

Civic Engagement as a Predictor of Academic Success: A Correlational Study Among Teacher Education Students at Eastern Samar, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to uncover the relationship between the Civic Engagement and Academic Performance of Teacher Education Students at Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) Guiuan Campus focused on the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) students. A quantitative approach structured around a descriptive correlational design was utilized using an adapted survey questionnaire. The results reveal that BSEd students demonstrate a Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) in both civic attitudes and behaviors. Mean scores for civic attitudes range from 4.05 to 4.11, with the highest-rated item being "Being informed of community issues" ($M = 4.11$), indicating that students value civic awareness. Similarly, civic behavior scores range from 4.21 to 4.27, with the most engaged behaviors being helping community members and contributing to charitable organizations ($M = 4.27$). In terms of academic performance, the General Weighted Average (GWA) is 1.71 (85-89%), which is interpreted as Very Good Academic Performance. Correlation analysis using Spearman's rho shows a moderate positive relationship between civic attitudes and GWA ($\rho = 0.462, p < .001$), as well as between civic behavior and GWA ($\rho = 0.466, p < .001$). Additionally, a robust correlation between civic attitudes and civic behaviors ($\rho = 0.958, p < .001$) suggests that students with strong civic beliefs are likelier to engage in civic activities. These findings indicate that higher civic engagement is associated with better academic performance, emphasizing the role of civic attitudes in fostering active participation in both community and educational settings.

Conclusion: The analysis of the civic attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance among the BSEd students of ESSU Guiuan shows a positive correlation between civic engagement and academic success. The student respondents demonstrate a Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) in civic attitudes and behaviors, highlighting community responsibility and community action. The respondent's "Very Good" academic performance, as shown in the total mean of 1.71 GWA from the second semester of the academic year, suggests that civic engagement may improve student motivation and academic outcomes. Finally, the study underscores the benefits of aligning civic engagement with academic outcomes to promote a holistically developed graduate.

Keywords: Civic Engagement, Academic Performance, Civic Behavior, Civic Attitudes, Teacher Education Students

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance, conventionally measured through Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) or General Weighted Average (GWA), serves as a foundational indicator of overall student achievement and plays a vital role in producing quality graduates who will contribute to the development of society (Akhter & Rahaman, 2020). Research has consistently demonstrated that academic performance is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including socioeconomic status, study habits, teaching quality, and various demographic variables. Moreover, Akhter & Rahaman's (2020) study at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University found that family responsibility and daily study habits positively correlate with CGPA,

while time spent on part-time employment showed negative correlations. Similarly, research from Sri Lanka identified several factors affecting undergraduate academic performance, including gender, mother language proficiency, and English language competency (Thayamathy & Elango, 2020).

The quality of educational delivery also significantly impacts student outcomes. Teachers' qualifications and teaching experience have been shown to correlate with student academic performance in Nigerian public secondary schools, highlighting the importance of instructor-related variables in the educational ecosystem (Alonge et al., 2020). Furthermore, teachers' lesson preparedness has demonstrated a significant relationship with secondary school student performance, reinforcing the multifaceted nature of factors contributing to academic success (Alonge et al., 2020).

While these traditional factors affecting academic performance have been extensively studied, emerging research has begun to explore how civic engagement might interact with and potentially enhance student educational outcomes. Civic engagement encompasses activities through which individuals address public concerns, including political participation, community service, advocacy, and social responsibility (Grey Group International, 2024). Developing civic engagement attitudes and behaviors is increasingly recognized as an essential educational objective across various disciplines, particularly in higher education.

A study investigating students' civic engagement self-efficacy in the context of socioscientific issues found that structured decision-making processes in classroom settings can increase students' civic engagement attitudes and skills related to social justice, interpersonal abilities, problem-solving, and political awareness (Dauer et al., 2021). These findings suggest that educational interventions connecting academic content to civic contexts support students' development as engaged citizens. The study also revealed that students' perceptions of their ability to impact various socioscientific issues varied significantly based on the perceived importance and scale of those issues.

Further research during the COVID-19 pandemic explored the relationship between college students' civic engagement and transferable capabilities, demonstrating significant connections between civic participation and the development of broader competencies (Chang et al., 2021). This suggests that civic engagement contributes to developing skills and attitudes that support academic success, though the study did not directly examine this relationship.

