

The Influence of Teacher Emotional Intelligence, Burnout, and Learning Environment Perceptions on Teacher-Reported Student Engagement in Inclusive Special Education Setting

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Abstract

Student disengagement remains a significant and widespread challenge within inclusive educational settings. The influence of teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and learning environment perceptions on teacher-reported student engagement was examined. Utilizing a quantitative correlational research design, data from 150 special education teachers selected through non-probability convenience sampling were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that while individual teacher traits do not significantly influence student engagement, the learning environment exerts a strong, significant positive influence on engagement levels. Future research may explore how specific elements of the learning environment interact with teacher characteristics; while educational leaders may focus on cultivating supportive classroom environments to naturally boost student engagement.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; burnout; learning environment; student engagement; special education teachers

1. Introduction

Student disengagement in inclusive educational settings remains the most challenging and growing problem worldwide. (Hauzel et al., 2024; Pérez-Salas et al., 2021). UNESCO (2024) has identified this ubiquitous issue as a major global impediment to attaining true classroom inclusion worldwide. This persistent disengagement not only impedes academic development but also places additional pressure on educators who are trying to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Globally, research findings highlighted that, while student engagement was recognized as vital, maintaining it faced persistent challenges across different educational landscapes. Hauzel et al. (2024) found that educators in specialized settings reported significant levels of student disengagement and diminished classroom motivation. Similarly, Pérez-Salas et al. (2021) emphasized that vulnerable learners encountered distinct relational barriers that directly hindered their active participation. Even in secondary frameworks, studies noted that while engagement was valued for addressing diversity, its success depended heavily on structural dynamics and student-teacher bonds.

In the Philippine setting, studies have revealed both comparable concerns and unique local opportunities and constraints related to student connectedness. Pedroso et al. (2023) observed that engagement frequently manifested through minimalism and a lack of collaborative leadership. Nacario et al. (2024) found that a distinct disconnect between social motivation and the classroom atmosphere directly led to student withdrawal. Dizon and Galang (2023) observed that despite the existence of inclusive practices, Filipino students with disabilities still had to deal with structural obstacles that restricted their total participation in the classroom.

Despite growing evidence, a gap remained in understanding how teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and perceptions of the learning environment influence student engagement, particularly in settings where inclusive education was still evolving. It is particularly true for schools that are still developing inclusive education. Addressing this knowledge gap is critical to developing inclusive teaching practices and to our understanding of the factors influencing the outcomes of vulnerable student populations.

1.1. *Significance of the Study*

This study is significant because it directly contributes to the realization of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education, which emphasizes inclusive learning environments and equal educational access for vulnerable learners. By examining how teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout, and perceptions of the learning environment influence student engagement, this research provides evidence-based insights to enhance instructional strategies within special education frameworks. In the Philippines context, particularly in Davao City, the findings aligned with the Department of Education (DepEd) by supporting teachers' physical and mental well-being and better accommodating different types of learners. This study shows not only that school and state policies receive support, but also how classroom interaction and the teacher's own characteristics positively influence inclusive practices. As a result, it promotes the growth of regional schools and further contributes to global development.

1.2 *Statement of the Problem*

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and learning environment perceptions on teacher-reported student engagement in inclusive special education settings. Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of emotional intelligence in terms of perceived and understand emotions, express and label emotions and manage, and regulate emotions; the level of burnout experienced by teachers in terms of career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related stress, and attitudes towards students; the level of perceived level of learning environment in terms of satisfaction, friction, competitiveness, difficulty, and cohesiveness; and the level of teacher-reported student engagement in terms of affective engagement, behavioral engagement and cognitive engagement.
2. To examine the significance of the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout experience, the perceived learning environment, and teacher-reported student engagement in an inclusive special education setting.

3. To examine the combined significant influence of the teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout experience, and the perceived learning environment on teacher-reported student engagement in an inclusive special education setting.

