

## Article

# Self Determination and Engagement of Social Studies Students in the Selected Private Schools

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**Abstract:** This study explores the relationship between student engagement and self-determination in Social Studies classes among senior high school students in selected private schools in Cabuyao, Laguna. Grounded in the Engagement Theory and Self-Determination Theory, the research examines how aspects of engagement—relating, creating, and donating—and components of self-determination—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—interact to shape students' academic experiences. Employing a quantitative correlational research design, the study collected data from 50 randomly selected students through validated survey questionnaires. The results indicated that students demonstrated very high levels of both engagement and self-determination. Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was found between these two constructs. These findings suggest that enhancing student engagement and supporting self-determined learning can positively influence motivation, participation, and academic performance. In response to the results, an action plan was developed to guide educators in designing more interactive and student-centered Social Studies learning environments. The study adds to the existing body of literature on student motivation and proposes practical strategies for integrating student voice and real-world relevance into classroom instruction to promote deeper academic involvement and civic consciousness.

**Keywords:** Student Engagement, Self-Determination, Social Studies

## 1. Introduction

Education is a transformative force that plays a vital role in individual development and national progress. Beyond academic achievement, it contributes to poverty reduction, social equity, and sustainable economic growth. In the Philippines, education has historically shaped leaders across various sectors, including economics, research, legislation, education, and the arts. Educational advancement is strongly linked to improved economic performance, highlighting that inadequate education can significantly hinder national development. Despite ongoing reforms, the Philippine education system continues to face major challenges. The 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, released in December 2023, showed that Filipino students remain among the lowest performers globally in mathematics, reading, and science, with little improvement since their initial participation in 2018. While access to education has improved, issues such as low student retention and declining academic performance persist. These problems have been further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted learning continuity and widened educational gaps.

In private schools, addressing these challenges requires a deeper understanding of the factors that influence student learning outcomes. Two critical factors are student engagement and self-determination. Engagement refers to students' attention, interest,

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and involvement in academic tasks, and is closely associated with achievement. Self-determination, on the other hand, encompasses autonomy, competence, and relatedness – key elements for fostering intrinsic motivation and lifelong learning. These factors are particularly important in social studies education, which emphasizes civic responsibility, historical awareness, and real-world application. The curriculum promotes critical thinking, empathy, communication, and research skills, while also instilling values such as justice, responsibility, and independence. In line with the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10533), the Department of Education has implemented reforms to strengthen student-centered learning across all schools. As a core subject in the K–12 curriculum, social studies plays a central role in building civic consciousness and global awareness by integrating academic content with social-emotional learning and values education.

This study aims to examine the levels of student engagement and self-determination in social studies classes in selected private schools. The findings will inform the development of an action plan to enhance these factors, with the goal of improving students' attitudes toward the subject and strengthening academic performance. Ultimately, the study seeks to support educational stakeholders in creating more meaningful and effective learning experiences.

### **Research Questions**

The primary objective of this study was to explore the Self determination and Engagement of Social Studies students. This was addressed through the following questions:

1. What is the level of student self-determination in terms of;
  - 1.1 Relatedness
  - 1.2 Competence; and
  - 1.3 Autonomy
2. What is the level of engagement among social studies students in terms of;
  - 2.1 Relating
  - 2.2 Creating; and
  - 2.3 Donating
3. Is there a significant relationship between the social studies student's engagement and self-determination?
4. What action plan program may be proposed?

## **2. Materials and Methods**

This quantitative study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationship between student engagement and self-determination in Social Studies. The study was conducted in selected private schools in Cabuyao City and involved 50 Grade 11 and 12 Social Studies students, who were selected through random sampling. The sample purposively focused on students currently enrolled in Social Studies classes to ensure alignment with the research objectives.

Data were collected using structured, closed-ended questionnaires designed to measure levels of engagement and self-determination. Ethical clearance was obtained prior to data collection, and the study adhered to the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time, and all responses were kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Informed consent was obtained before administering the instruments.

