

School-Based Equity Practices and Learning Participation Support among Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Learners

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated how school-based equity practices predicted learning participation support among socioeconomically disadvantaged learners in selected public schools in Quirino Province. A quantitative explanatory-predictive cross-sectional design was employed using partial least squares structural equation modeling and importance-performance map analysis. Eighty-eight learners were selected through criterion-based multistage sampling. Data were gathered using a validated 40-item researcher-developed questionnaire with strong internal consistency, yielding an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.93. Results showed that school-based equity practices and learning participation support were generally experienced to a high extent. Responsive instructional support obtained the highest rating, while welfare and attendance assistance

received only a moderate assessment. Classroom involvement emerged as the strongest participation dimension, whereas completion of learning tasks remained the weakest, particularly for technology-based requirements and activities requiring additional materials. The measurement model demonstrated acceptable reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. All four equity dimensions significantly predicted learning participation support, with responsive instructional support producing the strongest effect, followed by fair treatment and learner voice, equitable access to learning resources, and welfare and attendance assistance. The model explained 61.4 percent of the variance in learning participation support and showed moderate out-of-sample predictive power. The findings indicated that schools had established supportive instructional and relational practices, but gaps remained in material assistance, technology access, transportation support, and timely welfare referral. Strengthening early intervention, resource access, confidential referral systems, and learner-responsive support was therefore recommended.

Keywords: *educational equity; learner participation; partial least squares structural equation modeling; school-based practices; socioeconomic disadvantage; student support*

INTRODUCTION

Education becomes equitable not when every learner receives the same assistance, but when schools respond fairly to differences in learners' circumstances and needs. Learners enter the classroom with unequal access to food, transportation, learning materials, technology, study space, and adult guidance. When these differences are left unaddressed, family background can shape who attends regularly, completes learning tasks, speaks during lessons, and benefits from instruction. Educational equity therefore requires schools to reduce the influence of circumstances that learners cannot control while maintaining meaningful learning opportunities for all (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018).

Socioeconomic hardship can affect both access to schooling and the quality of participation once learners are inside the classroom. Some learners may be enrolled but remain unable to participate fully because of irregular attendance, limited learning resources, household responsibilities, poor nutrition, or the need to contribute to family income. The *Philippines Learning Poverty Brief* estimated that 91 percent of Filipino children at late primary age were not proficient in reading after accounting for children who were out of school. This condition shows that school participation must be understood beyond enrollment because time spent in school does not always lead to the expected knowledge and skills (World Bank, 2022).

Schools have room to lessen these disadvantages through decisions made close to the learner. Fair distribution of resources, careful identification of learners needing assistance, accessible intervention programs, responsive teaching, family communication, and regular monitoring can help prevent economic difficulty from becoming educational exclusion. Evidence from schools serving disadvantaged communities indicates that strong leadership, shared responsibility, high expectations, staff development, and attention to learner well-being can support achievement among learners from low-income households. These findings suggest that equity is not limited to a written policy because it depends on how school personnel translate their commitments into daily practices (Cockerill et al., 2021).

Participation is also more than physical presence. It includes learners' willingness to contribute, sustain effort, interact with teachers and classmates, complete academic tasks, and develop a sense that they belong in school. Learners facing economic hardship may withdraw when classroom activities appear inaccessible or when they feel that their circumstances are misunderstood. School support for learning, including encouragement from teachers and peers, has been associated with stronger student engagement, although the effects may differ according to learners' academic experiences and performance (Moreira et al., 2018).

The kind of support provided is equally important. Not every intervention produces the same effect for disadvantaged learners. Research has found that academic support, heterogeneous classroom grouping, and tutoring can help reduce socioeconomic achievement gaps, while poorly designed extended programs may produce uneven benefits. This means that schools must examine not only whether a program is available, but also whether learners can access it, participate meaningfully, and gain from it without being separated, labeled, or given less demanding learning opportunities (Nachbauer, 2024).

Teachers play a central role because equity is experienced most directly through classroom relationships and instruction. Trust, respectful communication, differentiated activities, visual materials, and responsive guidance can make lessons more manageable for learners who have fewer educational resources at home. At the same time, support can become limiting when teachers lower academic expectations because of a learner's economic background. Effective assistance should remove barriers while preserving challenging and worthwhile learning goals (Majcık & Obrovská, 2025).

