

Article

Exploring Teachers' Engagement in Instructional Endeavors in The Context of Basic Education

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Abstract:

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the learning experiences of students and ensuring their academic growth and development. The level of engagement exhibited by teachers in their instructional endeavors has a profound impact on student outcomes and the overall effectiveness of the educational system. This research assessed the level of teachers' engagement in instructional endeavors in the context of basic education of public elementary schools. The findings reveal that both administrators and teachers emphasize the importance of professional development, with a high mean rating for its significance. However, there is a significant difference in perception regarding school activities and the relationship with co-teachers, where administrators rate these aspects higher than teachers. The study highlights the need for improved collaboration, shared decision-making, and a supportive school culture. Additionally, strategies employed by teachers, such as creating instructional materials and collaborating with colleagues, are highly valued. On the other hand, concerns such as heavy workload, lack of parental support, outdated professional development strategies, inadequate facilities, and overcrowding in schools are identified as key issues that need to be addressed. Understanding these differences in perception among stakeholders can guide efforts to enhance teacher-student relationships, instructional practices, and overall educational outcomes.

Keywords: Teachers Engagement, Instructional Endeavors, Basic Education

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Introduction

It's common knowledge that teaching is one of the toughest jobs around, what with all the expectations placed on teachers and the

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constant need to meet the unique requirements of each student (Blewitt et al., 2021). Unfortunately, the career path for teachers is essentially flat, and those with years of experience in the classroom but little in the way of leadership roles are rarely recognized or rewarded (Mincu, 2022). In addition, recent decades have seen a shift in educational policy that recognizes teachers' active participation in the classroom as a key to raising student accomplishment (Pont, 2020).

Moreover, high levels of teacher engagement, as measured by things like good teacher-student interaction and effective teaching assistance, have been shown to create a social atmosphere conducive to students' success in the classroom (Thornberg et al., 2022). Teacher involvement also has a role in raising students' interest in learning and their academic performance. As a result, it is crucial for schools to be able to attract and keep highly trained and motivated professionals by ensuring that teaching professions provide ample chances for professional growth and meaningful contributions to educational improvement. Improved career options for educators may be sought out for the purpose of fostering new knowledge and maintaining a sense of enthusiasm for one's own teaching, as well as for the purpose of expanding one's professional network and lending aid to others with whom one works (Shikalepo, 2020). Without these types of chances, according to Smith et al. (2020) teachers who want to progress their careers have no choice except to shift into administrative positions in schools.

Although teaching is one of the greatest professions that bring changes to society, nation, and the world, it is yet to receive the respect it deserves. The occupation that produces leaders, entrepreneurs, social activists, and professionals is often downplayed by many (Ipek, 2022). Many of the highly potential teachers would attest to the fact that they don't get sufficient time to plan and implement their ideas. Teachers face a lot of pressure from management, administration, and parents for the completion of the course. It brings us to the point of non-teaching tasks that are often handed over to the teachers in schools. They are loaded with surveys, documentation, typing exam papers, scorecard preparations, admissions, and much more. These jobs can be performed by administrative staff equally efficiently, and teachers would get ample time to prepare for their lessons (Halupa, 2019).

Given that teachers engagement are key determinants of successful students learning, it is not surprising that some government initiatives have been directed at the management of teachers' performance and at supporting them in their professional development (Hennessy, 2022). Where management action is taken, it may involve a variety of staff from inside and outside the school, both in communicating the nature of the alleged poor performance and in offering professional development support to remediate performance (Maida, 2020).

Moreover, an accurate identification of the causes underlying poor teacher performance would assist school managers in informing the nature of any training provided, guide the nature of any work reorganization undertaken, and help direct the nature of the support and lack of teacher's engagement (Callan et al., 2021). For example, engaging skills coaching to enhance teacher questioning technique as a means to raise poor pupil attainment would be inappropriate if the underlying cause of poor teacher performance was inadequate subject knowledge (Pedler et al., 2020).

According to Meyer et al. (2019) all phases of a teacher's career have the potential for varying commitments, and potential for declining commitment is perhaps most vulnerable in the latter phases of teachers' careers. The fear of educational policy makers is not that experienced teachers may leave the profession because of professional stagnation. Okyar (2023) support for teachers is important because once they hit the classroom, they often feel lonely and isolated. In addition, teachers often lack the practical resources and knowledge needed to run a successful classroom. It is also important to tell teachers how you are supporting their work. According to Tan et al. (2019) teacher support promotes academic competence and prevents problematic behaviors in the classroom. However, the extent of teacher's engagement received remains unknown. Thus, understanding teachers need is crucial in attaining quality education.

