

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE ROLE OF PRACTITIONER-TUTORS IN THE DESIGN STUDIO

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the perception of the students on the role of practitioner-tutors in the learning process of the Design Studio courses. Practitioner-tutors were commonly employed in the learning process at university and generally provided a collaborative contribution for the teaching team of lecturers or persons in charge of the design studios. The research utilized the quantitative method with surveys and was analyzed using the descriptive statistics method. The objects of the research were twenty practitioner-tutors in four design studios, and the respondents were a hundred students from various years of study. The research variables of the roles of practitioner-tutors included learning goal orientation, feedback seeking, help-seeking, and behavior learning engagement. In conclusion, the research shows that students perceive the role of the practitioner-tutors in the four dimensions as quite good, with the highest merits being, in consecutive order, learning goal orientation and feedback seeking. Meanwhile, help-seeking and behavior learning engagement variables both are placed last with the same value. The benefit of this research is applied to the design studio course manager, and tutors for the better process of tutoring in a design studio course and giving the foundation for further similar research.

Keywords: students' perception, practitioner tutors, design studio

INTRODUCTION

The design studio course has become crucial in the learning process to create responsible graduates with good creativity and competence, especially in the design program (Demirkan & Afacan, 2012; Williams, Ostwald, & Haugen, 2010). The design studio course is generally considered as the main core in a systematic learning process. In all architecture study around the world, this process is seen as an integrated learning process (Al-Hagla, 2012). The arrangement of studio design classes needs a managerial system and creative process (Demirkan & Afacan, 2012).

In this new paradigm, student-centered learning has been widely applied (Kyoungjin & Davies, 2014; Zairul, 2018). The same thing can be seen in the learning process in studios, which applies the method through case-based learning (Cifuentes et al., 2009), problem-based learning and project-based learning (Widowati, Sawitri, & Krisnawati, 2015) and blended learning (Francis & Shannon, 2013). In fact, design studios often use a blended learning method to encourage students to adopt a greater role in the process.

One of the ways to support such learning process comes in the form of tutors to aid the studio masters (Zairul, 2018). The chosen tutors are sometimes students who double as studio master assistants, as well as practitioners who also work as tutors. In the context of this research, practitioner-

tutors are used as the main topic to be studied because, in addition to supporting the active process of student-centered learning, they also fit the vision and mission of the entrepreneurial mindset-based program of the university. The inclusion of real design projects to be completed in design studios purposely calls for the presence of these practitioner-tutors to aid studio masters in creating a learning atmosphere that resembles the real condition in the field.

In line with the research by Christina, Purwoko, and Kusumowidagdo (2015), the role of practitioners and learning opportunity from assistant-lecturers who double as practitioners come in the form of learning goal orientation, feedback seeking, help-seeking, and behavior learning engagement. This research is quantitative research, and it is correlated towards students' competence in the context of entrepreneurship education. These variables are used in the research to study the perception of the students towards all four of them.

The first variable is the learning goal orientation. The variable of students' learning goal orientation is influenced by their personal evaluation. It is found that learning goal orientation affects the motivation of the students (Corker & Donnellan, 2012) and their performance in groups if the project is a collaborative effort (Kleingeld, Van Mierlo, & Arends, 2011). There is a positive relationship between learning goals orientation and students' self-regulation

activities included goal setting, skill-maintenance activity, and strategy development of the learner. In the learning process inside a design studio, a clear learning goal orientation should be attempted, both by studio masters and practitioner-tutors.

The second variable is the feedback seeking that is also defined as seeking academic assistance. Feedback seeking can support both individual and group goals. Further, feedback seeking influences the learners; namely the frequency, type, source method, timing, and sign preference. The feedback seeking will help the student for a better decision, while feedback session will help students to assess their works and make a judgment about what they have learned.

