A Proposed Action Plan for the Improvement of

Students' School Engagement

Ma. Elena R. Guanzon* Inero V. Ancho[1]**

ABSTRACT

Student engagement to school is vital in improving the country's quality of education. The concern of revitalizing the engagement strategies was aimed to address by forwarding an action plan. Descriptive method of research study was conducted on 200 students and 45 teachers from 5 public elementary schools in the Division of Quezon City, Philippines. The study first explored the student engagement levels to assess the status. Results showed that the overall engagement of the students were average. However, some points had to be addressed such as the imbalance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Regarding reading, extra-curricular, and reinforcing the student-family-community collaboration were among the top teacher strategies. With the motivation of providing holistic engagement, the action plan was created to concentrate on three focus areas. It was intended to address inclusivity to stimulate autonomous learning abilities, and to intensify involvement to school.

[1]*Corresponding author: ancho.iv@pnu.edu.ph*

College of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Research Philippine Normal University

**Assistant Professor, College of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Research Philippine Normal University*

Introduction

Education is one of the foundations of development of the country. It is essential in Philippine political, economic, social, and cultural life as evidenced by its being the highest budgetary priority of our government. Despite the budget prioritization, Philippine education has been pressured with issues. One of these challenges that need to be resolved is the dropout rate. Although this matter has improved lately, still the educational system should continuously strive to entirely eradicate this problem. In fact, Philippine Education for All 2015 Plan has been established by the Department of Education to ensure that every Filipino achieves functional literacy. Nonetheless, the efforts of DepEd to solve these challenges of pupils at risk of disengagement from school seem to be insufficient as there are still out-of-school youth in communities.

In line with the objectives of Education for All (EFA) 2015 and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2015, this study aimed to address the issues of students' school engagement as early as possible to attain target zero dropout rate and help at-risk pupils from dropping out of school by exploring the students' school engagement dimensions from students' perspective and by forwarding interventions that may be done by our educators in their schools. School engagement is essential to children's success as learners. Students' school engagement involves students' cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses to in-class and out-of-class activities. Upon addressing the concerns on our current methods and upon informing the schools of the appropriate strategies that reinforce engagement, the issue on dropout rates will most likely be addressed as this effect is intertwined with the enhancement of students' school engagement.

Students' School Engagement

The study of students' school engagement involves a lot of complexities. According to Gallup (as cited in [1]), school engagement is an individual's interest in learning environment that influences his behavior and academic performance. It entails the favorable behaviors of students towards school environment [2].

Fredricks et al. [3] identified three dimensions to student engagement. First, behavioral engagement pertains to how students would comply with norms, how students participate in both school's academic and social aspects, how students demonstrate negative behaviors, such as truancy, behaving disruptively or being withdrawn in the classroom, and positive behaviors like good attendance, following school rules and being involved in learning. Second, emotional engagement refers to the reactions and emotions that affect students towards their school works, people at school, and school environment. Lastly, cognitive engagement deals with the investment of students in learning to the point wherein they would seek to go beyond the academic requirements.

The knowledge on these three dimensions or levels of student engagement—namely the cognitive, affective emotional and behavioral engagement—are necessary for school administrators to consider since they serve as the important pillars of their respective institutions and as the guiding light that will lead the whole student and faculty bodies to progress. Expertise on this area enables administrators and school managers to create suitable dropout prevention programs and engagement plans for the students [4]. As what Wang and Peck [5] argue, these dimensions

of student engagement impact the student's conception of school climate and their drive for academic achievement; thus, it is an imperative that the school administrators be aware and well-versed on this area.

Research Problem

This study intended to probe on forging strategies and plans of action that would foster student engagement and, subsequently, iron out the matter of the dropout occurrences. The students' level of engagement was to be determined and the teachers' insights on the various engagement strategies were to be analyzed. The findings of the study would be the basis for forwarding inputs to instructional planning. This research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the students' level of school engagement in terms of the following dimensions:

    1.1 cognitive engagement?

    1.2 affective emotional engagement?

    1.3 behavioral engagement?

2. How do the selected school participants promote student engagement?

3. What action plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Conceptual Framework

Finn's Participation-Identification Model/Theory (as cited in [6]) focuses on behavioral (participation) and emotional (identification) dimensions. It specifies a developmental order that begins with classroom performance rewards and pupils' identification with school, which, in turn, also leads to pupils' active classroom and school participation. Participation constitutes active behavior in the classroom, curricular and extracurricular activities. Identification consists of the feeling of school belongingness and realization of the importance of academic learning. Student's lack of participation may lead to non-identification and eventually resulting to dropping out of school.

