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## **The Learning Advisory Program Club Events and Well-Being: Regular Clubbers' Reflections on Their Experiences**

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### **Abstract**

From a sociocultural perspective of autonomy, it is vital that learners can access information, identify their values, know themselves, and manage their cognitive and affective states in their learning environment, and voice their opinions within their community of practice. To provide its learners with autonomy-supportive and structured environments within its specific context, the Learning Advisory Program Unit (LAP) of Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages (AYBU SFL) designed an extracurricular program, the LAP Club, which incorporated self-determination theory (SDT), PERMA-the five pillars of well-being, and intentional reflective dialogue (IRD) to promote advising practices. The resulting content was delivered following the phases defined in the equipped for future (EFF) framework and standards. In this qualitative research project investigating the participants' perceptions of the efficiency of the program in promoting their well-being, a questionnaire developed based on PERMA profiler by Butler and Kern (2016) was administered to five regular participants in their L1, Turkish. The findings indicate that the awareness gained with notions of well-being improves the learning process and develops the sense of self-determination with high levels of well-being.

*Keywords:* self-determination theory, PERMA well-being, advising in language learning, EFF framework

Looking at the rapidly changing conditions of the world in these COVID pandemic times, one can see today's learners face unprecedented challenges. These challenges vary from personal to ethical, or social to technological. Even in ideal educational contexts, learners are expected to have a high level of mental well-being and take on their own learning responsibilities, set goals, and evaluate learning outcomes and achievements by managing their learning processes. Therefore, learners should be educated on effectively managing their own learning and guided when needed. Aiming to support learner autonomy and well-being, the Learning Advisory Program (LAP) Unit has offered the students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages the LAP Club sessions within its integrated framework in 2020-2021 academic year in distance education. The LAP Club sessions were conducted as an extracurricular program within a model which has been developed based on self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and the PERMA model (Seligman, 2012). The sessions reflected the structure entailed by intentional reflective

dialogue (IRD), in which an advisor facilitates the dialogue with the advisee(s), which can result in transformational learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016). The delivery phases of the sessions were offered within the equipped for future (EFF) framework that includes access, voice, action, and bridge to the future (Stein, 2000).

This paper aims to investigate learners' perceptions of their LAP Club experiences in terms of five core elements of the PERMA model. In the first part of the paper, the theoretical framework, the components and the implementation of the model are outlined. In the second, the material and methodology of the study are provided, while the third section highlights the main findings.

### **Theoretical Framework of the LAP Club Model**

As for the advising construct of the LAP Club model, we engage in a reflective process within an advising context to help learners exercise agency for their actions as autonomy in learning lies at the heart of advising. This process helps them realize the reason for their engagement in language learning, which will make it meaningful to them personally. In advising in language learning (ALL), the crucial tool of IRD, within a sociocultural framework, is a mediator of thinking and learning (Kato & Mynard, 2016). In the LAP Club model, we make use of other dynamic tools which draw on dynamic systems theories (Thelen & Smith, 2006), where many factors influence learning. Those tools might involve using other artifacts, i.e., self-evaluations or other activities to facilitate thinking. These tools might scaffold the dialogue to help learners think more deeply. Also, this dialogue and tool implementation in the LAP Club sessions take the ecological perspective into account, which means learning can potentially take place in any environment (Benson, 2017), i.e., classrooms, self-access learning centers (SALCs), advising rooms, LAP Clubs, or the like.

The reason for focusing on well-being is that well-being which is related to a variety of positive outcomes, such as lower divorce rates, higher success in work life, stronger relationships, and better life health (Butler & Kern, 2016) is the fundamental element of an effective learning. In this respect, several factors that contribute to well-being and helping learners to be successful in both academic and social domains have been identified. These include personal goal setting, structured mentoring, life coaching, increasing gratitude, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills (Bird & Markle, 2012). Yu et al. (2018) found that personal well-being measured at the beginning of university study positively predicted learners' personal growth and academic achievement. Another study shows that individuals who get support for autonomy from their family and friends are directly and positively

influenced regarding their basic psychological needs, which, in turn, has a positive influence on subjective well-being (Çankaya, 2009).