1.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance:

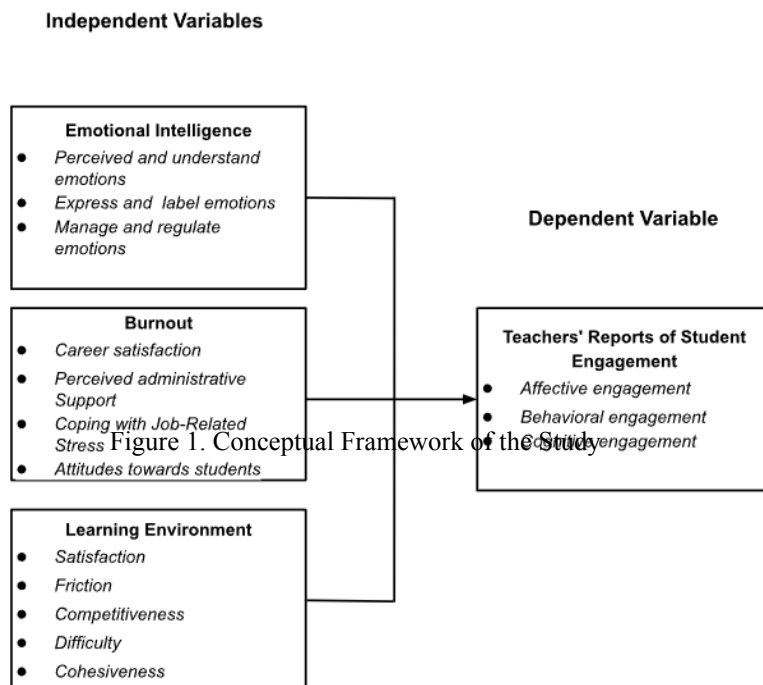
H₀₁: There was no significant relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout, and learning environment on teacher-reported student engagement in inclusive special education settings.

H₀₂: Teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout experience, and the perceived learning environment has no significant combined influence on teacher-reported student engagement in an inclusive special education setting.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study was anchored on the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which posits that human functioning is explained through a model of triadic reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1986). A central factor in this theory is that one-sided processes do not drive human agency and development. These factors operate through a continuous, bidirectional interaction in which cognitive and other personal factors, environmental events, and behavioral outcomes mutually determine one another.

In this study, teacher emotional intelligence and burnout experiences were conceptualized as personal factors reflecting how educators' internal psychological states and emotional competencies operate in the classroom. Similarly, the classroom atmosphere was conceptualized as an environmental variable, reflecting the teachers' perceptions of the inclusive learning environment. Together, these personal and environmental constructs were analyzed to determine how they interacted with and influenced the behavioral outcome, represented by teacher-reported student engagement. The broader elements of social modeling and observational learning within SCT were deliberately delimited in this study to maintain a focused examination of how these specific interacting determinants exerted a combined influence on inclusive student engagement.



2. Methodology

This section presented the research design, the locale of the study, the sample and sampling technique, the research instruments, the data-gathering technique, the data analysis, and the ethical considerations observed in the conduct of the study.

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design. This approach is used to measure and describe the degree of association or relationship between two or more variables without any statistical manipulation of the environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, a correlational design was employed to examine the relationships among teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and learning environment perceptions and to determine their combined influence on teacher-reported student engagement in inclusive special education settings.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools within the Division of Davao City. These schools are under the administrative supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd) and serve a diverse mix of learners and teachers. These specific schools were selected as the research locale due to their active implementation of inclusive education programs and their direct relevance to the variables under investigation. Furthermore, this location provided a large pool of public school special education respondents who could provide valuable information on inclusive classrooms while also ensuring practical accessibility during data collection.

2.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The respondents in this study consisted of 150 special education teachers assigned to inclusive settings during the School Year 2025–2026. The study used a non-probability convenience sampling technique, choosing participants who were readily accessible and met specific criteria rather than relying on random selection (Etikan et al., 2016). To ensure data quality, the sample was restricted to educators with at least two years of teaching experience within the defined geographical area. This accessible yet qualified pool of educators facilitated efficient data collection and yielded an adequate sample size for analyzing the relationships and influences among the variables.

2.4 Data Gathering Technique

The survey technique was used to gather data from the sample, using structured, non-experimental questionnaires to assess relationships among variables without direct manipulation (Putri et al., 2025). The data collection instrument was composed of four distinct parts.

The first part used the Emotional Skills and Competence Questionnaire for Teachers (ESCQ-T), adapted from Takšić (2009) and Valente et al. (2023), which was used to evaluate self-perceived emotional abilities of teachers across three dimensions: perceived and understand emotions, express and label emotions, and manage and regulate emotions.