Self-Determination Theory establishes on motivation, personality and optimal functioning [7]. Intrinsic motivation concentrates on behavior that arises from within the person or is driven by internal rewards which is naturally satisfying to him. Extrinsic behavior refers to behavior that arises from outside the person or driven by external rewards such as money, fame and praise.

The concept of this study is centered on the interconnection of the students' school engagement dimensions and its impact on the establishment of engagement strategies and interventions, as shown in Figure 1. Knowing the indicators of engagement allow educators to craft the appropriate measures for engaging students.
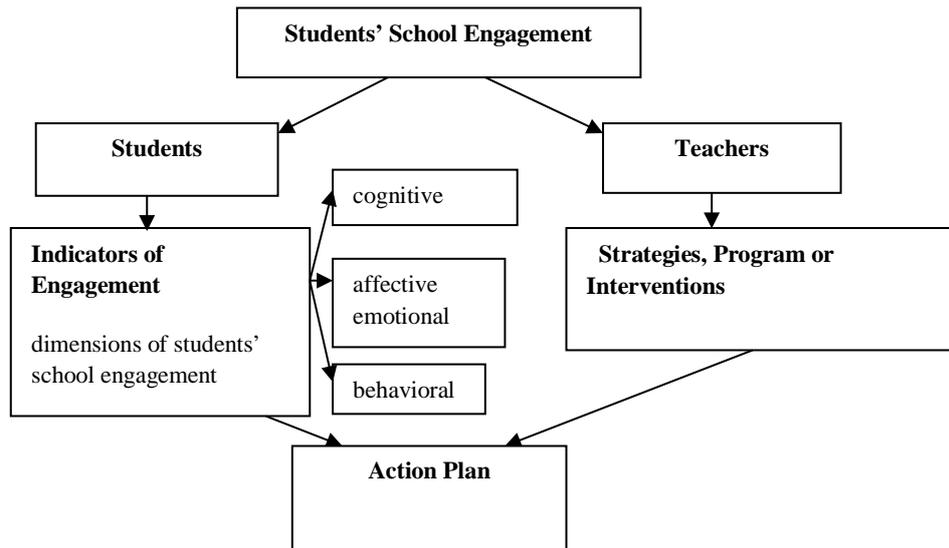
Figure1 Conceptual framework of the study.

Methodology

Research Design and Data Collection

This study utilized the descriptive method of research. The data and information were then utilized to create the suitable strategies based from the analysis of the data. A request was sent to the Schools Division superintendent that was then forwarded to school principals. Consent forms and questionnaires were distributed to the participants of the study. The researchers made use of a survey questionnaire, tallied the results and used the data for the research study.

Sampling and Participants

Purposive sampling was the sampling strategy employed. The sample participants were 45 teachers from Grades I to VI and 200 students from Grades IV and V in the elementary level in 5 public schools in the Division of Quezon City. To encompass students with different personalities and background, the middle class section either in Grade IV or V in each of the five schools was selected as student participants. The five school participants were chosen depending on their number of their student enrollment. One school had the largest number of enrollment in the past five years, from school years 2011 to 2016. The other four schools, on the other hand, were chosen because their enrollment figures seemed to be the most frequent number of enrollment among the schools in the Division of Quezon City. The teacher participants were then chosen based on their position in school. Also, it was made sure that the teacher participants were handling regular classes.

Table 1 Participants' demographic and general characteristics.

	Items		Frequency
	School 1	Student	34
		Teacher	8
	School 2	Student	45
		Teacher	10
	School 3	Student	44
Schools		Teacher	9
	School 4	Student	35
		Teacher	8
	School 5	Student	42
		Teacher	10
	Total student participants		200
	Total teacher participants		45

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	21 – 30	3	6.7%
Age in years of Teacher	31 - 40	16	35.6%
Participants (n=45)	41 – 50	14	31.1%
	51 – 60	11	24.4%
	Not reported	1	2.2%
	Total	45	100%

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex of Teacher Participants (n=45)	Male	9	20.0%
	Female	36	80.0%
	Total	45	100%

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Civil Status of Teacher Participants (n=45)	Single	6	13.3%
	Married	39	86.7%
	Total	45	100%

Table 1 Participants' demographic and general characteristics. (Cont.)

