



‘KUMUSTAHAN’ SESSIONS: THE MISSING PIECE IN LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

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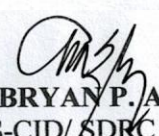
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APPROVAL SHEET

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‘Kumustahan’ Sessions: The Missing Piece in Learner Engagement

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Abstract

In education, student engagement is crucial for effective learning. However, many students have become passive and disconnected from their studies, especially after two years of remote learning due to COVID-19 pandemic. Returning to in-person classes posed a challenge for students who got used to the flexibility of remote and online learning. These circumstances were expressed by most parents from the lower sections in the grade 3 level during Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTCs). Hence, this study addressed these concerns by introducing *kumustahan* sessions under Project GuiDE (Guiding Individuals in Developing Engagement) to enhance the learning engagement of 99 Grade 3 students at Dalipuga Central School in the School Year 2023-2024. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the study found that students responded positively to the *kumustahan* sessions, impacting their engagement levels. Additionally, the study highlighted a significant difference in students' perceived engagement levels before and after the intervention, emphasizing the role of *kumustahan* sessions as the missing piece in learner engagement.

Keywords: *Learning engagement, kumustahan sessions, engagement levels, missing piece, education*

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***Elda F. Malalay
Teresita F. Andrade***

I. Introduction of the Research

In the pursuit of educational excellence outlined by the Department of Education (DepEd), the paramount objective remains to nurture learning and development in students, propelling them toward the realization of their fullest potential as positive contributors of the society. At the core of this educational mission lies the undeniable significance of learner engagement, a pivotal factor influencing academic achievement and personal growth.

Recent years have witnessed an increasing recognition of the critical role that learner engagement plays in the realm of education. According to Dr. David Sousa (2016), an educational neuroscience expert, learner engagement encapsulates "the amount of attention, interest, curiosity, and positive emotional connections that learners have when they are learning, whether in the classroom or on their own" (p.17). When students are engaged, they are more likely to retain information, think critically, and apply their knowledge in real-life situations. The engaged student, as expounded by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), becomes a catalyst for effective learning.

Engaged learners are more likely to develop a love for learning and be motivated to continue their education beyond the classroom. Evidence supporting this claim is robust; a 2018 Gallup study revealed that "engaged learners are 2.5 times more likely to say that they get excellent grades and do well in school, and they are 4.5 times more likely to be hopeful about the future than their actively disengaged peers." Additionally, learner engagement correlates with positive outcomes, including heightened academic achievement, increased persistence, and higher rates of completion, as confirmed by a recent Gallup study (Reckmeyer, 2019).

However, despite its undeniable importance, a disconcerting number of students find themselves disengaged in the classroom, a trend exacerbated by the challenges of

transitioning from two years of remote and online learning prompted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of ensuring learners attain the essential learning competencies during this period often overshadowed the imperative of maintaining active engagement. Consequently, students have adopted a more passive approach to learning, feeling disconnected and experiencing a diminished sense of social belonging.

Dalipuga Central School, recognizing the persistent issue of diminishing learner engagement as students progress through the education system, acknowledged the concern voiced by parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTCs). Given the growing importance of learner engagement in promoting academic success, a study was conducted to validate the observed low level of engagement among students, pinpoint specific dimensions requiring enhancement, and delve into students' perceptions of engagement along with the challenges hindering their active participation in the learning process. In this study, *kumustahan* sessions served as potential remedy to uncover insights into the factors contributing to disengagement, thereby informing the development of targeted and effective engagement interventions. By establishing a foundation for embedding such sessions into school policies, this study aspires to elevate learner engagement levels, ultimately fostering academic growth and success.

II. Literature Review

The foundation of this study drew upon two prominent developmental theories — attachment theory and self-determination theory. Attachment theorists, exemplified by Hamre and Pianta (2001), asserted that learners achieved greater self-reliance and exhibited a willingness to take risks in exploring the world when guided by a supportive adult presence in the school environment. Simultaneously, self-determination theory (SDT) suggested that learners who forged emotional connections with both teachers and peers charted positive trajectories in cognitive and affective domains (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).

