

A Study on Student Engagement Among School Students

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Abstract—The present study investigated on student engagement among school students. The research was conducted with the sample of 800 secondary school students from government schools affiliated with the Punjab School Education Board, S.A.S., Nagar, Mohali. Stratified random sampling technique was used to collect the sample. The research employed a descriptive research design, utilizing standardized tool, including Student engagement scale by Lam et al. (2014). The results revealed that a significant gender and locale-wise differences were found in student engagement among school students. Female and urban school students showed better student engagement than male and rural school students. These findings emphasize the need to address gender and locale disparities in student engagement. Lower engagement among male and rural students indicates gaps in resources and support. Addressing these disparities is essential for promoting equitable learning opportunities, improving overall academic outcomes and ensuring that no group of students is disadvantaged due to gender or geographical location. This study also showed the importance of fostering student engagement to enhance overall students' development, offering implications for educators, policymakers, and parents.

Index Terms—Student engagement, school students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a structured and continuous process through which an individual acquires knowledge, skills, experiences, and positive attitudes. Its primary aim is to develop a well-rounded and capable individual. Education is not limited to a single form; it can be formal, informal, or non-formal. In formal education, the role of the teacher is crucial in shaping and guiding students toward progress and success. Education is considered a fundamental pillar of a developed and powerful nation, as it plays a vital role in promoting growth and prosperity. In its broadest

sense, education includes all experiences that influence an individual's mind, character, and physical abilities. In a more specific or technical sense, it refers to the deliberate process through which society transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to the next. Since the earliest stages of human existence, education has been essential for survival and development. It serves as a powerful tool that enhances various aspects of life, enabling individuals to effectively apply what they have learned in both personal and professional contexts. In today's era of science and technology, education is a key factor in determining the well-being and advancement of society. Although education often occurs under the guidance of teachers, individuals can also engage in self-learning. It helps people lead a life of happiness and prosperity by encouraging positive thinking and informed decision-making. Education equips individuals to face life's challenges, overcome failures, and achieve success. It enables them to realize their full potential and become responsible and contributing members of society. Therefore, education is essential for developing a sound mind and achieving a successful life.

Student engagement has become a central focus in the field of educational psychology and school education, as it directly influences students' learning outcomes, academic achievement, and overall development. In modern classrooms, simply attending school is no longer considered sufficient; instead, how actively students participate in learning activities determines the effectiveness of education. Student engagement refers to the level of interest, attention, curiosity, and involvement that students show in the learning process. Engaged students are more likely to understand concepts deeply, perform better academically and develop positive attitudes toward school. On the other hand, disengaged students may

exhibit boredom, lack of motivation, and poor academic performance. Student engagement is a multidimensional concept that reflects the degree to which students are actively involved in their learning. It is commonly divided into three key dimensions:

- Behavioural engagement:

This includes students' participation in academic, social, and extracurricular activities. Examples include attending classes, completing assignments, and participating in discussions.

- Emotional engagement:

This refers to students' feelings toward school, teachers, and learning. It includes interest, enjoyment, or a sense of belonging, as well as negative emotions like boredom or anxiety.

- Cognitive engagement:

This involves the level of investment in learning, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and willingness to put effort into understanding complex concepts.

With the rapid changes in teaching methods, including digital learning and interactive pedagogy, understanding student engagement has become even more important. Researchers emphasize that engagement is not only influenced by students' individual characteristics but also by teachers, classroom environment, teaching strategies, and peer interactions. Therefore, a study on student engagement among school students aims to examine how and why students participate in learning activities and to identify factors that enhance or hinder their engagement in the classroom.

A thorough review of related literature pointed out that significant gender differences in student engagement among secondary school students. Female students show significantly high engagement as compared to male students. The results are supported by Veiga et al. (2014), Abubakar et al. (2017), Sharma (2018), Abdullah & Singh (2019), Hartono et al. (2019), Malini (2020), Mckeering et al. (2021), Singh (2022), Kumar (2023), Parveen & Jan (2023) and Singhi & Anmol (2025) revealed that significant gender differences are found in student engagement among secondary school students. Contrary, the study of Veiga et al. (2014), Glapaththi et al. (2019) and Sabu & Roy (2025) reported that no gender differences in

