

Reasons and Challenges of Former BSED English Students in Shifting to Other Program

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Article History:

Received 2024-09-30

Accepted 2024-12-21

Keywords:

Course shifting

Reason

Challenge

BSED english program

Career decision

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the reasons and challenges faced by former BSED English students who shifted to other programs. The study employed a case study approach, utilizing the Sharan Merriam technique and data triangulation method. Through Interviews with the seven former 1st-year BSED English students enrolled in the first semester, a thematic analysis was utilized to identify recurring patterns and themes. The study identifies reasons and challenges for students' shifting to other programs. The finding reveals that being inspired and influenced by others, as well as being curious about the program and the opportunity it offers, contribute to students' reason to take up BSED English. Challenges encountered include difficulty with the topic and difficulty in speaking English. Students' reasons for shifting are scholarship assistance and the difficulty of the major subject. The study concludes that these varying factors influenced the research participants to enroll in the BSED English program and shift to another program, indicating that it plays a significant role in students' academic journey. This study gives insights into a crucial shift of students that has a significant implication for both students and the institution, as it holds an important role in students' career decision-making.

1. INTRODUCTION

Choosing a major is usually related to a stable job stabilizing one's future income. It highlighted the importance of high school curriculum in college primary choice, which impacts one's career decision. Learning is the dynamic model of choosing a major in a student's career path since it is essential in the context of significant shifting, and many of them shifted courses at the end of the semester (Patnaik et al., 2020). Selecting one's major is a high-stakes decision that shapes students' experiences, learning, and satisfaction in college, as well as their occupation, earnings, and job stability. Additionally, Okesina and Famolu (2022) stated that choosing a career is a crucial life decision, and finding the ideal vocation is necessary to be successful. It is necessary to look for a job that aligns with our values and priorities. Job satisfaction brings a sense of fulfillment and can bring a sense of purpose.

A career is a lifetime initiative for success. It affects a person's personality and flow of income, making it a significant factor in their life since a student's choices significantly impact their life, it is a lifelong process (Zulkifly, 2019). Students highly value the course contents and the benefits of the

course for their future careers. It investigates the factors contributing to students' choice when selecting university courses to better understand student perceptions and attitudes. It stated that students are highly influenced in obtaining a passing grade, career opportunities, the teaching methods and recommendation from significant people.

In shaping one's career, it is better to have a good and well-planned career choice that highly interests the person. It influences their behavior since, as mentioned in the study self-practice, a stable and secure future influences career choices. Still, factors like economic background, personal interest, and family affect our career choices and significantly influence students to reconsider their choices (Ray et al., 2020). As stated by Tengaa (2024), many things affect how well a student performs in school; this includes individual traits, their family, the school environment itself, and the society they live in. It has profound implications for a students' career path, which shapes their choices and opportunities to take.

Foster et al. (2020) state that students who decide to change their course may face similar challenges as they adapt to a new academic environment and expectations. They may also need to manage their time effectively and seek support from peers and online resources. Understanding and support can help facilitate a better student experience and enhance the success of students who decide to shift their courses. Deciding on a college course is a challenge for student because of many influence that may affect his preference. The influence of other people in choosing their courses may help or hinder them to succeed in life (Naparan & Balimbingan, 2020). It is manifested that environmental and personality factors influence most students and are not influenced by opportunity factors.

Various motivational factors and external pressures influence students' views about their future or careers, including parents, teachers, and classmates (Shedge & Tarannum, 2021). Many students look up to their parents for advice because their parents greatly influence their decisions, and their parents' occupations and incomes significantly impact their career path. Additionally, acknowledging financial difficulty prevents them from considering their options and considering the choices their parents made for them (Khatri & Periwal, 2020). It demonstrates that most participants felt their families influenced their career choices. Making rational choices about college courses can be made more accessible by allowing students to experience the career that best suits them by integrating career plans with the curriculum.

Individuals' problem-solving and decision-making abilities may impact career decision-making. These difficulties arise from a need for more knowledge about oneself, one's profession, the decision-making process, and sources of further information. Decision-making difficulties resulting from internal and external conflicts due to inconsistent information are caused by unreliable information (Kirdök & Harman, 2018). This study demonstrates that students' challenges in selecting professional decisions are affected by their trait of having an internal or external locus of control.