Wang and Eccles (2012) conducted a seminal study exploring diverse trajectories of adolescent engagement encompassing behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions within the school context. The study found that students who had high levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement over time had higher levels of educational success, including higher academic achievement, higher educational aspirations, and greater persistence in pursuing their educational goals.

Moreover, the centrality of robust learner-teacher relationships emerged as a recurrent theme in literature. Martin and Bolliger (2018) underlined that engagement flourished in the crucible of strong learner-teacher connections. Echoing this sentiment, Peter Dewitt (2016), a former classroom teacher and principal, emphasized that the genesis of engagement lay in the cultivation of nurturing relationships. He emphasized that "when students formed close and caring relationships with their teachers and peers, they were fulfilling their developmental need for a connection with others and a sense of belonging in society." Crucially, these relationships were not merely incidental but rather necessitated intentional interaction, as articulated by Anderson (2003), who emphasized that learner engagement was inherently entwined with meaningful interaction.

In essence, the significance of strong learner-teacher relationships reverberated through the literature, creating an environment wherein learner engagement thrived. Recognizing the pivotal role of interaction, this underscored the imperative nature of conducting engagement sessions as a transformative intervention to elevate the level of learner engagement.

In response to the pervasive issue of learner passivity and disengagement, this study embraced innovative interventions to propel learner engagement and address the root causes of disengagement. A key avenue for augmenting learner engagement was identified in the

implementation of interactive and collaborative learning activities, exemplified by the "Kumustahan" sessions. Originating from the Filipino term for "how are you doing?" these sessions are characterized by interactive discussions and dialogues designed to foster open communication and relationship-building among participants.

The study embarked on an exploration of the efficacy of Kumustahan sessions within the framework of the "Gu.I.D.E." project (Guiding Individuals in Developing Engagement). This educational initiative sought to establish a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that prioritizes engagement and academic success, grounded in the universally acknowledged principle that engagement is pivotal to learning and accomplishment. Recognizing the imperative of attending to the mental health and well-being of learners, the project endeavored to employ viable strategies for meaningful engagement.

The integration of well-being activities into education gained prominence due to research demonstrating their positive impact on student engagement, achievement, and overall well-being (Suldo, Riley, & Shaffer, 2006). The project incorporated six well-being activities guided by the research-based SEARCH framework (Waters, 2020). SEARCH, an acronym for Strengths, Emotional Management, Attention and awareness, Relationships, Coping, and Habits and goals, provided a structured foundation for the implementation of activities aimed at equipping learners with essential skills and tools, enhancing coping capacity, and fostering adaptability. (see Appendix for the details of Project GuIDE using SEARCH framework.

Facilitated by class advisers, the Kumustahan sessions employed dynamic tools such as playshops and interactive group activities to engage participants and cultivate deeper connections among them. Through meaningful and captivating tasks, the sessions addressed safety needs and instilled a sense of love and belonging. Moreover, learners were actively

encouraged to assume roles and responsibilities for their own learning, empowering them to be active contributors to the educational process. In essence, the innovative Kumustahan sessions, embedded within the comprehensive Gu.I.D.E. project, emerged as a transformative strategy to ignite learner engagement and cultivate a supportive educational environment.

III. Research Questions

In pursuit of a comprehensive understanding, this study sought answers to the following specific questions:

1. What is the extent of the level of engagement prior to the conduct of intervention?
2. What is the learners' level of engagement about the intervention as perceived by learners themselves?
3. Is there a significant difference between the extent of the level of engagement prior to the conduct of intervention and the perceived level of engagement about the intervention?
4. What are the learners' perceptions toward the engagement session?
5. What innovation can be drawn based on the findings of the study?

Statement of Hypothesis

This study formulated the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance, , articulated in null form as follows:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the learners' level of engagement before and after the implementation of the project.

IV. Scope and Limitation

Engagement is a multidimensional construct --- behavior engagement, affective engagement, and cognitive engagement. This study focused on comprehending the learners'

levels of engagement across these distinct dimensions. Specifically, the study was conducted among 99 Grade 3 learners, comprising 3 sections, from Dalipuga Central School for school year 2022-2023. The data gathering procedure unfolded over the first 2 quarters of school year 2022-2023. Subsequent to the data collection phase, rigorous discussions and meticulous analyses were conducted to distill meaningful insights and conclusions from the findings.

