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Student engagement and academic performance of accountancy, business and management students in Zamboanga del Norte National High School, Dipolog City

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the level of student engagement and its impact on the academic performance of Accountancy, Business, and Management students at Zamboanga del Norte National High School during the 2023-2024 school year. A descriptive correlational research design was used, with 235 respondents participating. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, standard deviation, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho) were employed for data analysis. The findings indicated that students' engagement levels were high, while their academic performance was outstanding. However, no significant relationship was found between student engagement and academic performance. Based on these results, the study recommends that school principals and assistant principals consider other factors that might influence the connection between engagement and academic success. Teachers are encouraged to use these findings to develop strategies that enhance student engagement, while parents may find the research valuable in monitoring their children's participation in school activities. Students, too, could use this study to reflect on their own engagement levels in school.

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Introduction

Student engagement is considered a vital concept in educational psychology due to its theoretical significance and practical applications. It refers to the deliberate and voluntary commitment of an individual focused on completing academic tasks and achieving desired learning outcomes (Okwuduba et al., 2022). Academic performance encompasses factors such as intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits, self-esteem, and the teacher-student relationship. These factors represent learning processes promoted by the school, which involve transforming a given state into a new one, with integrity, cognitive, and structural elements. Performance varies depending on circumstances, as well as organic and environmental conditions that shape skills and experiences.

However, students may face obstacles arising from impulsive decision-making, poor choices, or a lack of knowledge about their academic strand. Such challenges can negatively impact student engagement and hinder academic performance (Avarado, 2019).

This study explores the dimensions of student engagement as key variables that may predict students' academic performance. Teachers play a critical role in fostering student engagement, which in turn enhances academic performance. Students increase their engagement by pursuing mastery goals, which are based on the belief that success can be achieved through persistent effort and continuous improvement (Cooper, 2014). Engagement in classroom and school activities is vital for improving academic performance (Wang et al., 2016). Moreover, students' enthusiasm for business management is a driving force behind their desire to learn business strategies, thereby enhancing their academic performance (Heriyati, 2017).

The present research investigates the complex nature of the educational process, specifically focusing on student engagement and its correlation with academic performance. A significant relationship between student engagement and academic performance has been identified (Campeanu et al., 2023). Teachers have the opportunity to build strong and positive relationships with students, which can improve their behavioral engagement and academic outcomes (Cooper, 2014). Student engagement is also closely tied to school experiences, such as dual enrollment, which in turn affect academic performance (An, 2015). Factors such as student background, psychological states, and academic disciplines also influence both engagement and performance (Gayles & Ampaw, 2014).

While there is a substantial body of research on student engagement, there remains an opportunity to deepen our understanding of its impact on academic performance, particularly within ABM education settings. Previous studies have made significant progress in exploring the correlation between engagement and academic achievement. However, further exploration of the nuanced structures and processes of learning engagement, as perceived by students from various perspectives, is still needed (Okwuduba et al., 2022). This study aims to address these research

gaps by testing and revalidating the structure of student engagement and academic performance using data collected from students at Zamboanga del Norte National High School.

Literature review

Student Engagement

Student engagement is described as active involvement in educational practices, both within and beyond the classroom, leading to various measurable outcomes (Pedler et al., 2020). It also refers to the extent to which students participate in activities that research in higher education has shown to be associated with high-quality learning outcomes (Wong & Liem, 2022). Student engagement is a relevant and current issue worldwide, with research indicating that students who are actively engaged in their learning can be up to seven months ahead of their peers. As a distinct learning process, student engagement has been identified as a key classroom measure that can predict both immediate and future student outcomes globally (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2017).

Behavioral Engagement

Student engagement is a flexible and multifaceted concept encompassing behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement (Pedler, Hudson, & Yeigh, 2020). Behaviorally engaged students follow behavioral norms, such as attending class and participating in activities, and show minimal disruptive or negative behaviors (Wong & Liem, 2022). Behavioral engagement refers to "on-task" behaviors (Witkowski & Cornell, 2015). It is the extent to which students actively engage in educational tasks. Indicators of behavioral engagement include the time and effort devoted to learning activities and the level of interaction with peers, faculty, and staff. Behavioral engagement refers to observable student actions and is most closely aligned with Astin's (1984) original concept of student engagement, which focuses on the quantity and quality of effort invested in learning (Schindler et al., 2017).