Understanding the factors that influence them to reconsider their academic plan is predetermined by the choice of subject combination with their desired courses. Making the right career choices is a complex process driven by factors such as making students think about their future careers. Still, such difficulties, challenges, and influences hinder them from shifting courses and considering career choices. Career choice affects the well-being of a person who is unable to make appropriate decisions because there are barriers and various factors that need to be considered process (Akpochafo, 2020). Some students quickly make career decisions, while others need help continuing the process.

Students may experience grade transitions due to a variety of academic challenges (Naparan et al., 2024). These could include difficulty in significant subjects, peer influence, personal preference, and external factors like expectations from family or the community (Sadjail et al., 2022). These issues may result in a decline in learning, leading students to reconsider their academic plans and admission to different courses (Olivar & Naparan, 2023). The reasons behind course shifting among English language learners are just as varied. As stated by Denice (2020), the pathways taken by college students have become so complex and varied that what we think of as "the traditional pathway to a bachelor's degree characterizes the experience of a minority of students."

BSED English Program is a tool for obtaining a stable and decent job. Graduates from this program are equipped and mentored correctly, making them flexible and adaptable to any career path they choose (Arbis et al., 2023). The program opens new doors of opportunities and hone their knowledge and skills, enabling them to possess such abilities to succeed in their chosen field (Libued, 2017). BSED English Program assists graduates in becoming competent in teaching, making them proficient in this field.

The BSED English program experienced a significant decrease in student enrollment from the first to the second semesters. Initially, the program had 42 students enrolled, but by the second semester, this number had dropped to 21. Half of the students who started in the BSED English program did not continue in the second semester. Seven (7) students from the BSED English program had shifted to other programs, and the remaining students dropped out.

This study only focuses on the reasons and challenges of former BSED Students shifting to another program through self-discovery and decision-making. It is identified that only the BSED English program experienced a significant decrease in enrolment in the following semester. Anchored on Vroom's Expectancy Theory that emphasizes students' performance can be compared to their expectations to meet their academic goals; if they are not meeting those goals because they find certain activities or subjects difficult, they may think about shifting to a different course. It highlights that actions are determined by expectations and the instrumentality you use to achieve your objectives.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to answer the central question, "What are the reasons and challenges of Former BSED English Students in shifting to other program?" With this, three (3) statements of the problem are provided as follows: (1) What made the student decide to enroll in the BSED English program? ;(2) What challenges encountered by the students during the BSED English program? ;(3) Why students decide to shift to another course?

2. METHODS

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. In particular, the study utilized Sharan Merriam (1998), a case study technique and data triangulation focusing on a specific case or phenomenon to discover new information to analyze the gathered data. The researchers used this case study technique to understand the reasons and challenges of the former BSED English students who have shifted to another program. Using this method, researchers identified the reasons behind course shifting among the former BSED English students. Furthermore, Merriam's technique of categorizing data was also utilized to identify patterns and themes, which allows researchers to understand the challenges that the students face during this transition and provide a comprehensive view of the factors behind course shifting. The Researchers gathered data through interviews, observation, and data to obtain deeper insights into the participants' experiences; this method

encourages researchers to look up topics that come up throughout the data-gathering process through interviews.

A purposive sampling method was employed to select Seven (7) students from the BSED English program who have shifted to other programs. There was an assigned code name to each participants to ensure confidentiality in this study. These students were chosen based on the decreasing level of enrolment in the second semester. In this institution, the English program is known to be the most populated within the BSED program. In addition to the primary participants, three peers and one family member were included to offer supporting information to understand the broader context of shifting.

The study used interview guide questions as the main instruments in this study. The researchers prepared an informed consent and had it signed and approved by the dean. The researchers provided a letter to the participants stating their involvement in the study. To minimize interruption to the participants' schedules, the researchers interviewed them during the allotted free time of the participants. They were given enough time to prepare for the interview and ponder questions. To prevent coercion, the interviewers were allowed to provide informed consent to the participants, and the interviewers will be recorded for reference.

The gathered data were subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes involving multiple readings of the transcriptions. The identified themes were analyzed based on the context of existing literature on the reasons and challenges of students in shifting to other programs, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors behind course shifting. Furthermore, Merriam's technique of categorizing data was also utilized to identify patterns and themes based on the data. The gathered data was synthesized into coherent narratives supported by direct quotations from the participant's responses to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the findings. This approach provides an in-depth understanding of the reasons and challenges of former BSED English Students in shifting to other programs.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Student's reasons to decide on taking up BSED English

Several subcategories emerged based on the responses provided by the participants during the interview on their decisions on why they enroll in the BSED English program. These subcategories are to be *inspired by others, parents' decisions, curiosity about the program, and opportunities abroad*.