The existing literature has highlighted the potential decline in commitment among teachers, particularly in the later phases of their careers, which raises concerns about professional stagnation and its consequences. However, there is a gap in examining how this declining commitment and potential isolation experienced by teachers translate into their engagement levels in the classroom. Understanding the factors that contribute to or hinder teachers' engagement and exploring the specific support needed to foster their engagement is essential for creating effective strategies and interventions to promote quality education. Therefore, there is a need for further research that investigates the level of teachers' engagement in instructional endeavors, identifies the factors influencing their engagement, and explores the specific support mechanisms required to enhance their engagement throughout their careers. Such research would provide valuable insights for educational policymakers, administrators, and stakeholders to develop targeted initiatives and interventions to support and empower teachers in their vital role as instructional leaders in basic education.

Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study was a descriptive method, which aimed to describe and analyze data regarding the extent of teachers' engagement and the perceived issues and concerns among

teachers in the identified schools. The study gathered data through the use of a research instrument, specifically a checklist that included demographic information such as age, gender, highest educational attainment, years in service, and relevant training and seminar attendance. The extent of teachers' engagement was assessed using a scale adapted from previous studies conducted by Inge (2005) and OECD (2013). By utilizing this methodology, the study sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current conditions and characteristics of the teachers and administrators involved, shedding light on their engagement levels and identifying any significant factors or challenges that may affect their instructional endeavors. These data were analyzed and interpreted in order to arrive at a more conclusive statements and implications of the results. The findings of the study will serve as basis in formulating an action plan. This study utilizes the 5-point Likert Scale from 5 to “strongly agree” to 1 “Disagree”.

Results and Discussions

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.	4.4	SA	4.2	A
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.	4.4	SA	4.05	A
Our school developed a school wide professional development plan versus allowing teachers to select their own professional development activities.	4.2	A	3.95	A
The administration at our school monitors the amount of participation by teachers in professional development activities.	4.2	A	4.4	SA
Our school provide different activities for teacher's professional development.	4	A	4.25	SA
Grand Mean	4.24	SA	4.17	A

Table 1 shows the respondent groups perception in terms of professional engagement. Based on the data gathered, the statements refer to continued professional development of teacher was considered vital to the success of our school and professional development activities that have been provided for us by our school and district are aligned with student achievement goals identified in our SIP got the highest weighted mean of 4.4 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statements refer to school developed a school wide

professional development plan versus allowing teachers to select their own professional development activities and administration at our school monitors the amount of participation by teachers in professional development activities got the lowest weighted mean of 4.2 which verbally described as agree. Meanwhile, teachers on the other hand, the statement refers to administration at our school monitors the amount of participation by teachers in professional development activities got the highest weighted mean of 4.4 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statement refers to, school developed a school wide professional development plan versus allowing teachers to select their own professional development activities got the lowest weighted mean of 3.95 which verbally described as agree. Overall, administrator got the final weighted mean of 4.24 while the teachers got the overall weighted mean of 4.17 which verbally described as agree. Manasia et al. (2019) emphasized that teachers' professional engagement is critical to the success of the education system. Engaged teachers are more effective in the classroom, leading to improved student learning outcomes. Moreover, Hursen (2021) noted that when teachers are committed to their profession and continually strive to improve their skills and knowledge, they create a more dynamic learning environment, resulting in better academic achievement. This indicates that teacher professional engagement is critical to creating a high-quality education system that meets the needs of all students. By investing in teacher engagement, we can improve student learning outcomes, promote teacher well-being, and build a more dynamic and effective education community.

Table 2. School Activities

Indicators	Administrator		Teachers	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
This school provides staff with opportunities to participate in school decisions	4.2	A	3.55	A
This school provides parents or guardians with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions	4	A	3.6	A
This school provides students with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions	4.6	SA	4.2	A
This school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues	4.8	SA	3.6	A
There is a collaborative school culture which is characterized by mutual support.	5	SA	4.2	A
Teachers get along well with the school leadership.	4.8	SA	3.6	A
Grand Mean	4.57	A	3.79	A