Cognitive Engagement

Students who are cognitively engaged are deeply committed to their learning, striving to exceed minimum expectations and enjoying challenges (Wong & Liem, 2022). Cognitive engagement involves the ability to achieve higher-level understanding of material, particularly focusing on Bloom's taxonomy levels such as analysis, evaluation, and creativity (Witkowski & Cornell, 2015). Cognitive engagement refers to the level of students' commitment to learning and the mental effort they invest in understanding and mastering content. Indicators of cognitive engagement include motivation for learning, perseverance in overcoming academic challenges, and efforts to meet or surpass academic standards. Students who are cognitively engaged critically examine information, engage in self-regulation (e.g., setting goals, planning, organizing study efforts, and monitoring learning), and actively create new knowledge (Schindler et al., 2017).

Emotional Engagement

Students who are emotionally engaged experience affective responses such as interest, enjoyment, or a sense of belonging (Wong & Liem, 2022). Emotional engagement reflects a student's attitude toward the subject matter and their interest in the topic. These areas can be assessed through teacher observations and student self-assessments (Witkowski & Cornell, 2015). Emotional engagement refers to students' affective responses to learning. Signs of emotional engagement include attitudes, interests, and values related to learning, as well as a sense of belonging within the learning environment. Emotional engagement is often evaluated through self-report measures, providing insight into students' feelings about a specific topic, teaching method, or instructor (Schindler et al., 2017).

Academic Performance

Academic performance is the result of engaging in high-quality active learning, which requires participation from both educators and students. It goes beyond merely focusing on student grades, as it also promotes self-esteem, which differs from academic self-concept. This leads to high academic achievement, as demonstrated by students' final grades, reflecting their ability to stay engaged and complete their educational program (Boulton et al., 2019). Academic performance tends to decline as students become less engaged when transitioning from primary to secondary education. Moreover, student grades can reflect their level of engagement in the educational process, particularly when motivated by a desire to improve self-efficacy (Campeanu, Boitan, & Anghel, 2023).

Conceptual framework

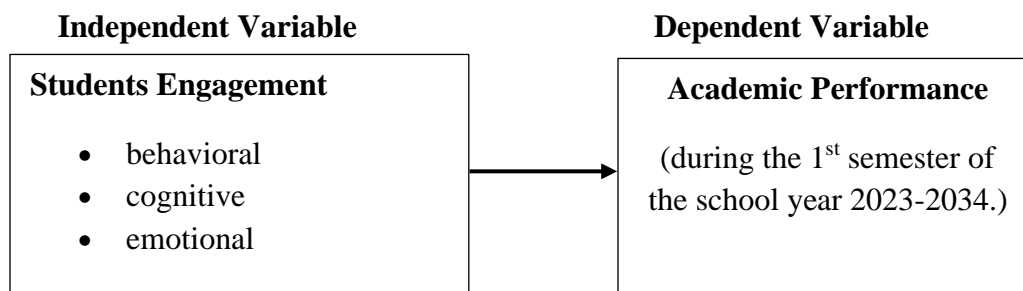


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1. The independent variable, student engagement, is categorized into three dimensions: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. The dependent variable is academic performance, measured during the 1st semester of the 2023-2024 school year.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the student engagement and how it affects the academic performance of the Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) students in Zamboanga del Norte National High School during the school year 2023-2024.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' level of students' engagement in terms of:
 - 1.1 behavioral;
 - 1.2 cognitive; and
 - 1.3 emotional?
2. What is the respondents' level of academic performance in terms of general weighted average during the first semester of school year 2023-2024?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the students' engagement and academic performance?

Hypothesis

The study found no significant relationship between student engagement and academic performance.

Research methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, using a survey method to collect data on student engagement and actual academic performance.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Zamboanga del Norte National High School, Dipolog City, during the 2023-2024 school year.

Population

The study involved 235 ABM students: 112 from Grade 11 and 123 from Grade 12. A complete enumeration was used to select all eligible respondents.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The statistical tools used for data analysis included the Weighted Mean, which quantified the respondents' ratings on student engagement and academic performance, with a scoring guide applied to interpret the responses. The Standard Deviation (SD) was used to assess the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the respondents' scores, where an $SD \leq 3$ indicates homogeneity,

and an $SD > 3$ indicates heterogeneity (Aiken & Susane, 2001; Refugio et al., 2019). Additionally, the Pearson r Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to determine the relationship between student engagement and academic performance.