The second part featured the Teacher Burnout Scale (Seidman & Zager, 1991). It was used to evaluate occupational stress across four subscales: career satisfaction, perceived administrative support, coping with job-related stress, and attitudes towards students.

The third part employed the My Class Inventory–SF for Teachers (MCI–SF), adapted from Sink (2003). It was used to measure perceptions of the classroom environment regarding satisfaction, friction, competitiveness, difficulty, and cohesion.

Finally, the fourth part used the Teacher Engagement Report Form–New (TERF–N), adapted from Hart et al. (2011). It was used to evaluate teacher-reported student engagement across affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions in inclusive special education settings.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data collected in this study were analyzed systematically using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression techniques.

Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, were employed to summarize and organize the baseline data. Mvududu (2023) described these statistical indicators as helpful for presenting data in a way that enables appropriate interpretation within the context and goal of a study. This method was suitable since it made it possible to describe the sample's features in a methodical manner. In line with McCombes (2023), descriptive research is concerned with outlining the attributes of a population or phenomenon by addressing questions of what, where, when, and how, without altering the variables under study. Accordingly, descriptive statistics were used to present the respondents' data in a clear, structured manner.

To evaluate the bivariate relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed. Finally, to determine the combined significant influence of teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and learning environment perceptions on teacher-reported student engagement, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using both standardized and unstandardized Beta coefficients.

In the following section, the matrix outlining the statistical scales, descriptive levels, and corresponding qualitative interpretations for each variable is presented.

Scale	Level	<i>Emotional Intelligence</i>	<i>Teacher Burnout</i>	<i>Learning Environment</i>	<i>Student Engagement</i>
1.00 – 1.75	Very low	Never	Never	Not Conducive	Never Observed
1.76 – 2.50	Low	Seldom	Seldom	Less Conducive	Seldom Observed
2.51 – 3.25	Moderate	Sometimes	Sometimes	Conducive	Sometimes Observed
3.26 – 4.00	High	Most of the time	Most of the time	Completely Conducive	Observed most of the time

Standard Deviation Value Ranges and Interpretation:

Range	Level of Variability	Interpretation
1.50 and above	High	Widely spread, varied perceptions
1.00 – 1.49	Moderate	Moderate differences

0.50 – 0.99	Low	Relatively consistent with minimal differences
0.00 – 0.49	Very Low	Highly consistent with a tight clustering around the mean

For the interpretation scale of *r-value*, the following scheme was used:

Computed r	Descriptive Interpretation
+/- 1.00	Perfect correlation
Between +/- 0.75 – +/- 0.99	High correlation
Between +/- 0.51 – +/- 0.74	Moderately high correlation
Between +/- 0.31 – +/- 0.50	Moderately low correlation
	Low correlation
Between +/- 0.01 – +/- 0.30	No correlation
0.00	

The following scheme for Beta (β) coefficient strength, as proposed by Cohen (1988) and Hair et al. (2019), was used:

B Value (absolute)	Predictive Strength
< .20	Weak / Small
.20 – .49	Moderate / Medium
.50 – .79	Strong / Large
≥ .80	Very Strong

2.6 Ethical Consideration

This study strictly adhered to established educational research ethics, following the guidelines mandated by the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE) of Holy Cross of Davao College. All teacher-respondents were explicitly assured of their voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time without professional penalty, and informed consent was systematically secured. All data was stored in password-protected digital folders, and participants' names were replaced with alphanumeric codes to ensure anonymity, in accordance with the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Finally, before data collection, official administrative clearances were obtained from the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of Davao City and the respective school heads.

3. Results

This chapter presents the tabulated results of the descriptive, correlational, and regression analyses, along with the corresponding analyses and interpretations of the statistical findings. It concludes with a structured summary of the findings.

3.1 Descriptive Results

Shown in Table 1 are the descriptive results of the variables of the study. These variables are emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, learning environment, and teacher-reported student engagement, each with its respective indicators. The statistical information in the table is the sample size, mean, standard deviation, and the descriptive levels of the variables and indicators.