V. Research Methodology

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method design using both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, to yield a comprehensive understanding of the research problems. Quantitative data took precedence using adapted research instruments to validate the learners' level of engagement and delve into their perceptions regarding the intervention. Subsequently, the qualitative data were taken through interviews with 10 randomly selected learners to verify their perceptions and determine how the intervention affects their level of engagement.

a. Sampling

The study encompassed 99 learners from the Grade 3 level of Dalipuga Central School, enrolled for the school year 2022-2023. Employing purposive sampling, participants were selected based on their reading comprehension skills and the observations of both parents and teachers, ensuring a targeted and representative sample.

For the comprehensive gathering of both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher utilized the following instruments:

Elementary Student Engagement Instrument (SEI-E). The Elementary Student Engagement Instrument (SEI-E) gauged affective and cognitive engagement in schools. It was validated for use with learners in Grades 3-5 with an internal consistency (alpha) estimates that ranged from 0.64 to 0.82. Furthermore, an expert panel of engagement scholars

scrutinized the instrument to ensure developmental appropriateness and relevance to the constructs under investigation (Carter et al., 2012). Notably, the researcher secured permission from the *Check and Connect* Team, gaining access to the pencil-paper version of SEI-E, along with its supplementary materials for administration, scoring, and result interpretation.

SEI-E validated learners' level of engagement by indicating the extent to which they agree or disagree on close-ended statements using a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree).

Table 1
Scoring Procedure on Learners' Level of Engagement

Scale Value	Verbal Interpretation	Weighted Mean
1	Very Low Engagement	1.00 -1.79
2	Low Engagement	1.80 -2.59
3	Average Engagement	2.60 – 3.39
4	High Engagement	3.40 – 4.19
5	Very High Engagement	4.20 – 5.00

Activity Perception Questionnaire. Derived from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI), this 25-item questionnaire served as a pivotal tool in gauging participants' subjective experiences tied to the targeted activity. The IMI itself stands as a comprehensive, multi-dimensional measurement device meticulously crafted to assess the intricate facets of participants' intrinsic motivation. Within this context, the instrument specifically delved into participants' perceived choice, interest/enjoyment, and the value/usefulness attributed to the given activity. Recognizing the need for alignment with the participants' cognitive capacity, the researcher adeptly adapted the instrument. To enhance accessibility and comprehension, the original 7-point scale was streamlined into a more participant-friendly 5-point scale. This deliberate adjustment aimed to ensure that participants could articulate their perceptions with

clarity, thus contributing to a clear understanding of their engagement dynamics during the *kumustahan* sessions.

Table 2

Scoring Procedure on Learners' Perception of the Engagement Activity

Scale Value	Verbal Interpretation	Weighted Mean
1	Not at all true	1.00 -1.79
2	Somewhat untrue	1.80 -2.59
3	Neutral	2.60 – 3.39
4	Somewhat true	3.40 – 4.19
5	Very true	4.20 – 5.00

Interview questions. After the conduct of *kumustahan* sessions, qualitative data was extracted through interviews with a select cohort of ten participants to articulate their experiences and perspectives. The participants' responses supplemented and enriched the findings derived from the Activity Perception Questionnaire.

b. Data Collection

The following activities were executed to gather the requisite data for the study:

Securing Permission to Conduct the Study. The researchers initiated the data collection process by securing official permission from the school principal, setting the ethical groundwork for the study.

Orientation of Parents and Distribution of SEI-E (pre-testing). Upon approval, the researchers conducted in-person meetings to present the nature and scope of the study to parents. Informed consent, crucial for minors' participation, was sought through consent letters addressed to parents. Simultaneously, the SEI-E was distributed and comprehensively discussed, ensuring clarity and transparency.

Conduct of *Kumustahan* Sessions. The engagement sessions , crucial to the study, were facilitated by the advisers post-facilitation/briefing sessions. The *Kumustahan* sessions

targeted the giving of meaningful experiences using playshops and interactive group activities.

Evaluation through Activity Perception Questionnaire. Following the *kumustahan* sessions, the Activity Perception Questionnaire was administered to learners.