The third variable is the help-seeking. It is usually obtained from peers as well as from tutors. This action could have a wide range from classrooms to online forum by using many methodologies (reports and log) and could be related to the technologies support. Social interaction and communication can lead to innovation (Sidawi, 2012). A research by Ryan (2012) has revealed that instructors can also become a source for help-seeking. This can be a requirement for a significant profile of the instructor. A successful help-seeking happens when the instructor has the ability to solve problems and give ample support and is able to follow through with the problems. These particular characteristics of an instructor are also needed inside a design studio. In practitioner-tutors, the ability to solve a problem is largely linked to the condition of the field.

The fourth variable is behavior learning engagement that encourages students to study in high spirit. This is linked to the use of strategy, activities, and tools that are well-liked by students. The active learning system in a studio will support students' self-learning ability as well as their self-regulatory process and provide a learning process and performance that is compatible with the expectancy of the learning process. To promote student engagement, Garrett (2011) has explained that instructor/teacher/lecturer should show the engagement; class discussion on engagement, give the student variety styles to engage, have the students reflect their engagement, create memorable moments, have feedback from the students about activities that increase their engagement.

This research explores the four roles of tutor, especially in the context of practitioner-tutor in the design studio. To this day, various researches regarding design studios have been conducted, for instance the learning method, design method, and assessment used (Zairul, 2018), tutoring process (Faroa, 2017), the design method used in completing design projects, the digitalisation process of learning (McCarthy, 2012), the atmosphere of learning (Danaci, 2015; Wang, 2010), and the learning class layout (Obeidat & Al-Share, 2012). However, not many of the researches have delved into the role of tutors especially the role of practitioners who work as tutors although some researches have explored the collaboration between peers or lecturers who work as tutors.

Therefore this research wishes to fill the gap in exploring the perception of the students towards the role of practitioner-tutors in the learning process inside design studios, particularly in the perspective of interior architecture program in Indonesia. Another objective of this research is to offer beneficial information for future researches and practical data for other design institutions as learning inspiration.

METHODS

The research consists of two stages which are done following sequential exploratory order. The first is the qualitative stage to confirm the indicators and variables of the previous research (Christina, Purwoko, & Kusumowidagdo, 2015). The second is the quantitative stage which is conducted through a survey involving 100 students to perceive the variables of the role of practitioner-tutors in design studios of Ciputra University's interior architecture program. Research object is the Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design studio, the title of the Design Studio course in Ciputra University, Indonesia. The term entrepreneurial is used since the vision of the university is to create an entrepreneurial mindset that creates value.

These courses (design studios) are a core study in the Interior Architecture program. The course comprises six levels with increasing complexity in terms of building dimensions and types. The increasing complexity can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Design Studio Courses, Competencies, and Credits

Semester	Courses	Credits	Competencies
1	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 1	5	Able to apply the elements and principles of design, composition and theory in an applicative manner and has an adaptive value toward the design industry
2	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 2	6	Able to design a single room in a residential and commercial project and has an adaptive value toward the design industry
3	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 3	6	Able to design the interior architecture of a residential project and has an adaptive value toward the design industry
4	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 4	6	Able to design the interior architecture of a commercial project with a dimension of 100-200 m ² and has an adaptive value toward the design industry

Table 1 Design Studio Courses, Competencies, and Credits (Continued)

Semester	Courses	Credits	Competencies
5	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 5	6	Able to design the interior architecture of a commercial project with a dimension of 200-400 m2 and has an adaptive value toward the design industry
6	Entrepreneurial Interior Architecture Design Studio 6	6	Able to design the interior architecture of a commercial project with a minimum dimension of 400-600 m2 that is adjusted to the requirements of an interior architecture consultant, product design and private business need

In the design studio course, the quite large credits reflect the longer study time inside the studio. The design studios are managed by head of Design Studio Laboratories, who oversee studio heads and studio master of the six levels (Figure 1). On each level, there is a tutor who helps the studio heads and deputy studio heads with a tutor-student ratio of 1:10. Each studio consists of around 50 students, making the total number of tutors in each studio to be five as shown in Figure 2. The tutor-student ratio, in this case, has a common ratio as the research of Zairul (2018).