	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Educational attainment of Teacher Participants (n=45)	Bachelor's Degree	14	31.1%
	Master's Units	19	42.2%
	Master's Degree	10	22.2%
	Doctorate Units	1	2.2%
	Doctorate Degree	1	2.2%
	Total	45	100%
	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Position of Teacher Participants (n=45)	Teacher	36	80.0%
	Master Teacher	8	17.8%
	Not reported	1	2.2%
	Total	45	100%
	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Years in Teaching of Teacher Participants (n=45)	1 - 10	15	33.3%
	11 - 20	13	28.9%
	21 - 30	11	24.4%
	31 - 40	2	4.4%
	Not reported	4	8.9%

Table 1 shows the general information of the participants in the study. It also shows distribution of the respondents in terms of age. Most of the teachers who participated are between 31 to 40 years old (35.6%). Four out of 5 of the surveyed teachers are female as shown. Majority of the teacher respondents are married (86.7%). In terms of educational attainment, most of the teachers have earned Master's units (42.2%). About one-third is Bachelor's degree holders (31.1%) and one-fifth is Master's degree holders (22.2%). Then, the remaining teachers have either Doctorate units or degree. Majority of the designation of the teacher respondents are Teacher (80.0%) while the rest are Master Teachers (17.8%). The average years of experience of the respondents in teaching is 17.2 years. However, four teachers do not supply the said information. One out of three of the teacher respondents have 1 to 10 years of teaching experience (33.3%).

Table 2 shows the enrollment and dropout rates of the participating schools from school year 2013-2014 to school year 2015-2016.The source of the Table 2 is secured from the School Governance and Operation Division Office of Quezon City.

Table 2 Enrollment and dropout rates of the selected elementary schools.

	Number of Enrolment				Number of Dropouts				Percentage of Dropouts			
	2013	2014	2015	AVE	2013	2014	2015	AVE	2013	2014	2015	AVE
School 1	3,057	3,108	3,084	3,083	56	105	28	63	1.8	3.4	0.9	2.0
School 2	2,399	2,350	2,321	2,357	23	10	15	16	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.7
School 3	4,374	4,317	3,997	4,229	0	134	107	80	0.0	3.1	2.7	1.9
School 4	2,037	2,033	2,083	2,051	0	10	14	8	0.0	0.5	0.7	0.4
School 5	9,676	9,576	9,575	9,609	217	219	314	250	2.2	2.3	3.3	2.4

Instruments

The Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) which was developed by Appleton and Christenson in 2006 was employed to examine the level of students' school engagement in this study. The version of the SEI included 29 items assessed on a four–point Likert scale where 1 means "strongly agree", 2 "agree", 3 "disagree" and 4 "strongly disagree". The SEI has been proven by Appleton and Christenson, and it was utilized by other studies. There are 7 items pertaining to cognitive, 19 items dealing with affective/emotional, and 3 items referring to behavioral.

The teachers' questionnaire consists of the strategies the school implements or plans to implement to increase students' school engagement. The assessment for the proposed strategies of the teachers was an open-ended question.

Results and Discussion

Students' Level of Engagement

A total of 200 students from 5 different elementary schools participated in the survey. The students were from Grade IV and Grade V levels. Each student answered the questionnaire which consisted of 29 items to evaluate their level of engagement in school, which can be categorized into three dimensions: affective emotional, cognitive and behavioral engagement. Table 3 shows the complete distribution of mean scores of the students on their level of engagement by school. Percentile rank is then computed to see whether the students have low, middle/average, or high engagement in each dimension.

From the Table 3, students in all schools have middle/average engagement in all three dimensions of learning. Among the five schools, School 2 has the highest engagement in terms of affective/emotional (4.27) and behavioral (4.03); and finally, School 4 has the highest mean rating for cognitive (4.53). Moreover, it is evident to say that the general overall engagement of the students in all schools is in the middle or average rank as shown. In terms

of mean scores, cognitive engagement is rated the highest. It has a mean of 4.11. It is followed by affective and behavioral with mean scores of 4.09 and 3.77 respectively.

Table 3 Mean ratings of the student's level of engagement in the three dimensions of learning and the overall mean ratings of the student's level of engagement per school.