student engagement among secondary school students. The findings also revealed that there are significant locale-wise differences in student engagement among secondary school students. Urban students have significantly more student engagement as compared to rural students. The findings are similar to the present study by Abubakar et al. (2017) and Singh (2022) reported that there are significant locale-wise differences in student engagement among secondary school students. On the other hand, the results of the present study are in contrast with the finding of Sharma (2018) and Parveen & Jan (2023) reported that no significant locale-wise differences are found in student engagement among secondary school students.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is highly significant in the field of education and educational psychology, as it helps in understanding how various social and demographic factors influence students' involvement in learning. This study provides insight into how engagement levels may differ between male and female students. Understanding gender-based differences can help educators design teaching strategies that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all learners. It also helps in identifying whether certain groups are less engaged and require additional academic or emotional support. It examining locale-wise differences (such as rural and urban areas) is important because the learning environment, availability of resources, teaching methods, and socio-economic conditions often vary significantly between these settings. This study can highlight inequalities in educational opportunities and suggest ways to bridge the gap between different regions. Furthermore, this study is useful for teachers, school administrators, and policymakers. Teachers can adopt more effective and engaging classroom practices, while policymakers can develop targeted educational programs and policies to improve student engagement across diverse groups. This research also contributes to improving the overall quality of education by promoting equal participation and reducing disparities among students. It ensures that all learners, regardless of gender or location, receive fair opportunities to actively engage in the learning process. Finally, the study is significant because student engagement is closely linked to academic achievement, motivation, and school retention. By

understanding the variations in engagement, appropriate interventions can be developed to enhance students' interest, participation, and success in school.

III. OBJECTIVES

- To compare gender differences in student engagement among school students.
- To compare locale-wise differences in student engagement among school students.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method of research was used to conduct this study. Following research tool was used in the present study:

Student engagement scale by Lam et al. (2014) is used by researcher. The scale consists of 34 items which includes three dimensions. These are

- (i) affective engagement
- (ii) behavioral engagement
- (iii) cognitive engagement.

To determine the internal consistency of student engagement scale, Cronbach's alpha formula and Test-Retest method were used for checking the reliability. Cronbach's alpha reliability and Test-Retest method's reliability coefficient came out to be 0.78 and 0.73 respectively.

Sample

The study was conducted a sample of 800 Government secondary school students from Punjab, state. The sample was selected using stratified random sampling technique. The sample was included 367 male and 433 female students, ensuring representation across gender. Out of the total sample, 450 urban and 350 rural students were randomly selected. Three districts- Hoshiarpur, Patiala and Mansa were selected on the basis of their literacy rate. Six Govt. schools were randomly chosen from each district, with three from rural areas and three from urban areas.

V. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The data was analysed using t-test to study the significance of gender and locale-wise differences in student engagement among school students.

Gender Differences in Student engagement among School Students

In order to find out the significant of gender differences in student engagement among school students, t-test was applied.

Table I Gender Differences in Student Engagement among Secondary School Students

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Student Engagement	Male	367	127.56	6.61	2.74*
	Female	433	131.04	8.57	

** $p < 0.01$

The table shows that mean score of male school students on student engagement is 127.56 and SD is 6.61. The mean score of female school students on student engagement is 131.04 and 8.57. The t-value testing the significance of gender differences came out to be 2.74, which is significant at 0.01 level. This implies that there is a significant gender difference in student engagement of school students. Further the mean score of female school students is significantly higher than mean score of male school students. It shows that female school students have better student engagement than male school students.

Locale-wise Differences in Student engagement among School Students

In order to find out the significant of locale-wise differences in student engagement among school students, t-test was applied.

Table II Locale-wise Differences in Student Engagement among Secondary School Students

Variable	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Student Engagement	Urban	450	133.22	8.42	2.73*
	Rural	350	129.68	7.73	

** $p < 0.01$

The table shows that mean score of urban school students on student engagement is 133.22 and SD is 8.42. The mean score of rural school students on student engagement is 129.68 and 7.73. The t-value testing the significance of locale-wise differences

came out to be 2.73, which is significant at 0.01 level. This implies that there is a significant locale-wise difference in student engagement of school students. Further the mean score of urban school students is significantly higher than mean score of rural school students. It shows that urban school students have better student engagement than rural school students. From the results of the present study, it may be concluded that there was a significant gender difference in student engagement among school students. Female school students have better student engagement than male school students. Further, results revealed that there was a significant locale-wise difference in student engagement among school students. Urban school students have better student engagement than rural school students. The findings of the study are important in the field of education and educational psychology as they highlight significant differences in student engagement based on gender and locale. The result showing that female students have higher engagement than male students is important for educators and policymakers. It indicates the need to understand the reasons behind lower engagement levels among male students and to develop strategies that can increase their interest, participation, and motivation in learning activities. This can help in creating a more balanced and inclusive classroom environment. Similarly, the finding that urban students are more engaged than rural students is significant because it reflects disparities in educational resources, teaching methods, and learning environments. This suggests a need for improving facilities, teaching quality, and learning opportunities in rural schools to enhance student engagement. These findings are also important for teachers, as they can modify their teaching methods according to the needs of different groups of students. Special attention can be given to less engaged groups to ensure equal participation in the learning process. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing gender and regional differences to improve student engagement, which is closely linked to better academic performance, reduced dropout rates, and overall educational development.

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