The strategy to hire practitioner-tutors is one of the qualifications that should be fulfilled in order to comply with the vision and mission of Ciputra University, which puts forward entrepreneurship education. One of the efforts to realize a suitable learning process for entrepreneurial students is by using real clients for the design projects in each design studio. With the presence of practitioner-tutors, students will be greatly supported to learn in a real-life condition.

Phases that are usually used in design studios are observation, deep research, first design development, second design development, final design development, communication and presentation. In each of these phases, the tutors are expected to play roles as displayed in Table 2.

This research has two stages; the previous stage one study has determined the indicators for the above variables (Figure 3). In order to comply with the context of the latest research, the researcher has ensured the use of indicators of the variables through a focus group process of 15 students to legitimate the variables and indicators (Christina, Purwoko, & Kusumowidagdo, 2015). In this focus group study, the first stage of research shows that several variables are determined with these indicators. Each indicator has explained in Table 3, 4, 5, 6.

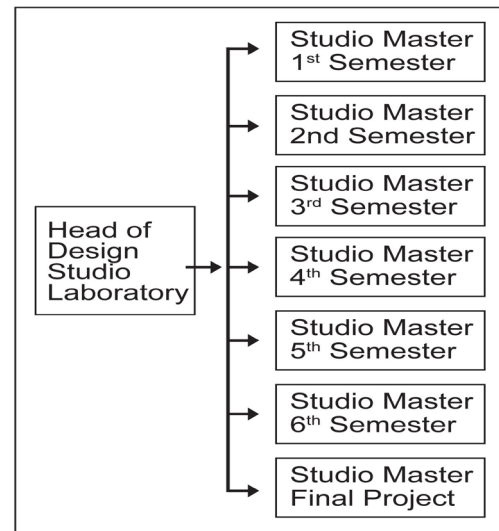


Figure 1 The Structure of Design Studio Laboratories in Interior Architecture Department, Universitas Ciputra

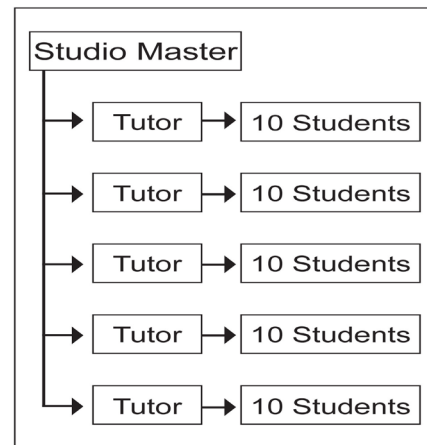


Figure 2 The Structure of Each Subject of Design Studio, Interior Architecture Department, Universitas Ciputra

Table 2 Design Phase and Roles of Practitioner Tutor

Design Phase	Roles of Practitioner Tutor
Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explaining learning goal orientation, tasks, and scope of observation tasks. - Encouraging behaviour of learning engagement by participating in design activities in inside and outside campus.
Deep research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aiding or help seeking in order to facilitate students' needs for supported and relevant literatures and other relevant research related to their design project. - Encouraging behaviour of learning engagement by participating in design activities in inside and outside campus.
First Design De-velopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aiding and encouraging ideas, first sketch, and concept implementation. - Giving feedback for all created ideas.

Table 2 Design Phase and Roles of Practitioner Tutor (Continued)

Design Phase	Roles of Practitioner Tutor
Second Design Development	- Aiding, encouraging design improvement, strengthening concept implementation. - Giving feedback for all created ideas. - Encouraging behaviour of learning engagement by participating in design activities in inside and outside campus.
Final Design Development, Communication and Presentation	Giving final feedback.

