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## Article

**Examining Teachers' Engagement in Classroom Practices in Basic Education**

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the various dimensions of teacher engagement and their impact on instructional effectiveness in primary education. Data were collected using a comprehensive questionnaire from a representative sample of teachers and administrators. The findings provide a detailed overview of the perceptions and engagement of administrators and teachers in professional development, school activities, and relationships with co-teachers. Both administrators and teachers recognize the critical role of professional development in educational success, though teachers rate certain aspects slightly higher, indicating room for alignment in perceptions. School activities are perceived positively by both groups, with strong agreement on the importance of involving staff, parents, and students in decision-making processes. However, administrators feel a stronger sense of shared responsibility and mutual support. The most significant difference is observed in the relationships with co-teachers, where administrators report higher levels of collaboration and resource sharing compared to teachers. This highlights the need for initiatives to enhance teacher collaboration and ensure consistent engagement across all domains. Overall, while there is a general consensus on the importance of professional growth and collaborative practices, the disparities in perceptions underscore areas for potential improvement to foster a more cohesive and supportive educational environment.

**Keywords:** Teacher engagement, instructional effectiveness, professional development, school activities



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**Introduction**

Primary education serves as the foundation for lifelong learning, playing a crucial role in shaping children's cognitive, social, and emotional development (Bjorklund, 2022). At this stage, students

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acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills that are essential for their future educational endeavors and overall personal growth (Clarion, 2024). The significance of primary education cannot be overstated, as it lays the groundwork for all subsequent learning and development (Webb et al., 2019). Research highlights that primary education not only imparts basic academic skills but also plays a pivotal role in fostering social and emotional competencies. These competencies include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, which are critical for personal and social success (Sgaramella et al., 2022). Developing these skills early in life helps children navigate social interactions, manage their emotions, and build resilience, are essential for their overall well-being and future success.

Teacher engagement in classroom practices encompasses a range of behaviors and attitudes that reflect teachers' commitment to their students and their profession (Laurmann & Berger, 2021). This engagement includes active involvement in lesson planning, instructional delivery, classroom management, and student assessment. Engaged teachers are those who continuously seek to improve their teaching methods, interact positively with their students, and adapt to the diverse learning needs of their classrooms (Han, 2021). This multifaceted concept is essential for creating a dynamic and effective learning environment (Sarah E. McKellar et al., 2020).

The impact of teacher engagement on teaching effectiveness and student outcomes is profound (Xu et al., 2020). Engaged teachers are more likely to implement innovative teaching strategies, provide individualized support to students, and foster a positive classroom climate (Pedler et al., 2020). This, in turn, enhances student motivation, participation, and academic achievement. Research has shown that when teachers are deeply engaged in their instructional practices, students benefit from higher quality education and are more likely to succeed academically and socially (Adam J. Lekwa et al., 2019).

In recent years, the educational landscape has experienced significant changes, particularly with the integration of innovative instructional strategies and the adoption of technological advancements (Oke & Fernandes, 2020). Digital tools and resources have become integral to modern teaching, offering new ways to engage students and enhance learning (Dash, 2022). These advancements have transformed traditional educational practices, making education more accessible and interactive (Tuma, 2021). However, despite these technological innovations, the core of effective education still relies heavily on the active engagement of teachers (Tiffany A. Roman et al., 2021).

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the extent and nature of teachers' engagement in classroom practices within the context of basic education. It aims to identify the factors that enhance or hinder teacher engagement and to understand how engaged

teachers contribute to better educational outcomes. The study also emphasizes the importance of creating supportive and empowering environments for teachers, which are crucial for sustaining their engagement and effectiveness.

To achieve these objectives, the research will investigate various aspects of teacher engagement. It will also examine the challenges and barriers teachers face in maintaining their engagement, and the strategies they employ to overcome these obstacles. By providing a comprehensive analysis of teacher engagement, this study seeks to offer practical recommendations for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to enhance the quality of primary education.