Table 1. Descriptive Table

Variables	Number of Samples	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Emotional Intelligence	150	3.31	.26	High
<i>Manage and Regulate Emotions</i>	150	3.33	.38	High
<i>Express and Label Emotions</i>	150	3.27	.42	High
<i>Perceive and Understand Emotions</i>	150	3.32	.07	High
Teacher Burnout	150	2.56	.30	Moderate
<i>Career Satisfaction</i>	150	3.14	.52	Moderate
<i>Perceive Administrative Support</i>	150	2.29	.46	Low
<i>Coping with Job Related Stress</i>	150	2.23	.67	Low
<i>Attitude Towards Students</i>	150	2.56	.39	Moderate
Learning Environment	150	2.74	.32	Moderate
<i>Satisfaction</i>	150	3.17	.44	Moderate
<i>Cohesiveness</i>	150	2.86	.43	Moderate
<i>Friction</i>	150	2.52	.36	Moderate
<i>Competitiveness</i>	150	2.77	.45	Moderate
<i>Difficulty</i>	150	2.34	.53	Low
Teacher-Reported Student Engagement	150	3.13	.35	Moderate
<i>Affective Engagement</i>	150	3.29	.42	High
<i>Behavioral Engagement</i>	150	2.95	.45	Moderate
<i>Cognitive Engagement</i>	150	3.14	.55	Moderate

Table 1 shows that emotional intelligence among teachers had a high mean score of 3.31, indicating that teachers generally possessed strong abilities in perceiving, expressing, regulating, and understanding emotions. High scores in its subcomponents further supported this result: Manage and Regulate Emotions at 3.33, Express and Label Emotions at 3.27, and Perceive and Understand Emotions at 3.32. The consistently high results revealed that emotional intelligence stood out as a significant strength among the teachers surveyed. These results in the Perceive and Understand Emotions showed only a very small difference, showing that most teachers shared similar levels of competence in this area, making it a potentially reliable foundation for promoting positive classroom dynamics and relationships.

Teacher burnout, for instance, had a moderate mean score of 2.56. This result suggests that while many teachers definitely feel the weight of emotional exhaustion, it hasn't yet reached critical levels. But when we look at this alongside the low mean scores for Coping with Job-Related Stress (2.23) and Perceived Administrative Support (2.29), the moderate burnout level becomes more concerning. It appeared that they aren't getting enough support from the school system or engaging in effective stress management, even though these teachers have strong emotional skills. These gaps could contribute to sustained burnout over time, affecting how well they do their jobs, how they feel in their work, and, eventually, shaping the overall feel of the school and even how well students learn.

The learning environment had a moderate mean score of 2.74, indicating that classrooms were generally acceptable but not particularly inspiring or cohesive. There was moderate satisfaction (3.17) and

cohesiveness (2.86), indicating a mostly positive mood, but the classroom atmosphere was unexceptional. Meanwhile, scores for friction (2.52) and competitiveness (2.77) indicated a certain level of interpersonal or academic tension among students. The low perceived difficulty score of 2.34 might indicate that students were not sufficiently challenged, potentially affecting motivation and deeper engagement. These results pointed to a learning environment that might be functional but lacked the enriching qualities that foster high engagement and academic growth.

Lastly, teacher-reported student engagement had a moderate mean score of 3.13, reflecting that students were reasonably engaged but not to a consistently high degree. Affective engagement was the strongest area, with a high score of 3.29. This result means students generally felt connected to their classes, cared about what they were doing, and showed clear interest in their lessons. Meanwhile, behavioral engagement scored 2.95 and cognitive engagement 3.14, both within the moderate range. This result shows that students were not yet participating or applying themselves fully in class. What this tells us is that although students felt emotionally attached to school and their learning, they did not always turn that positive feeling into consistent, active involvement or deeper effort. To raise these engagement levels, improvements can be made to the learning environment, along with greater teacher support, especially in helping students avoid burnout and develop better ways to handle challenges and stress.

3.2 Correlation Analysis Results

Table 2 presents the correlation results between the predictor variables, namely, emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, and learning environment, and the criterion variable, which is teacher-reported student engagement.