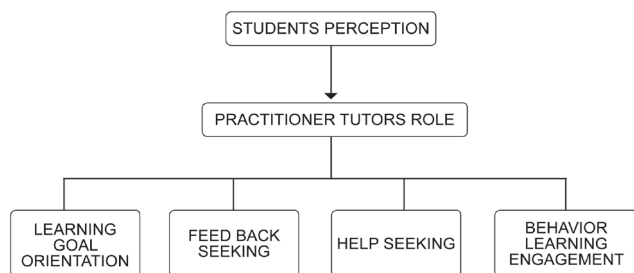


Figure 3 The Four Variables of Practitioner-Tutors' Role

Table 3 Indicators for Variable; Learning Goals Orientation

Indicators' number	Indicators definition
1	Complete comprehension of the tasks in the design studio
2	Able to show others that design project is easy
3	Prove my ability in design project
4	One of my goals this year is to learn as much as I can about design project in the studio
5	Learning a new skill in design studio project
6	It is important for me that other students think highly of me in the design studio project
7	It is important for me not to look foolish in the design studio class
8	It is important to learn a lot about the design project this year
9	It is important for me to look more capable than other students in the design studio class
10	One of my goals in the design studio is not to look as if I have a problem in class
11	It is important for me to improve my design skill this year

Table 4 Indicators for Variable: Feedback Seeking

Indicators' number	Indicators definition
1	I request input or feedback from my tutor so that I can determine the target of my future project
2	I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to hear praises that make me happy
3	I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to know how to solve problems in the project
4	I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to be more capable in finishing a project
5	I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to learn to improve the quality of my project
6	I request input or feedback from my tutor to ensure my design project is fine
7	I request input or feedback from my tutor to improve my knowledge and ability for my design project
8	I request input or feedback from my tutor so my friends know that I am a good student
9	I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to prove my ability to others
10	I request input or feedback from my tutor to ensure I am able to finish my design project

Table 5 Indicators for Variable: Help Seeking

Indicators' number	Indicators definition
1	Tutor provides ready answer or gives a sure hint instead of just explaining how to solve the problem and ask me to do it myself
2	I get tips about how to finish the project instead of getting the ready answer
3	Tutor finishes my task instead of explaining how to do it myself
4	Tutor explains about things I don't know instead of providing ready answer
5	Tutor explains about the general idea instead of providing ready answer
6	Tutor provides ready answer instead of explaining things I don't understand
7	Tutor gives example on how to solve problems like the ones he has had before
8	Tutor gives enough help so that I can still finish my task independently
9	Tutor finishes my task instead of just helping me finish on my own
10	Tutor helps finish the task I don't understand

Table 6 Indicators for Variable: Behaviour Learning Engagement

Indicators' number	Indicators definition
1	When I face a problem in a project, I will not stop until I find the solution
2	It is important for me to finish my design project without a glitch
3	When I find it difficult to understand a problem, I will learn about it until I understand everything
4	I participate in design activities and other related events
5	I work hard in design studio class
6	Design class and design project are important to support my goals
7	I am a student who is active in design related events in campus
8	I learn about the most important things regarding design in campus
9	After finishing a project, I check to ensure that what I have done is correct
10	I work as hard as I could in design studio class
11	After finishing my design studio tasks, I check to ensure that what I have done is correct
12	Learning about design is fun because I can be more capable in design
13	I have a plan to continue my design project even after my real client agrees with the design
14	Design course will help me to create more opportunities in the future
15	I have high hopes for the future
16	I work hard so that my design project is successful
17	What I have learned in design studio class is important for my future

Stage two of the research is done through a survey taken by 100 students (as probability sample) who completed the questionnaires about the four variables and their indicators, which are explained in stage one of the research. In order to select the respondents, 100 students are picked using systematic sampling. Twenty-five students (around 50%) from 4 studio classes in the ongoing research period of 2017/2018 are selected. The advantage of this systematic sampling is that all student representatives are represented proportionally as respondents (Creswell, 2014). This stage of the research will be further analyzed using a descriptive statistical means. The items of the questionnaire have been tested for their validity and reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A descriptive analysis is used to analyze the data by describing the collected data as it is. First is the respondents' response regarding learning goal orientation variable. Table 7 shows that from the total 13 statements of the respondents'

response regarding learning goal orientation, the highest score comes from statement number 5 (One of my goals this year is to learn a new skill in design project) with 545 points. While the lowest score can be seen in statement number 12 (One of my goals is to be considered more capable than other students in the design studio class) with 272 points.