The following range of values were used:

Students Engagement

Scale	Range of Values	Description	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly agree	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	High
3	2.61-3.40	Somewhat Agree	Average
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

To describe the performance of the respondents, the researcher used the following descriptors, and grading scale based on DepEd Order No.8, Series of 2015.

Students' Academic Performance

Scale	Description	Grading Scale
5	Outstanding	90 – 100
4	Very Satisfactory	85 – 89
3	Satisfactory	80 – 84
2	Fair Satisfactory	75 – 79
1	Did Not Meet Expectation	Below 75

Results

Level of Students' Engagement

Table 1

Level of Students' Behavioral Engagement

A. Behavioral Engagement	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion.	3.66	0.90	Agree	High
2. Raising my hand in class.	3.64	0.85	Agree	High
3. Participating in or small group discussions.	4.05	0.79	Agree	High
4. Doing all the homework problems.	3.93	0.84	Agree	High
5. Coming to class every day.	4.28	0.87	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. Taking good notes in class.	3.77	0.94	Agree	High
7. Getting a good grade.	3.91	0.82	Agree	High
8. Staying up on the readings.	3.60	0.84	Agree	High

9. Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance.	3.28	1.00	Somewhat Agree	Average
10. Come to class without completing readings or assignments.	2.94	1.05	Somewhat Agree	Average
11. Making sure to study on a regular basis.	3.62	0.87	Agree	High
12. Doing well on a test.	3.69	0.83	Agree	High
Overall	3.68	0.73	Agree	High

Source: Delfino, A. P. (2019)

Table 1 displays the level of students' behavioral engagement. The data affirms that the respondents strongly agree that they come to class every day. They also agree that they raise their hands, ask questions in class and contribute to the discussion, participate in group discussion, do all the homework, take notes in class, get a good grade, stay up on the readings, make sure to study regularly, and do good in the test. The respondents somewhat agree that they receive prompt written or oral feedback from the faculty on their academic performance and come to class without completing readings or assignments. Overall, students' behavioral engagement obtained a mean of 3.68 with a standard deviation of 0.73 which is described as agree and interpreted as high. This finding signifies that the level of students' behavioral engagement of Grade 11 and Grade 12 ABM students of Zamboanga del Norte National High School is high. The present finding is supported by Delfino (2019) study which contended that most students generally exhibited a relatively high level of behavior engagement in ABM subjects.

Table 2

Level of Students' Cognitive Engagement

B. Cognitive Engagement	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Made a class presentation.	3.91	0.85	Agree	High
2. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in.	3.43	0.95	Agree	High
3. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from previous sources.	3.80	0.77	Agree	High
4. Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussion.	3.85	0.72	Agree	High
5. Used an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment.	3.71	0.83	Agree	High

6. Discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class.	3.41	0.91	Agree	High
7. Putting forth effort.	3.84	0.83	Agree	High
8. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor.	3.12	1.06	Somewhat Agree	Average
9. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor.	3.26	0.97	Somewhat Agree	Average
10. Work harder than you thought you could do to meet an instructor's standards or expectations.	3.73	0.88	Agree	High
11. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class.	3.60	0.85	Agree	High
12. Going to the professor's office hours to review assignments of tests, or to ask questions.	2.96	1.13	Somewhat Agree	Average
13. Thinking about the course between class meetings.	3.46	0.94	Agree	High
14. Finding ways to make the course interesting to me.	3.82	0.80	Agree	High
15. Looking over class notes between classes to make sure I understand the materials.	3.83	0.77	Agree	High
16. Applying course materials to my life.	3.77	0.83	Agree	High
17. Finding ways to make the course relevant to my life.	3.95	0.80	Agree	High
Overall	3.93	0.68	Agree	High

Source: Delfino, A. P. (2019)

Table 2 reflects the level of students' cognitive engagement. The product conveys that the respondents agree that they made a class presentation, prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in, worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from previous sources, put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussion, used an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment, discussed ideas from readings or classes with faculty members outside of class, put forth effort, work harder than they thought they could do to meet an instructor's standards or expectations, discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class, thinking about the course between class meetings, finding ways to make the course interesting to them, looking over class notes between classes to make sure they understand the materials, applying course materials to their life, and find ways to make the course relevant to their life. The respondents somewhat agree that they used e-mail to communicate with an instructor, discuss

grades or assignments with an instructor, and go to the professor's office hours to review assignments of tests, or to ask questions. Altogether, the student's cognitive engagement obtained an overall mean of 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.68 which is described as agree and interpreted as high. This finding implies that ABM students' cognitive engagement in Zamboanga del Norte National High School is high. The present finding is supported by Delfino (2019) study which contended that most students generally exhibited a relatively high level of cognitive engagement in ABM subjects.