## Methodology

The descriptive research method was utilized in this study to systematically describe and analyze the data and characteristics of the population under study. This approach was chosen for its ability to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of teachers' engagement in classroom practices, as well as to identify the perceived issues and concerns reported by the teachers. The descriptive method addresses the fundamental questions of who, what, where, when, and how, allowing the research to capture a detailed snapshot of the present conditions. Teachers' engagement questionnaire was adopted from the study of Inge (2005) and OECD (2013). The study focused on gathering quantitative \data from a representative sample of teachers. A structured research instrument, such as a survey or questionnaire, was employed to collect data from the respondents. This instrument was designed to measure various dimensions of teacher engagement. Once the data were collected, they were subjected to a thorough descriptive analysis. This analysis involved summarizing the data using statistical measures, employing the descriptive research method, this study was able to provide valuable insights into the levels of teacher engagement in classroom practices.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1. Professional Engagement

| Indicators  | Administrator |    | Teachers |    |
|---|---------------|----|----------|----|
|   | Mean          | VD | Mean     | VD |
| The continued professional development of teacher was considered vital to the success of our school.  | 4.05          | A  | 4.42     | SA |
| The professional development activities that have been provided for us by our school and district are aligned with student achievement goals identified in our SIP. | 4.02          | A  | 4.00     | A  |

|  |      |   |      |    |
|--|------|---|------|----|
| Our school developed a school wide professional development plan versus allowing teachers to select their own professional development activities. | 3.85 | A | 4.36 | SA |
| The administration at our school monitors the amount of participation by teachers in professional development activities.                          | 4.20 | A | 3.82 | A  |
| Our school provide different activities for teacher's professional development.  | 4.02 | A | 4.20 | A  |
| Grand Mean   | 4.03 | A | 4.16 | A  |

Table 1 presents the findings on professional engagement among administrators and teachers, highlighting their perceptions of professional development activities. Both groups acknowledge the critical role of continued professional development for school success, with administrators (Mean = 4.05) slightly less enthusiastic than teachers (Mean = 4.42). Both groups similarly rate the alignment of professional development activities with student achievement goals in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) (Administrators Mean = 4.02; Teachers Mean = 4.00). There is a notable difference in perceptions of school-wide professional development plans, with administrators (Mean = 3.85) less positive than teachers (Mean = 4.36). The administration's monitoring of teacher participation in professional development is rated higher by administrators (Mean = 4.20) than teachers (Mean = 3.82), indicating strong administrative oversight. Both groups agree that their schools provide various professional development activities (Administrators Mean = 4.02; Teachers Mean = 4.20). The grand means (Administrators = 4.03; Teachers = 4.16) reflect overall positive perceptions of professional development practices. In conclusion, there is general agreement on the importance and implementation of professional development, with minor differences in perceptions suggesting areas for improvement in communication and planning. This shared commitment to professional growth is essential for enhancing educational outcomes and fostering continuous improvement in schools.

Table 2. School Activities

| Indicators   | Administrator |    | Teachers |    |
|--|---------------|----|----------|----|
|  | Mean          | VD | Mean     | VD |
| This school provides staff with opportunities to participate in school decisions                         | 4.05          | A  | 3.65     | A  |
| This school provides parents or guardians with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions | 3.75          | A  | 3.82     | A  |
| This school provides students with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions             | 4.6           | SA | 4.42     | SA |
| This school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues                                     | 4.54          | SA | 3.6      | A  |

|   |      |    |      |    |
|---|------|----|------|----|
| There is a collaborative school culture which is characterized by mutual support. | 3.75 | A  | 3.82 | A  |
| Teachers get along well with the school leadership.                               | 4.6  | SA | 4.46 | SA |
| Grand Mean  | 4.25 | SA | 4.02 | A  |

Table 2 reveals perceptions of school activities among administrators and teachers, focusing on participation in school decisions, shared responsibility, collaborative culture, and relationships with school leadership. Both groups recognize efforts to involve staff in decision-making, with administrators rating this slightly higher (Mean = 4.05) than teachers (Mean = 3.65). Opportunities for parents to participate in decisions are similarly acknowledged by both groups (Administrators Mean = 3.75; Teachers Mean = 3.82). Strong agreement exists on student participation in school decisions, rated highly by both administrators (Mean = 4.6) and teachers (Mean = 4.42). A notable difference is seen in perceptions of shared responsibility, with administrators rating it very highly (Mean = 4.54) compared to teachers (Mean = 3.6). Both groups agree on a collaborative school culture (Administrators Mean = 3.75; Teachers Mean = 3.82) and positive relationships with school leadership (Administrators Mean = 4.6; Teachers Mean = 4.46). The grand mean scores reflect overall positive perceptions, with administrators (4.25) viewing the environment slightly more favorably than teachers (4.02). The data suggests general satisfaction with school activities, though areas such as shared responsibility and mutual support could be improved to enhance teacher involvement and foster a more inclusive educational environment.