Conduct of SEI-E (post-testing) and Interviews. The researchers distributed the SEI-E for post-testing after the conduct of all engagement sessions. Additionally, interviews were conducted with ten selected learners, yielding rich qualitative insights into the profound impact of the engagement sessions. The interviewees' answers were recorded and transcribed for qualitative analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation. After eliciting both quantitative and qualitative data, these were translated, summarized, and analyzed according to the research problems set forth in the study.

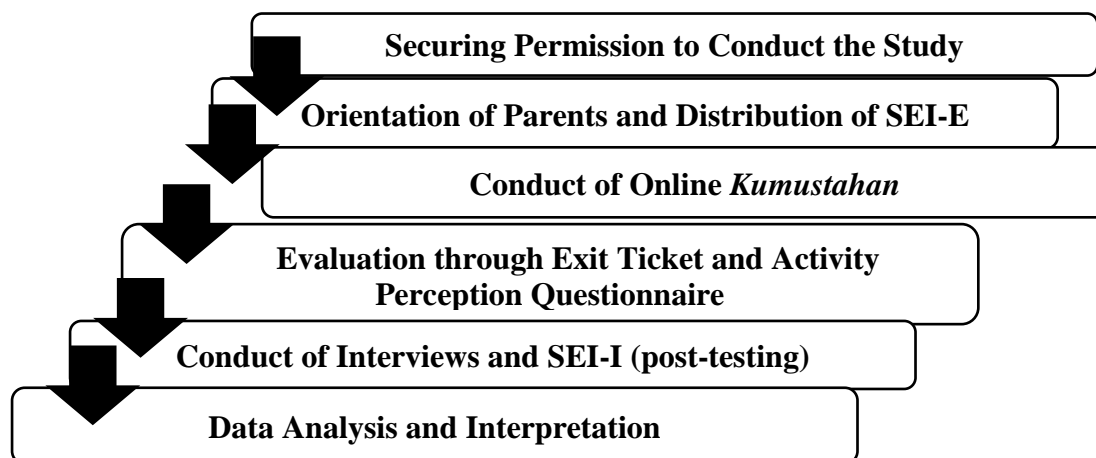


Figure 1. Data Gathering Procedure of the Research

In adherence to the research ethics procedure governing human subjects, the researchers sought approval to conduct the study. Furthermore, explicit permission was sought from the owner of the research instruments, upholding transparency and intellectual property rights. Participants were informed, through their parents, about the precise contents of the study before its implementation. Emphasizing the paramount importance of participant

confidentiality, all research data remained safeguarded both during and after the study. The researchers prioritized the utmost respect for the dignity of the participants throughout the research journey.. To ensure data integrity, the researchers adhered to stringent procedures for the collection, storage, and management of data. This ensured the accurate and responsible reporting of results, fortifying the ethical foundation of the study.

The quantitative and qualitative data gathered in the study underwent comprehensive processing using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Manual statistical computation was also employed as a rigorous cross-verification measure to ensure the precision and accuracy of the findings. Specifically, the following statistical tools were used to summarize, translate and analyze the results.

a. Arithmetic mean

The arithmetic mean served as a pivotal statistical tool for addressing problems 1 and 2. Through this method, the respondents' level of engagement and their perceptions toward the intervention were precisely determined, offering a quantitative snapshot of the study's outcomes.

b. Paired T-test

For problem 3, which deals with significant differences, a paired t-test with 0.05 level of significance was applied.

c. Coding

For problem 4, data underwent coding, followed by categorization and thematic arrangement. This method facilitated a systematic exploration of qualitative insights, allowing for in-depth probing and elaboration of ideas.

V. Discussion of Results and Recommendations

This section discussed the results and analyses of the data gathered in this study. All data obtained from questionnaires and interviews are presented to answer the research questions.

Problem 1: What is the extent of the level of engagement prior to the conduct of intervention?