In this regard, the well-being dimension of the model is based on Seligman's (2012) PERMA model with its "foregrounding of the social nature of well-being," which refers not to its individualistic but social perspective that involves communities and relationships (Mercer et al., 2018, p. 17). It is comprised of the following components:

### ***Positive Emotions***

Both positive and negative emotions are experienced simultaneously (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). The value of positive emotions across a range of life outcomes have been supported by numerous studies (Howell et al., 2007; Huppert, 2009; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

### ***Engagement***

Intense concentration, absorption and focus have been referred to as flow, or an extreme level of psychological engagement in positive psychology (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990b). Student engagement includes psychological, behavioral, cognitive, and academic domains (Appleton et al., 2008).

### ***Building Relationships***

Relationships involve feeling cherished, protected, and respected by others. Good relationships have a significant effect on our welfare because we are intrinsically relational beings (Seligman, 2012).

### ***Finding Meaning and Purpose***

The closest we come to being our "inner selves," the closer we are to finding meaning in our lives (Schlegel et al., 2009). When we are faced with a tremendous obstacle or adversity in our lives, seeing a larger purpose in life allows us to concentrate on what is most valuable.

### ***Experiencing Accomplishment***

A sense of achievement indicates that we have progressed and accomplished our objectives, mastered a skill, and had the self-motivation to fulfill the task at hand. When we can look back on our life with a feeling of accomplishment and think, "I did it, and I did it well," it adds to our happiness (Seligman, 2012).

## **The Components of the Model and Well-being**

The multidimensional LAP Club model, adapted from the model built by Field and Hoffman (1994), integrates SDT, wellbeing and ALL, and consists of six components (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*The LAP Club Model*



### ***Discovering the SELF***

Knowing one's strengths and shortcomings in depth allows learners to set realistic short-term targets, devise effective strategies to achieve them and grow a self-awareness which will promote the level of our well-being by creating more positive emotions.

### ***VALUING the Self***

One of the most critical things that can help learners advance their self-determination is experiencing the love, comfort, and sense of support that comes from forming and nurturing good relationships in their lives, relationships also being an essential element of well-being as identified in PERMA. This entails promoting well-being by valuing one's strengths and qualities, which supports the positive emotions element of PERMA.

### ***Building a VISION***

This component being more of a visual practice, entails creativity and critical thinking, which assists them with finding novel methodologies to get around barriers that persistence alone cannot survive. Learners are bound to engage in their activities and envision themselves in an effective learning environment, which aligns with the engagement element of PERMA.

### ***Setting GOALS***

Setting long-term objectives, breaking down long-term objectives into short-term objectives, and breaking down short-term objectives into a sequence of actions are all parts of the process of setting goals. When completed, these actions will result in the intended outcome. This component also overlaps with the achievement element of the PERMA.

### ***Putting Plans into ACTION***

Self-determination is impossible without action and engagement, an important element of PERMA. By taking action, learners can realize their goals. Furthermore, acting

and reflecting on the results of such acts increase their self-awareness and confidence in themselves. This greater self-determination is aided by this greater knowledge and confidence.

### ***REFLECTING on the Process***

Engaging in the process and learning from what happens is one of the most effective methods to gain the information, beliefs, and abilities. When learners actively and deliberately reflect on their experiences, they improve their capacity to live a self-determined life, which relates to the meaning element of PERMA.

### **The Implementation of the Model and Well-being**

LAP Club model is implemented by conducting IRD within the framework of EFF content framework and standards (Stein, 2000). Within the scope of this framework, it is necessary to address the four main objectives of learning while determining the specific knowledge and skills that learners need to overcome difficulties in learning environments. Initially, the learners are provided with *access* to theoretical information and *voice* their own experiences and ideas in the light of this information. In the action phase, they apply the tools as the session content target in the break-out rooms. In the last stage, they are helped to ‘bridge to the future’ by discussing the ways of transforming the application, in which they blend the information obtained from the theory into practice in their own learning environment in a joint discussion environment. Reflective questions are asked within the scope of IRD at every phase of the session, which is conducted by trained and certified learning advisors to help learners go deeper. Also, the tools that are used in each session are organized in line with the six components of the model, respectively. The multidimensional nature of the LAP Club model can be explained in a sample session called *My Core Values* as below.

In the *access* phase of the session, the advisor tells an inspirational story which is based on the importance of the values in life. Learners clarify what matters most in life. This also helps to build rapport in the initial phase of the session, which promotes the *positive emotions* element of PERMA.