Table 2 shows the respondent groups perception in terms of school activities. Based on the data gathered, the statements refer to school has a culture of shared responsibility for school issues and teachers get along well with the school leadership got the highest weighted mean of 4.8 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statements refer to school provides parents or guardians with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions got the lowest weighted mean of 4 which verbally described as agree. Meanwhile, teachers on the other hand, the statement refers to school provides students with opportunities to actively participate in school decisions and there is a collaborative school culture which is characterized by mutual support got the highest weighted mean of 4.2 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statement refers to, school provides staff with opportunities to participate in school decisions got the lowest weighted mean of 3.55 which verbally described as agree. Overall, administrator got the final weighted mean of 4.57 while the teachers got the overall weighted mean of 3.79 which verbally described as agree. According to Kaufmann et al. (2022) teachers' participation in school activities is essential to building a sense of community and fostering a positive learning environment. Teachers who participate in school activities, such as sports events, cultural celebrations, and extracurricular activities, have an opportunity to build relationships with their students outside the classroom (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). This indicates that teachers' participation in school activities is crucial to building a positive and inclusive school community. By engaging in school events and supporting their students' interests and passions, teachers can help to create a more vibrant and supportive learning environment that benefits all students.

Table 3. Strategies

Indicators	Administrator		Teachers	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
I develop and create instructional materials to enhance students' participation.	4	A	4.7	SA
I collaborate with other teachers to administer a standardized test.	4.8	SA	4.65	SA
I have individual students answer questions in front of the class.	4.2	A	4.55	SA
I provide written feedback on student work in addition to a letter grade or numeric score	4	A	4.25	SA
I observe students when working on particular tasks and provide immediate feedback.	4.6	SA	5	SA
Grand Mean	4.32	SA	4.63	SA

Table 8 shows the respondent groups perception in terms of strategies. Based on the data gathered, the statements refer to I collaborate with other teachers to administer a standardized test got the highest weighted mean of 4.8 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statements refer to, I develop and create instructional materials to enhance students' participation and I provide written feedback on student work in addition to a letter grade or numeric score and I provide written feedback on student work in addition to a letter grade or numeric score got the lowest weighted mean of 4 which verbally described as agree. Meanwhile, teachers on the other hand, the statement refers to I observe students when working on particular tasks and provide immediate feedback got the highest weighted mean of 5 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statement refers to, I provide written feedback on student work in addition to a letter grade or numeric score got the lowest weighted mean of 4.25 which verbally described as agree. Overall, administrator got the final weighted mean of 4.32 while the teachers got the overall weighted mean of 4.63 which verbally described as agree. Wang et al. (2020) noted that teachers' strategies can help to create a positive and supportive learning environment and by fostering a sense of community and collaboration in the classroom, teachers can encourage students to support one another and work together towards common goals. Moreover, effective teaching strategies can help students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Alkhatib (2019). This indicates that teachers' strategies are essential to creating a successful and engaging learning environment.

Table 4. Relationship with co-teachers

Indicators	Administrator		Teachers	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
Teachers Engage in discussions about the learning development of specific students	5	A	4.05	A
Work with other teachers in my school to ensure the use of common standards in evaluations assessing student progress	4.6	A	3.9	A
Engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g., projects)	4.6	A	4	A
Exchange teaching materials with colleagues	4.8	A	3.5	A
Attend team conferences	4.6	A	3.45	A
Take part in collaborative professional learning	5	A	4	A
Weighted Mean	4.77	A	3.82	A

Table 4 shows the respondent groups perception in terms of relationship with co-teachers. Based on the data gathered, the

statements refer to teachers Engage in discussions about the learning development of specific students and take part in collaborative professional learning got the highest weighted mean of 5.0 which verbally described as strongly agree, while the statements refer to, work with other teachers in my school to ensure the use of common standards in evaluations assessing student progress, engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g., projects) and attend team conferences got the lowest weighted mean of 4.6 which verbally described as strongly agree. Meanwhile, teachers on the other hand, the statement refers to I teachers Engage in discussions about the learning development of specific students got the highest weighted mean of 4.05 which verbally described as agree, while the statement refers to attend team conferences got the lowest weighted mean of 3.45 which verbally described as agree. Overall, administrator got the final weighted mean of 4.77 while the teachers got the overall weighted mean of 3.82 which verbally described as agree. Chan et al. (2021) emphasized that teachers who have positive relationships with their colleagues, administrators, and other staff members have a support network that can help them through challenging times. This network can provide emotional support, practical advice, and professional development opportunities. In addition, Marz & Kelchtermans (2020) suggested that teachers who have strong relationships with their colleagues are more likely to collaborate on projects and share resources. This indicates that a teacher's relationship with others is critical to creating a supportive and effective learning environment. By building a support network, collaborating for student success, fostering a positive school culture, enhancing professional growth, and building trust with parents and the wider community, teachers can help to create a successful and engaging learning environment for all students.