Statistical analysis was conducted to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between student engagement and self-determination. The findings aimed to

inform potential educational interventions to foster greater motivation and engagement in Social Studies classrooms.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The results of the study were examined and interpreted based on each specific research problem. Data were gathered from Grade 11 and 12 students in selected private schools in Cabuyao City. These data, along with the results of the statistical analysis, were interpreted and presented in tables following the sequence of the research problems addressed in the study.

#### 1. What is the level of student self-determination in terms of

##### 1.1 Relatedness

**Table 1.** The Level of Student Self-Determination in terms of Relatedness.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. I feel connected to my classmates during Social Studies activities.	3.34	0.772	Very High
2. I feel supported by my teacher in Social Studies	3.40	0.700	Very High
3. I engage in collaborative activities with my peers in Social Studies.	3.08	0.877	High
4. Social Studies lessons help me understand and relate to the perspectives of others.	3.42	0.731	Very High
5. I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts and opinions in Social Studies class discussions.	3.08	0.877	Very High
Overall RELATEDNESS	3.26	0.594	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The data in Table 1 indicated that the level of student self-determination in terms of relatedness was very high, with an overall mean of 3.26 and a standard deviation of 0.594. This suggested that students generally felt a strong sense of connection and support in their Social Studies learning environment.

Among the statements, the highest mean score (3.42) was given to the statement that Social Studies lessons helped students understand and relate to the perspectives of others, showing that the subject fostered empathy and awareness of different viewpoints. Similarly, students felt supported by their teacher (3.40) and connected to classmates (3.34) during Social Studies activities, both receiving a very high interpretation. However, the lowest mean scores (3.08) were observed in students' engagement in collaborative activities and comfort in sharing thoughts during discussions, with one category being rated as high and the other still within the very high range.

Overall, these results highlighted that Social Studies promoted a strong sense of relatedness, enhancing students' social connections and interactions. However, educators may have focused on increasing collaborative activities and open discussions to further strengthen student engagement and self-determination.

##### 1.2 Competence

**Table 2.** The Level of Student Self-Determination in terms of Competence.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I am confident in my ability to understand and apply Social Studies concepts.	3.14	0.808	Very High

I feel successful in completing Social Studies tasks and assignments.	3.22	0.708	Very High
Social Studies classes challenge me to improve my skills and knowledge.	3.40	0.606	Very High
I understand the feedback provided by my teacher on my Social Studies work.	3.28	0.671	Very High
I feel competent in engaging with complex Social Studies topics.	3.06	0.843	Very High
Overall COMPETENCE	3.22	0.487	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The data in Table 2 indicated that students exhibited a very high level of self-determination in terms of competence, with an overall mean of 3.22 and a standard deviation of 0.487. This signified that students generally felt confident and capable when engaging in Social Studies-related tasks and activities.

The highest mean score (3.40) corresponded to the statement that Social Studies classes challenged students to improve their skills and knowledge, suggesting that students perceived the subject as stimulating and enriching. Other aspects, such as feeling successful in completing Social Studies tasks and assignments (3.22) and understanding teacher feedback (3.28), further reinforced their sense of competence.

Although all statements fell within the very high category, the lowest-rated statement (3.06) pertained to students' competence in engaging with complex Social Studies topics. This suggested that while students felt generally confident, they may still have encountered difficulties with more challenging content.

Overall, the findings highlighted that students perceived Social Studies as a subject that helped build their competence. To further strengthen this, teachers may have considered providing additional support for students struggling with complex topics, such as scaffolding techniques, differentiated instruction, or peer-assisted learning strategies.

### 1.3 Autonomy

**Table 3.** The Level of Student Self-Determination in terms of Autonomy.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I have freedom to choose how I complete Social Studies assignments.	3.32	0.768	Very High
I feel in control of my learning in Social Studies.	2.98	0.892	High
I am given opportunities to make choices about my learning activities in Social Studies.	3.08	0.829	Very High
My opinions and ideas are valued in Social Studies classes.	3.14	0.808	Very High
I set my own learning goals for Social Studies	3.02	0.909	Very High
Overall AUTONOMY	3.10	0.657	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The results in Table 3 revealed that students demonstrated a very high level of autonomy in Social Studies, with an overall mean of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 0.657. This suggested that students generally perceived themselves as having control over their learning process and decisions in Social Studies.

