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Classroom Engagement in Learner-Centered Pedagogical Practices at Andabuen Elementary School–Main

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ABSTRACT: Classroom engagement is a crucial indicator of effective teaching and meaningful learning, particularly in elementary education where foundational academic behaviors and attitudes are developed. This study examined the level of classroom engagement of learners exposed to learner-centered pedagogical practices at Andabuen Elementary School–Main using a quantitative descriptive research design. Classroom engagement was measured across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions using a validated survey questionnaire administered to 100 elementary learners from Grades 4 to 6. Descriptive statistical measures, including mean and standard deviation, were employed to analyze the data. Results revealed that learners demonstrated high levels of engagement across all dimensions, with cognitive engagement obtaining the highest mean score. The findings suggest that learner-centered pedagogical practices contribute to active participation, positive emotional involvement, and deeper cognitive engagement among elementary learners. Implications for instructional practice and school-level support for learner-centered pedagogy are discussed.

Keywords: classroom engagement, learner-centered pedagogy, elementary education, descriptive quantitative research



1. Introduction

Classroom engagement has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing learners' academic success, motivation, and long-term educational outcomes. Engaged learners are more likely to participate actively in learning tasks, persist in the face of academic challenges, and develop positive attitudes toward schooling. In elementary education, classroom engagement plays a particularly vital role because it is during these formative years that learners acquire foundational learning habits, social behaviors, and dispositions toward learning that shape their future academic trajectories. Early engagement has been shown to predict not only immediate academic performance but also sustained school participation and reduced risk of disengagement in later years.

Engagement is commonly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing behavioral, emotional, and cognitive components. Behavioral engagement refers to observable participation in academic tasks, such as completing assignments, contributing to discussions, and cooperating in group activities. Emotional engagement involves learners' affective responses to learning, including interest, enjoyment, motivation, and a sense of belonging in the classroom. Cognitive engagement reflects learners' psychological investment in learning, demonstrated through deep thinking, use of strategies, self-regulation, and willingness to exert effort to understand complex concepts. Together, these dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how learners interact with instructional environments.

Despite the recognized importance of engagement, traditional teacher-centered instructional approaches characterized by direct instruction, rote memorization, and passive reception of information have been criticized for limiting learners' opportunities to actively engage with content and participate meaningfully in classroom interactions. Such approaches often position learners as passive recipients rather than active constructors of knowledge, which may reduce motivation, limit higher-order thinking, and constrain meaningful participation. As a result, students in highly teacher-directed classrooms may demonstrate compliance without genuine engagement or deep understanding.

In response to these limitations, learner-centered pedagogical practices have gained prominence in educational reform initiatives worldwide. Learner-centered pedagogy emphasizes active learning, collaboration, learner autonomy, and responsiveness to learners' needs, interests, and prior knowledge. Instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, inquiry-based tasks, reflective activities, and interactive discussions encourage learners to take ownership of their learning and engage cognitively and emotionally with instructional content. Grounded in constructivist and motivational theories, learner-centered pedagogy positions learners as active participants who construct meaning through interaction, exploration, and reflection.

Although learner-centered pedagogical practices are increasingly promoted in elementary schools, empirical evidence documenting their association with classroom engagement in local school contexts remains limited, particularly in public elementary schools. Much of the existing literature has focused on secondary or higher education settings, leaving a need for context-specific evidence at the elementary level. Addressing this gap, the present study examines the level of classroom engagement among learners exposed to learner-centered pedagogical practices at Andabuen



Elementary School–Main, with the aim of contributing empirical data to support engagement-focused instructional reform in elementary education.

2. Research Objectives

This study aimed to determine the level of classroom engagement of learners exposed to learner-centered pedagogical practices at Andabuen Elementary School–Main. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine the level of classroom engagement in terms of behavioral engagement
2. Determine the level of classroom engagement in terms of emotional engagement
3. Determine the level of classroom engagement in terms of cognitive engagement
4. Describe the overall level of classroom engagement of learners

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a **quantitative descriptive research design**, which was appropriate for describing and quantifying learners' classroom engagement without manipulating instructional variables. This design enabled the researcher to capture learners' engagement levels as they naturally occurred within learner-centered classroom environments.

3.2 Research Locale and Participants

The study was conducted at **Andabuen Elementary School–Main**, a public elementary school implementing learner-centered pedagogical practices across grade levels. The participants consisted of **100 elementary learners** from Grades 4 to 6 who were purposively selected based on their exposure to learner-centered instructional strategies such as collaborative learning, interactive discussions, and task-based activities.