School	Affective		Cognitive		Behavioral		Overall	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
School 1	3.90	average	3.83	average	4.01	average	3.91	average
School 2	4.27	average	4.23	average	4.03	average	4.18	average
School 3	4.07	average	4.10	average	3.68	average	3.95	average
School 4	4.18	average	4.53	average	3.44	average	4.05	average
School 5	4.01	average	3.85	average	3.69	average	3.85	average
Mean	**4.09**	average	**4.11**	average	**3.77**	average	**3.99**	average

Results on Appleton's instrument about the overall engagement and the engagement on the three dimensions show that students are averagely engaged to school. This shows that students take their education seriously because they treat this as their key to success, but the students still experience lack of interest plausibly caused by the disproportionate practice of extrinsic motivation if compared to the exercise of intrinsic motivation.

Table 4 Frequency distribution of the students' affective engagement in each school.

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
School 1	6	17.6%	Low
	16	47.1%	Average
	12	35.3%	High
Total:	34	100%	
School 2	16	35.6%	Low
	19	42.2%	Average
	10	22.2%	High
Total:	45	100%	
School 3	13	29.5%	Low
	23	52.3%	Average
	8	18.2%	High
Total	44	100%	

Table 4 Frequency distribution of the students' affective engagement in each school. (Cont.)

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
School 4	11	31.4%	Low
	17	48.6%	Average
	7	20.0%	High
Total	35	100%	
School 5	4	9.5%	Low
	25	59.5%	Average
	13	31.0%	High
Total:	42	100%	

Table 4 itemizes the frequencies of the students having low, middle and high engagements in each school in terms of affective engagement. Low engagement pertains to the 1st percentile to the 25th percentile. Average engagement pertains to the 25th to 75th percentile. High engagement refers to the 75th percentile to the 99th percentile. Results show that among all the participating schools, the affective engagement of the students is mainly average. As much as there are several positive responses on this domain, there are also negative responses which pertain mostly on the tension in student-student relationships.

The results reflected what the Participation-Identification Model presents, which demonstrates that students' identification with school led to an active participation to both the classroom's and the school's activities. This average engagement of the students might have sprung from the children not having developed strong attachment to school. Thus, through reinforcing these school activities and devising ways that would capture students' interest, school engagement and involvement may be further established to attain a higher engagement from the student body.

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the students' cognitive engagement in each school.

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
School 1	6	17.6%	Low
	21	61.8%	Average
	7	20.6%	High
Total:	34	100%	
School 2	18	40.0%	Low
	20	44.4%	Average
	7	15.6%	High
Total:	45	100%	

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the students' cognitive engagement in each school. (Cont.)

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
School 3	19	43.2%	Low
	23	52.3%	Average
	2	4.5%	High
Total	44	100%	
			Low
School 4	5	14.3%	
	23	65.7%	Average
	7	20.0%	High
Total	35	100%	
School 5	2	4.8%	Low
	13	31.0%	Average
	27	64.3%	High
Total:	42	100%	

Table 5 catalogs the frequencies of the students having low, middle and high engagements in each school in terms of cognitive engagement. Cognitive engagement of the student participants lay on the average range also. The importance of education is well-inculcated in the students' perspectives as seen in their responses. Although that is the case, it is also evident in the results that their motivation to perform academically is quite problematic as extrinsic motivation governs the method of motivation in the schools.

Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory evidently manifests in the cognitive engagement results of the student participants. Further analysis of the cognitive dimension will be presented in Table 9; however, to give an overview of how this exhibits a strong parallel to the theory, the average cognitive engagement of the students, albeit not low, is grounded on the inadequacy of motivation instilled by the school in the students.

Table 6 Frequency distribution of the students' behavioral engagement in each school.

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
School 1	5	14.7%	Low
	19	55.9%	Average
	10	29.4%	High
Total:	34	100%	
School 2	9	20.0%	Low
	17	37.8%	Average
	19	42.2%	High
Total:	45	100%	
School 3	12	43.2%	Low
	20	52.3%	Average
	12	4.5%	High
Total	44	100%	
School 4	10	14.3%	Low
	20	65.7%	Average
	5	20.0%	High
Total	35	100%	
School 5	14	4.8%	Low
	24	31.0%	Average
	4	64.3%	High
Total:	42	100%	

Table 6 details the frequencies of the students having low, middle and high engagements in each school in terms of behavioral engagement. The results pertain that the behavioral engagement was average across the selected schools. Students come to class generally ready for the lesson; however, results also showed that in terms of classwork, students, on the average, are not primed. On a positive note, further interpretation of the items in the instrument also revealed that they do come to school with their homework done and reading materials prepared.