Table 2. Correlation Table (N=150)

	<i>Teacher Reported Student Engagement</i>			
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
<i>Emotional Intelligence</i>	.164	.133	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
<i>Teacher Burnout</i>	.053	.632	Accept Ho	No significant correlation
<i>Learning Environment</i>	.496**	.000	Reject Ho	Moderately low positive significant correlation

Level of Significance: 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$

The correlation between emotional intelligence and teacher-reported student engagement shows an $r = .164$, $p = .133$. Since the p-value is greater than the standard threshold of .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted, and the result is considered not statistically significant. This result suggests that although there was a slight positive correlation between a teacher's emotional intelligence and how engaged they perceive their students to be, this relationship was weak and not strong enough to rule out the possibility that it occurred by chance.

For teacher burnout, the influence on student engagement was even weaker, with an r-value of just .053 and a p-value of .632. That very low correlation, paired with such a high p-value, led us to accept the null hypothesis: there was no meaningful connection between the two. Put simply, how burnt out a teacher felt didn't have any direct tie to how engaged they believed their students were. Even though burnout affects teachers' well-being, it doesn't necessarily change how they see their students' behavior, participation, or interest in learning.

In contrast, the learning environment shows a moderately low positive correlation with teacher-reported student engagement ($r = .496$, $p = .000$). Since the p-value is below .05, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the relationship was deemed statistically significant. This result indicates a reliable and meaningful association: the more positive and supportive the learning environment was perceived to be, the more engaged teachers reported their students to be. This finding underscores the critical role of classroom conditions such as cohesiveness, support, and overall atmosphere in fostering student participation, interest, and effort. To sum up, out of the three variables examined, only the learning environment was found to have a statistically significant association with student engagement as reported by teachers. Emotional intelligence and teacher burnout, while important in other contexts, did not appear to have a direct or meaningful impact on how teachers perceived their students' engagement levels in this data. This result highlighted the importance of focusing on environmental factors when seeking to improve student involvement in the classroom.

3.3 Regression Analysis Results

The regression model presented in Table 3 has an R-squared value of 0.270, indicating that 27% of the variation in how teachers perceive their students' engagement is accounted for by the three factors we included: emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, and the learning environment. This result indicates that the model has a moderate ability to explain the factors that influence engagement and suggests that other aspects we didn't measure also play a role. Overall, the model is statistically significant with an F-value of 9.979 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming that, when taken together, these three variables provide a meaningful way to predict student engagement as reported by teachers.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
(Constant)	1.756	.466			3.765	.000	—	—
Emotional Intelligence	.069	.138	.052		.503	.617	Accept H_0	No significant influence
Teacher Burnout	-.197	.121	-.171		-1.622	.109	Accept H_0	No significant influence
Learning Environment	.600	.116	.545		5.190	.000	Reject H_0	Positive significant influence

Model Summary:

$R = 0.519$ | $R^2 = 0.270$ | $F(4,146) = 9.979$ | $p = 0.000$

Level of Significance: 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$

Among the individual predictors, learning environment emerged as the only statistically significant factor, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of .600, a standardized coefficient (Beta) of .545, a t-value of 5.190, and a p-value of .000. These results clearly indicate that the learning environment had a strong and positive effect on student engagement as reported by teachers. A one-unit increase in the learning environment score was associated with a .600 unit increase in engagement, making it a key area for intervention if the goal was to boost student participation and involvement.

On the other hand, emotional intelligence did not significantly predict student engagement in this data. It has a B value of .069, a low Beta of .052, a t-value of .503, and a p-value of .617. The findings showed that emotional intelligence, although valuable for teacher wellness and communication, had no clear or measurable impact on teachers' perceptions of student engagement. This result aligned with earlier findings,

which showed that the relationship between emotional intelligence and engagement was not statistically significant.

Similarly, teacher burnout shows a negative but non-significant effect on student engagement, with a B value of -.197, a Beta coefficient of -.171, a t-value of -1.622, and a p-value of .109. While the result pointed toward higher burnout and possibly lower student engagement, it was not statistically significant. This result suggests that burnout, on its own, may not be a strong factor in perceived student engagement.

In conclusion, the regression analysis revealed that the learning environment is the most powerful and significant variable of teacher-reported student engagement. Though emotional intelligence and teacher burnout matter in other areas of teaching, neither appeared to have a clear, measurable impact on students' engagement in class. This result means that efforts to boost student engagement should first focus on improving the learning setting, such as prioritizing enhancements to the classroom environment, promoting cohesiveness, reducing friction, and increasing satisfaction and support within the learning space.