Table 7 Respondents' Response Regarding Learning Goal Orientation Variable

Indicator number	% in Likert Scale					Actual Score	Ideal Score
	5	4	3	2	1		
1	66	31	2	1	0	462	500
2	34	40	21	5	0	403	500
3	45	37	5	0	0	388	500
4	53	41	21	9	1	511	500
5	58	42	22	9	3	545	500
6	28	30	31	22	8	405	500
7	35	47	17	6	3	429	500
8	56	40	4	0	0	452	500
9	24	42	22	9	3	375	500
10	9	30	31	22	8	310	500
11	57	39	3	1	0	452	500
12	14	44	6	3	2	272	500
13	27	37	10	0	0	313	500
Total						5317	6500

The indicator for learning goal indicator that must be improved is student's awareness that they have capabilities to do more. Based on the data, efforts to improve this learning goal orientation are good learning strategy (Kadioglu & Uzuntiryaki Kondakci, 2014), such as discussions with good learning sources related to students' weaknesses in the studio and providing design inspirations. Overall, tutors have done activities in order to direct the learning goals of students. It is also supported by the statement of studio students during the additional interview process.

"I think my tutor has explained this issue to me clearly. His explanation helps me deepen my understanding and so has my master studio. By giving brief information about the design, product clarity, and also time line, I can do the tasks comprehensively. I also discuss with tutors on appropriate learning strategies and design inspirations." (Female, 18 years old, student)

"If the goal is clear made, then the task will be easy to do. In this way, I can strengthen my skill design in this semester. Of course, I should be able to increase my scores and competencies. This course is helpful and I think the tutor not only gives words to me but also show me about the importance of the future, and the connections to my work later." (Male, 21 years old, student)

The total score for the variable of learning goal orientation is 5317, which lies in the good category, as shown in the interval range of 4420 – 5780. The continuum line of this variable is shown in Figure 4.

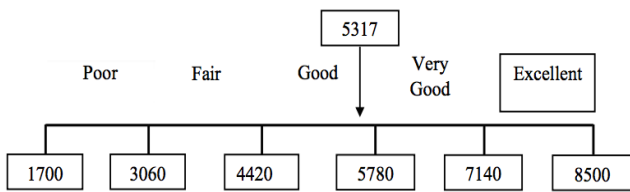


Figure 4 The Continuum Line of Learning Goals Orientation

A good learning goals orientation (Figure 4) later build needed competencies, by mastering new skills and problem-solving abilities. To achieve this, the tutor has a vital role in assisting students in order to provide new insight and to encourage steps needed in solving problems. This goal-oriented ability is also influenced by intellectual and interpersonal communication abilities.

Second is about respondents' response regarding feedback seeking variable. Table 8 shows a total of ten statements of the respondents' response regarding feedback seeking. The highest score comes from statement number 4 (I request input or feedback from my tutor because I want to be more capable of finishing a project) with 562 points. While the lowest score can be seen in statement number 8 (I request input or feedback from my tutor, so my friends know that I am a good student) with 249 points.

Table 8 Respondents' Response Regarding Feedback Seeking Variable

Indicator number	% in Likert Scale					Actual Score	Ideal Score
	5	4	3	2	1		
1	42	53	4	1	0	436	500
2	6	15	27	30	22	253	500
3	65	29	3	1	0	452	500
4	65	52	8	2	1	562	500
5	67	22	24	29	18	571	500
6	37	52	14	9	2	455	500
7	65	33	1	0	1	461	500
8	5	16	24	33	22	249	500
9	7	22	24	29	18	271	500
10	23	52	14	9	2	385	500
Total						4095	5000

The total score for the variable of feedback seeking is 4095, which lies in the good category, as shown in the interval range of 1020 – 1260. The continuum line of this variable is shown in Figure 4.