In the *voice* phase of the session, the advisor asks inclusive reflective questions, e.g., *In what learning situation do you feel your needs are fulfilled and you feel most content?* Learners imagine the most fulfilled or content moments as a learner and identify the values fulfilled in those moments together. Thinking deeply on the meaning of their learning together promotes the *finding meaning and purpose* element of PERMA.

In the *action* phase of the session, learners attribute their core values to common aspects in life, mainly focusing on their learning life by implementing the tool called *my core values*. They ask and answer the prepared reflective questions with a peer in a break-out session. This strengthens the *relationship* with their peers that learners need for their well-being, relating to the *building relationships* element of PERMA.

In the *bridge to the future* phase of the session, learners get together and reflect on their experience in the break-out sessions within a focus group discussion on their shared values with the partners and the rest of the group. This helps them build a sense of community and derive the importance of shared values, which will fulfill the sense of achievement relating to that element of PERMA.

Considering the implementation period, since each academic period consists of seven weeks at AYBU SFL, an ideal extracurricular program to support learners in their preparatory school environment would last six weeks, leaving one week for the exams, some special events and/or national holidays. In this respect, six sessions were conducted within the scope of the curriculum developed for the synchronous online program covering these steps weekly.

### **Research Question**

This study seeks to answer the following research question: What are learners' perceptions of the efficiency of the program in promoting their well-being in terms of the five core elements of the PERMA model?

### **Research Methodology**

#### ***Participants***

One male and four female participants aged 18 to 20, who took part in 36 Club sessions, were recruited for this study. While three participants were ongoing prep school students, one was a psychology major. One other participant was a regular clubber, although he was studying in his faculty having completed the prep-year.

#### ***Instruments***

Participants' perceptions of the PERMA components of the sessions were investigated via semi-structured interviews using a protocol containing 11 open-ended questions developed based on the PERMA profiler by Butler and Kern (2016). The protocol had two questions for each of the five well-being components and an overview question for their perception of the ecology of the sessions. Participants were instructed to respond to the open-ended questions and judge the sessions in terms of each PERMA component on a scale from

1 to 10, 1 referring to the lowest effectiveness while 10 representing the highest. It was administered by the researcher herself one-to-one with each participant via the online platform called Zoom as a post-implementation interview in Turkish. Each session lasted around 45 mins.

### ***Procedure***

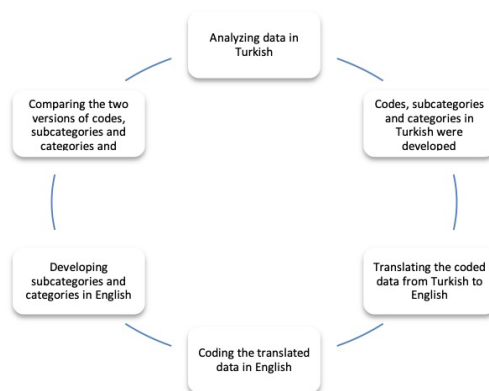
After getting permission from the participants, the interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed using a cross-case analysis following Creswell's (2012) qualitative content analysis scheme, which entails the identification of general trends in common answers. However, due to the limited number of participants, there were limited number of occurrences of each theme; therefore, the researcher did not employ a reductionist approach and included all the distinct themes.

As the interviews were conducted in Turkish, they were first transcribed and translated, and then coded. This translation method suggested by Ho et al. (2019) involves six steps (see Figure 2 below for an adapted illustration of the procedure of translation method): (1) analyzing data in the original language, Turkish, (2) developing subcategories and categories in Turkish, (3) translating the coded data from Turkish to English, (4) coding the translated data in English, (5) developing subcategories and categories in English, (6) comparing the two versions of codes, subcategories, and categories, and developing meaning-based translated findings. Due to the involvement of sensitive personal information in the study, the researcher worked as an analyst and translator to develop research findings without the loss of meaning, enhanced transparency during the translation process, and managed data sensitively. For reliability, 40 per cent of the anonymized data were also analyzed by a fellow researcher with sufficient field knowledge who is an EFL instructor and learning advisor with four years of advising experience.