Inspired by others. The participants was urged to enrol in this program because of her previous teacher in Senior High School which became the factor she was inspired to chose this program. It became a state of motivation that drives the participants to put that inspiration into practice. As stated by Chang (2022) it is a state of energy that motivates people to see their potential in a particular domain. It shows that some students were inspired by the people that surround them. The research participants shared:

One of the factors that made me decide to enroll in this program is my English teacher in Senior High School because she is my idol. -RP4

I was inspired by Aunt who is also a teacher. -RP1

The friend also supported the response of the research participant by giving enough proof. Below is the response:

It influenced and convinced her very much that it made her decide to enroll in this program. -FP3

Based on the participant's responses students are more likely be inspired by aspiring individual who had a significant contribution in their lives. The desire to learn can be influenced by various factors, often resulting in someone's agreement with the idea. Teacher's influence helps develop social virtues, knowledge, and insights that contribute to students' decision-making (Descals-Tomas et al., 2021). This influence is also expected to motivate students to demonstrate perseverance in learning, as a teacher's influence shapes students' attitudes toward learning by creating a supportive and engaging learning environment where students can thrive and be motivated to learn.

Parent's decision. This suggests that parents significantly influence their children's career and decision-making processes. Parents often influence the career choices and the decision-making processes of their children in very major ways. They shape the ambitions and values of their children and make decisions for their future (Por et al., 2024). The influence of the parents has made real the importance to students decision making to their chosen path to pursue. The research participants shared:

The reason why I decided to enroll in the English Program is because of my parents. -RP2

I decided to enrol in the BSED English program is because of my parents. -RP5

I decided to enroll in this program because my parents want this and they want me to be an English teacher someday. -RP7

Even their friend mentioned that there are many reasons why his classmates decided to enroll in the BSED English Program. Below is their friend's response.

There are several reasons why my classmates choose the BSED English Program. First, their parents decide it for them. -FP1

As stated by Nawabi (2019), parents have a significant influence on their children's choices, and their perceptions play a significant role in their children's lives, impacting their personal, academic, and career lives. This shows that the student chooses this program because of the influence their parents have in their lives. A student's academic success is influenced by multiple factors including parents decision, school-related and societal factors which create a greater impact on the students academic achievement (Tengaa, 2024). It shows that their parent's plays a major role in their decision-making which often resulted to an agreement of one's career prospect. The participant's responses clearly shows that their parents has a direct influence in their career aspirations.

Curiosity about the Program. Guided by curiosity, the participants engage in lifelong exploration, cope with change, and realize their full potential in pursuit of personal and professional development. As stated by Shinn et al, (2024), curiosity is an integral part of learning as it stimulate students' interest and increased students level of attainment. They chose this program because they were curious of the things they could learned during the program. It is one of the factors why students chose to enrol to this programs that made them determined to learn. The research participants shared:

I decided to enrol in this program because I want to enhance my knowledge in English since our teacher was just teaching English lightly. That's why I enrolled with the thought that it is easy. I also want to broaden my knowledge. -RP6

I want to learn the proper usage of words in a sentence knowing that grammar has its rules. -RP4

The reason why I decided to enroll in an English program is to challenge myself because I have been very curious since elementary school since English is also one of my weakness. -RP3

The friends were also asked what made the student enroll in the BSED English program. Below are some of their responses:

My classmate thought that English is easy, but along the way, they proved that studying English is difficult, as you need to understand the proper usage of words in a sentence. -FP2

My friend decided to enroll in the BSED English Program because she knows that this program will give her the skills she needs to teach English in high schools. -FP3

Based on the participants' responses, they decided to enroll in the English program because they wanted to become proficient in English. Learning English became the gateway to knowledge and opportunities. However, becoming proficient in the language requires consistent practice. Many students need help learning English, especially if they were not exposed to such a language during their primary years. As Nishanthi (2018) states, learning English is learning the basics since it is the essential step to becoming proficient in such a language since it serves as a medium of communication and gives students the opportunity to improve career prospects in the global job market.