Among the statements, the highest-rated aspect (mean = 3.32) pertained to students having the freedom to choose how they completed Social Studies assignments, indicating

that they valued flexibility in their learning. Additionally, students felt that their opinions and ideas were valued in class discussions (mean = 3.14) and that they were given opportunities to make choices about their learning activities (mean = 3.08), further reinforcing their sense of independence.

The lowest-rated statement (mean = 2.98) was related to students feeling in control of their learning, which, while still interpreted as "high," suggested that some students may have felt limited in fully directing their educational experience. This could have implied a need for more student-centered approaches, such as project-based learning or inquiry-based methods, to enhance their autonomy.

Overall, the findings highlighted that students felt a strong sense of autonomy in Social Studies, which could lead to greater motivation and engagement. Educators may have considered providing additional opportunities for self-directed learning and encouraging goal-setting strategies to further strengthen students' autonomy in the subject.

**Table 4.** Summary Level of Student Self-Determination.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Relatedness	3.26	0.594	Very High
Competence	3.22	0.487	Very High
Autonomy	3.10	0.657	Very High
Overall SELF-DETERMINATION	3.19	0.513	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The findings from the summary of student self-determination indicated that students exhibited a very high level of self-determination in Social Studies, with an overall mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.513. This suggested that students generally felt competent, autonomous, and connected in their learning experience. Among the three dimensions of self-determination, relatedness received the highest rating (Mean = 3.26), indicating that students felt a strong sense of connection with their peers and teachers in Social Studies. Competence followed closely (Mean = 3.22), suggesting that students believed in their ability to understand and successfully complete Social Studies tasks. Meanwhile, autonomy (Mean = 3.10) was slightly lower than the other two dimensions but still at a very high level, indicating that students felt a significant degree of independence in their learning process.

These results highlighted that students experienced a supportive, competence-driven, and autonomous learning environment in Social Studies. To sustain and further enhance this level of self-determination, educators could have continued to encourage collaborative learning activities to strengthen relatedness, provided constructive feedback and academic challenges to maintain competence, and offered more student-directed learning opportunities to foster autonomy. By reinforcing these aspects, educators could have ensured that students remained highly self-determined, which could have led to greater motivation, engagement, and overall academic success in Social Studies.

## **2. What is the level of engagement among social studies students in terms of**

### **2.1 Relating**

**Table 5.** The Level of Engagement among Social Students in terms of Relating.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I find Social Studies topics relevant to my personal life and experiences.	3.46	0.579	Very High

I understand historical events better when they are connected to current issues in my Social Studies class.	3.26	0.664	Very High
Social Studies lessons help me understand my community and its history.	3.46	0.706	Very High
I engage in discussions about Social Studies topics with classmates outside of school.	3.04	0.880	Very High
Social Studies assignments require me to draw connections between the content and real-world events.	3.12	0.773	Very High
Overall RELATING	3.27	0.458	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The results in Table 5 indicated that the level of engagement among Social Studies students in terms of relating was very high, with an overall mean score of 3.27 and a standard deviation of 0.458. This suggested that students strongly connected Social Studies topics to their personal lives and experiences.

Among the specific statements, the highest mean scores were observed in "I found Social Studies topics relevant to my personal life and experiences" ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = 0.579$ ) and "Social Studies lessons helped me understand my community and its history" ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = 0.706$ ). These findings indicated that students perceived Social Studies as meaningful and applicable to their daily lives.

Furthermore, the statement "I understood historical events better when they were connected to current issues in my Social Studies class" ( $M = 3.26$ ,  $SD = 0.664$ ) reinforced the idea that linking past events to contemporary issues enhanced students' comprehension and engagement. Meanwhile, the lowest mean score was found in "I engaged in discussions about Social Studies topics with classmates outside of school" ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 0.880$ ), suggesting that while engagement was high, discussions outside the classroom were less frequent.

