
**AN ENGAGEMENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS IN
THE DIVISION OF COTABATO**

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ABSTRACT

Student engagement is a cornerstone of educational success, particularly in active learning environments like Physical Education (PE). This study investigated the relationship between multidimensional PE engagement and sports skills development among Senior High School students in the Schools Division of Cotabato. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combined a descriptive-correlational design with a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore students' lived experiences. Quantitative results revealed that students are generally "Engaged" across four dimensions: agentic, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional, with behavioral engagement scoring the highest. Sports skills development was similarly rated as "Developed," with the highest scores observed in mental toughness and game intelligence. A very strong positive correlation was found between overall engagement and skill development, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Multiple regression analysis indicated that while all dimensions significantly influence skill acquisition, emotional engagement emerged as the strongest predictor of overall sports skills development. Qualitative themes highlighted that fun, interactive class designs, teacher support, and peer collaboration significantly foster engagement. Conversely, consistent practice and mastery experiences were primary drivers of confidence. The study concludes that a holistic, student-centered PE curriculum that empowers student agency and fosters emotional connection is vital for optimizing athletic and personal growth.

I. INTRODUCTION

Student engagement is a critical determinant of educational success, encompassing both broad institutional participation and specific classroom-level learning effectiveness. In the

context of physical education, engagement serves as a vital bridge in motivational models, connecting internal motivation to tangible learning and development. Recent scholarship emphasizes that engagement in PE is multidimensional, consisting of behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic components. Recognizing these dimensions is essential for promoting meaningful participation and deeper learning experiences.

Despite its importance, many existing measures of engagement in PE present limitations, often excluding the "agentic" aspect—how students actively shape their own learning—or relying on tools adapted from traditional classrooms without proper validation for active environments. Most surveys focus only on behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects, which limits a full understanding of engagement in active learning environments. This creates a gap in understanding how these specific dimensions influence the development of sports skills, particularly in the Philippine Senior High School context.

This study addresses this gap by examining the influence of multidimensional engagement on sports skills development among students in the Schools Division of Cotabato. It aims to determine the level of physical education engagement in terms of agentic, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement and assess the level of sports skills development in terms of technical skills, tactical awareness, physical abilities, mental toughness, and game intelligence. Furthermore, the study seeks to identify which dimensions significantly influence sports skills development to inform the design of a policy brief for Senior High School physical education.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a sequential mixed-methods design to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. Phase 1 employed a descriptive-correlational research design to provide a statistical picture of the relationships between student engagement and sports skills development. Phase 2 used a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore and understand the lived experiences of students through rich descriptions and reflective narratives. The Division of Cotabato in Region XII served as the locale, providing a diverse educational landscape for the study. A sample of 301 students was selected through stratified random sampling for the quantitative phase, while 25 participants were chosen for Focus Group Discussions using purposive sampling based on specific enrollment criteria. Quantitative data were gathered using a structured questionnaire based on the multidimensional engagement framework, and qualitative data were collected via an expert-

validated interview guide. Data analysis included the use of Mean, Pearson R Correlation, and Regression for the quantitative phase, while thematic analysis was performed for the qualitative phases to determine significant themes across participant narratives.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative findings revealed that Senior High School students in the Schools Division of Cotabato are generally "Engaged" across all dimensions of physical education. Behavioral engagement received the highest mean ($M=4.17$), followed by emotional ($M=4.14$) and cognitive ($M=4.12$), while agentic engagement was slightly lower at $M=3.89$. These results suggest that while students are active and follow instructions, there are opportunities to further empower them to take control of their learning. Regarding sports skills development, students were rated as "Developed" ($M=3.98$), with mental toughness ($M=4.09$) and game intelligence ($M=4.02$) showing the strongest results, while tactical awareness ($M=3.88$) and physical abilities ($M=3.93$) were slightly lower.

The correlational analysis revealed a statistically significant and very strong positive relationship between overall Physical Education Engagement and Sports Skills Development ($r=0.804$, $p<0.01$). This indicates that as a student's engagement increases, their sports skills also significantly improve. Multiple regression analysis further confirmed that all four dimensions of engagement are significant predictors of skill development, collectively explaining 64.9% of the variance. Emotional engagement emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.290$, $p<0.001$), emphasizing the critical role of enjoyment and interest in skill acquisition.

Qualitative themes substantiated these findings by highlighting how the classroom environment influences participation. Students identified that fun, interactive games and supportive teaching foster a strong sense of involvement. Confidence and improvement in sports were primarily attributed to consistent practice, mastery of specific techniques, and positive social support. Furthermore, students connected their PE engagement to holistic growth, noting developments in discipline, teamwork, and a shift toward healthier lifestyle attitudes.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it is concluded that Physical Education classes in the Schools Division of Cotabato are effective in promoting student engagement across multiple dimensions. This

active engagement is a critical determinant of sports proficiency, as higher engagement directly leads to better development of physical abilities, tactical understanding, and mental resilience. Because all dimensions of engagement—agentic, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional—contribute significantly to skill development, a holistic instructional approach is necessary. Students view PE not only as a means to improve athletic performance but also as a vital space for character development and the adoption of lifelong healthy habits. Ultimately, fostering a supportive, student-centered environment that emphasizes enjoyment and student voice is essential for maximizing learning outcomes.