Summary of Findings

Based on statistical results, it was found specifically that:

1. Emotional intelligence is not significantly correlated with teacher-reported student engagement.
2. Teacher burnout is not significantly correlated with teacher-reported student engagement.
3. The learning environment shows a moderate, positive, and significant correlation with teacher-reported student engagement.
4. Emotional intelligence does not significantly influence teacher-reported student engagement.
5. Teacher burnout does not significantly influence teacher-reported student engagement.
6. Among the predictor variables, only the learning environment significantly influences teacher-reported student engagement.
7. There is a significant combined influence of emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, and learning environment on teacher-reported student engagement.

4. Discussion

This chapter presents the study's findings, covering descriptive, correlational, and regression analyses. The discussion emphasizes how the results align with or depart from the existing literature. Also included are the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study's findings and interpretations.

Emotional Intelligence, Teacher Burnout, Learning Environment, Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

Recent studies consistently emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in shaping teachers' professional well-being, engagement, and classroom functioning. Research findings indicate that educators with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to be emotionally and intellectually committed to their profession, report higher levels of job satisfaction, and experience less burnout. It is because teachers who are skilled at managing their emotions are better able to manage their professional contacts and teaching duties (Li et al., 2025; Gilar-Corbi et al., 2023). Research further showed that emotional intelligence lowers teacher burnout indirectly by strengthening self-efficacy and supporting adaptive ways of managing emotional demands at work. This pattern explains why, even among instructors with high EI ratings, burnout is relatively moderate (Zhang et al., 2024). Furthermore, research revealed that although emotional intelligence fosters engagement, its benefits could be curtailed if teachers believe that school officials are unsupportive and that there are insufficient stress-reduction strategies. That is why, in the end, their overall satisfaction and involvement often remain only at a moderate level (Kim & Asbury, 2022; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2023).

Non-Significant Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

The non-significant correlation between teacher emotional intelligence and teacher-reported student teachers suggests that, while emotional intelligence supports teachers' self-regulation and students' personal functioning, it may not directly influence students' classroom engagement behaviors. According to Social Cognitive Theory, learning and engagement are shaped by the reciprocal interaction among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2001). Under this framework, teachers' emotional capabilities serve as personal attributes that guide their instructional practices and interactions. However, the actual results regarding student involvement are largely shaped by intermediate factors including the overall classroom setting, teaching approaches, and the quality of social relationships developed throughout the learning process (Fredricks et al., 2022; Wang & Eccles, 2023). This perspective explains why high teacher emotional intelligence alone does not guarantee high student engagement: engagement is a socially learned behavior that depends on the combination of teacher practices, classroom context, and modeled behaviors (Zimmerman, 2022; Reeve, 2023). Therefore, the present finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes that teachers' personal attributes indirectly influence student engagement primarily through their effects on observable teaching behaviors and the quality of the learning environment.

Non-Significant Correlation between Teacher Burnout and Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

The non-significant correlation between teacher burnout and teacher-reported student engagement suggests that stress and emotional exhaustion do not directly lead to noticeable changes in students' engagement. This observation aligns with the principles of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2001). This framework explains that engagement develops through teachers' interactions with personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. It means that conditions like teacher burnout do not affect engagement directly, but rather through their impact on classroom practices and the overall learning setting. Recent studies indicate that even when teachers experience moderate burnout, students can remain engaged if the learning environment provides structured, supportive, and motivating opportunities for student participation and if teachers maintain consistent instructional practices (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2023; Wang & Eccles, 2023). In other words, Social Cognitive Theory suggests that student engagement is socially learned and environmentally mediated, which helps explain why the absence of a direct correlation between burnout and engagement highlights the importance of classroom context and instructional quality in sustaining student involvement, despite teacher-related challenges (Fredricks et al., 2022; Zimmerman, 2022).