Overall, the results demonstrated that students highly related to Social Studies content, particularly when lessons were relevant to their personal experiences and communities. This highlighted the importance of contextualizing learning materials to maintain student interest and engagement.

## 2.2 Creating

**Table 6.** The Level of Engagement among Social Students in terms of Creating.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I participate in hands-on activities like projects, presentations, or group discussions in Social Studies.	3.44	0.723	Very High
I enjoy creating projects or presentations for my Social Studies class.	3.24	0.787	Very High
I have the opportunity to choose how I demonstrate my learning in Social Studies (e.g., through projects, presentations).	3.02	0.754	Very High
Creative assignments in Social Studies help me understand the subject better.	3.32	0.772	Very High
Creating projects or presentations enhances my engagement in Social Studies.	3.14	0.823	Very High
Overall CREATING	3.23	0.456	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level



The results presented in Table 6 showed that the level of engagement among Social Studies students in terms of creating was very high, with an overall mean score of 3.23 and a standard deviation of 0.456. This indicated that students actively participated in hands-on activities and creative tasks related to Social Studies.

Among the specific indicators, the highest level of agreement was found in "I participate in hands-on activities like projects, presentations, or group discussions in Social Studies" ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 0.723$ ), emphasizing that students were highly engaged when involved in interactive learning experiences. Similarly, students reported a strong preference for "Creative assignments in Social Studies help me understand the subject better" ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 0.772$ ), further reinforcing the idea that creativity enhanced comprehension.

Meanwhile, the lowest mean score was observed in "I have the opportunity to choose how I demonstrate my learning in Social Studies" ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.754$ ). While still rated as very high, this suggested that students may have had slightly fewer opportunities for autonomy in how they showcased their learning.

Overall, the findings indicated that students found creative activities in Social Studies highly engaging and beneficial for their learning. Encouraging more opportunities for student choice in creative projects may have further enhanced their engagement and overall academic experience.

### 2.3 Donating

**Table 7.** The Level of Engagement among Social Students in terms of Donating.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I apply what I learn in Social Studies to help or contribute to my community.	3.16	0.889	Very High
Social Studies lessons encourage me to take action on civic issues.	3.02	0.937	Very High
I participate in community service or advocacy projects as part of my Social Studies class.	2.90	0.763	High
My Social Studies education empowers me to make a difference in my community.	3.02	0.714	Very High
My Social Studies assignments involve solving real-world problems or advocating for social change.	3.28	0.834	Very High
Overall DONATING	3.08	0.634	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The results in Table 7 indicated that the level of engagement among Social Studies students in terms of donating was very high, with an overall mean score of 3.08 and a standard deviation of 0.634. This suggested that students actively applied their Social Studies knowledge to contribute to their communities and engage in civic-related activities.

Among the specific indicators, the highest level of engagement was recorded for "My Social Studies assignments involve solving real-world problems or advocating for social change" ( $M = 3.28$ ,  $SD = 0.834$ ), indicating that students perceived their coursework as impactful in addressing societal issues. Additionally, students strongly agreed with "I apply what I learn in Social Studies to help or contribute to my community" ( $M = 3.16$ ,  $SD = 0.889$ ), demonstrating their willingness to use their knowledge for community betterment.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score was observed for "I participate in community service or advocacy projects as part of my Social Studies class" ( $M = 2.90$ ,  $SD = 0.763$ ), which was interpreted as high rather than very high. This implied that while

students acknowledged the importance of civic engagement, actual participation in community service projects may have been slightly lower compared to other engagement aspects.

Overall, the findings highlighted that Social Studies played a crucial role in fostering civic awareness and responsibility among students. To further enhance engagement, educators may have considered incorporating more hands-on community involvement opportunities within the curriculum.