Table 3
Extent of the Levels of Engagement

Domains	Mean	Interpretation
Affective Engagement	(3.14)	
• Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR)	3.19	Average Engagement
• Peer Support for Learning (PSL)	2.87	Average Engagement
• Family Support for Learning (FSL)	3.36	Average Engagement
Cognitive Engagement	(2.69)	
• Future Aspiration and Goals (FGA)	3.25	Average Engagement
• Intrinsic Motivation (IM)	2.13	Low Engagement
Additional Domain	(2.98)	
• Dissatisfaction (DISS)	3.34	Average Engagement
• Behavioral Engagement (BEH)	2.61	Average Engagement
Overall Mean	2.94	Average Engagement

Legend:
 4.20 – 5.00 (Very High Engagement);
 3.40 – 4.19 (High Engagement);
 2.60 – 3.39 (Average Engagement);
 1.80 – 2.59 (Low Engagement);
 1.00 – 1.79 (Very Low Engagement)

Table 3 shows the collated result of the extent of the levels of engagement in terms of affective, cognitive, and additional domains, signifying an average engagement with an overall mean, (\bar{x} = 2.94). This suggested that while there are areas of strength, there are also specific domains that require actionable insights and interventions.

Specifically, in terms of their level of affective engagement, the learners demonstrated average engagement (\bar{x} = 3.36) within the Family-Support for Learning (FSL) dimension

which underscored the importance of family involvement in promoting learner engagement. The creation of a motivating and challenging learning environment within the family positively influenced learning engagement (Schunk & Mullen, 2012). Meanwhile, the Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR) dimension signified an average engagement ($\bar{x}= 3.19$). Multiple studies have established the importance of quality teacher-student relationships with respect to learning engagement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). Furthermore, Peer Support for Learning (PSL) reflected an average level of engagement ($\bar{x}= 2.87$), implying that while peer interaction contributes to engagement, there is room for improvement in enhancing support among peers.

Table 3 further revealed that the learners' level of cognitive engagement signified an average engagement. Within this realm, Future Goals and Aspirations (FGA) showed average engagement ($\bar{x}= 3.25$) as learners affirmed that education serves as a gateway to myriad opportunities for realizing their future goals. Moreover, they are hopeful about their future despite the uncertainties brought by the global pandemic. On the contrary, the learners' Intrinsic Motivation (IM) surfaced with a distinct pattern of low engagement ($\bar{x}= 2.13$). Several learners expressed a motivation to learn primarily driven by external rewards from parents and teachers. This suggested that their educational motivations were extrinsically anchored, stemming more from external stimuli than from internal desires. Notably, parents tended to endorse the notion that extrinsic motivation was pivotal for their children's educational pursuits. However, it's crucial to underscore that while extrinsic rewards may temporarily elevate engagement, the enduring quality of academic performance is profoundly influenced by intrinsic factors (Cherry, 2019).

Simultaneously, a subset of learners exhibited Dissatisfaction (DISS) with their academic performance, with a mean score indicating an average level of engagement ($\bar{x}= 3.34$). They attributed their perceived poor performance to a belief in their own lack of

intelligence, and some grappled with a lack of understanding behind the grades they received. Meanwhile, students' Behavioral Engagement (BEH) showed an average level of engagement ($\bar{x}= 2.61$). This may be indicative of underlying challenges in the learning process, including potential gaps in understanding or support. Addressing these concerns is crucial for promoting a positive and constructive learning environment.

Problem 2: What is the learners' level of engagement about the intervention as perceived by learners themselves?

Table 4
Learners' Perceptions of Engagement Session

Perception	Mean	Interpretation
Value/ Usefulness	4.23	Very High Engagement
Perceived Choice	3.64	High Engagement
Interest/ Enjoyment	4.36	Very High Engagement
Overall Mean	4.08	High Engagement

Legend: 4.20 – 5.00 (Very High Engagement);
3.40 – 4.19 (High Engagement);
2.60 – 3.39 (Average Engagement);
1.80 – 2.59 (Low Engagement);
1.00 – 1.79 (Very Low Engagement)

The overall mean ($\bar{x}= 4.08$) presented in Table 4, signified a predominantly positive outlook among learners. Data suggested very high engagement ($\bar{x}= 4.23$) in terms of value and usefulness, as majority of the learners acknowledged the positive impact of *kumustahan* sessions on concentration and study habits. Furthermore, the learners exhibited a very high level of engagement ($\bar{x}= 4.36$) in terms of interest and enjoyment during the *kumustahan* sessions. This intervention resonated positively, with learners finding it both enjoyable and interesting. Meanwhile dimension of perceived choice reflected high engagement ($\bar{x}= 3.64$). While the majority of learners felt empowered in their participation, a subset expressed a sense of obligation, attending the sessions out of necessity rather than personal volition.