The Participation-Identification Model/Theory states that the development of the student engagement begins with the furthering the performance of the students in the classroom. Thus, analyzing the behaviors of the students in the classroom and creating strategies that tick their interest to class discussions will consequently engage them on a greater extent.

Table 7 Frequency distribution of the students' overall engagement in each school.

School	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation*
School 1	6	17.7%	Low
	21	61.8%	Average
	7	20.6%	High
Total:	34	100.0%	
School 2	14	31.1%	Low
	19	42.2%	Average
	12	26.7%	High
Total:	45	100.0%	
School 3	12	27.3%	Low
	22	50.0%	Average
	10	22.7%	High
Total	44	100.0%	
School 4	11	31.4%	Low
	16	45.7%	Average
	8	22.9%	High
Total	35	100.0%	
School 5	7	16.7%	Low
	22	52.4%	Average
	13	31.0%	High
Total:	42	100.0%	

Table 7 shows the frequencies of the students having low, middle and high engagements in each school in terms of overall engagement. Given that the affective, cognitive and behavioral engagements of the students in the schools were primarily average and given that these three domains are the only subsets of the overall engagement

based on Appleton's instrument, it is anticipated that the overall engagements of the students across the schools were also average.

To further evaluate or assess the students' engagement, the respondents ranked a series of statements that they experience, or they can relate to. The following tables summarize their responses for each question or statement in the questionnaire.

Table 8 Perception of students in school based on their experiences—affective dimension.

Affective/ Emotional	Mean	Interpretation
My family/guardian(s) are there for me when I need them.	4.61	High
The rules at my school are fair.	4.52	High
My teachers are honest with me.	4.48	High
I have friends at school.	4.31	Average
My teachers are there for me when I need them.	4.23	Average
My family/guardian(s) want me to keep trying when things are tough at school.	4.23	Average
Most teachers care about me as a person, not just a student.	4.19	Average
I like talking to the teachers here.	4.19	Average
Teachers at my school care about the students.	4.17	Average
My family/guardian(s) want to know when something good happens at school.	4.08	Average
I feel safe at school.	3.98	Average
When I have problems at my school, my family/guardian(s) are ready to help me.	3.94	Average
Adults at my school listen to the students.	3.92	Average
Adults at my school are fair towards students most of the time.	3.86	Average
I enjoy talking to the students here.	3.86	Average
Other students here like me the way I am.	3.81	Low
Other students care about me.	3.50	Low
Students at my school are there for me when I need them.	3.36	Low
Students here respect what I have to say.	3.20	Low

Table 8 suggests that the respondents have guardians and teachers who are there for them when they need them. They feel that the rules at school are also fair and that they have honest teachers. Likewise, they have friends at school. The support of parents, relatives, teachers and friends help them become more engaged at school. However, there is still a need to address issues among peers and fellow students as the results of the students' responses in this area leaned onto the negative side, as observed in the last five items in Table 8.

Table 9 Perception of students in school based on their experiences—cognitive dimension.

Cognitive	Mean	Interpretation
Continuing to learn after high school is important.	4.63	High
I plan to go to college after I graduate from high school.	4.55	High
School is important for reaching my future goals.	4.42	Average
My education will create many chances for me to reach my future goals.	4.41	Average
I am hopeful about my future.	4.25	Average
I will learn only if teachers give me a reward.	3.03	Low
I will learn only if my parent/guardian(s) give me a reward.	2.80	Low

Furthermore, the respondents believe that education will create many opportunities for them to reach their dreams and future goals. Thus, they see the importance of continuous learning until high school and pursue college education after they finished high school. It seems to be one of the driving forces of the students to engage more in their studies even at a young age (see Table 9).

Nonetheless, the concept of extrinsic motivation is still ingrained in the students' nature as students still expect rewards in return for their efforts in learning. People who are extrinsically motivated perform only when they will be given a separate reward. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation pertains to the act of doing since it is inherently enjoyable. These points are encapsulated by Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory.

Although extrinsic motivation can be highly effective in our society especially in the finance and business fields, it can also backfire and cause the *over justification effect*. Alexitch [8] defines the *over justification effect* as "the loss of motivation and interest as a result of receiving an excessive external reward".

