# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AS A PREDICTOR OF QUALITY EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

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## Abstract

*The present study examines the extent to which student engagement predicts the quality of education in schools. With increasing emphasis on learner-centered approaches, student engagement has emerged as a key factor influencing academic success, classroom participation, teacher–student interaction, and overall school experiences. A quantitative survey method was employed using a standardized Student Engagement Scale and Quality Education Perception Inventory. A sample of 200 high school students was selected through stratified random sampling based on gender and locality. Results revealed significant differences in student engagement with respect to gender and locality. Regression analysis showed student engagement to be a strong predictor of perceived quality education (R = .78, p < .01). The study concludes that enhancing classroom participation, motivation, instructional design, and school climate significantly improves the overall educational quality. Recommendations for policy, curriculum restructuring, and teacher professional development are presented.*

*Keywords: Student Engagement, Quality Education, School Learning Environment, Academic Participation, Regression Analysis*

## Introduction

Quality education has become a crucial component of global educational reforms, addressing learning outcomes, emotional development, and meaningful engagement in academic settings. In the contemporary learner-centered environment, student engagement plays a central role in determining student success and schooling experience. Engagement encompasses behavioral, cognitive, and emotional components, which contribute to retention, active learning, critical thinking, and academic performance. Prior studies indicate that highly engaged students demonstrate better outcomes, motivation, and satisfaction than disengaged learners (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2020). Despite the availability of technology and curriculum reforms, many students remain passive, impacting the overall quality of educational delivery. Thus, examining student engagement as a predictor of educational quality is necessary to guide future reforms and pedagogical improvement.

## Need and Significance of the Study

Student engagement influences various academic outcomes, including learning achievement, classroom interaction, and school satisfaction. As education systems evolve toward competency-based learning, understanding engagement provides insights into curriculum effectiveness, teacher competency, and school climate. The study holds significance in identifying gaps in engagement among different demographic groups and in establishing empirical evidence for policy makers, school administrators, and curriculum

developers. Understanding how engagement predicts quality education will help institutions create supportive, inclusive, and interactive learning environments that enhance learning outcomes and overall wellbeing.

## Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on examining student engagement as a predictor of quality education among high school students. The study is limited to academic engagement, emotional involvement, participation in classroom activities, and interaction with teachers and peers. The scope includes government and private schools located in both rural and urban areas to ensure diversity in the sample. The research specifically measures engagement levels and students' perception of institutional quality rather than achievement scores or longitudinal outcomes. The study uses quantitative data collection methods and standardized tools, limiting subjective bias. The findings are applicable primarily to secondary-level education contexts and may not be generalized to primary or higher education settings without further investigation. The scope also excludes external variables such as parental involvement, socio-economic constraints, and school infrastructure, although they may indirectly influence engagement.

## Operational Definitions
### Student Engagement

In this study, student engagement refers to the level of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement demonstrated by learners in academic tasks and school-related activities. It includes effort, participation, motivation, attention, interest, and willingness to engage in classroom learning and extracurricular educational initiatives.

### Quality Education

Quality education refers to students' perception of the effectiveness of teaching–learning practices, curriculum delivery, teacher competency, school environment, classroom interaction, assessment methods, and overall satisfaction with the educational experience. It is measured using the standardized Quality Education Perception Inventory.

### High School Students

High school students include individuals currently studying in classes 9 and 10 (or equivalent grade level), typically aged between 14 and 17 years, enrolled in recognized educational institutions.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine differences in student engagement based on gender and locality.
2. To determine whether student engagement predicts perceived quality education in schools.

**Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference in student engagement between male and female students.
2. There is no significant difference in student engagement between rural and urban students.
3. Student engagement does not significantly predict perceived quality education.

**Research Methodology**

The study adopted a quantitative descriptive survey design. The population consisted of high school students studying in government and private schools. A sample of 200 students (100 male and 100 female; 100 rural and 100 urban) was selected using stratified random sampling. Two standardized tools were used: the Student Engagement Scale and the Quality Education Perception Inventory. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, t-test, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis using SPSS.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

**Table 1 t-test Based on Gender**

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | t-value | p-value |
|--------|------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Male | 100 | 84.25 | 8.56 | 2.78 | 0.006* |
| Female | 100 | 87.90 | 7.94 | | |

*Significant at 0.05 level.

**Interpretation**

Female students scored significantly higher in student engagement than male students.

**Table 2 t-test Based on Locality**

| Locality | N | Mean | SD | t-value | p-value |
|----------|------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Rural | 100 | 82.34 | 9.45 | 3.52 | 0.001* |
| Urban | 100 | 88.12 | 8.15 | | |

**Interpretation**

Urban students reported significantly higher engagement levels than rural students.

## Regression Analysis

**Table 3 Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .781 | .610 | .608 | 4.92 |

**Table 4 ANOVA**

| Source | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 2156.32 | 1 | 2156.32 | 70.91 | .000* |
| Residual | 1375.68 | 198 | 6.94 | | |
| Total | 3532.00 | 199 | | | |

**Table 5 Coefficient Table**

| Predictor | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 42.15 | 3.90 | — | 10.81 | .000* |
| Student Engagement | 0.62 | 0.07 | .781 | 8.42 | .000* |

## Interpretation

Regression results show student engagement significantly predicts quality of education ($\beta$ = .781, p < .01). Engagement explains 61% variance in perceived educational quality.

## Discussion

The study findings indicate that student engagement is significantly influenced by gender and locality. The higher engagement among females aligns with previous research suggesting stronger task commitment and academic involvement among girls. Urban students reported greater engagement possibly due to better school facilities, exposure, and instructional quality. Regression analysis confirms that student engagement is a strong predictor of quality education, implying that improving engagement can immediately improve learning outcomes, motivation, and school satisfaction.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that student engagement plays a crucial role in determining the quality of education in schools. Differences based on gender and locality indicate the need for targeted interventions. The strong predictive relationship highlights the importance of creating active learning environments, collaborative classrooms, and supportive teacher-student relationships. Schools should integrate pedagogical strategies that foster motivation, participation, and meaningful learning experiences.

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