Table 3

Level of Students' Emotional Engagement

C. Emotional Engagement	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Included diverse perspective in class discussions or writing assignments.	3.80	0.79	Agree	High
2. Worked with other students on projects during class.	3.91	0.93	Agree	High
3. Worked with classmates to prepare class assignments.	3.86	0.88	Agree	High
4. Tutored or taught other students paid or voluntary.	3.07	1.19	Somewhat Agree	Average
5. Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course.	3.52	0.98	Agree	High
6. Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious, political opinions, or personal values.	3.74	1.00	Agree	High
7. Really desiring to learn the materials.	4.02	0.81	Agree	High
8. Being confident that I can learn and do well in the class.	3.85	0.80	Agree	High
9. Having fun in class.	4.06	0.91	Agree	High
10. Worked with faculty on activities other than course work.	3.26	0.97	Somewhat Agree	Average
11. Talked about career plans with a faculty member or adviser.	3.48	1.03	Agree	High
Overall	3.64	0.73	Agree	High

Source: Delfino, A. P. (2019)

Table 3 presents the level of students' emotional engagement. According to the table, the respondents agreed that they actively participated in class discussions or writing assignments, collaborated with peers on projects, worked together to prepare class assignments, engaged in community-based projects as part of a regular course, had meaningful conversations with students

from different religious, political, or personal backgrounds, were genuinely eager to learn, felt confident in their ability to succeed in the class, enjoyed the class, and discussed career plans with faculty members or advisers. The respondents somewhat agreed that they tutored or taught other students, either paid or voluntarily, and worked with faculty on activities beyond coursework. Overall, the mean score for emotional engagement was 3.64, with a standard deviation of 0.73, which is classified as "agree" and interpreted as high. This suggests that ABM students at Zamboanga del Norte National High School exhibit a high level of emotional engagement. This finding is consistent with Delfino's (2019) study, which also found that ABM students generally demonstrate a high level of emotional engagement.

Table 4

Summary of the Level of Students' Engagement

Students' Engagement	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
A. Behavioral	3.68	0.73	Agree	High
B. Cognitive	3.93	0.68	Agree	High
C. Emotional	3.64	0.73	Agree	High
Overall	3.57	0.78	Agree	High

Source: Delfino, A. P. (2019)

Table 4 exhibits the summary of the level of students' engagement. The data maintains that students' engagement in terms of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional is high. This finding can be attributed to the fact these SHS learners are already mature and are engaged in different school activities. The present finding is supported by Delfino's (2019) study which contended that most students generally exhibited a relatively high level of engagement in ABM subjects.

Table 5

Level of Academic Performance

Level of Students' Academic Performance

Scale	Grading Scale	Range of Values	Description	F	%	Weighted Mean	Description/ Interpretation
1	below 75	1.00-1.80	Did not Meet Expectations	1	0.43	4.46	Outstanding
2	75-79	1.81-2.60	Fairly Satisfactory	2	0.85		
3	80-84	2.61-3.40	Satisfactory	21	8.94		
4	85-89	3.41-4.20	Very Satisfactory	76	32.34		
5	90-100	4.21-5.00	Outstanding	135	57.45		

Source: DepEd Order No.8, Series of 2015

Table 5 conveys the level of students' academic performance. The result denotes that one hundred thirty-five (135) or 57.45% of the respondents attained outstanding academic performance, seventy-six (76) or 32.24% are very satisfactory, twenty-one (21) or 8.94% are satisfactory, two (2) or 0.85% are fairly satisfactory, and one (1) or 0.43% did not meet expectations. The overall mean is 4.46 which is described and interpreted as outstanding. This finding means that the majority of the ABM students of ZNNHS have outstanding academic performance. The present finding is supported by Dauz (2019) whose study disclosed excellent academic performance of students in ABM.