Problem 3: Is there a significant difference between the extent of the level of engagement prior to the conduct of intervention and the perceived level of engagement about the intervention?

Table 5

Analysis on the Difference Between the Extent of the Level of Engagement Prior to the Intervention and Their Perceived Level of Engagement About the Intervention

Variables	\bar{D}	S_D	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Extent of the Level of Engagement vs. Perceived Level of Engagement	0.79	0.22	20.78	98	0.0001	Reject H_0 (There is a significant difference.)

Shown in Table 5 is the computed p-value of 0.0001 that stood resolutely below the 0.05 level of significance; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that the extent of the level of engagement of the learners prior to the conduct of intervention has a significant difference with their perceived level of engagement about the intervention. In this study, the difference in the levels of engagement can be attributed to the nurturing relationships established during the interactive engagement session. Recognizing learners as inherently social beings with an innate need for interpersonal connections, the study aligned with Dewitt's (2016) assertion that fostering close and caring relationships fulfilled learners' developmental necessities for connection and a sense of belonging.

It underscored the transformative influence of engagement sessions in creating a conducive environment where learners were not merely recipients but active participants, spurred to grow within the positive dynamics of strong learner-teacher relationships. This alignment with previous research, notably Burgess (2015), reinforced the understanding that teacher-learner interactions wielded substantial influence on learner engagement. The findings underscored the pivotal role of the intervention in reshaping and elevating the engagement landscape, substantiating the transformative power of interactive engagement

sessions in fostering a positive and participatory learning environment.

Problem 4: What are the learners' perceptions toward the engagement session?

In addressing Problem 4, which sought to explore the learners' perceptions regarding the engagement sessions, this study employed document analysis of interview data. The insights gleaned from these interviews have been examined and are expounded upon within the framework of the following thematic categories:

Theme 1: Fostering Well-being and Social Connectivity

The conduct of *Kumustahan* sessions, aimed at supporting the psycho-social well-being of the learners, fosters a dynamic sense of community and social interaction. The implications of this dynamic community engagement extend beyond mere social connectivity; rather, it is posited that such communal interactions may serve to amplify the learners' affective engagement. These claims are aligned with the learners' perceptions below.

P2: "Makalingaw ang dula ug kolor-kolor." ("Playing and coloring are fun.")

P4: "Nagshare mi sa among gipanghimo...ganahan ko ma'am." ("We shared what we did... I enjoyed it, ma'am.")

P5: "Gitabangan ko sa akong klasmeyt, dali ra mi nahuman dayon nagshare mi sa atubangan." ("My classmate helped me; we quickly finished, then we shared in front.")

P9: "Sige rag katawa akong tapad ma'am kay malingaw siya sa akong drowing." ("The person next to me keeps laughing, ma'am, because he enjoys my drawing.")

Theme 2: Positive Learning Experiences Improve Cognitive Engagement

The learners' cognitive engagement can be improved when we maintain a strong connection with them, demonstrating genuine concern and understanding if they are feeling overwhelmed by the changes. These claims are supported by the learners' opinions:

P1: “Naa koy natun-an kay nagshare man sila.” (“I learned something because they shared their knowledge.”)

P3: “Lingaw ra bahalag usahay dugay mahuman. Nakabalo ko unsay himuon.” (“It's enjoyable even if it takes a while to finish. I know what to do.”)

P8: “Nakatagna ko sa answer ma'am. Naminaw man ko.” (“I predicted the answer, ma'am. I listened attentively.”)

P9: “Basta maminaw kay makabalo.” (“Just listen because it helps us understand.”)

P10: “Mamati basta mag istorya na si ma'am para maka-answer mi.” (“I pay attention when ma'am starts talking so I can answer.”)

Interpreting these responses, it becomes apparent that learners appreciate and engage more effectively when teachers establish a supportive and communicative environment. The act of listening, sharing, and understanding contributes significantly to positive learning experiences, fostering an atmosphere where cognitive engagement thrives.

Problem 5: What innovation can be drawn based on the findings of the study?