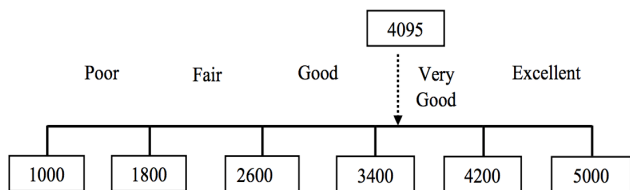


Figure 5 The Continuum Line of Feedback Seeking

The one that must be valued is the importance of feedback for praise. Feedback is also significant to mark the

students who ask the question as smart students. From Table 8, it shows that students feel that they do not need praise for their feedback. It is a good condition because the feel that praise of their work is not important but the process of giving feedback to develop their design is more important. The student statements in the interview also support the above statement.

“My goal is to get feedback so that I can complete the design problems well. Design completion is very important. Practitioner tutor helped me during the discussion, especially about the stages of ideation and design development stage. The practitioner provided a systematic answer and his information brought me closer to the real condition and reality. We know what the real condition it is like.” (Male, 21 years old, student)

“Actually in the process of getting the most important feedback is how to solve the problem. Praise from tutors is not very important.” (Male, 19 years old, student)

Feedback seeking is regularly done in the spoken or written way in this design studio. The content of feedback is generally about standard, product demand, and way of thinking complexity. Feedback is usually conducted in several phases of the studio, especially in an evaluation phase. Feedback seeking depends on individual differences. Also, the quality of workmanship in the studio is influenced by kinds of task and feedback frequency. Feedback seeking is considered good because students are predominantly independent and the campus adopts a student-centered learning process, allowing students to learn on their own and do their design independently or in a group with the tutor's role mainly to provide feedback to ensure good progress for the students' design.

The third is the respondents' response regarding help-seeking variable. Table 9 shows a total of ten statements of the respondents' response regarding help-seeking. The highest score comes from statement number 2 (I get tips about how to finish the project instead of getting the ready answer) with 414 points, while the lowest score can be seen in statement number 9 (Tutor finishes my task instead of just helping me finish on my own) with 237 points.

Table 9 Respondents' Response Regarding Help Seeking Variable

Indicator number	% in Likert Scale					Actual Score	Ideal Score
	5	4	3	2	1		
1	29	39	27	4	1	391	500
2	32	52	15	0	1	414	500
3	1	30	33	27	4	282	500
4	8	23	35	25	12	299	500
5	6	7	33	38	19	252	500
6	5	11	35	30	18	252	500
7	33	56	7	4	0	418	500
8	19	37	28	15	1	358	500
9	3	7	33	38	19	237	500
10	6	11	35	30	18	257	500
Total						3160	5000

As revealed from Table 9, item number 5, 6, 9, and 10 who get low scores, actually it shows a good condition that the tutors give the indirect answer in order to lead students, and must be able to dig information from the students related to problems or difficulties faced by them. The tutors are also expected to provide indirect answers by giving the students advice or ways to solve their problems. It can be seen from the students' statement below.

"Practitioners' tutors do not always provide immediate answers, we are invited to find answers together. Some of the questions asked can direct our answer there." (Male, 22 years old, student)

"The answers from the practitioner's tutors are fun and open ended. I am able to accommodate all aspects of design thinking. Their explanations are fairly advanced and they do not always reject student thinking. (Female, 16 years old, student)

The continuum line of this variable is shown in Figure 6.

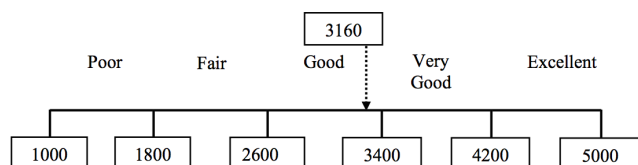


Figure 6 The Continuum Line of Help Seeking

The tutoring process to assist students is regarded to have run well, and needs improvement on the aforementioned efforts which will ultimately improve the outcome quality that is in line with Faraa (2017). The practitioner tutors' role in the design studio in help-seeking is considered good, so that will lead the students to solve the design problems and give ample support and is able to follow through with the problems.