Significance of Correlation between Learning Environment and Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

The significant correlation between learning environment and teacher-reported student engagement highlights the mutually reinforcing relationship between environmental context and student behavior, consistent with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2001). This theory emphasizes that the reciprocal interactions among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors influence learning and engagement. In this study, a positive, well-structured learning environment provides students with opportunities for observational learning, reinforcement, and social modeling, thereby fostering behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement (Zimmerman, 2022). Empirical evidence showed that when classrooms are cohesive, supportive, and clearly organized, students are better able to regulate their learning, participate actively, and maintain motivation, reinforcing engagement patterns over time (Fredricks et al., 2022; Wang & Eccles, 2023). Therefore, the present finding underscores the learning environment's critical role in shaping students' engagement behaviors, in line with Social Cognitive Theory's principle of reciprocal determinism.

Significant Influence of Learning Environment on Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

The significant influence of the learning environment on teacher-reported student engagement is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory. This framework holds that learning and behavior develop through ongoing interactions between individuals and their social surroundings (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2001). Within the class, the learning environment acts as a contextual factor. In the classroom, the learning environment is an important factor for students. It offers opportunities for observational learning, social motivation, and feedback, each of which directly molds students' patterns of engagement. Recent findings have validated that encouraging, clearly structured, and connected learning environments help improve students' active participation, mental investment, and emotional connection to learning. It is achieved by nurturing positive outlooks, self-belief, and drive to learn (Fredricks et al., 2022; Wang & Eccles, 2023). From a social cognitive perspective, students tend to maintain consistent engagement when classroom conditions offer clear learning goals, positive peer interactions, and steady instructional guidance. This kind of setting allows them to manage better and direct their own learners (Zimmerman, 2022). Thus, the current finding verifies that the classroom setting is a major factor influencing students. It reinforces Social Cognitive Theory's premise that engagement is acquired, reinforced, and maintained in socially supportive, well-structured learning environments.

Combined Influence of Teacher Emotional Intelligence, Teacher Burnout, and Learning Environment on Teacher-Reported Student Engagement

The significant combined influence of teacher emotional intelligence, teacher burnout, and learning environment on teacher-reported student engagement can be meaningfully explained through Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the principle of reciprocal determinism among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 2001). According to this theory, a teacher's emotional intelligence functions as a personal resource that combines cognitive and emotional strengths. It supports self-management and flexible, effective classroom actions. That said, these individual characteristics have the most significant impact on how engaged students become when shaped by the classroom setting. This environment creates the social framework in which learning through observation, positive reinforcement, and behavioral modeling occurs (Zimmerman, 2022). Evidence from recent investigations indicates that teachers who demonstrate higher emotional competence and experience less burnout are more effective in shaping supportive, well-structured, and harmonious classroom climates. In turn, these conditions enhance learners' active involvement, cognitive focus, and emotional commitment to their studies (Wang & Eccles, 2023; Fredricks et al., 2022).

Conclusion

Guided by the Social Cognitive Theory principle of reciprocal determinism, this study demonstrated that teacher-reported student engagement is shaped by the dynamic interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors rather than by isolated teacher characteristics. The non-significant relationships between teacher emotional intelligence, burnout, and student engagement suggest that teachers' states and personal attributes do not directly affect student behaviors unless they are translated into observable instructional practices. Conversely, the learning environment emerged as the sole significant individual predictor, providing the crucial contextual cues, reinforcement, and modeling necessary to sustain student involvement. Ultimately, the significant combined influence of these variables underscores that teachers' abilities and coping mechanisms enhance engagement most effectively when embedded within a structured, cohesive, and supportive classroom climate. These findings confirmed that student engagement is an environmentally mediated, socially learned behavior, highlighting the critical need for integrated institutional interventions that optimize classroom contexts alongside teacher capacity.

Recommendations

To enhance student engagement, school administrators may prioritize building and keeping a positive classroom atmosphere. This result means providing teachers with adequate resources, professional development, and supportive leadership that foster classroom cohesion and reduce friction. Teachers, in turn, can make the most of this supportive environment by using instructional strategies and building good connections with them. At the same time, they manage their own well-being to sustain motivation and effectiveness. Future researchers should look deeper to explore the complex, possibly indirect roles of emotional intelligence and burnout in student engagement. It would also be valuable to investigate interventions that support teachers' well-being and build a better classroom environment. Ultimately, collaborative efforts among administrators, teachers, and researchers are essential to develop holistic approaches that promote sustained engagement and positive educational outcomes.

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