In Quirino Province, the Philippine Statistics Authority reported a poverty incidence of 6.7 percent among families in 2023. Although the province was included among those with comparatively low poverty incidence, the provincial estimate does not mean that all households experience the same economic security or that disadvantaged learners encounter identical barriers. A closer examination at the school level is therefore needed to determine how equity-oriented practices are carried out and how these practices relate to the support given for learners' attendance, classroom involvement, task completion, interaction, and continued participation in learning. Such evidence can guide schools in directing assistance toward the learners who need it most while avoiding practices that unintentionally deepen existing differences (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2024).

Literature Review

Equity-Oriented School Leadership and School Practices

Educational equity requires schools to examine whether their policies, resources, programs, and daily decisions provide fair opportunities for learners whose circumstances place them at a disadvantage. Equity does not necessarily require identical treatment because equal provision may still produce unequal experiences when learners differ in access to transportation, food, technology, academic guidance, and other learning resources. Levinson et al. (2022) explained that educational equity may refer to fairness in resource distribution, learning

experiences, academic growth, or educational outcomes. This distinction is important because schools may claim to support equity while using practices that do not directly address the barriers faced by disadvantaged learners. School leaders therefore have a major responsibility in identifying excluded groups, directing resources toward demonstrated needs, developing supportive school conditions, and ensuring that high expectations are maintained for all learners. Leithwood (2021) found that equitable leadership involves practices such as establishing inclusive school values, allocating resources according to student needs, strengthening teacher capacity, involving families and communities, and monitoring the experiences and outcomes of underserved learners. These findings show that school-based equity is expressed through concrete actions rather than general statements of fairness. It includes how assistance is distributed, how interventions are organized, how learner concerns are addressed, and how school personnel determine whether support reaches those who need it most.

Socioeconomic Barriers to Educational Participation

Socioeconomic disadvantage can shape a learner's participation before academic ability is fully considered. Financial pressure may affect attendance, punctuality, access to school supplies, completion of projects, participation in extracurricular activities, and the amount of time available for studying. In the Philippines, Albert et al. (2018) reported that more than half of out-of-school children came from low-income families, indicating that school attendance remained strongly connected to household economic conditions. The authors also observed that financial assistance could improve schooling among poor families, although existing support might not fully cover the opportunity costs of continued attendance, particularly as children grow older. Socioeconomic separation may also influence the quality of educational opportunities available to learners. Gutiérrez et al. (2020) found that the separation of learners from rich and poor households across schools remained generally stable in many education systems despite programs intended to lessen inequality. Such separation can concentrate educational difficulties within particular schools and place greater pressure on institutions serving disadvantaged communities. These conditions suggest that participation cannot be measured only by enrollment or physical attendance. A learner may remain formally enrolled while facing difficulties in attending consistently, securing materials, completing requirements, joining activities, or sustaining academic effort. School-based support must therefore consider both visible and less visible barriers that interfere with meaningful participation.

Teacher Support and Responsive Classroom Practices

Teachers influence whether disadvantaged learners experience the classroom as an accessible place for learning or as another setting where their limitations become more apparent. Responsive support may include clear lesson structures, reasonable learning adjustments, additional explanations, flexible ways of completing tasks, constructive feedback, and opportunities for learners to make choices in their work. Archambault et al. (2020), in their study of learners from low-income elementary schools, found that teacher involvement and support for learner autonomy contributed to behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement. The findings also showed that classroom practices worked together, suggesting that structure alone may not be sufficient unless learners also experience encouragement, personal involvement, and appropriate independence. Supportive relationships are equally important because learners facing material difficulties may depend more heavily on the encouragement available within the school. Martinot et al. (2022) found that teachers and peers were among the strongest sources of support for school engagement, particularly among learners enrolled in priority education areas. These findings show that participation support should combine academic assistance with respectful relationships. Providing materials or intervention sessions may have limited value when learners feel embarrassed, ignored, or incapable of meeting classroom expectations. Effective classroom support removes practical obstacles, builds confidence, preserves learner dignity, and allows disadvantaged learners to participate without being marked as less capable than their classmates.