Despite growing interest in civic engagement and academic performance as educational outcomes, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the direct relationship between these two domains. While researchers have established correlations between academic performance and various demographic, socioeconomic, and educational factors (Akhter & Rahaman, 2020; Thayamathy & Elango, 2020; Elizabeth, 2020), and others have examined how educational interventions can enhance civic engagement attitudes and skills (Dauer et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2021), few studies have specifically investigated how civic engagement might relate to or potentially influence academic performance.

In the Philippines, there is a shift of interest in the importance of civic engagement in educational institutions, especially in higher education. However, studies generated locally focus the majority on general student engagement and do not look into the specific impacts of civic engagement. While international studies have extensively examined the relationship between civic engagement and academic performance (Carlisle et al., 2020; Dauer et al., 2021), there is limited research on the topic in the Philippines.

Furthermore, limited research explores how regional socio-cultural factors influence this relationship in rural areas like the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) Guiuan campus. This study aimed to shed light on this gap by determining the interplay between civic engagement and academic performance among Bachelor of Secondary Education students at the ESSU Guiuan campus.

Objective

This study aimed to uncover the relationship between the Civic Engagement and Academic Performance of the Performance of the BSEd students at ESSU Guiuan.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of civic engagement of the BSEd student in Eastern Samar State (ESSU) Guiuan, in terms of:
 1. Civic Attitude; and
 2. Civic Behavior.
2. What is the level of academic performance of the BSEd students in the academic year 2024-2025?
3. Is there a relationship between the level of civic engagement and the academic performance of the BSEd students in ESSU Guiuan?

Theoretical Framework

This study will anchor to the Self Determination Theory (SDT) in understanding the relationship between Civic Engagement and Academic Performance. Developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in 1985, SDT examines how personal differences and diversity of individuals provide an impetus or intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and cognitive development, which are all contributing factors to civic engagement and academic performance (Zak-Moskal, & Garrison, 2020). Civic engagement blends perfectly with SDT's three (3) fundamental needs. Civic engagement allows students to gain autonomy by aligning with causes and values that best represent their ideas and beliefs. Integrating this theory into the study will enable an in-depth examination of how engagement activities enhance autonomy and intrinsic motivation, which highly contribute to improved overall academic achievement. In addition, Lu's (2024) study on incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI) in civic education significantly enhances student engagement and achievement, positively correlating to academic performance.

Conceptual Framework

The study aimed to determine the relationship between civic engagement and academic performance of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students in the Eastern Samar State University—Guiuan campus. Figure 1 illustrates the paradigm that utilizes the independent and dependent variable (IV-DV) models. The independent variables include the teacher education faculty's technological and pedagogical knowledge. On the other hand, the dependent variable of this study is the teaching performance of the faculty.

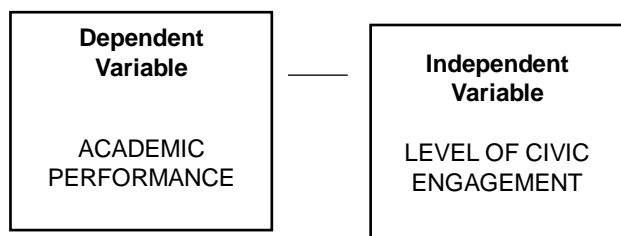


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative approach structured around a descriptive correlational design. Its primary objective was to assess civic engagement and academic performance levels among Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students at Eastern Samar State University's (ESSU) Guiuan campus.

Descriptive correlational research, as utilized in this study, focuses on examining and analyzing existing data to understand associations between variables rather than inferring causality. This approach contrasts with experimental research, which manipulates variables to establish cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell,

2017). The choice of a descriptive correlational design allowed for an exploration of how civic engagement relates to academic performance among BSEd students at ESSU's Guiuan campus during the specified academic year.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

All three hundred fifty-six (356) Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students participated in this study. Among these, one hundred twenty-five (125) were male, and two hundred thirty-one (231) were female. A complete enumeration of BSEd students, regardless of their specializations, was utilized as an inclusion criterion. Irregular students were not included as part of the exclusion criteria.

