

Passion to Learn Well With Reflections of CGPA and Course Levels: Empirical Evidence

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Passion to learn well (PLW) is important. With limited time and resources, how instructors can pinpoint and prioritize students who need support and encouragement to learn well and achieve the desired class performance. Cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is one acceptable factor in evaluating students' academic performance. This research studied the relationship between PLW and CGPA, and course levels. The study surveys students at an undergraduate Bangkok private university, business school, real estate major. The questionnaire surveys were conducted in November 2021, and employed quantitative methods and descriptive data analysis. The results show that the higher CGPA, the higher the levels of PLW. Students with a CGPA of 2.35 and below reflected the median level of PLW. Students with CGPA above 3.00 reflected PLW at high to the highest levels. Course levels also show a relationship with PLW. The higher the course levels – from junior to senior courses – the higher PLW. Senior courses had a higher proportion of PLW at high level than junior courses. The findings contribute by support with empirical evidence.

Keywords: CGPA, course levels, empirical evidence, learn well, passion

INTRODUCTION

Rational

Passion to learn well is important. Instructors would typically like *all* of their students to learn well and show well-studying performances. Instructors are typically willing to assist all of their students to achieve the courses' goals. However, this willingness is less likely to be achieved because of the instructors' time and energy availability. It is even more difficult for instructors to narrow down which students need encouragement and assistance to learn well. This is especially true for non-participated students in some Asian countries, like in Thailand. Majority of students in Thailand, even those in bachelor's degree levels, are normally shy to speak up for questions/opinions/problems. To simplify matters, not all students in the same classroom would have the same levels of ability/passion/eagerness to make themselves learn well.

Research Questions

A question arises as to how instructors can pinpoint which students instructors should observe, encourage, and give supports to them to learn well. Among many factors, passion in education is one important factor, with support from many research studies, to drive students to learn well. In this aspect, it is important for instructors to know which students have which level of passion, then to point out students who have lesser passion levels to learn well within a classroom. Then instructors can put their effort into

assisting students with a lesser passionate level, hoping that this group of students would improve their eagerness to learn well and show their desire class performance.

To measure students' class performance, cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and grade point average (GPA) are by far acceptable evaluation measures. CGPA and GPA are substantive and measurable attributes of each student: GPA measures each semester's performance, and CGPA measures the overall performance. However, there has been limited investigation into the relationship between student passion to learn well and CGPA and GPA, especially in undergraduate levels. In addition, it is interesting to understand the different levels of passion to learn well in different college levels, for example, junior and senior years.

The objectives of this research were: (a) to study for any similarities or differences of PLW among different levels of college students, and (b) to find out the relationship between cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and the level of passion to learn well (PLW). The scope covers undergraduate degree students in a private university in Thailand. The survey focused on courses in the real estate program of the business school.

Passion in Education

Passion is a strong tendency or desire toward an activity that one likes, puts importance on, and invests time and energy in (Vallerand et al., 2003). The characteristics of a passionate person include dedication, persistence, identification with and love for an activity (JaimeLeon, 2016). Numerous research studies in 'Passion' have been carried out in education areas, in several aspects such as in psychology aspect and teaching-and-learning aspect. In psychology, passion is in two groups: harmonious and obsessive (Vallerand et al., 2003). For harmonious passion, one engages in an activity with one's own free will, tends to be associated with positive characteristics. During obsessive passion, one engages in an activity because of intra-personal or inter-personal pressure (Vallerand, 2008; Vallerand et al., 2003, 2007). So, obsessive passion tends to be associated with negative characteristics (Stoeber et al., 2011). Studies in this area identify many factors and relationships to passion, such as burnout, engagement, satisfaction, dropout intentions, and achievement (Belanger and Ratelle, 2020; Stoeber et al., 2011; Carbonneau et al., 2008; Vallerand et al., 2010; Ariani, 2022). Stoeber (et al., 2011) research findings suggest that passion for studying explains individual differences in students' academic engagement and burnout beyond autonomous and controlled motivation and thus deserves more attention from educational psychology.