Table 6

Test of Relationship between the Levels of Students' Engagement and Academic Performance

Students' Engagement	rho-value p-value	Academic Performance	Interpretation
Behavioral	rho-value	0.116	Small/low positive correlation
	p-value	0.076	Not Significant
Cognitive	rho-value	0.126	Small/low positive correlation
	p-value	0.055	Not Significant
Emotional	rho-value	0.061	Negligible/slight positive correlation
	p-value	0.349	Not Significant
Overall	rho-value	0.061	Negligible/slight positive correlation
	p-value	0.349	Not Significant

Source: Delfino, A. P. (2019); DepEd Order No.8, Series of 2015

Table 6 presents the results of the test examining the relationship between students' engagement and academic performance. Using the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho), the analysis reveals a slight positive correlation between student engagement and academic performance. However, this correlation is not statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that student engagement does not significantly influence academic performance. This finding contrasts with Delfino's (2019) study, which found a statistically significant relationship between student engagement and academic performance among ABM students

Discussion

The results of this study reveal an interesting and nuanced perspective on the relationship between student engagement and academic performance. While students in Grade 11 and Grade 12 at Zamboanga del Norte National High School (ZNNHS) demonstrated high levels of engagement across behavioral, cognitive, and emotional dimensions, the study found no significant relationship between this engagement and their academic performance. This result prompts a closer examination of both the nature of student engagement and the factors that contribute to academic success.

First, the high level of student engagement reported in this study reflects the maturity and proactive involvement of students in various school activities. The engagement behaviors observed—such as collaborating with peers, participating in projects, and actively engaging in class discussions—indicate that students at ZNNHS are motivated to participate in their learning environment. These behaviors, particularly when students are engaged emotionally and cognitively, are known to contribute to a positive school experience. They support a deeper connection to the school and to learning itself, which can enhance the overall educational environment.

However, the absence of a significant correlation between student engagement and academic performance suggests that engagement alone is not sufficient to drive high academic achievement. While engaged students are more likely to be involved in school activities and demonstrate commitment to their learning, their academic performance may also be influenced by a variety of other factors. For instance, individual study habits, time management skills, access to academic resources, teacher-student relationships, and even external pressures from home or extracurricular commitments can all play pivotal roles in shaping academic outcomes.

Furthermore, the complexity of academic performance itself may contribute to the lack of a strong connection between engagement and achievement. Academic success is multifaceted and involves not only cognitive abilities but also emotional resilience, self-regulation, and personal motivation. It is possible that while engaged students at ZNNHS are participating in the academic process, other factors—such as the quality of their study practices or their ability to apply learned concepts effectively—may have a more direct impact on their grades and academic results.

In light of these findings, it becomes clear that engagement, while important, is just one piece of the puzzle. The results suggest that for academic performance to improve, other interventions may be necessary. These might include providing students with more effective study strategies, personalized academic support, or additional opportunities for academic enrichment outside of traditional classroom settings. It may also be helpful to explore how engagement can be more closely aligned with academic objectives, ensuring that students are not only active participants but are also effectively applying their engagement to their learning goals.

Consequently, the results of this study highlight the need for a holistic approach to improving academic performance. While student engagement is a valuable indicator of student involvement, its impact on academic achievement appears to be complex and requires further investigation. Future research should consider other variables that might moderate or mediate the relationship between engagement and performance, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how student engagement contributes to academic success

Conclusions

The study reveals that Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at Zamboanga del Norte National High School (ZNNHS) exhibit high levels of engagement due to their maturity and active participation in various school activities. These students demonstrate significant involvement across behavioral, cognitive, and emotional dimensions, collaborating effectively with peers on assignments and projects. While these behaviors suggest a strong commitment to their academic environment, the study found no significant relationship between engagement and academic performance. This suggests that while student engagement is an important aspect of the learning experience, it does not directly correlate with or significantly impact academic achievement. Further research is needed to explore other factors that may contribute to academic success, as engagement alone may not be sufficient in influencing academic outcomes.

Authors Contributions

Josa Mae Ann G. Bellino. Conceptualization of the paper

Shirley G. Bellino. Grammarian of the paper

Leynie Boy G. Bellino. Data Collection

Leo C. Naparota. Writing and editing of the paper

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