As what has been found out in the results of this study, students chose to learn only when rewarded. Addressing this concern is tricky since careful balance between the practice of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is important to capture the students' engagement and maintain it on the long run. It is true that extrinsic motivation is a good tool to quickly engage the students but asserting the inherent benefits of their actions is also crucial for them to develop their own interest towards their actions. Once some intrinsic interest has been inculcated in the students, external rewards and motivation should be eliminated over time.

Table 10 Perception of students in school based on their experiences—behavioral dimension.

Behavioral	Mean	Interpretation
How often did you come to class without your homework done	3.48	Average
How often did you come to class without reading materials	3.19	Average
How often did you come to class without what you need to do classwork	2.81	Low

However, about their behavior, the respondents in general go to class without homework and without reading materials often (see Table 10). Developing students' sense of interest towards studies will slowly solve this concern. Once students identify with their school, their motivation and willingness towards their academics will consequently build up.

To reiterate, student engagement is not composed of just one component but of three—cognitive, affective/ emotional, and behavioral, and striking a balance among these three components is important to continuously engage students. Improving the affective component will evoke the students' sense of belongingness and inclusivity to school which is crucial in capturing their interest to school and its activities. Intensifying the cognitive domain of student engagement will stimulate the students' deep learning capabilities and enhance students' intrinsic interest towards school. Emphasizing on actions that promote the behavioral domain of student engagement will further reinforce the students' participation in the classroom and consequently their motivation in attending school as well. Attending to the issues raised in the results of this study with these three cores of student engagement in mind will therefore further the students' engagement and subsequently reduce the number of at-risk students.

Strategies or Programs to Engage the Students

There were 45 teachers, from five different public schools, who completed the survey on their perception about the engagement of students in school. Specifically, a questionnaire which composed of their basic demographic information and the strategies or programs that can be proposed to improve the engagement of the students in school were given to the respondents

Table 11 Strategies, Interventions or Programs to Engage the Students (n=45)

Strategies/Programs/Interventions	Frequency	Frequency label
Extra-curricular activities (ex. MTAP, scouting, sports, summer camp and others)	25	typical
Reading program	20	typical
Collaborative activities with parents (ex. PTA conference, meetings and others)	9	variant
Home visitation	8	variant
Collaborative activities with the Barangay/LGU (ex. Anti-bullying Program, Barangay officials' Seminars to Parents and Low Performing Students and others)	7	variant

Table 11 Strategies, Interventions or Programs to Engage the Students (n=45) (Cont.)

Strategies/Programs/Interventions	Frequency	Frequency label
Teaching strategies (ex. Games, role playing, collaborative, drill, and others)	6	variant
Feeding program	6	variant
Incorporation of technology in teaching	4	rare
Student-at-Risk of Dropping Out intervention	3	rare
Teachers' Seminar	2	rare
Recognition Program	2	rare
Investigatory Projects for Intermediate Pupils	2	rare

*13 teachers did not give their responses

The teachers were also asked on their recommendations for strategies or programs that can be used to improve the engagement of the students (see Table 11). There were 13 teachers who did not give any response with regards to the strategies that they currently use or plan to use to create an engaging atmosphere for the students. This number of teachers, which amounts to 29% of the teacher participants, who did not provide any strategy they are implementing or planning to implement is alarming because teachers must know very well which strategies are appropriate to the situations of their students.

One of the recommended activities school-related activities such as camps/scouting, field trips, quiz bee competitions, and monthly celebrations. These activities are believed to engage the students by enhancing their capabilities or talents. Second was the conduct of reading programs. The respondents found positive effects of remedial reading and reading interventions to non-readers. Third was the collaborative active ties with parents. Building rapport with parents and teachers for the welfare of child could significantly improve the engagement of students. This includes PTA conferences, parent-learning support system, and values formation training with parents. Fourth was home visitation. Indeed, it was a great way to bridge whatever gap there is between the teacher and the student. Last of the top choices was collaborative activities with the barangay or local government units (LGUs). The support of the community could not be dismissed. It was advised to make partnership with LGUs in conducting seminars about anti-bullying, prohibited drugs, and even school regulations.