Opportunities abroad. Seeking opportunities in a foreign country for a better quality of life became a common decision as they found international opportunities more practical (Cahilog et al., 2023). It became one of the factor why students chose to enrol in the program to seek career opportunities abroad for better quality of life. As Macapagong et al. (2023) state, working in another country is an attractive career option for those who seek better job opportunities. This is also to acquire additional skills and experiences that contribute to their professional development. The research participants shared:

There will be a lot of opportunities lining up if I choose this course in the future where I will be able to be an ESL Teacher like in 51talk or become an English teacher abroad. -RP2

Choosing this program is for practicality and also to work abroad because being an English teacher is easy, for you to work abroad because this program is in demand. -RP1

The English program is a practical program that enables you to work abroad because from what I have seen it is in demand. -RP3

One of the reasons why I enrolled is because of the opportunity abroad; it is useful since it is already exposed, especially the English language. -RP6

This is in demand because you can be a call center agent and work in 51talk that teach foreign people. -RP4

Many opportunity will await you, one of this is you can be an ESL teacher which is really one my passion. -RP5

As mentioned, students choose to enrol in the BSED English program due to its potential opportunities. They believe that selecting this program can improve their career prospects and widen their experience. They view this program as a pathway towards job opportunities and for acquiring practical skills necessary for finding a suitable and respectable job in the industry.

The nature of the job market in the industry has been a great blast in finding a job. The emphasis on practical and specialized work bridges the gap between academic settings and real-world demands. English Education programs initially prepare individuals for the opportunities and demands of the industry (Lasekan, 2019).

The findings of the study align with Vroom's Expectancy Theory by Van and Thierry (1996), which states that your actions are determined by your expectations and the instrumentality you use to achieve your objectives. It is based on your value on a certain expectation for better career prospects and personal satisfaction. In other words, the students set a specific expectation that if they enroll in the BSED English program, there will be a lot of opportunities lining up.

Challenges encountered by the students during the BSED English program

The participants provided the following responses about their challenges during the BSED English program, and two subcategories emerged. These subcategories are *difficulty of the topic* and *difficulty in speaking English*.

Difficulty of the topic. It became a challenged for the participants because most of them mentioned that they experienced difficulty during the BSED English program. Learning the topic has been a major challenged that affects students motivation to learn and engaged in the lesson. Nicchiotti, B., & Spagnolo, C. (2024) states that the perceived difficulty of students refers to the achievement achieved by students. The research participants shared:

I find our last topic in syntax difficult. -RP6

My big challenge in this program is our topic, but at first, everything was bearable, only when our subject became even more difficult, which made it more difficult for me to stay in the program. - RP2

During the English program, learning phonetics was a challenge to me, especially syntax, because of this I tend to procrastinate and skip classes. -RP4

Due to various activities and discussions I missed, I struggled to understand our topic, which is a challenged to me. -RP3

Based on my experience, syntax was difficult during our finals, which challenged me. -RP5

The friend was also asked about the student's challenges during the BSED English program. Below is the friend's response:

One common problem that my classmates experienced during the BSED English Program is the difficulty of the subject and some unfamiliar words that are used in a sentence. -FP1

I think the common problem that they usually encounter is the difficulty of the major subject, especially the lesson. -FP1

"It is a challenge for her especially since I noticed that she struggled during our final topic the syntax. -FP3

Based on the responses experiencing difficulty while learning the subject is a common challenge that students may encounter during their academic journey. It directly impacts the student's performance, reflecting on their academic achievement. Difficulty on the topic is part of the learning process as it often raises emotional responses, as stated by Lodge et al. (2018). Students may lose interest in the subject due to the challenges they encounter, which makes them unmotivated to learn (Reyna et al., 2023). This shows that the students became uninterested in the program after experiencing such difficulties in their subject.

Difficulty in speaking English. It is a form of difficulty that hinders the person from effectively communicating his thoughts, feelings, and opinions. It can be frustrating to not pronounce the word correctly and having the fear of making mistakes (Nguyen, 2024). It is one of the challenges that the participants experienced during the program which unable them to express themselves clearly. The research participants shared:

During reportings and oral recitation, I often stutter when speaking English. -RP1

The challenges I encountered when I was an English major was speaking English fluently because I tend to stutter. -RP7

I also struggle during oral recitation because I often stutter when speaking English fluently, that's why I consider shifting. -RP3

The family members were also asked about the challenges encountered during the BSED English program. The family member stated:

As what I have observed she struggled during their reportings because I noticed when she was practicing in her room she often stutter while explaining because she is not that fluent in English. -FM

Speaking is a skill that requires conveying information and expressing oneself confidently. However, some research participants struggle to express their thoughts, often experiencing difficulty and stuttering. Normawati et al. (2023) argue that speaking is an active skill that uses language to convey meanings, ideas, and opinions. The study suggests that the fear of speaking can hinder personal and academic growth.