Fourth is the respondents' response regarding behavior learning engagement variable. Table 10 shows that from the total 17 statements of the respondents' response regarding behavior learning engagement, the highest score comes from statement number 15 (I have high hopes to be a designer in the future) with 452 points. While the lowest score can be seen in statement number 7 (I am a student who is active in design-related events in campus) with 320 points. The total score for the variable of help seeking is 3160, which lies in the good category, as shown in the interval range of 2600 – 3400.

Table 10 Respondents' Response Regarding Behaviour Learning Engagement Variable

Indicator number	% in Likert Scale					Actual Score	Ideal Score
	5	4	3	2	1		
1	24	54	20	2	0	400	500
2	39	52	9	0	0	430	500
3	23	57	18	2	0	401	500
4	18	39	30	12	1	361	500

Table 10 Respondents' Response Regarding Behaviour Learning Engagement Variable (Continued)

Indicator number	% in Likert Scale					Actual Score	Ideal Score
	5	4	3	2	1		
5	30	39	28	3	0	396	500
6	39	42	16	3	0	417	500
7	8	30	40	18	4	320	500
8	11	48	34	5	2	361	500
9	26	44	25	5	0	391	500
10	34	37	25	4	0	401	500
11	25	51	17	7	0	394	500
12	21	45	25	6	3	375	500
13	20	54	21	3	2	387	500
14	31	58	7	3	1	415	500
15	54	45	0	1	0	452	500
16	49	47	4	0	0	445	500
17	44	47	7	2	0	433	500
Total						6779	8500

The total score for the variable of behavior learning engagement is 6779, which lies in the good category, as shown in the interval range of 5780 – 7140. The continuum line of this variable is shown in Figure 7.

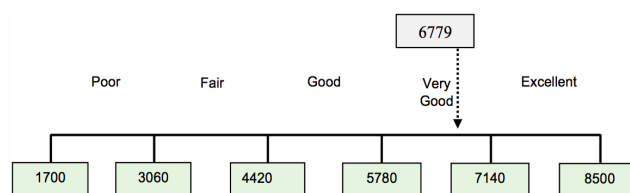


Figure 7 The Continuum Line Behaviour Learning Engagement

Based on the values explained, improvements on values that get low scores are by motivating students' learning, encouraging their participation in design events, engaging in the learning process in the studio, and learning inside and outside the campus. This statement is supported by the students' explanation below.

"Tutor practitioners have plenty of info and opportunities to take us to the real world such as seminars, and field courses to their projects. They also advised us to participate in various design events with other campuses." (Female, 19 years old, student)

In addition, the improvement of learning behavior engagement can be focused on the tutors themselves by improving the focus of the active learning system, participating in more challenging studio activities, and effective communication. Besides that, creating conducive atmosphere is also important in a way to provide a physical and social supportive learning atmosphere and a supportive community. Therefore, students' success can take form through their development, learning achievement, and social skills improvement.

In higher education, the tutoring process is discussed more on its role to tighten students' engagement relationship with a course. This tutoring program will facilitate students to have two-way communication. The role of practitioner tutors in the design studio is considered as good in those four dimensions measured.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of this research shows that students in design studio course feel good about the role of practitioner-tutors, especially in the measured variables, namely learning goal orientation, feedback seeking, help-seeking, and behavior learning engagement. The feedback-seeking is seen as the biggest role a tutor can adopt, which the students generally perceive well. In order to improve the roles of practitioner-tutors, more teaching and learning trainings are needed in the future to provide guidelines in learning goal orientation, feedback seeking, help-seeking, and behavior learning engagement.

Future researches could explore further about students (for instance, students' background and the required privacy and characteristics of tutorials, gender differences in perceiving tutorials, differences in semester, and differences in expected tutorial arrangement), and also the background of the tutors (for example, measurement on the focus of the tutorial, the correlation of a tutorial's experience and competence). Therefore, this research can be viewed as a good start to improve the learning condition in the studio with professional practitioner-tutors.

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