School Belonging and Meaningful Learning Participation

Learning participation includes more than attendance because it also involves attention, interaction, task completion, persistence, classroom contribution, and willingness to remain involved in school activities. These behaviors are influenced by whether learners feel accepted, safe, respected, and supported within the school. Allen

et al. (2022) found that perceived teacher support was positively associated with school belonging among learners from both lower and higher socioeconomic groups. Their findings also indicated that learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds generally reported weaker belonging and greater exposure to bullying, showing that participation may be affected by the social climate surrounding the learner. Schools serving marginalized communities can strengthen participation by pairing academic opportunities with care, flexibility, and practical assistance. Riddle et al. (2024) identified several practices that supported substantive engagement, including welcoming school climates, meaningful curriculum, caring pedagogy, transportation and food assistance, flexible programs, and stronger engagement with communities. The literature therefore presents learning participation as an outcome of both instructional and social support. However, much of the available evidence comes from education systems outside the Philippines or focuses on isolated practices rather than examining how a broader set of school-based equity practices relates to participation support. This creates a need to examine how schools in Quirino address socioeconomic barriers and sustain learners' involvement in classroom and school learning activities.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative explanatory-predictive cross-sectional design supported by partial least squares structural equation modeling. This design was selected because the investigation moved beyond describing the extent of school-based equity practices and learning participation support. It examined how the specific dimensions of equity-oriented school practices were associated with and predicted the support experienced by socioeconomically disadvantaged learners. The explanatory component clarified the direction and strength of the relationships among the constructs, while the predictive component determined which school practices contributed most strongly to variations in learning participation support.

Variance-based structural modeling was considered appropriate because the study involved multidimensional constructs, a modest sample, and an objective of identifying practices with practical predictive value. Importance-performance map analysis was also incorporated to distinguish practices that were highly influential but less consistently experienced by learners. This procedure provided a more action-oriented interpretation of the findings by identifying areas that required greater attention from schools.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public schools in the province of Quirino. The province provided a suitable setting because its schools served learners from communities with varying access to transportation, learning materials, communication technology, family income, and educational assistance. Some learners travelled considerable distances to attend school, while others experienced limitations in securing supplies, completing technology-based requirements, or participating in activities that involved additional expenses.

The selected schools represented communities in which socioeconomic differences were evident and where school personnel had implemented various forms of learner assistance. These included material support, attendance monitoring, classroom accommodation, academic intervention, feeding assistance, referral services, and communication with families. Conducting the study in Quirino allowed the investigation to examine how school-level equity practices were experienced within a provincial educational setting.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants consisted of 88 socioeconomically disadvantaged learners enrolled in selected public schools in Quirino during the conduct of the study. The final sample exceeded the minimum requirement established through an a priori statistical power analysis. Using a medium anticipated effect size of 0.15, a significance level of 0.05, a statistical power of 0.80, and four predictor domains, the analysis indicated a minimum requirement of approximately 85 participants.

A criterion-based multistage sampling procedure was employed. Public schools were first identified according to the presence of learners receiving school or government assistance and the availability of organized

participation-support initiatives. Within the participating schools, eligible learners were identified through existing school records and referrals from authorized personnel. Eligibility criteria included documented financial difficulty, membership in a household receiving social assistance, inability to meet routine educational expenses, or receipt of school-based material and welfare support.

Participation remained voluntary, and learners were not included solely because they belonged to a particular class or section. Learners who participated in the pilot testing were excluded from the final sample. The selection procedure protected the dignity of the participants by avoiding public identification or classroom labeling based on economic circumstances.

Research Instrument

Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire composed of two major scales. The first scale measured school-based equity practices through four dimensions: equitable access to learning resources, responsive instructional support, welfare and attendance assistance, and fair treatment and learner voice. The second scale assessed learning participation support through attendance continuity, classroom involvement, completion of learning tasks, and academic persistence and help-seeking.

The questionnaire contained 40 statements, with 20 items assigned to each major variable. Responses were recorded using a five-point scale ranging from 1, interpreted as never experienced, to 5, interpreted as consistently experienced. The statements were written from the learners' perspective so that the results reflected their actual school experiences rather than the intended implementation reported by school personnel.

The initial version of the instrument underwent content and face validation by five specialists with backgrounds in educational research, school leadership, inclusive education, guidance services, and measurement and evaluation. Each expert evaluated the clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and alignment of the statements with the study constructs. The scale-level content validity index based on average agreement was 0.94, while the item-level content validity indices ranged from 0.86 to 1.00. Statements identified as repetitive, broad, or difficult for learners to understand were revised before pilot administration.

