ONLINE ISSN: 3007-3197 | PRINT ISSN: 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 7 (2025)

Relationship between Teacher-Students Interaction and Students Engagement

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Article Details

Key Words: Teacher Student Interaction, Student's Engagement

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to find out relationship between teacher-students interaction and students engagement. The purpose of this study is to find out relationship between teacher-students interaction and students engagement. The population of the study consisted of (759) elementary school teachers and universal random sampling technique was used for the selection of the sample of teachers (254). The study was descriptive in nature and survey method was used to collect the data from the respondents. Five point Likert scale was used for gathering the responses from the respondents. The questionnaire was validated by two experts from the Department of Education, University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Data were collected through personal visits. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 22 was used for the analysis of data. It is concluded that most of the respondents were agreed that teacher-student interaction plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience and academic success of students, particularly at the elementary level. It is recommended teachers may foster an open and inclusive environment by building stronger relationships with students, encouraging open communication, and utilizing strategies like anonymous feedback channels and peer mentoring systems. Professional development programs can support teachers in effective student engagement. This interaction creates a foundation for meaningful communication, fostering trust and mutual understanding, which are essential for student engagement. Research highlights that when teachers establish positive relationships with students, it enhances their motivation to learn, participation in classroom activities, and overall academic performance

INTRODUCTION

Teacher-student interaction plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience and academic success of students, particularly at the elementary level. This interaction creates a foundation for meaningful communication, fostering trust and mutual understanding, which are essential for student engagement. Research highlights that when teachers establish positive relationships with students, it enhances their motivation to learn, participation in classroom activities, and overall academic performance (Wire, 2023).

Engaged students are more likely to enjoy learning, exhibit higher levels of curiosity, and develop a sense of belonging in the classroom environment. Effective teacher-student interaction involves not only the dissemination of knowledge but also active listening, encouragement, and responsiveness to students' needs. At the elementary level, students are in a critical developmental stage where they require consistent guidance and support from teachers. Warm and supportive interactions can help students develop self-confidence and resilience, enabling them to take risks in their learning processes. Furthermore, active teacher involvement can mitigate disengagement and reduce behavioral issues among students (Lee & Thomas, 2023).

The importance of teacher-student interaction extends beyond academics, influencing social-emotional development as well. Elementary students often look to their teachers as role models, and positive interactions can nurture a sense of respect and empathy in young learners. Teachers who employ interactive teaching methods, such as collaborative projects and personalized feedback, are more likely to foster higher levels of student engagement, creating an inclusive and stimulating learning atmosphere. According to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, the role of interaction in education is crucial for cognitive development, as it enables students to learn within their "zone of proximal development" with the support of a teacher or peer (Masud, et al., 2019).

Teacher-student interaction is a cornerstone of effective education, particularly at the elementary level, where foundational learning and character development occur. The quality and frequency of interaction between teachers and students have been shown to significantly impact students' cognitive, emotional, and social engagement. Positive teacher-student relationships can lead to an enhanced sense of belonging, which is essential for young learners to thrive in a structured educational setting (Hooks, 2015).

Engagement at the elementary level is a multidimensional concept that encompasses behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects. Behavioral engagement refers to students' active participation in

academic and extracurricular activities, while emotional engagement involves positive relationships and a sense of connectedness with the school. Cognitive engagement, on the other hand, entails deep investment in learning, such as applying effort to understand complex concepts (Herman, et al., 2020). Research suggests that teachers who maintain high-quality interactions characterized by warmth, clarity, and encouragement are more likely to promote these dimensions of engagement in their students.

The interaction between teachers and students also contributes to classroom dynamics and the overall learning climate. For instance, teachers who provide constructive feedback and show genuine interest in their students' well-being can cultivate a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. In contrast, negative or inconsistent interactions can lead to disengagement, alienation, and even academic underperformance among students (Sano, et al., 2022). Furthermore, teachers who employ student-centered teaching strategies, such as interactive discussions and hands-on activities, tend to witness higher levels of engagement, as these methods resonate well with the developmental needs of elementary learners.

Culturally responsive teaching also highlights the importance of teacher-student interaction. At the elementary level, students from diverse backgrounds bring varying experiences, languages, and values to the classroom. Teachers who acknowledge and incorporate these differences into their teaching practices can strengthen students' sense of identity and increase their engagement. Studies emphasize that when teachers demonstrate cultural awareness and adapt their communication styles to meet the needs of their students, they can build stronger connections and facilitate deeper learning experiences (Simonton, & Garn, 2019).