Passion in the teaching-and-learning aspect covers both teacher side and student side. Passion is important for teaching and learning because it not only drives teachers to teach, but also pushes students to learn efficiently (George, 2016). For instructors' side, there are studies that examined passion and teaching-and-learning methods. Some topics include: building passion with creative learning through three steps, recognize of problems, value creative learning, and understanding diverse ways of creative learning (Keller-Mathers, 2011); committing and dedicating to student learning (Mart, 2013); to developmental feedback as a teacher's role (Zhao et al., 2021); and to create effective learning environments endeavor to increase learning potentials of their students (Serin, 2017). For students' side: university students' passion for their studies has been previously demonstrated to be important for both their academic performance and their personal well-being (Sverdlik et al., 2022). Zhao (et al., 2021) showed that academic passion has positively related to students' academic engagement, which is a part of explaining the mechanism underlying the relationship between academic passion on college students' academic engagement.

CGPA and GPA

Cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and grade point average (GPA) are one important and acceptable factors in evaluating students' academic performance. There are several research that uses CGPA and GPA as either independent variable or dependent variable with several other factors. Examples among many factors are related to *study efforts* (attendance, time spent on studying) (Obeidat et al., 2012; Yogendra, 2017), *family's background and attitude* (sibling in the same school, parents' education background, and attitude towards kids' education) (Erdem & Arslam, 2007; Cheng et al., 2012), *study skills* (attention, concentration, desire to study, health and strength readiness, study schedule, etc.) (Pepe, 2012),

and *students' profile* (gender and class level). GPA has also been recommended to be used to predict subsequent academic performance instead of some exam scores, such as SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) and ACT (American College Testing) (Becon & Bean, 2006).

Still, there are studies that show no correlation between GPA and some factors of interest. Siles and Vincent (2021) demonstrated that GPA did not correlate to one's ability to learn design skills. They also detailed that GPA was not a significant predictor of total score improvement, but GPA was a significant predictor of post score, when controlled for pre-score. Becon and Bean (2006) stated that GPA was often underused in marketing education research studies.

METHODOLOGY

This research was achieved through quantitative analysis with descriptive statistics for data analysis. The data used was gathered through questionnaire survey sampling. The surveys were conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021. The samplings were students who took real estate major courses at a business school in a Bangkok private university. The surveys were distributed to four-level courses: (no.1) a junior-level first-semester course, (no.2) a junior-level second-semester course, (no.3) a senior-level course, and (no.4) a senior-level internship course. The surveys were done through Google Forms, an online survey administration software.

Data: The surveys were conducted during the first semester of the 2021 academic year. The three main data include students' profiles, especially CGPA, real estate course taking, and the level of passion to learn well (PWL). The question asked about PWL was a five-point rating scale: that is, PWL in 1 to 5 level: "1" is "No to very low passion" to "5" which is "the highest level of passion". The total number of respondents was 81, which were students from many majoring majors of the business school including Real Estate, Marketing, Finance and Banking, Industrial Management and Logistics, and students from the school of art at this university. However, after careful consideration, the data used for the analysis were only the respondents who were in the real estate major. This is because the two surveyed courses, no.3 and no.4, had only students who were in the real estate major. As the analysis should be based on the same background group of students, it was more reasonable to use students who were in a similar major, which was real estate major. Therefore, the total respondents of 81 were screened out to only respondents who were in the real estate major. Then, the total number of data used in the subsequent analysis was 55 respondents, which consists of 7 (junior course, 1st semester), 21 (junior course, 2nd semester), 18 (senior course), and 9 (senior, internship course).

FINDINGS

The results are discussed as in: (1) the Levels of Passion to Learn Well (PWL) in Different Courses Levels and (2) the relationship between cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and the level of passion to learn well (PLW).

The Levels of Passion to Learn Well in Different Courses Levels

This analysis aimed to find any similarities or differences between the level of passion to learn well (PLW) among the respondents in the four-levels courses. Of the four surveyed courses, none of the courses selected PWL level 1 and level 2. Some courses selected PWL level 3. All courses selected PWL level 4 and level 5. Figure 1 shows the survey results with the proportion of PLW of level 3, level 4, and level 5 in each of the four courses.