**Table 8.** Summary Level of Engagement among Social Students.

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Relating	3.27	0.458	Very High
Creating	3.23	0.456	Very High
Donating	3.08	0.634	Very High
Overall Student Engagement	3.19	0.451	Very High

Legend: 3.00-4.00 – Very High Level, 2.00-2.99 – High Level, 1.00-1.99 – Low Level, 0.99-1.00 – Very Low Level

The summary results indicated that the overall engagement level of Social Studies students was very high, with an overall mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.451. This suggested that students were highly engaged in their Social Studies learning, particularly in terms of Relating, Creating, and Donating.

Among the three dimensions of engagement, Relating received the highest mean score of 3.27, indicating that students found Social Studies topics relevant to their personal lives and experiences. Creating followed closely with a mean score of 3.23, suggesting that students actively participated in hands-on activities such as projects and presentations, which enhanced their understanding of the subject. Meanwhile, Donating had the lowest mean score of 3.08, though still within the very high interpretation, indicating that while students engaged in applying their Social Studies knowledge to real-world social issues, this aspect may have needed further reinforcement.

Overall, the findings emphasized the effectiveness of Social Studies in fostering student engagement across different domains. To sustain and further improve this engagement, educators may have incorporated more interactive and real-world applications in their teaching strategies.

**Table 9.** Test of Relationship between the Student's engagement and Self-determination in the Social Studies.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Self-determination and Student's engagement	0.863	Very Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results indicated a very strong positive correlation between student self-determination and engagement in Social Studies ( $r = 0.863$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), suggesting that students who were more engaged in their learning also exhibited higher levels of self-determination. This finding aligned with Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasized that engagement in academic activities fostered intrinsic



motivation, autonomy, and competence, all of which contributed to greater self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

**Table 10.** Test of Relationship between Relating and Relatedness.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Relating and Relatedness	0.697	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results showed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.697$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between relating and relatedness, indicating that students who engaged in social interactions and built relationships were more likely to feel a sense of belonging and connection in their learning environment. The p-value of 0.001 suggested that this relationship was statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Table 11.** Test of Relationship between Relating and Competence.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Relating and Competence	0.667	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results indicated a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.667$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between relating and competence, signifying that students who engaged in meaningful social interactions were more likely to perceive themselves as competent in their academic activities. The p-value of 0.001 suggested that this relationship was statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Table 12.** Test of Relationship between Relating and Autonomy.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Relating and Autonomy	0.725	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results indicated a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.725$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between relating and autonomy, meaning that students who experienced meaningful social relationships were more likely to feel a sense of autonomy in their learning. The p-value of 0.001 suggested statistical significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Table 13.** Test of Relationship between Creating and Relatedness.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Creating and Relatedness	0.739	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results indicated a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.739$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between creating and relatedness, suggesting that students who engaged in creative activities tended to experience a stronger sense of connection with others. The p-value of 0.001 confirmed statistical significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Table 14.** Test of Relationship between Creating and Competence.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Creating and Competence	0.501	Moderate Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results indicated a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.501$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between creating and competence, suggesting that students who engaged in creative activities tended to develop a moderate sense of competence. The p-value of 0.001 confirmed statistical significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Table 15.** Test of Relationship between Creating and Autonomy.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Creating and Autonomy	0.743	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results showed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.743$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between creating and autonomy, indicating that students who engaged in creative activities tended to develop a strong sense of autonomy. Since the p-value was 0.001, which was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, confirming that the relationship was statistically significant.

**Table 16.** Test of Relationship between Donating and Relatedness.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Donating and Relatedness	0.624	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject Ho	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results showed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.624$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) between donating and relatedness, indicating that individuals who engaged in donating activities tended to feel a stronger sense of social connection and belonging. The p-value of 0.001 was less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and confirming that this relationship was statistically significant.

**Table 17.** Test of Relationship between Donating and Competence.

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Donating and Competence	0.537	Moderate Correlation	0.001	Reject $H_0$	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between donating and competence ( $r = 0.537$ ), which was statistically significant ( $p = 0.001$ ). Given that the p-value was below the conventional threshold of 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, confirming that a significant association existed between the two variables. Based on Evans' (1996) classification, a correlation coefficient within the range of 0.40 to 0.59 was considered moderate, suggesting that individuals who engaged more in donating behaviors tended to exhibit higher levels of competence. While the relationship was not strong, it was meaningful, indicating that prosocial behaviors such as donating may be linked to an individual's perceived or actual competence.