**Figure 2**

*The Procedure for Translating and Analyzing Data Between Turkish and English (Adapted from Ho et al., 2019)*



## Results and Discussion

This paper describes the initial investigation of responses given by five regular clubbers in post-implementation interviews. A total of 12 themes emerged to describe the LAP Club sessions as a result of the deductive coding process: Beneficial, Fun, Connecting, Meaningful, Safe, Scientific, Eye-opening, Empowering, Satisfying, Supportive, Active, Sustainable (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Clubbers' Perceptions of the LAP Club Sessions with Respect to PERMA Components (N=5)*

Theme	Example excerpt	Pseudonyms	PERMA Components
Beneficial	"LAP Club has filled the gaps in my social life. I was shy and unable to talk with people. Now I'm really talkative."	Aylin	Positive Emotions / Engagement
Fun	"The slides are colorful and fun. It is obvious that there's a lot of effort and expertise behind."	Aslı	Engagement
Connecting	"Thanks to LAP Club, I feel that I am as social as before the pandemic. I turned back to my pre-pandemic social life."	Aylin	Relationships
Meaningful	"LAP has become a stage where learners voluntarily share their life and learning issues and inspire each other in the way to resolve any conflicts, which is so meaningful."	Beyhan	Meaning
Safe	"It's a safe environment with trustworthy friends and expert advisers."	Salih	Relationships

Scientific	“The thought-provoking questions create a mindfulness.” “Talks are based on science-supported topics.”	Sinem	Engagement
Eye-opening	“I found my reason to learn.”	Sinem	Meaning / Accomplishment
Empowering	“While reflecting on the session, we see how much we touch the other learners and vice versa. When I see I have some good impacts on others, I feel like I can make a change.”	Sinem	Positive Emotions
Satisfying	“It has a therapeutic effect.”	Aylin	Positive Emotions
Supportive	“It really feels great to be a part of others’ happiness and learning.”	Aslı	Relationships
Active	“LAP Clubs help you move. They trigger a willingness to act.”	Beyhan	Accomplishment
Sustainable	“It feels addictive.” “You lose track of time.”	Beyhan	Engagement / Relationships

The emergent themes shown in Table 1 above were grouped and interpreted based on the corresponding PERMA elements:

***Positive Emotions:***

Participant responses to the interview questions on *positive emotions* in the PERMA well-being model revealed three main themes, as illustrated in Table 1. All regular clubbers described the club sessions as beneficial, satisfying, and empowering. They stated that the content gradually helped them overcome their overall anxiety and stress due to the pandemic, manage emotions in and out of the sessions, receive advisor and peer support, and free from the boredom and exhaustion of online education. A clubber’s view is as follows:

*“Talking about our feelings and perspectives made us feel positive. Also, all discussions were US-oriented (learner-oriented) and this made us feel precious. You asked US and WE talked. It felt like a group therapy.” Aylin*

In addition, they expressed their satisfaction due to the perceived improvement in their language skills, relationships built with peers in break-out sessions, and the eventual desire to achieve more engaging and reflective learning spaces as a community. These effects are clear in the words of another clubber:

*“We share new ways of learning with each other in the sessions. Even if we don’t like their ways, we can convince other learners that our ways are helpful. And once they*

*like our ways of learning, this creates a sense of satisfaction because we feel we are helpful.” Sinem*

They reported feeling/having felt empowered. They experienced being listened to and felt valued due to learner-oriented talks, which resulted in increased willingness to move forward and higher levels of motivation. This can be observed in the reflections of a clubber as shown below:

*“In the beginning of the academic year, we started talking about our dreams, future plans and how to reach them, so I felt myself on the track since the beginning and it helped me plan my studies and take steps to reach my goals.” Aylin*

The clubs proved effective in promoting positive emotions contributing to learner well-being and *creating hope* as Mendler (2009) lists among his motivation boosters and confirming previous findings regarding the value people attach to positive emotions across a variety of life outcomes (Howell et al., 2007; Huppert, 2009; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

Participants’ scalar ratings regarding the effectiveness of the sessions in triggering positive emotions indicates highly positive effects on them (See Table 2). They considered the emotions they experienced in the LAP clubs positive while their sense of managing them was slightly more limited, yet still considerably high. This result demonstrates the potential contributions of the sessions in fostering learners’ positive emotions which could help them move forward in their learning environment.