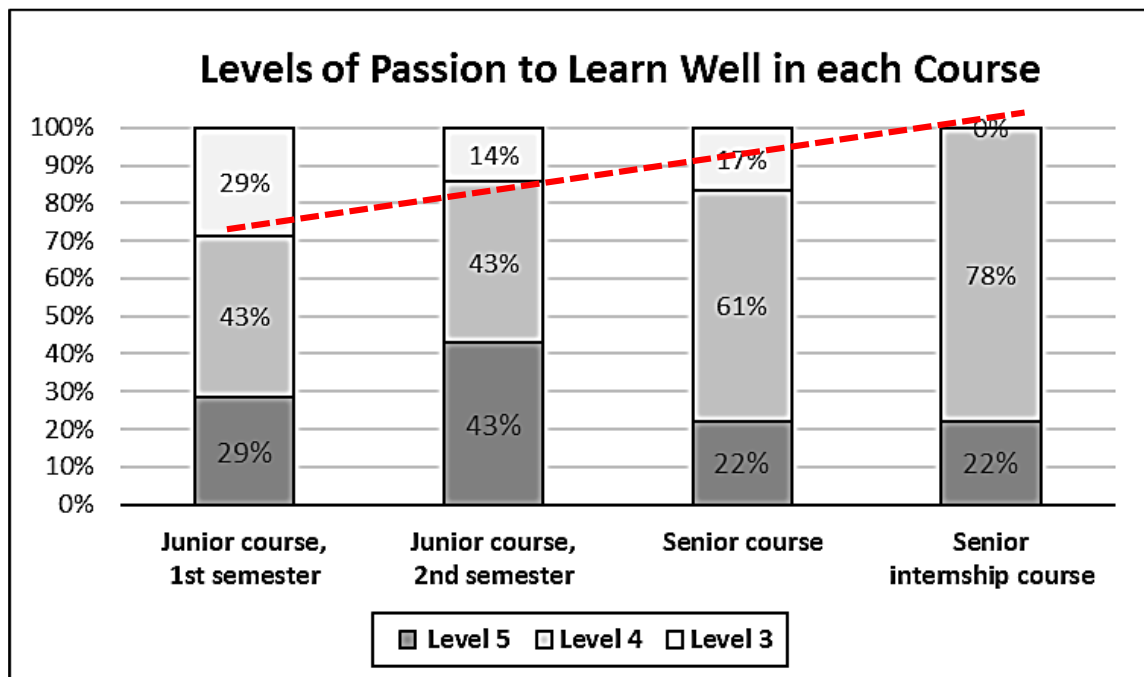
The results shown in Figure 1 are as follows:

- PLW level 3 is in the highest proportion in junior 1st semester course, 29%, the lowest course level among the four surveyed courses. The proportion of PLW level 3 reduces lower in junior 2nd semester course and senior course, 14% and 17%, sequentially. In senior internship course, the most senior course did not select PWL level 3. That is the proportion of PWL level 3

reduced lower with the more senior course. The higher the course, the lower the proportion of PLW level 3.

- PLW level 4 is in the lowest proportion in junior 1st semester course, 43%, as opposed to PLW 3. The proportion of PLW level 4 increases more in three more senior courses: 43%, 61%, and 78%, in the junior 2nd semester course, senior course, and senior intern, ship course sequentially.
- The sum of PLW level 4 and PLW level 5 increases from the lowest to the highest, in the most junior course to the most senior course sequentially. The respondents in the senior internship course showed the most confidence level of passion to learn well.