Table 5. Test of Significant Difference

Teacher Engagement	Mean	Std Dev	p - value	Decision
Professional	4.24	0.17	0.537	Failed to reject Ho
	4.17	0.18		not significant
School Activities	4.57	0.39	0.004	Reject Ho
	3.79	0.32		significant
Strategies	4.32	0.36	0.165	Failed Reject Ho
	4.63	0.27		Not significant
Relationship with co-teachers	4.80	0.20	0.001	Reject Ho
	3.82	0.27		significant

Table 5 presents the data in terms of significant difference on the respondent groups perception on the teacher's engagement. Finding

showed that Teacher Professional Engagement (Administrator perception) and Teacher Professional Engagement (Teacher's perception) was not statistically significant, $t(8) = 0.65, p = .537$, 95% confidence interval $[-0.18, 0.32]$. In terms of difference between School Activities (Administrator perception) and School Activities (Teacher's perception) data shows that it was statistically significant, $t(10) = 3.79, p = .004$, 95% confidence interval $[0.32, 1.23]$. Strategies (Administrator perception) and Strategies (Teacher's perception) showed that it was not statistically significant, $t(8) = -1.53, p = .165$, 95% confidence interval $[-0.78, 0.16]$. Moreover, difference between Relationship with co-teachers (Administrator perception) and Relationship with co-teachers (Teacher's perception) was statistically significant, $t(9) = 6.73, p = <.001$, 95% confidence interval $[0.65, 1.31]$.

Table 6. Perceived Issues and Concerns

Issues	Rank
Heavy workload	1
Lack of parental support	2
Outdated Professional Development Strategies	3
Lack of facilities in school environment	4
Overcrowding in schools	5

Table 11 presents the issues and concerns in terms of teacher's engagement. The identified issues and concerns related to teachers' engagement are as follows: heavy workload, lack of parental support, outdated professional development strategies, lack of facilities in the school environment, and overcrowding in schools. The heavy workload placed on teachers, ranked as the top issue, can lead to high levels of stress and burnout, ultimately impacting their engagement and effectiveness in the classroom. To address this, schools and administrators should consider implementing strategies to alleviate teachers' workload, such as providing adequate planning time, streamlining administrative tasks, and promoting a healthy work-life balance. By reducing the burden on teachers, they can devote more time and energy to engaging with their students. The second concern, the lack of parental support, highlights the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents in supporting student learning. Schools can foster stronger parent-teacher partnerships by establishing open lines of communication, hosting regular parent-teacher conferences, and involving parents in school activities. Encouraging parental involvement can create a supportive environment that enhances teachers' engagement and reinforces the value of education at home. Outdated professional development strategies, ranked as the third issue, hinder teachers' growth and engagement. To address this, educational institutions should prioritize providing relevant and ongoing professional development opportunities that align with

current pedagogical approaches, technological advancements, and changing student needs. Offering personalized, job-embedded professional development can empower teachers, enhance their skills, and promote their continued engagement in their profession.

The fourth concern, the lack of facilities in the school environment, can adversely affect teachers' engagement and instructional effectiveness. Insufficient resources, outdated infrastructure, and inadequate technology can impede teachers' ability to create an engaging learning environment. School administrators should prioritize investing in necessary resources, upgrading facilities, and providing access to modern educational technology to support teachers in delivering high-quality instruction. Lastly, overcrowding in schools presents a significant challenge to teachers' engagement. Large class sizes can limit individual attention, increase behavior management issues, and reduce the overall effectiveness of instruction. To mitigate this concern, schools can explore strategies such as implementing class size limits, hiring additional teachers or support staff, and creating smaller learning communities within larger schools. By reducing overcrowding, teachers can better connect with students, tailor instruction to individual needs, and foster a more engaged learning environment. Addressing these issues and concerns requires a collaborative effort from educational stakeholders, including policymakers, school administrators, teachers, parents, and the community. By acknowledging and actively working to overcome these challenges, schools can create an environment that supports and enhances teachers' engagement, leading to improved educational outcomes for all students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, this indicates that there are significant differences in perception regarding the extent of teachers' engagement in instructional endeavors among different stakeholders in the education system. While there was no significant difference in perception between administrators and teachers in terms of professional engagement, there were notable differences in their views on school activities and the relationship with co-teachers. The administrators rated higher in these areas compared to the teachers. These findings highlight the need for improved collaboration and shared decision-making between teachers and administrators, as well as the importance of creating a supportive and collaborative school culture. Additionally, the study identified several issues and concerns that need to be addressed, including heavy workload, lack of parental support, outdated professional development strategies, lack of facilities, and overcrowding in schools. Addressing these issues is crucial for creating an environment that promotes teachers'

engagement in instructional endeavors and enhances overall educational outcomes.

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