This concern of having learners who are less motivated, more withdrawn, and more afraid to interact is rampant even in other classes. With the results of this study, the basis for the formulation of an innovation is laid. The researcher is prompted to propose an innovation that advocates for the systematic inclusion of Structured Interactive Engagement Sessions (IES) within the standard academic curriculum. These sessions, carefully designed to foster meaningful connections and overcome learner withdrawal, will become an integral part of the educational experience. Furthermore, these sessions will be seamlessly embedded into Homeroom Guidance activities across all grade levels (from Kindergarten to Grade 6),

ensuring a comprehensive approach to learner engagement.

The IES will be designed with careful consideration of age-appropriate content and interactive methodologies tailored to the diverse needs of each grade level. Recognizing that engagement strategies may vary across developmental stages, the innovation ensures flexibility in content delivery while maintaining a consistent emphasis on fostering a positive and participatory learning environment.

Conclusions

This study reaffirmed the critical importance of delivering engaging learning experiences for the success of learners. After employing the Student Engagement Instrument for Elementary Students (SEI-E) to assess the learners' engagement levels, an intervention in the form of Kumustahan sessions was implemented. The findings highlighted the potential for enhancing engagement through interactive sessions, as evidenced by the positive perceptions expressed by learners in the evaluation survey. The impact of these sessions on engagement was further elucidated through interviews, revealing a dynamic sense of community and improved affective engagement, coupled with positive learning experiences that bolstered cognitive engagement.

Building on these findings, an innovative solution is proposed: the systematic integration of Structured Interactive Engagement Sessions (IES) within the standard academic curriculum. These sessions, strategically designed to cultivate meaningful connections and address learner withdrawal, are envisioned to seamlessly blend into Homeroom Guidance activities across all grade levels (from Kindergarten to Grade 6). This comprehensive approach aims to foster a transformative educational experience centered on sustained learner engagement.

Recommendations

For Teachers. Teachers are encouraged to regularly assess learners' engagement levels, identifying strengths and weaknesses across dimensions. Utilizing the activities from Project GuIDE can serve as a valuable resource to tailor interventions that address the unique needs of their students.

For Parents. Parents play a crucial role in reinforcing engagement efforts. Strengthening partnerships with teachers and actively participating in school-provided activities and engagement sessions can contribute to creating meaningful and engaging learning experiences for their children. Cultivating a harmonious relationship with teachers further supports the learning process.

For School Administrators. School administrators are urged to prioritize learning engagement, recognizing its impact on learners' overall achievement. Taking full responsibility for support, administrators should provide teachers with enriching professional development trainings that equip them with the skills necessary to address learning gaps stemming from low levels of engagement.

For Other Researchers. Future researchers are encouraged to contribute to the body of knowledge on learning engagement by conducting definitive studies that either substantiate or contrast the findings of this research. Exploring additional dimensions and instruments related to learning engagement will enrich the understanding of effective strategies for enhancing learner involvement in educational settings.

VI. Dissemination and Advocacy Plans

Objectives	This study, aimed at enhancing learner engagement, strives to bridge learning gaps and improve overall learning outcomes. Additionally, its objective is to cultivate a deeper understanding of learning engagement, utilizing the garnered results and findings to underscore its educational significance. The plan extends to presenting this understanding to stakeholders, fostering support for sustainability.
Audience	The following will benefit in the dissemination and utilization of the research findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• learners;• parents;• teachers;• researchers;• school administrators;• policy makers; and,• other stakeholders
Timeline	The second cycle of the study is scheduled for the third and fourth quarters of the school year 2023-2024. Preliminary activities, inclusive of planning and preparation, will initiate in the second quarter. The consolidation of data and reporting of findings will be accomplished within May-June 2024, strategically before the end of the school year.
Resources	External resource speakers/facilitators, possessing comprehensive knowledge and experiences related to the study's focus, will be tapped. Material resources, including handouts and reproduction costs, will be sourced from the school funds.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The research findings will serve as the foundation for crafting an innovation centered around engagement sessions.• The process and results of the study will be disseminated to stakeholders through visually appealing infographics and during Parents-Teachers Conferences (PTCs).• Implementation guidelines for the Structured Interactive Engagement Sessions (IES) will be made accessible to both teachers and parents.• Information regarding the project will be widely shared on social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, ensuring that the results reach the broadest possible audience.

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