Table 3. Relationship with co-teachers

| Indicators  | Administrator |    | Teachers |    |
|---|---------------|----|----------|----|
|   | Mean          | VD | Mean     | VD |
| Teachers Engage in discussions about the learning development of specific students                                    | 4.25          | SA | 4.05     | A  |
| Work with other teachers in my school to ensure the use of common standards in evaluations assessing student progress | 4.35          | SA | 3.67     | A  |
| Engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g., projects)                                   | 4.28          | SA | 4        | A  |
| Exchange teaching materials with colleagues   | 4.8           | SA | 3.5      | A  |
| Attend team conferences   | 4.25          | SA | 3.45     | A  |
| Take part in collaborative professional learning  | 4.35          | SA | 4        | A  |
| Weighted Mean   | 4.40          | SA | 3.72     | A  |

Table 3 presents findings on the relationship with co-teachers among administrators and teachers, focusing on collaboration and professional interactions. Both groups recognize the importance of discussing the learning development of specific students, with administrators rating this higher (Mean = 4.25) than teachers (Mean = 4.05). Administrators

also rate the use of common standards in evaluations more highly (Mean = 4.35) compared to teachers (Mean = 3.67). Both groups agree on the value of joint activities across different classes, but administrators rate this higher (Mean = 4.28) than teachers (Mean = 4.00). A significant difference is seen in the exchange of teaching materials, with administrators rating this very highly (Mean = 4.8) compared to teachers (Mean = 3.5). Attendance at team conferences is rated higher by administrators (Mean = 4.25) than teachers (Mean = 3.45). Participation in collaborative professional learning is rated positively by both groups, though administrators rate it slightly higher (Mean = 4.35) than teachers (Mean = 4.00). The overall weighted mean scores show administrators (4.40) perceive higher levels of collaboration and professional interaction among co-teachers compared to teachers (3.72). The data suggests generally positive perceptions of co-teacher relationships, with areas for improvement in fostering consistent collaboration and resource sharing among teachers. Enhancing these practices is crucial for a supportive and effective educational environment.

Table 4. Significant relationship

| Teacher Engagement            | Mean | Std Dev | p - value | Decision            |
|-------------------------------|------|---------|-----------|---------------------|
| Professional                  | 4.02 | 0.17    | 0.218     | Failed to reject Ho |
|                               | 4.16 | 0.18    |           | not significant     |
| School Activities             | 4.25 | 0.39    | 0.520     | Failed to reject Ho |
|                               | 4.02 | 0.32    |           | not significant     |
| Relationship with co-teachers | 4.41 | 0.20    | 0.041     | Reject Ho           |
|                               | 3.72 | 0.27    |           | significant         |

Table 4 presents the findings on the significant differences in teacher engagement across three domains: Professional Engagement, School Activities, and Relationship with Co-Teachers. The table includes the mean scores, standard deviations, p-values, and decisions regarding the null hypothesis (Ho) for each domain. In the domain of Professional Engagement, the mean scores for administrators and teachers are 4.02 and 4.16, respectively, with standard deviations of 0.17 and 0.18. The p-value for this comparison is 0.218, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is not rejected, indicating that there is no significant difference between administrators and teachers in terms of professional engagement. For School Activities, the mean scores are 4.25 for administrators and 4.02 for teachers, with standard deviations of 0.39 and 0.32, respectively. The p-value is 0.520, which also exceeds the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho) is not rejected, suggesting that there is no significant difference between the two groups regarding



their engagement in school activities. However, in the domain of Relationship with Co-Teachers, the mean score for administrators is significantly higher at 4.41 compared to 3.72 for teachers, with standard deviations of 0.20 and 0.27, respectively. The p-value for this comparison is 0.041, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, indicating a significant difference between administrators and teachers in their relationships with co-teachers.

## Conclusion

The findings provide a detailed overview of the perceptions and engagement of administrators and teachers in professional development, school activities, and relationships with co-teachers. Both administrators and teachers recognize the critical role of professional development in educational success, though teachers rate certain aspects slightly higher, indicating room for alignment in perceptions. School activities are perceived positively by both groups, with strong agreement on the importance of involving staff, parents, and students in decision-making processes, although administrators feel a stronger sense of shared responsibility and mutual support. The most significant difference is observed in the relationships with co-teachers, where administrators report higher levels of collaboration and resource sharing compared to teachers. This highlights the need for initiatives to enhance teacher collaboration and ensure consistent engagement across all domains. Overall, while there is a general consensus on the importance of professional growth and collaborative practices, the disparities in perceptions underscore areas for potential improvement to foster a more cohesive and supportive educational environment.

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