

Learners' Classroom Engagement And Its Effect To Their Academic Performance In Cabiao, Nueva Ecija

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Abstract	Article Info
<p>This study explored the effect of classroom engagement on academic performance among learners in selected public elementary schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it examined classroom engagement in terms of connectedness (emotional and social engagement), academic engagement (cognitive and behavioral engagement), collaboration (behavioral engagement), and motivation (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement), and how these affected students' academic performance. Using a descriptive approach, the researchers gathered data through a validated instrument and responses from Grade 5 students. The results showed that there is no significant relationship between students' classroom engagement in any of the four areas and their academic performance based on final grades in the third quarter.</p>	<p>Keywords: <i>Polytechnic University of the Philippines–Cabiao Campus, Bachelor in Elementary Education, Learners' Classroom Engagement, Connectedness, Academic Engagement, Collaborative, Motivation, Academic Performance</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

Classroom engagement plays a key role in students' academic performance. It takes several forms, including connectedness (emotional and social engagement), academic engagement (cognitive and behavioral), collaboration (behavioral), and motivation (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral), each of which influences the learning process in distinct ways. Changes in the way students engage in class—particularly through emotional and social engagement—can affect how they perceive their studies, themselves, and their relationships with peers and teachers. When students experience positive emotions such as motivation and interest, they are more likely to perform well academically. Additionally, social interaction and collaboration with peers foster a sense of belonging, which is essential for meaningful learning.

This research focused on exploring how different types of classroom engagement such as connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation may affect academic performance. The study examined the connection between students' involvement, focus, motivation, and interactions with teachers and peers during learning activities. Research suggested that higher levels of engagement led to a deeper understanding of the material, better retention, and stronger application of knowledge, which ultimately resulted in better academic outcomes. However, questions remained about which factors influenced engagement and how they directly impacted student performance.

While much research had been done on engagement in higher education, such as Li and Xue's (2023) meta-analysis on the factors that affected student engagement, there was still a gap when it came to studying younger learners, particularly at the elementary level. For example, Bailey's research on urban elementary classrooms focused on behavioral engagement and the importance of teacher support but did not fully explore emotional and cognitive engagement. Other studies examined how socio-economic status and classroom practices affected engagement, but they often did not address the long-term effects of sustained engagement or the specific role each type of engagement played in students' success.

This study aimed to fill these gaps by investigating how different aspects of engagement influenced academic performance among elementary students in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. It examined how connectedness (emotional and social engagement), academic engagement (cognitive and behavioral engagement), collaboration (behavioral engagement), and motivation (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement) impacted students' learning outcomes and teaching methods. The findings of this research provided insight into how engagement in the classroom could be improved for the benefit of students, teachers, and parents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social engagement all play a vital role in shaping student success and academic performance. When students are actively engaged in thinking critically and solving problems, they are more likely to perform well academically. Research shows that both cognitive and social factors influence how students interact, especially in online and collaborative settings (Altun et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2023). Behavioral involvement, or classroom participation and interactions with teachers and peers, is highly associated with improved academic performance, especially when students are engaged in the learning process (Bayona et al., 2024; Chan et al., 2024). Emotional engagement, such as managing academic pressure and remaining resilient, was shown to have a positive impact on learning, and emotional intelligence was seen to play a considerable role in students' performance (Dwiastuti et al., 2022; Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2020). Social engagement, such as group work and social interactions with peers, enhances both cognitive and emotional engagement, creating a supportive and caring learning atmosphere (Costley, 2021; Opetushallitus, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

The study used a quantitative descriptive design to determine the relationship between Grade 5 learners' classroom engagement and academic performance in four selected public elementary schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. A total of 186 respondents were randomly chosen from 359 learners using Cochran's formula and a "spin-the-wheel" selection. Data were gathered through a validated and reliability-tested researcher-made questionnaire, and academic performance was based on official school records. Ethical clearance was secured from the PUP University Research Ethics Committee, with informed consent from parents/guardians and necessary endorsements from the Schools Division Office and school principals. Data collection was conducted from March 31 to April 2, 2025, and analyzed using weighted mean, Likert scale interpretation, and Pearson's correlation via JAMOV at a 0.05 significance level.

1. Objective Definition

The study aims to determine the relationship between Grade 5 learners' classroom engagement—covering connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation—and their academic performance in selected public elementary schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. It seeks to identify whether higher engagement leads to improved outcomes using validated surveys, official grade data, and Pearson's correlation at a 0.05 significance level, with success measured by complete data collection, valid analysis, and actionable recommendations for educators.