Teacher-student interaction is widely regarded as a critical factor influencing student engagement at the elementary level, shaping both academic outcomes and personal development. This interaction serves as the medium through which teachers communicate expectations, provide emotional support, and foster a collaborative learning environment. According to Alam and Mohanty, (2023) positive teacher-student relationships help children develop a sense of security and trust, which are vital for active engagement. Elementary school is a formative period where students' attitudes toward learning are established, and nurturing teacher-student interactions can lay the groundwork for lifelong educational success.

Engagement, as a concept, extends beyond mere participation in classroom activities to include emotional attachment, intellectual curiosity, and social involvement. Teachers play a key role in stimulating these aspects of engagement through effective communication, encouragement,

and creating a safe space for expression. For instance, when teachers acknowledge students' efforts and provide constructive feedback, students are more likely to feel motivated and take ownership of their learning process (Mayers & Pianta, 2008).

Moreover, teacher-student interaction is deeply intertwined with the socio-emotional development of elementary students. At this stage, children are highly impressionable and benefit immensely from teachers who demonstrate empathy, patience, and understanding. Research by Wentzel (1998) indicates that students who perceive their teachers as supportive are more likely to exhibit prosocial behavior and engage actively in the classroom. Furthermore, supportive teacher-student relationships help students develop resilience, enabling them to face academic challenges with confidence.

In recent years, the role of teacher-student interaction in promoting equitable learning opportunities has also gained attention. With classrooms becoming increasingly diverse, teachers must adapt their communication styles and teaching strategies to cater to varied cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Studies have shown that culturally responsive interactions not only enhance engagement but also improve students' self-efficacy and academic achievement (Patnaik & Subban. 2023).

Finally, the integration of technology in education has added a new dimension to teacher-student interaction. Digital tools, such as interactive learning platforms and virtual classrooms, offer innovative ways for teachers to connect with students and foster engagement. However, the effectiveness of these tools depends largely on how teachers leverage them to build meaningful relationships and encourage active participation. Research suggests that a balance between traditional face-to-face interactions and technology-mediated engagement can lead to optimal learning outcomes (Corpurz, et al., 2023).

Such practices underscore the importance of acknowledging and valuing the unique experiences that each student brings to the classroom. Additionally, positive interactions can reduce anxiety and behavioral issues, further contributing to a conducive learning environment.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

The study aims to find out relationship between teacher-students interaction and students engagement at elementary level in city Kotli AJ&K. Therefore, the study was descriptive in nature and survey method used to collect the data from the respondents. The population of the study was consisted of seven fifty nine (759) students from Government boys elementary Schools of city Kotli AJ&K. three hundred students were selected as sample by using Random sampling technique was

used for the selection of sample from the population. Sample was selected by using Gay (2009) table. The researcher developed a five-point Likert scale questionnaire for the student to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was consisted of two section First section consisted of (15) statements, second section consisted of ten (15) statements. Hence, the questionnaire was consisted of 30 statements. The questionnaire was validated by two experts from the Department of Education, University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir. For pilot testing, the questionnaire was distributed among 25 elementary level school students who were not part of the final survey. The purpose of pilot testing was to check the readability and reliability of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was measured through Cronbach's alpha statistical technique with the help of SPSS software version 22. The reliability of the instrument was 0.84 which was acceptable for the further research. The researcher personally visited all the Govt. boy elementary Schools of city Kotli and collected the data from the heads teachers. A statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 22 was used for the analysis of data. The researcher applied frequency, percentage and mean scores for the analysis and interpretation of data.

DATA ANALYSIS

TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF TEACHER STUDENT INTERACTION

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I believed that I am socially responsible.	300	4.18	.911
2. I feel responsible for helping society	300	4.19	.910
3. I value social responsibility as a student.	300	4.18	.920
4. I think social activities help me to grow.	300	4.16	.935
5. I make an effort to reduce use of plastic.	300	4.10	.964
6. I recycle regularly.	300	4.14	.964
7. I turn off lights and electronics when not i use.	300	4.13	.976
8. I participate in charity events or fundraisers.	300	4.19	.907
9. I am involved in a community organization.	300	4.18	.900
10. I am aware of social justice issues of community.	300	4.17	.899
11. I educate myself about diverse cutlers.	300	1.90	.775
12. I speak out against discrimination.	300	4.15	.940
13. I support organizations working towards social justices.	300	4.16	.908
14. I always cite sources properly in my university work.	300	4.19	.897

15. I follow university policies on academic integrity.	300	4.17	.928

Table 1 show that the given statements reflect a strong sense of personal, social, and academic responsibility among students. They demonstrate an awareness of social and environmental issues, such as valuing social responsibility, participating in community efforts, recycling, and reducing plastic use. These behaviors show the student's commitment to contributing positively to society and promoting sustainability. Additionally, the statements indicate a proactive attitude toward social justice by speaking out against discrimination, staying informed about diverse cultures, and supporting related organizations. On the academic side, the student upholds integrity by properly citing sources and adhering to university policies. Overall, the responses highlight a well-rounded individual who takes their roles seriously in social, environmental, and academic contexts. While the mean score shows that respondents were strongly in favor of the statements.