Instrumentation

This study utilized the Civic Engagement Scale adopted and modified from Youthrex Research and Evaluation Exchange developed from the analysis of Doolittle, A., & Faul, A. (2013) and Flanagan, C. A., Syvertsen, A. K., & Stout, M. D. (2007). The questionnaire measured individuals' attitudes and behaviors affected by a service-learning experience. The questionnaire has an internal consistency of $\alpha = .80-.91$, considered "High reliability." The respondents rated this questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale divided into two parts: (1) Civic Attitude and (2) Civic Behavior. Furthermore, to determine academic performance, the researchers collected the General Weighted Averages (GWA) of the student participants from the college dean for the second semester of the academic year.

Ethical Consideration

The respondents' willingness to participate in the study was consistently highlighted throughout the data collection process through a letter of consent. They were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any moment they felt so without any negative consequences. Furthermore, they were assured of the anonymity of their responses, and the data collected will only be used under the scope of the research objectives.

Treatment of Data

All data generated from the survey through the questionnaires were tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using Jeffreys's Amazing Statistics Program (JASP). JASP is an open-source, user-friendly statistics program that organizes data, conducts statistical analyses, and generates tables and graphs that summarize data. It is a cost-effective alternative for SPSS that guarantees reliable and high-standard data analysis (Ghazali et al., 2023). The use of JASP has been validated by numerous studies (Kondratyuk & Morosanova, 2023; Ghazali et al., 2023). Moreover, using JASP as an open source promotes transparency and reproducibility of studies, which are essential for the validity and reliability of research (JASP, 2022).

Furthermore, the researchers utilized Spearman rank correlation (Spearman's rho) to determine the relationship between the variables. This type of correlation was selected regarding the non-parametric test trait that does not require assumptions about the data set that will be collected, making it appropriate for ordinal or ranked data (Tresliyana et al., 2004; Primohadi Syahputra & Mulya, 2022). Moreover, Spearman's rho is applicable when relationships between variables are not necessarily linear. Provided civic engagement can be measured on an ordinal scale, and academic performance might not always follow a linear relationship with the former, Spearman's rho allows a reliable method of assessing the strength and direction of the association (Statistics Solution, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the interpretation and analysis of data based on the result of the data gathered. This study investigated the relationship between civic engagement (Civic Attitudes and Civic Behavior) and Academic

Performance (General Weighted Average).

Table 1. Mean Scores of BSEd student responses on Civic Attitudes

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1.I feel responsible for my community	4.08	Engaged	MLE
2.I believe I should make a difference in my community	4.08	Engaged	MLE
3.I believe that I have a responsibility to help the poor and the hungry	4.08	Engaged	MLE
4.I believe that I have a responsibility to help the poor and the hungry	4.05	Engaged	MLE
5.I believe that all citizens have a responsibility to their community	4.05	Engaged	MLE
6.I believe that it is important to be informed of community issues	4.11	Engaged	MLE
7.I believe that it is important to volunteer	4.06	Engaged	MLE
8.I believe that it is important to financially support charitable organizations	4.11	Engaged	MLE
Total	,	Engaged	MLE

Legend: MLE-Moderate Level of Engagement

Table 1 presents the analysis of the respondents' responses to the Civic Attitudes indicators. The table shows the respondents' strong commitment to community responsibility, with mean scores ranging from 4,05 to 4.11 on a seven (7) point-Likert scale. This indicates that the respondents exhibit a Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) in civic duties, such as feeling responsible in the community and believing in making a difference. The highest score, "I believe it is important to be informed of community issues" (M = 4.11), underscores that students recognize the importance of being knowledgeable in social matters, which backs Hoek et al. (2024) study suggesting that civic knowledge enhances students' engagement in the democratic process in the community. Moreover, the consistent mean scores across the indicators illustrate the respondents' collective attitude toward civic responsibility.