Formulation of Action Plan

With the results of the study in mind, the researchers intended to incorporate the findings in devising an action plan to encompass all the issues found in this study. The action plan that the researchers proposed considered the level of school engagement of the students, consolidated the strategies suggested by the teachers, and incorporated new instructional strategies that were aligned with the changing landscape of education. This plan primarily focused on improving the engagement of the students who experience low to average school engagement as these strata of students need more attention as compared to students who are already highly engaged to school. The full and detailed action plan for improving the students' school engagement can be found in Appendix.

There are three focal areas which signify the three dimensions of student engagement since balancing the engagement to all these three is critical. In each focal area, a goal is formulated to serve as the big picture perspective of a desired result. Along with the establishment of the goals, a more specific and more detailed statement of the objective is presented. To achieve the projected objective, the necessary strategies which are the frameworks of the action plan are listed and their respective activities which pertain to the individual actions that must be carried out to achieve the strategy are also indicated for each strategy.

The first focal area concentrates on enhancing the students' affective engagement. Sparking their interest to school draws them to engaging, and in effect, class attendance increases with their increasing sense of inclusivity.

The second focal area of the action plan intensifies the cognitive dimension of the student engagement. Based on the results of the study, there is a need to stress the significance of intrinsic motivation over extrinsic motivation. Thus, this area intends to immerse students in learning methods that stimulate the intrinsic interest to the lessons and inculcate the value of intrinsic interest as well so as to maintain the motivation already started.

The last focal area is geared towards strengthening the behavioral engagement of the students in such a way that it will widen and firmly root their involvement to school activities. Aiming attention at this area will ensure that the students participate not only in class discussions but also in extra-curricular activities of the school. Strategies center on constructing collaborative activities, improving the student-teacher relationship and providing autonomy support to the students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Improving engagement is attainable; however, proper measures and planning are to be done before initiating any step. This study has forwarded potential strategies and solutions through the careful consideration of the level of student engagement in the selected Division.

The overall engagement of the students was average along with their affective, cognitive, and behavioral engagement domains. Students generally felt the support of their parents, guardians, teachers, and friends who helped them become more engaged in school. Also, they perceived education as vital in achieving their aspirations. However, regarding behavioral domain, students often attended class without homework, reading materials and participation to classwork.

The Participation-Identification Theory and Self-Determination Theory were instrumental in interpreting the results of the 3 dimensions of students' engagement. Through these theories, issues on extrinsic motivation and the tensions in student-student relationships and in the school climate surfaced. As a result, these concerns were then addressed using the action plan proposed.

In devising an action plan for engagement, it is vital to investigate first the levels of student engagement and to gather insights from the appropriate authorities to create strategies that are relevant and suitable. The strategies suggested by the teachers together with the analysis of the level of student engagement are used to mold and formulate the proposed action plan, which, in turn, can assist faculty and administrators among the elementary schools in modifying their strategic planning processes.

Limitations of the Study

About the validity of the findings, it is judicious to note that the research was limited to Grade IV and V students in the Division of Quezon City, Philippines. The study is also conducted solely on public schools; hence, differences on the results from private schools, from different grade levels, and from public schools in other divisions may have existed had the study been conducted in these areas as well.

Furthermore, the data are based mainly from self-report instruments. Although an analysis of relevant statistics on the dropout rate of the Division of Quezon City was done, integrating other instruments, analyzing further the related statistics, and introducing new ways of measuring the engagement of students were beneficial to advance the development of the research.

Since this study was conducted only at a certain time, specifically during the fourth quarter, conducting this at different time frames would contribute to a more rounded picture of the students' engagement. Students' engagement to school may be higher during the start of the year since students felt fresh after a period of vacation. However, as this was conducted on the last quarter of the school year, the level of engagement of the students may be lower than that during the early quarters.

Recommendations

Researchers may adapt a different research design that they perceive to be more suitable to this kind of study. A longitudinal research design which involves repetition of the study over long periods of time may give a clearer picture as to how various factors affect students' engagement in different time periods. Conducting the study in a longitudinal manner through the elementary level will also provide insights on the levels and factors that influence students' school engagement. Using similar measures and variables is also vital in checking the congruency and validity with previously established research and findings.

Researchers may investigate the feasibility of implementing their proposed programs based on existing laws, plans, and policies. The proposed program should indeed be implemented, an evaluative study of the implemented program may be conducted to see its effectiveness and success.

For schools that intend to apply the proposed action plan in their respective institutions, school administrators should consider the nature, situations, personalities and other specificities of the students and the teachers before initiating any of the proposed programs and strategies.

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