**Table 2**

*Clubbers’ Average Rating Scores for Positive Emotions Component (N=5)*

Questions: “Do you think/feel that you ...”	Average Score
1.1 ... experience positive emotions during the LAP Clubs?	9.2
1.2 ... have gained a sense of managing your emotions by joining the LAP Club?	8
Component Average	8.6

***Engagement:***

Participant responses to the interview questions on *engagement* in the PERMA well-being model revealed four main themes as presented in Table 1. All regular clubbers described the club sessions as beneficial, fun, scientific, and four of them found the sessions sustainable. In addition, reflective questions, quotes, and thought-provoking discussions within specific themes in each session helped them broaden their horizons. As can be seen in the reflections of another clubber below:

*“I gained new perspectives and more creative ways of thinking as we asked and answered various questions that I hadn’t thought before. For instance, I haven’t thought about MY version of success or the color of success before.” Beyhan*

Also, they stated that the sessions were beneficial due to engaging with supportive peers and expert advisors. Sharing their experiences as different types of learners helped them gain new resources such as peers. They reported having fun, even losing track of time within these three or four-hour sessions due to the colorful slides, thought-provoking questions that were exchanged with energetic advisors and supportive peers within break-out sessions.

*“I have been addicted to the LAP Clubs. I felt bad when I couldn’t join once or twice as it felt like a mandatory lesson for me. This was because my regular class lessons could have been a bit boring with usual language activities, but clubs were never boring with fruitful discussions about our feelings, thoughts via some interesting tools and topics that we engaged with new people and supportive advisors in every session. This was exactly what we needed especially in pandemic times.” Ashi*

Their ratings to the questions reflect a high average again as is illustrated in Table 3. This indicates that the clubbers were provided with the needed affective and/or practical support to experience engagement as a part of a reflective learning community. In this new learning space (see Benson (2017) and Mynard (2020) for more on this ecological perspective), the clubbers were experiencing a high level of psychological engagement, quite like the *flow* state in Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990a) terms.

**Table 3**

*Clubbers’ Average Rating Scores for Engagement Component (N=5)*

Questions	Average Score
2.1 Do you think/feel that you have been absorbed in the activities / lost track of time during the LAP Clubs?	9.2
2.2 To what extent do you feel joyful during the LAP Clubs?	9.4
Component Average	9.3

### ***Building Relationships:***

Participant responses to the interview questions on *building relationships* in the PERMA well-being model revealed four main themes, as shown in Table 1. All regular clubbers described the club sessions as connecting and supportive, while four of them described the sessions as safe and sustainable. They stated that the club sessions were

connecting learners with trustworthy peers and expert advisors while developing mutual perspectives with them. This helped them gain self-awareness and empathize with peers with different perspectives. An example quote illustrates this as shown follows:

*“We, clubbers tried to empathize with each other, and it was not that difficult as we were experiencing similar conditions. Therefore, we were all willing to be there for each other, which connected us and made us feel supported.” Salih*

In addition, they found the sessions supportive. Three clubbers mentioned they did not need any one-to-one support, especially about exam anxiety. This was due to both academic and emotional support throughout the sessions, either in the main room or in the break-out rooms. It is clear in the following learner script:

*“We were talking about our mistakes in the sessions with our peers and discussing ways to release from the frustration that we feel when we make mistakes or get low grades. We were finding ways to turn these into experiences that we learn from. This helped me a lot when trying to cope with my exam anxiety.” Aylin*

Seeing their peers as role models and getting feedback from them helped the clubbers to develop long-term relationship skills out of sessions, which proved the sustainability of the program. Three clubbers mentioned the names of their peers as their role models. They stated that they were provided with very useful learning strategies by their peers in the breakout sessions.

The clubbers, having been offered the chance to connect with others and socialize in a safe, supportive space at a time of social isolation, felt cherished, protected, and respected by others as *intrinsically relational beings* (Mendler, 2009; Seligman, 2012). One of the clubbers stated the effectiveness of exchanging written reflections on Moodle as follows:

*“When I reflected on the sessions on Moodle and received some replies to my comments, I felt connected. Some advisors asked some questions there that helped me understand my feelings and see the other side of the coin, which let me feel like writing more detailed as I felt so relaxed while sharing them freely. I felt excited when I received a comment notification and I wanted to reply back immediately.” Ashi*

To this end, the high average rating related to the building relationships component of the questionnaire (See Table 4) reflects the inclusive, caring, appreciative and respectful climate of the clubs which was noticed and valued by the clubbers.