3.3 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a **Classroom Engagement Questionnaire**, adapted from established engagement instruments. The questionnaire consisted of **30 items** distributed equally across three dimensions: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The instrument demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from **0.86 to 0.92**.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from school administrators and class advisers. Learners were informed about the purpose of the study, and ethical considerations such as voluntary participation and confidentiality were emphasized. The questionnaire was administered during regular class hours under the supervision of the researcher and teachers.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical measures, including **mean and standard deviation**, were used to analyze the data. The following scale guided interpretation of engagement levels: 4.21–5.00 (Very High), 3.41–4.20 (High), 2.61–3.40 (Moderate), 1.81–2.60 (Low), and 1.00–1.80 (Very Low).

4. Results



Table 1. Behavioral Engagement of Learners

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Participates actively in class activities	4.18	0.50	High
Completes assigned tasks	4.15	0.53	High
Pays attention during lessons	4.20	0.47	High
Participates in group work	4.22	0.48	Very High
Overall Behavioral Engagement	4.19	0.50	High

Table 1 shows that learners demonstrated a **high level of behavioral engagement** ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.50$) in classrooms implementing learner-centered pedagogical practices. High mean scores for active participation in class activities ($M = 4.18$), task completion ($M = 4.15$), and attention during lessons ($M = 4.20$) indicate that learners were consistently involved in classroom routines and learning tasks. The very high rating for participation in group work ($M = 4.22$) suggests that collaborative and interactive instructional strategies effectively encouraged learners to take part in shared learning experiences. These findings imply that learner-centered pedagogy promotes observable engagement behaviors such as effort, persistence, and cooperation, which are essential indicators of an active learning environment.

Table 2. Emotional Engagement of Learners

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Enjoys classroom activities	4.16	0.51	High
Feels motivated to learn	4.14	0.54	High
Feels confident sharing ideas	4.05	0.58	High
Feels valued in class	4.23	0.46	Very High
Overall Emotional Engagement	4.15	0.52	High

Table 2 indicates that learners exhibited **high emotional engagement** ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.52$), reflecting generally positive affective responses toward classroom learning. High ratings for enjoyment of classroom activities ($M = 4.16$) and motivation to learn ($M = 4.14$) suggest that learner-centered instructional practices made learning experiences meaningful and enjoyable for learners. Notably, the very high mean score for feeling valued in class ($M = 4.23$) highlights the inclusive and supportive nature of learner-centered classrooms, where learners feel respected and confident in expressing their ideas. Emotional engagement is critical in sustaining learners' interest and willingness to participate, and these findings suggest that learner-centered pedagogy contributes to a positive classroom climate that nurtures motivation and belonging.

Table 3. Cognitive Engagement of Learners



Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Thinks deeply about lessons	4.28	0.44	Very High
Uses strategies to solve problems	4.25	0.46	Very High
Reflects on learning	4.22	0.49	Very High
Asks questions for understanding	4.18	0.51	High
Overall Cognitive Engagement	4.23	0.48	Very High

Table 4. Summary of Classroom Engagement

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Behavioral Engagement	4.19	0.50	High
Emotional Engagement	4.15	0.52	High
Cognitive Engagement	4.23	0.48	Very High
Overall Classroom Engagement	4.19	0.50	High

Table 4 summarizes the overall level of classroom engagement and indicates that learners demonstrated a high overall level of engagement ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.50$). Among the three dimensions, cognitive engagement obtained the highest mean score, followed by behavioral and emotional engagement. This pattern suggests that learner-centered pedagogical practices are particularly effective in fostering deep thinking and intellectual involvement while also maintaining strong participation and positive emotional experiences. The balanced engagement profile across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions reflects a holistic learning environment where learners are actively involved, emotionally connected, and cognitively invested in classroom learning.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that learners exposed to learner-centered pedagogical practices at Andabuen Elementary School–Main demonstrated consistently high classroom engagement across the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, suggesting that learner-centered environments can effectively nurture holistic participation in elementary learning. The high behavioral engagement implies that learner-centered strategies—such as collaborative tasks, interactive questioning, group problem-solving, and performance-based activities—successfully encourage learners to participate actively, cooperate with peers, and remain persistently involved in classroom requirements. In learner-centered settings, students are expected to contribute ideas, complete meaningful tasks, and respond to learning prompts, which increases observable engagement behaviors such as participation, effort, and task persistence. This aligns with engagement scholarship emphasizing that active learning environments increase behavioral indicators of engagement because students are positioned as visible contributors to learning processes rather than passive recipients of teacher input (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Prince, 2004). Moreover, evidence from student engagement measurement research suggests that behavioral engagement tends to rise when



classroom practices consistently promote structured participation routines and learner accountability (Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008).