This consistency is supported by the study of Rudolph and Horibe (2022), which posits that exposure to education positively influences students' willingness to engage in civic issues and concerns. In the study of Seludo and Murillo (2023) on the experiences and challenges of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in the Samar region of the Philippines, they similarly noted that the teachers are actively promoting civic competence in their classrooms, embedding concepts of social responsibility into daily lessons. Their findings validate the presence of civic attitudes observed in this study and suggest that curriculum integration plays a vital role in shaping students' civic awareness. The consistent mean scores across the indicators give the respondents a collective notion of civic responsibility. This result is backed by the study of Magdadaro and Sacramento (2022) on the Lumad schools in Mindanao, where educational practices emphasizing community engagement developed civic consciousness.

The findings indicate a consistent Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) in civic attitudes, suggesting that students internalize a sense of autonomy and relatedness, which are core constructs of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2013). Their belief in the importance of community involvement and responsibility may reflect a self-endorsed commitment to civic ideals. This internalization supports the satisfaction of autonomy, wherein students view civic involvement as a personally meaningful choice. Moreover, the emphasis on community issues and helping others aligns with the need for relatedness, as civic attitudes are inherently social and involve connections to larger societal goals.

Table 2. Mean Scores of BSEd student responses on Civic Behavior

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
I am involved in structured volunteer position(s) in the community	4.22	Engaged	MLE
When working with others, I make positive changes in the community	4.23	Engaged	MLE
I help members of my community	4.27	Engaged	MLE
I stay informed of events in my community	4.21	Engaged	MLE
I participate in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility	4.22	Engaged	MLE
I contribute to charitable organizations within the community	4.27	Engaged	MLE
Total	4.08	Engaged	MLE

Legend: MLE-Moderate Level of Engagement

Table 2 presents the analysis of the responses of the respondents on the Civic Behavior indicators. The analysis reveals a strong engagement in civic activities by the respondents. The mean scores range from 4.21 to 4.27, which is interpreted as a Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) and indicates engagement in civic activities such as volunteering, helping in positive change movements, and contributing to charitable organizations. The highest mean scores of 4.27 for indicators "I help members of my community" and "I contribute to charitable organizations within the community" highlight the respondents' active participation in pragmatic civic activities. This finding is consistent with Garlick & Forstenzer's (2024) study that suggests that service-learning experiences enhance students' civic engagement by fostering a sense of social responsibility and community involvement.

The consistency of the high mean scores across the indicators for civic behavior supports the notion that civic education can effectively promote active citizenship, as noted by studies emphasizing the role of experiential learning in civic development. Moreover, a spotlight on personal actions and community involvement reflects the trend observed in civic engagement research, where students often focus on personal actions and informing and educating others as primary means of participating in societal issues (Frontiers in Education, 2021).

Active participation in civic behaviors, such as volunteering and helping community members, reflects students' pursuit of competence and relatedness. Engaging in structured community roles allows students to feel effective (competence), while their interactions in the community foster a sense of connection (relatedness). According to Self-Determination Theory, such engagement satisfies intrinsic psychological needs, which can enhance motivation and, by extension, academic functioning. These findings parallel Garlick & Forstenzer (2024), who argued that civic involvement deepens personal investment in social responsibility, which may further reinforce intrinsic academic motivation.

Table 3. Mean Score of the General Weighted Average (GWA) of BSEd students

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
General Weighted Average (GWA)	1.71	85-89%	Very Good Academic Performance

Table 3 analyzes the student respondents' General Weighted Average (GWA). The overall mean of the GWA of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students for the second semester of the academic year 2024-2025 is 1.71, corresponds to an educational performance of 85-89%, and is interpreted as "Very Good" academic performance. This achievement illustrates the strong university's commitment to academic excellence, backed

by its impressive performance in national exams like the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) (ESSU, 2024).

Table 4. Correlation between Civic Attitudes, Civic Behavior, and Academic Performance

Variable	GWA	Civic Attitude	Civic Behavior
GWA	—	—	—
Civic Attitude	0.462 ***	—	—
Civic Behavior	0.466 ***	0.958 ***	—
p-value	< .001	< .001	—

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation coefficient between civic attitude and GWA, as determined by the Spearman Rho's correlation coefficient, is 0.462, statistically significant at $p < .001$. The mean score suggests that civic attitudes and academic achievement have a beneficial association. According to this association, students with good civic attitudes typically perform better academically. This is consistent with studies showing that civic attitudes and knowledge can favor academic performance and motivation (Kondratyuk & Morosanova, 2023; Ghazali et al., 2023). The GWA and civic conduct correlation coefficient is also 0.466, which is significant at $p < .001$.