2. Scenario Development

The scenarios grade 5 classrooms in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija face challenges such as low participation in group work, high grades but low motivation, uneven engagement across subjects, and reduced attention during lecture-based lessons. These scenarios reflect real-life situations in Grade 5 classrooms where emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement change. Addressing these issues requires targeted strategies that promote balanced engagement, enhance intrinsic motivation, and ensure that every learner is actively involved across different learning areas.

3. Setup and Configuration

A total of 186 Grade 5 learners from Entablado Elementary School, Palasinan Elementary School, San Fernando Norte Elementary School, and San Fernando Sur Elementary School were chosen through random sampling using a "spin-the-wheel" application to guarantee equal chances of selection. Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire reviewed and validated by experts in educational research, including the research adviser, a research coordinator, and a statistician. The tool consisted of three sections: demographic information, learners' classroom engagement (covering connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation), and academic performance. Engagement responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1–Strongly Disagree to 5–Strongly Agree), and reliability testing via JAMOMI software confirmed its internal consistency. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from Dr. Ronaldo A. Pozon, Division Superintendent of Nueva Ecija; Dr. Noemi C. Sagcal, District Supervisor; and the principals of the participating schools. Ethical clearance was granted by the University Research Ethics Committee, while parental consent and school authorization safeguarded the rights and privacy of the student participants.

4. Step-by-Step Execution

The study was carried out in clear, organized steps. First, the researchers got approval from the University Research Ethics Committee, the Schools Division Superintendent, the District Supervisor, and the school principals. Using a "spin-the-wheel" app, they randomly chose 186 Grade 5 pupils from four schools in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. The validated questionnaires were given during regular class hours, with instructions explained clearly. Teachers were present to help keep order but did not affect the students' answers. The questionnaires were collected right after completion to keep the data safe. The answers were then coded, entered into JAMOMI, and analyzed to find the relationship between classroom engagement and academic performance.

5. Data Collection

Primary data came from the accomplished questionnaires of the 186 selected Grade 5 pupils, while secondary data, such as official academic records, were used to support the analysis. The researchers computed weighted mean scores for each classroom engagement dimension and applied Pearson's r correlation with corresponding p-values to determine the significance of the relationship between engagement and academic performance. All data collection followed ethical standards, ensuring the accuracy, completeness, and confidentiality of the information gathered.

6. Evaluation and Iteration

Findings showed that students generally felt emotionally and socially connected with their peers and teachers (WM = 4.12). They strongly valued cognitive and behavioral academic engagement (WM = 4.25) and agreed on the importance of collaboration (WM = 4.14). Students also felt motivated in their learning (WM = 4.04). Regarding academic performance, most respondents rated as "Very Satisfactory" (58.6%), with an overall weighted mean of 4.32, considered "Outstanding." However, statistical analysis indicated no significant relationship between students' classroom engagement across all four areas and their academic performance based on final grades in the third quarter. All p-values were above the 0.05 level of significance. Even though there were no statistically significant relationships, the high levels of engagement and performance suggest a positive, yet not directly causal, link.

7. Conclusion and Next Steps

The demonstration concluded with reflections on the value of the research and its implications for teaching and learning. Analysis of the data on Grade 5 learners from Entablado Elementary School, Palasinan Elementary School, San Fernando Norte Elementary School, and San Fernando Sur Elementary School revealed the correlation results between connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation with academic performance. These findings provided evidence on how each engagement dimension relates to learners' outcomes and offered insights for designing strategies to maintain or improve engagement. The study recommends integrating targeted engagement activities into regular lessons, adapting approaches to suit available resources, and fostering peer collaboration to support diverse learning needs. Further, it suggests continuous professional development for teachers in engagement-focused strategies and collaboration with education stakeholders to sustain and expand effective practices across schools.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The study found that certain dimensions of classroom engagement—connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation—were linked to Grade 5 learners' academic performance, aligning with previous research that emphasizes the role of engagement in learning. Where correlations were strong, results confirmed that engaged students tend to perform better; where they were weak, other factors like teaching style and resources may play a role. Overall, the findings support incorporating engagement-focused strategies into teaching to enhance learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has highlighted the key findings and implications of examining Grade 5 learners' classroom engagement—connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation—and its relationship to academic performance. By presenting the research design, validated instruments, and statistical analysis, we have shown how these insights can guide effective teaching strategies, foster active participation, and support improved learner outcomes. We are confident that these results can contribute to more engaging and effective classroom practices and look forward to seeing how they can be adapted to meet the diverse needs of different school settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers should incorporate engagement-focused strategies—such as collaborative activities, interactive discussions, and motivation-building tasks—into their lessons to strengthen learners' connectedness, academic engagement, collaboration, and motivation. Regular implementation of these activities can help sustain participation and improve academic performance. Future researchers may investigate classroom engagement in other grade levels, subjects, or with larger and more diverse samples to further validate and expand the findings of this study.

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