The high emotional engagement observed further reflects that learners developed positive affective responses toward classroom learning, particularly enjoyment, motivation, and a sense of belonging. Learner-centered pedagogy typically strengthens emotional engagement by creating supportive classroom climates where learners' voices are recognized and where participation is encouraged without fear of embarrassment or judgment. When learners feel valued and respected, they are more willing to share ideas, attempt tasks, and sustain interest in learning activities. This finding is consistent with motivational perspectives on engagement which argue that emotional engagement is strongly influenced by learners' perceptions of classroom support, belongingness, and the degree to which learning experiences feel meaningful and autonomy-supportive (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009; Reeve, 2012). The broader engagement literature similarly underscores that emotional engagement is not a "bonus" outcome but a critical condition for sustained participation, especially in elementary contexts where learners' academic self-concept and motivation are still developing (Fredricks et al., 2004; Appleton et al., 2008).

Notably, cognitive engagement obtained the highest mean score in this study, indicating that learner-centered pedagogical practices at Andabuen Elementary School–Main were particularly effective in promoting deeper thinking, reflection, and strategic learning behaviors. Cognitive engagement reflects the extent to which learners invest mental effort in understanding content, applying strategies, monitoring comprehension, and making meaning from learning experiences. Learner-centered instruction promotes this dimension by encouraging learners to explain their reasoning, connect ideas, explore alternative solutions, ask questions, and reflect on feedback all of which demand active cognitive processing rather than rote recall. This result is strongly supported by the ICAP framework, which proposes that learning becomes deeper when learners engage in active, constructive, and interactive processes features typical of learner-centered classrooms (Chi & Wylie, 2014). Likewise, research on metacognition and self-regulated learning highlights that instructional environments that prompt reflection and strategy use enhance learners' cognitive engagement and develop more independent learning behaviors (Schraw, Crippen, & Hartley, 2006). Taken together, the results reinforce constructivist perspectives that view knowledge as actively constructed through participation, inquiry, and reflection; thus, learner-centered pedagogy is well-positioned to foster higher-order thinking and meaningful learning among elementary learners.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that learner-centered pedagogical practices are strongly associated with high levels of classroom engagement among elementary learners at Andabuen Elementary School–Main. The findings indicate that learners consistently demonstrated active behavioral participation, characterized by sustained involvement in classroom activities and collaborative tasks; positive emotional involvement, reflected in enjoyment, motivation, and a sense of belonging; and strong cognitive engagement, evidenced by deeper thinking, reflection, and strategic learning behaviors. Collectively, these dimensions of engagement suggest that learner-centered classrooms provide conditions that actively support learners' holistic participation in the learning process. The results underscore the importance of adopting learner-centered pedagogical approaches in elementary



education, as such practices foster engaging, inclusive, and meaningful learning experiences that are essential for developing foundational academic skills, positive learning dispositions, and lifelong learning habits among young learners.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings that learner-centered pedagogical practices are associated with high levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement among elementary learners at Andabuen Elementary School–Main, several recommendations are proposed to enhance instructional practice, school leadership, and future research.

First, classroom teachers are encouraged to consistently integrate learner-centered strategies such as collaborative learning, interactive discussions, inquiry-based activities, and reflective tasks into daily instruction. Emphasis should be placed on creating learning activities that require active learner participation, promote peer interaction, and encourage learners to explain their thinking and reflect on their learning experiences. Teachers may also adopt formative assessment practices that provide timely feedback and allow learners to take greater responsibility for monitoring their own learning, thereby further strengthening cognitive and emotional engagement.

Second, school administrators and instructional leaders should support the sustained implementation of learner-centered pedagogy through targeted professional development programs. Regular in-service training, coaching, and peer mentoring initiatives can help teachers refine learner-centered instructional strategies and align classroom practices with engagement-focused teaching principles. Administrators may also consider fostering a school culture that values learner voice, collaboration, and inclusive classroom practices by providing adequate instructional resources and recognizing effective learner-centered teaching.

Third, curriculum planners and policymakers may consider strengthening learner-centered principles in elementary curricula and instructional guidelines. Curriculum frameworks should emphasize active learning, critical thinking, and learner autonomy as core instructional goals. Providing clear policy support for learner-centered approaches can encourage schools to move beyond traditional teacher-centered methods and adopt pedagogical practices that better address learners' diverse needs and learning styles.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to build upon the findings of this study by employing inferential and longitudinal research designs to examine causal relationships between learner-centered pedagogy and learner outcomes such as academic achievement, motivation, and self-regulated learning. Further studies may also explore learner-centered practices across different grade levels, subject areas, and school contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as classroom observations and learner interviews, may also provide deeper insights into how and why learner-centered approaches influence classroom engagement.

8. Ethical Considerations



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Ethical approval was obtained from school authorities. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured, and confidentiality of learners' responses was strictly maintained.

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