**Table 4***Clubbers' Average Rating Scores for Building Relationships Component (N=5)*

Questions: “Do you think/feel that you ... ?”	Average Score
3.1 ... have built positive relationships during the LAP Clubs?	8.9
3.2 ... receive help and support from others in the LAP Clubs?	9.4
Component Average	9.15

***Finding Meaning & Purpose:***

Participant responses to the interview questions on *finding meaning and purpose* in the PERMA well-being model revealed two main themes, as can be seen in Table 1. All the regular clubbers described the club sessions as meaningful and eye-opening. They stated that the sessions helped them touch others' lives while talking about real-life topics and issues and mutually sharing what they know. In addition, clarifying the reasons for learning in mind and having helpful talks about discovering the value of learning helped them move forward in life, feel content with decisions and moves while inspiring and being inspired by other learners. One clubber's highlights such effects as follows:

*“Club sessions triggered a deep-thinking process about my learning environment. I questioned why I was studying English and what I targeted more specifically. This led to a clarification in my mind, and I knew my reasons for learning English. In the end, I realized that learning English was truly valuable for me.” Sinem*

They stated that learning new ways of managing time help them plan their studies and learning. They mentioned that they became better thinkers of learning and gained the habit of regular study instead of procrastinating.

*“I started to use the time management strategies that we learned in the club sessions to organize my departmental studies and even my social life. I was able to find a way to stop procrastinating with the help of those tips and strategies. They helped me organize my life not only at prep school but in general.” Beyhan*

Despite the lack of total agreement revealing that each individual learner's club experience had led them to find meaning and purpose in their learning, it is important to note that the average scores in this component was still high (See Table 5). This finding reveals that the sessions were considered effective in creating an eligible space for learners to explore their inner derives for learning as well as observing others do the same, peeling further layers to get closer to *their inner, true selves* in Schlegel et al.'s (2009) terms.

**Table 5***Clubbers' Average Rating Scores for Finding Meaning and Purpose Component (N=5)*

Questions: “Do you think/feel that you ... ?”	Average Score
4.1 ... have built positive relationships during the LAP Clubs?	8.5
4.2 ... receive help and support from others in the LAP Clubs?	7.2
Component Average	7.85

***Experiencing Achievement:***

Two main themes were revealed from the participant responses to the interview questions on *experiencing achievement* in the PERMA well-being model, as illustrated in Table 1. All regular clubbers described the club sessions as eye-opening and active. Also, one clubber mentioned that she realized her needs as learner. This realization helped her to see herself and the reality as if in a mirror and identify the ideal ways of her learning. Her words were as follows:

*“The sessions made me realize that I needed to take care of myself in the long run. I needed to spare some time for myself to feel recharged, especially when I overstudy. I also realized that I don’t need to study in my room all the time, but I can study anywhere suitable, like outside in the garden as well.” Aylin*

In addition, they started to move forward to approach their targets and act mindfully about their goals by following and evaluating their daily steps. They reported implementing the gained skills in other learning environments by becoming good speakers and listeners, as it is mentioned by two clubbers below:

*“I think we learn more efficient ways of studying and this reflects as a more efficient learning environment for us.” Beyhan*

By being active in the sessions, they broke their hesitancy and achieved the least-expected goals as well. Also, two clubbers mentioned that they gained new experiences as psychology students.

Rating this component with an average of 9.25 out of the highest rate of 10, the clubbers bore out their contentment that the positive and supportive climate of the clubs helped learners gain a perception of increased effectance (effective interaction with others) as an aspect of motivation (See Table 6). This refers to reaching beyond the goal of increased language learning progress and proficiency. The sessions were reported to be a stage for achievements of *building strong relationships*, creating positive emotions, *expressing*

*enthusiasm* in Mendler’s (2009) terms, and experiencing a state of flow, which seem to have contributed to clubbers’ *feelings of accomplishment*, as highlighted by Seligman (2012).