TABLE 2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT'S ENGAGEMENT

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I have made close friends at university.	300	4.17	.905
2. I feel comfortable participating in class discussion.	300	4.22	.872
3. I receive positive feedback from my peers	300	4.23	.864
4. I regularly attend campus events and activities.	300	4.23	.863
5. I participate in student organizations.	300	4.23	.863
6. I feel engaged through social work.	300	4.25	.849
7. Giving time to community projects feel valuable	300	1.89	.815
8. I engage in online discussion with my peers.	300	4.16	.904
9. I participate in group projects.	300	4.23	.863
10. I feel motivated to solve social issues.	300	3.98	1.015
11. I receive emotional support by my university friends.	300	4.16	.921
12. My university has successfully integrated social response into its culture.	300	4.16	.915
13. I feel social work improves my team works.	300	1.74	.820
14. My academic success is linked to my social response activities.	300	4.28	.826
15. I see social response as a fundamental part of a student's personal growth.	300	4.30	2.487

Table 2 shows that the statements reflect a strong sense of social and academic integration among university students, highlighting the importance of peer relationships, active participation, and community involvement. Students who build close friendships, feel comfortable in discussions, and receive positive peer feedback tend to be more engaged in both academic and extracurricular activities. Their involvement in campus events, student organizations, and group projects indicates a commitment to collective learning and social engagement. Participation in social work and community projects is seen not only as valuable but also as a means of developing teamwork skills, emotional support networks, and personal growth. Moreover, when universities foster a culture of social responsibility, students feel more motivated to address social issues, linking their academic success with meaningful societal contributions. This suggests that social responsiveness is not only beneficial for students' interpersonal development but also plays a crucial role in their educational journey. While the mean score shows that respondents were strongly in favor of the statements.

TABLE 3: CORRELATION BETWEEN TEACHER STUDENT INTERACTION AND STUDENTS ENGAGEMENT

Variables	Mean	SD	R	P	Sig
Teacher student interaction	60.19	11.731	.891	.000	
students engagement	58.09	6.082			

Table 3 shows that the correlation between the teacher students interaction and students engagement. Table further show that there was a significant correlation found between students interaction (Mean= 60.19, SD= 11.731) and students engagement (Mean= .58.09, SD= 6.082) as correlation p=.000. The value of person correlation r=.891 indicated that there is significant relationship between teacher students interaction and students engagement.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study show that most students have a positive view of their teachers' behavior in the classroom. A very high percentage of students agreed that teachers encourage class participation, treat students equally, make lessons interesting, and appreciate their efforts. The high mean scores support these responses. These findings suggest that teachers are actively working to create a supportive and engaging learning environment. Many students also feel their teachers maintain respectful relationships and motivate them to do their best. However, not all feedback was completely positive. A significant number of students shared that they do not feel comfortable asking teachers for help, and many believe that teachers' feedback does not always lead

to more involvement. This shows a gap in communication and support, even though teachers seem to be trying to create a good learning environment. These areas may need more focus to ensure all students feel supported and encouraged.

When it comes to student behavior, most students reported that they participate in class, finish assignments on time, collaborate with peers, and show enthusiasm for learning. They also recognize that positive teacher-student interactions and encouragement boost their motivation. This suggests that good teaching practices do have a strong impact on student behavior and engagement in the classroom. On the other hand, some students feel they do not ask questions to clarify doubts and do not take full responsibility for their learning. This highlights the need for teachers to build a more open classroom environment where students feel confident to express themselves. In conclusion, while teachers are doing many things right, improvements in student-teacher communication and promoting student independence can further enhance learning outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that many students do not feel comfortable asking their teachers for help. This shows that there may be a gap in trust and communication between students and teachers. When students are not comfortable, they may avoid asking questions, even when they need help. This highlights the need for teachers to create a more welcoming and supportive classroom environment where students feel safe and confident to speak up. It was also seen that most students do not ask questions to clear their confusion. This may be because they are shy, afraid of being judged, or feel the classroom is not encouraging enough. Teachers need to build a learning environment where asking questions is seen as a good thing. This can help students better understand lessons and become more active in class. On a positive note, many students were seen as responsible for their own learning. This means they try to study on their own and take their education seriously. Still, there is room to help students become even more independent and confident in managing their learning without always relying on the teacher. Lastly, most students felt that teacher feedback does not increase their involvement in learning. This suggests that the way teachers give feedback might not be helping students improve or feel more motivated. Teachers should use feedback in a better way—one that supports, guides, and encourages students. Overall, the study shows how important it is for teachers to connect well with students and give useful feedback to support their learning and growth.

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