Data analysis reveals a moderate positive relationship between civic behavior and academic performance. Academic performance is typically higher for those who participate more actively in civic affairs. By encouraging a sense of responsibility and participation in educational activities, this research supports the idea that active civic engagement might improve academic success (Winthrop, 2020; CivxNow, 2025). Additionally, there is a powerful and statistically significant association ($r = 0.958$; $p < .001$) between civic behavior and civic mindset. It suggests a strong correlation between civic acts and civic attitudes. People who strongly align their views and behaviors are more likely to participate in civic activities. The significance of cultivating favorable civic attitudes to promote active civic participation is highlighted by this robust association (Winthrop, 2020; CivxNow, 2025). Seludo and Murillo (2023) also noted the experiences and challenges of Araling Panlipunan Teachers in the Samar region of the Philippines; they similarly noted that civic competence is linked to positive academic outcomes, as it fosters responsibility and engagement—key contributors to learning success. Additionally, the strong correlation between civic attitudes and civic behavior confirms Magdadaro and Sacramento's (2022) observation that civic-mindedness cultivated through educational settings often leads to actual civic participation.

This result can be best seen through the Self-Determination Theory, which posits that students who feel part of their community, believe in their ability to effect change and choose to engage in civic life are more likely to exhibit intrinsic motivation in their academic work. This intrinsically motivated student will, in turn, set higher academic goals and perform better in their academic endeavors (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, civic engagement might serve as a contextual factor that enhances intrinsic motivation, thus supporting academic success. However, these findings remain correlational without controlling for SES or prior academic history, as noted by Sirin (2005) and Dubow et al. (2009).

This approach highlights the essence of integrating service-learning into schools and universities to bridge the gap between civic attitudes and actual participation. While positive correlations were found in this study (statistically significant) for civic attitudes, civic behavior, and academic performance, other factors related to academic performance were not assessed and, therefore, cannot be controlled. Socioeconomic status (SES), parental education, and prior academic performance were not measured. However, previous research has shown that these factors predict academic performance and engagement in civic activities (Sirin, 2005; Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009). Without controlling for these variables, civic engagement may not clearly predict academic performance. It would be beneficial for future studies to assess these variables as covariates with

partial correlation or regression models to isolate civic engagement's unique contribution better. Strengthening these limitations will add to the internal validity of future studies and help determine the relationship between civic characteristics and academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the civic attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance among the BSEd students of ESSU Guiuan shows a positive correlation between civic engagement and academic success. The student respondents demonstrate a Moderate Level of Engagement (MLE) in civic attitudes and behaviors, highlighting community responsibility and community action. The respondent's "Very Good" academic performance, as shown in the total mean of 1.71 GWA from the second semester of the academic year, suggests that civic engagement may improve student motivation and academic outcomes. Finally, the study underscores the benefits of aligning civic engagement with academic outcomes to promote a holistically developed graduate.

RECOMMENDATION

The researchers draw the following recommendations based on the outcome of the study. Firstly, the incorporation of civic education in the curriculum is vital. The study of Borhan (2025) highlights that civic education promotes inclusive communities by developing students' civic knowledge and social values, which will, in turn, result in improved community engagement. For example, including courses on Philippine Constitution and Civic Responsibility or blending civic themes to Araling Panlipunan or Social Studies methods, classes can help foster civic awareness and shared community values. Secondly, encourage service-learning activities such as tutoring economically disadvantaged students, organizing nutritional support programs, and leading environmental campaigns in the local government unit. Doing so enhances social-emotional development, which is highly associated with improved academic achievement (Cirlce & Tuff, 2022). It encourages community engagement as it helps students build transferrable skills (Chang et al., 2021). Lastly, it acknowledges the importance of civic engagement for students through institutionalizing policies, such as requiring civic involvement for graduation, creating civic awareness clubs for students, and offering rewards for community service.

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