**Table 6**

*Clubbers’ Average Rating Scores for Experiencing Achievement Component (N=5)*

Questions: “Do you think/feel that you ... ?”	Average Score
5.1 ... have been supported towards achieving your goals during the LAP Clubs?	9.3
5.2 ... gain a sense of direction in your learning environment during the LAP Clubs?	9.2
Component Average	9.25

A general question was also asked to explore the perceptions of the clubbers regarding the ecology of the sessions as a setting for well-being. As this study was conducted within a small group of only five regular clubbers who were able to build highly supportive relationships through the sessions, they highlighted positive aspects of the environment rather than their suggestions. However, one aspect which can be identified reading between the lines was speaking anxiety mentioned by two participants due to clubbers’ varied levels of English. One of the clubbers explained this as below:

*“The discussions in the sessions helped me become aware that facing challenges help us grow. This realization was supported by one experience with a clubber who was speaking too fluently for me. In the break-out session when he realized my anxiety, he told me to keep calm when talking to him. I started to feel relaxed, and we had a nice session with him, and this was one time I was able to talk with a foreign student that helped me speak more confidently in the following sessions.” Asli*

All the participants responded to the final question “What is your opinion of the ecology of LAP Clubs as a setting for well-being?” with the highest rate 10, which indicates that the LAP club sessions were effective in creating the conditions in which learners can flourish and thrive in their learning environment. Overall, the overwhelmingly positive results obtained in this study could be due to several factors such as the small number of participants, positive group dynamics, positive progress of the clubber-advisor relationship in this group, and intervention-context congruence.



## Conclusion

This study investigated learners' perceptions of the efficiency of LAP Club sessions in promoting their well-being based on the five core elements of the PERMA model. The following points emerge from the analysis and results in support of these.

Learners' scalar ratings regarding the effectiveness of the sessions in terms of the five components of PERMA yielded positive results. The average scores of three components, engagement, building relationships, and experiencing accomplishment were above nine. This result indicates that the LAP Club sessions provided learners with an online environment where they fulfilled their needs to build new relationships with other learners and advisors in an engaging learning setting where they also experienced success. We have observed the positive emotions gained by the participants on their perceptions of improvement in English, which refers to approaching the goals, engaging with other learners in break-out sessions, becoming aware of their reasons for learning, and more significantly, inspiring and being inspired by other learners as a set of achievements fulfilled within a reflective learning environment. Finding meaning and purpose received the lowest average scores although it was still considerably high. To this end, they reported to have grown a mental welfare that they needed, which relates to all aspects of their well-being.

It has also been observed that participants gained not only academic but non-academic life skills that they need in their social and academic lives as well. Many times, the participants mentioned that they turned back to their social life before the pandemic with LAP Clubs. This goes in line with the perspective *communities of practice* which were defined as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 4). The LAP Club sessions clearly helped create a new online community of practice among learners and instructors.

The findings of the study provide implications on how the LAP Club model, with its multiple, mutual, and continuous interaction of all its components, promotes the acquisition, evaluation, and celebration of skills. The sessions weave together the awareness gained with high levels of well-being.

## Limitations and Directions for Further Study

This paper represents a part of a larger study, and only one dimension of a multidimensional model is discussed. One limitation is about data collection procedures. Scalar rating was aimed at investigating participants' satisfaction in terms of PERMA

components and provides data specific to this group. It is the study's reliance solely on self-report data which may have been susceptible to social desirability bias (Barker et al., 2002), which refers to using measures of more than one type or perspective to reduce the problem of method variance (e.g., to use self-report measures and observer ratings). Follow-up studies can be designed in the form of narrative inquiries to collect learners' opinions with more in-depth data. Within more in-depth sequential studies, the impacts of the model on clubbers' well-being and their awareness levels can be incorporated into the next stage of the project to investigate the impacts of the model on clubbers' becoming self-determined learners.

When advisors are empowered, experience confidence, and opportunities to be creative, learners will benefit. Supporting both learners and advisors through the creation of a motivational institution climate has substantial advantages in terms of educational outcomes within higher levels of well-being. This reveals the need for future educational research with advisors to consider the importance of their perceptions regarding their own autonomy and well-being. As a result, it is my hope that this research can aid in creating an interest in further exploring how mindful and self-determined advisors and learners are and how mindful and self-determined they are becoming. It could also be worth investigating the ecology of institutions as a setting for well-being.

#### **Notes on the Contributor**

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#### **Editorial note**

This paper was originally published on September 29, 2021 and updated on January 25, 2022 at the request of the author. The LAP Club model described in this paper refers to an adapted model of the one developed by Field and Hoffman (1994). Although this important reference was present in the original submission and early versions of the article, it was accidentally deleted during the review and revision process. The reference sentence has been re-inserted on page 214: "The multidimensional LAP Club model, adapted from the model built by Field and Hoffman (1994), integrates SDT, wellbeing and ALL, and consists of six components (see Figure 1)." The reference list has also been updated.

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