FIGURE 1
THE PROPORTION OF PLW IN FOUR COURSES



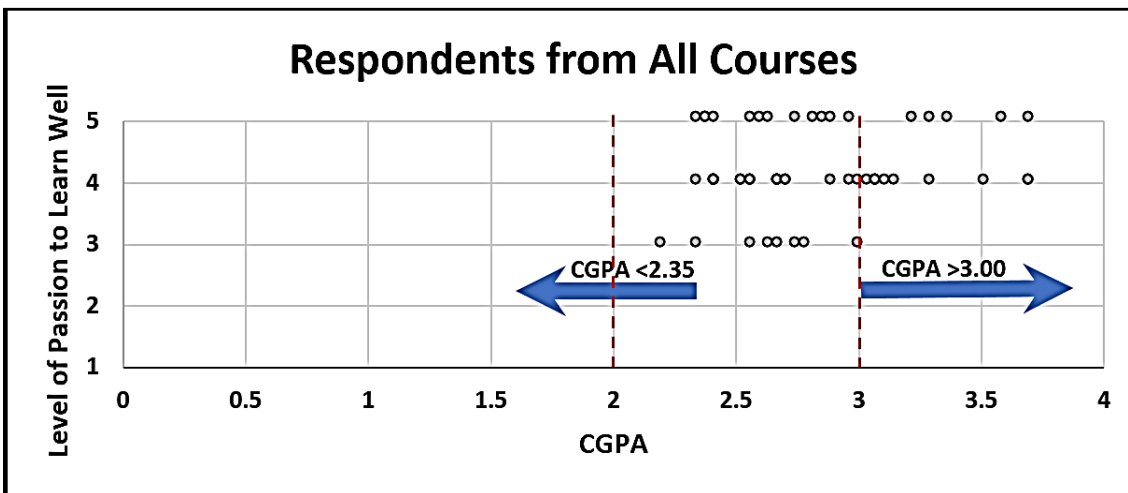
The Relationship Between CGPA and PLW

The second part of the analysis aimed to show the relationship between cumulative grade point average and the level of passion to learn well (PLW). This analysis used the data from the 55 respondents who were real estate majors and studied in the four surveyed courses. Figure 2 shows scatter plot of the data between CGPA and PLW. This plot shows three levels of PLW, level 3 to level 5, because there is no selected PLW level 1 and level 2 as discussed in the earlier section.

The results shown in Figure 2 are as follows:

- In the overall configuration, the minimum CGPA of this group of respondents was 2.20 and the maximum CGPA was 3.71. The respondents with $CGPA \leq 2.35$ had PLW only in level 3. The respondents with CGPA of more than 3.00 had PLW higher than level 3.
- CGPA between 2.00 and 3.00 selected PLW in level 3 to level 5.
- CGPA above 3.00 did not select PLW level 3. This group of respondents selected PLW in higher levels of level 4 and level 5.

FIGURE 2
THE SCATTER PLOT BETWEEN CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND THE
LEVEL OF PASSION TO LEARN WELL



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- In the overall configuration, the minimum CGPA of this group of respondents was 2.20 and the maximum CGPA was 3.71. The respondents with $CGPA \leq 2.35$ had PLW only in level 3. The respondents with CGPA more than 3.00 had PLW higher than level 3.
- CGPA between 2.00 and 3.00 selected PLW in level 3 to level 5.
- CGPA above 3.00 did not select PLW level 3. This group of respondents selected PLW in higher levels of level 4 and level 5.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The results about the differences of PLW in four surveyed courses show that the proportion of PLW level 3 *reduced* lower with the more senior course. However, for the higher PLW level 4 *increased* in, the more senior courses. In addition, the sum of PLW 4 and PLW level 5 *increased* from the lowest to the highest, in the most junior course to the most senior course sequentially. For the results about the relationship between CGPA and PLW, students with CGPA of 2.35 and below selected only PLW level 3. Students with CGPA above 3.00 did not select PLW level 3. They selected PLW in higher levels: level 4 and level 5. The higher the CGPA, the more PLW.

This research results show similarities and differences from the prior kinds of literature. The results show similar trends from slightly different research contexts about hope on GPA and retention. Seirup and Rose (2011) found that high-hope students revealed the greatest overall gain in GPA's. On the other hand, the findings are different from Najmuldeen (2021), which showed that for high school students, the younger learners (first grade) had the highest level of passion for knowledge compared to the second and third grades.

The findings reflect that students with higher GPAs are likelier to have a higher level of passion to learn well. On the other hand, students with lower GPAs are more likely to have a lower level of passion to learn well. The results from the two parts of the analysis seem to be basic common sense. Nevertheless, this research provides valuable empirical evidence that students' passion to learn well has a relationship with their cumulative grade point average.

The results are in line with Jachimowicz (et.al, 2018), which identified passion as a strong feeling toward a personally important value/preference that motivates intentions and behaviors to express that value/preference. To be exact, ones with passion would motivate themselves to behave towards their

intentions, here is 'to learn well'. So, students from this research survey who had high CGPAs, of over 3.0, express their passion to learn well in high levels, PLW level 4 and level 5.

These research results can be possible immediate applications. At the beginning of the semester, instructors should study the CGPA of each student in their class. By knowing students' CGPA can be counted as the first step toward recognizing of problems (Keller-Mathers, 2011). Then instructors should focus their attention on students with lower CGPA and find ways to encourage this weaker academic performance student, even passion is only one factor to support students' performance, as discussed earlier.

However, the limitation of this research is that the scope of the respondents focused on students who were majoring in real estate, a business school in Thailand. Future research should expand the scope to cover a broader background of students. Other many interesting further research topics needed to be done, including conducting why more senior courses, such as internship courses, students had higher PLW, level 4 and level 5; exploring the PLW of probation students, those who have a CGPA lower than 2.00; and conduct qualitative via an in-depth interview with students in different CGPA the reasons to select PLW.

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