These findings aligned with existing literature that suggested a connection between prosocial behavior and personal competencies. According to Eisenberg et al. (2006), engaging in prosocial actions, such as donating, could enhance an individual's social and cognitive competence by fostering empathy, moral reasoning, and social responsibility. Similarly, Carlo et al. (2015) emphasized that individuals who frequently engaged in helping behaviors tended to develop a greater sense of personal efficacy and competence in navigating social interactions. Moreover, prosocial behavior had been associated with increased self-esteem and confidence, both of which contributed to overall competence (Caprara et al., 2012).

In summary, the study supported the notion that donating and competence were positively related. The significant correlation suggested that individuals who participated in charitable acts may have developed competencies that enhanced their personal and social effectiveness. These results contributed to the growing body of research highlighting the benefits of prosocial behaviors, reinforcing the idea that generosity and competence may be mutually reinforcing traits.

**Table 18.** Test of Relationship between Donating and Autonomy

Variable	Pearson r	Degree of Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Donating and Autonomy	0.712	Strong Correlation	0.001	Reject $H_0$	Significant

Legend: Significant if  $p < 0.05$ ; 0.80-1.00 Very Strong correlation 0.60-0.79 Strong correlation, 0.40-0.59 Moderate correlation, 0.20-0.39 Weak Correlation, 0.00-0.19 Very Weak / No correlation (Evans, 1996)

The Pearson correlation analysis between donating and autonomy revealed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.712$ ), which was statistically significant ( $p = 0.001$ ). Since the p-

value was below 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, indicating that donating behavior was significantly associated with autonomy. According to Evans' (1996) classification, a correlation coefficient in the range of 0.60 to 0.79 was considered strong, suggesting that individuals who engaged in donating behaviors tended to exhibit a higher sense of autonomy.

This finding aligned with previous research highlighting the relationship between prosocial behavior and autonomy. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posited that autonomy was a fundamental psychological need that fostered intrinsic motivation and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Engaging in prosocial behaviors, such as donating, may have enhanced feelings of autonomy by allowing individuals to act in accordance with their personal values and moral beliefs (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010). Moreover, research suggested that individuals who frequently participated in altruistic acts perceived themselves as more self-directed and competent in making independent choices, further reinforcing their sense of autonomy (Chirkov et al., 2003).

Overall, the results suggested that donating and autonomy were significantly and positively linked. This supported the notion that engaging in generous behaviors may have empowered individuals, giving them a greater sense of control over their actions and decisions. These findings contributed to the broader understanding of how prosocial behavior could enhance psychological well-being and self-determination.

#### 4. Conclusion

As presented in the summary of findings, the conclusion was derived that the hypothesis stating there was no significant relationship between engagement and self-determination among Social Studies students was rejected. Based on the findings, Social Studies students exhibited a very high level of engagement and self-determination, reflecting their deep involvement in learning activities and their strong sense of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The engagement dimensions—Relating, Creating, and Donating—were all rated very high, with *Relating* receiving the highest score, underscoring the perceived relevance of Social Studies to students' lives. Similarly, the self-determination dimensions—Relatedness, Competence, and Autonomy—were also rated very high, with Relatedness achieving the highest score, highlighting students' strong social connections with their peers and teachers.

The data further indicated a significant positive correlation between student engagement and self-determination, emphasizing their mutual reinforcement. This finding aligned with Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posited that fostering engagement enhanced intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and competence, thereby leading to greater self-determination. The individual correlations between the engagement dimensions and the self-determination components further supported this dynamic relationship.

Overall, the study highlighted the importance of fostering a supportive, interactive, and relevant learning environment in Social Studies to enhance both engagement and self-determination. Educators were encouraged to implement strategies that emphasized collaborative learning, creative activities, real-world applications, and opportunities for student autonomy to ensure sustained motivation and academic success.

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