Moreover, many participants struggle to express their thoughts verbally as they often stutter. This difficulty decreases students' motivation to learn as they believe certain circumstances define their inability to speak English (Villegas et al., 2023). The study's findings reveal that a person's value of a particular outcome may be influenced by such circumstances, as portrayed in Vroom's expectancy Theory. This shows that if the students perceive the outcome as desirable, they will continue valuing it. However, if they encounter difficulties, they may re-evaluate the value they place on that particular outcome and lose their motivation to learn.

Student's reasons for shifting to another course

The participants provided the following responses about why students shift to another course. Two subcategories emerged: *Due to Scholarship Assistance and Difficulty of the Major Subject*.

Due to scholarship assistance. The participant chooses to shift to another program because the English program was not on the list of programs covered in the scholarship. CHED is a program that helps students finish their education and offers financial support to students from low-income to overcome economic challenges, as stated by Berlanga et al. (2022). The program does not only lighten the financial burden but also gives hope, motivation, and a feeling of possibility to the students as it provides a way through which they can achieve their academic and personal goals.

Based on the responses of the research participants on student's reason in shifting to another program. The participants shared:

My only reason why I decided to shift to another course which forced me is my scholarship because CHED does not support the English program. -RP1

The family members were also asked about the reasons why the student shifted to another course. The family member stated:

One of the reason why my child shifted is her scholarship that's why when her aunt told her to apply for CHED she do it immediately without a second thought. -FM

Based on the response educational assistance plays a significant role for students who experience financial loss. It serves as a support for their education without the burden of financial constraints. It is essential to provide a supportive environment for students as it is one of the fundamental rights of humans. This shows that it affects the students' decision-making, leading to reconsidering their choices or plans. The findings reveal that the student reconsiders her choice to secure the scholarship.

Difficulty of the Major Subject. It is seen as a major obstacle to the student's academic performance which became the reason why students shifted from this program. Students dealing with the challenges of a major subject may be faced with difficulties that test their determination to stay in the program. Cuff (2017) stated, subject difficulty significantly affects the student's performance and motivation to learn the subject.

One of the most common responses of the research participants was about students' reasons for shifting to another program. The participants shared:

My reason for deciding to change my program is the difficulty of the lesson in our major subject specifically the syntax which urged me to shift. -RP2

One reason why I decided to change my program is the difficulty of the lesson in our major subject, which is the syntax, especially in using words in a sentence. -RP3

The reason why I changed my program is the difficulty of the lesson in our major subject, syntax, and phonetics which is the factor why I shifted. -RP4

The reason why I shifted is the syntax because it was so difficult for me, especially in the branches part that made me feel dizzy. -RP5

The difficulty of the syntax made me realize that English is not for me, it affect me personally that's why I decided to shift. In addition, my skills in dancing is useful in PE. -RP6

Actually, I wasn't completely sure about taking this program since I did not want it because when I encountered syntax, I said to myself that I wanted to shift. -RP7

The friends of the students were also asked about the reasons why students shifted to another course. Below are the responses:

Their reasons on why they shifted a program is the difficulty of the subject, by not mastering the basic (noun, pronoun, adverb, adjective, etc. -FP1

Some of their reasons on why they decided to change their program is the difficulty of the subject which push them to lost interest in learning it. -FP2

Encountering difficulty in the major subject is a common struggle that students often experience. This difficult subject proves to be challenging and demanding, showing that you should take it with effort as the major subject aligns with the student's career goals and career development. This explains why students encounter major setbacks in their learning journey, which push them to shift to another program.

It shows how students lose interest in their previous program after encountering such difficulties, which is emphasized in Vroom's Expectancy Theory (Van and Thierry, 1996), that the outcome is predetermined by the value you place on it. It became the driver of why students tend to reconsider their decision. It is proven that former BSED English student reconsiders their choice because they lose interest after experiencing difficulties in the subject.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the summary of findings, the researchers concluded that the varying factors influenced the research participants from enrolling in the BSED English program to shifting to another program, indicating that the varying factors have a significant influence on students' academic journey. The researchers were able to determine the reason why students decided to enroll in the BSED English program.

The study only focuses on the 1st-year former BSED English students within the College of Teachers, Education, Arts, and Sciences. Due to this limited scope, the findings undermine the generalizability of its conclusion which concerned about the study's being transferable to students in varying academic years within the department. The exclusion of these programs suggest future researchers to have a more comprehensive analysis of the shifting behaviors of the students in different programs.

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