The revised instrument was pilot-tested among 30 socioeconomically disadvantaged learners from public schools that were not included in the main investigation. The pilot participants possessed characteristics similar to those of the final participants. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the scales. The school-based equity practices scale obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.92, while the learning participation support scale obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.90. The complete questionnaire produced an overall reliability coefficient of 0.93. These values indicated strong internal consistency and supported the use of the instrument in the main data collection.

The questionnaire was also reviewed after the pilot administration through learner feedback. Words that appeared technical or unclear were replaced with more familiar expressions without changing the meaning of the statements. The final instrument retained all 40 items because the corrected item-total correlations exceeded the acceptable threshold and the removal of individual statements did not produce a meaningful improvement in reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the appropriate education authorities, school heads, and other authorized offices before the participants were approached. Coordination meetings were held with designated school personnel to explain the purpose of the investigation, the participant selection criteria, the administration procedure, and the measures used to protect confidentiality.

Parents or legal guardians received written information about the study and signed informed consent forms before their children participated. The learners were also provided with age-appropriate assent forms. They were informed that participation was voluntary, that they could decline to answer any statement, and that they could withdraw without academic or disciplinary consequences.

The questionnaires were administered in small groups at a time approved by the school administration. Teachers who directly handled the participants were not positioned near the learners while the questionnaires were being answered. This arrangement reduced pressure and encouraged honest responses about school experiences.

The researcher or a trained research assistant explained the instructions, clarified unfamiliar terms without influencing responses, and remained available throughout the administration.

Each questionnaire required approximately 20 to 25 minutes to complete. No names, learner reference numbers, or household income amounts were written on the survey forms. Completed questionnaires were placed in sealed envelopes and checked only for completeness. Forms containing substantial missing responses were excluded, while isolated missing values were examined and handled according to the data screening protocol.

Data Analysis

The data were screened for incomplete responses, unusual response patterns, outliers, and distributional concerns before formal analysis. Descriptive statistics, particularly the mean and standard deviation, were used to determine the extent to which the participants experienced each dimension of school-based equity practices and learning participation support. Indicator means were also examined to identify practices that were strongly or weakly experienced.

Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used as the principal inferential procedure. The measurement model was assessed before the relationships among the constructs were interpreted. Indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, ρ_A , composite reliability, and average variance extracted were examined to establish indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated through the heterotrait-monotrait ratio.

The structural model was then assessed through path coefficients, coefficient of determination, effect size, and predictive relevance. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was performed to generate standard errors, t-statistics, probability values, and bias-corrected confidence intervals. A relationship was considered statistically significant when the probability value was below 0.05 and the confidence interval did not include zero.

The coefficient of determination was used to establish the proportion of variance in learning participation support explained by the dimensions of school-based equity practices. Effect size values were examined to determine the practical contribution of each predictor, rather than relying only on statistical significance. Predictive relevance was evaluated through the Stone-Geisser Q^2 procedure, while out-of-sample predictive capacity was assessed using PLSpredict.

Importance-performance map analysis was applied after the structural model had met the required quality criteria. This analysis compared the total effect of each equity practice with its average performance score. Dimensions with high importance but comparatively low performance were identified as priority areas for school intervention. This approach allowed the statistical findings to be translated into specific recommendations for resource allocation, instructional support, learner assistance, and participation-focused programs.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed the principles of informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, respect, fairness, and protection from harm. Special care was observed because the participants were learners and because socioeconomic disadvantage involved sensitive personal and family circumstances. Economic conditions were not discussed publicly, and learners were not asked to disclose exact household income, debts, or other unnecessary financial information.

Parental or guardian consent and learner assent were obtained before data collection. Participants were informed that their decision to participate or decline would not affect their grades, access to school assistance, relationship with teachers, or eligibility for future programs. The questionnaire focused on school experiences and did not require participants to provide identifying information.

Survey forms were coded using numerical identifiers and were stored in a secured location accessible only to the researcher. Electronic records were protected through password-controlled storage. Results were presented in aggregated form so that individual learners, families, classes, and schools could not be identified. Any finding that could have exposed a small or easily recognizable group was combined with broader categories during reporting.

The administration was scheduled to avoid disruption of regular lessons and essential school activities. Participants who experienced discomfort while answering were allowed to pause or discontinue without penalty.

The study avoided deficit-based descriptions and treated socioeconomic disadvantage as a condition shaped by unequal access to resources rather than as a weakness of the learner or family. All data were used solely for the stated research purpose and were retained and disposed of according to the approved research protocol.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *School-Based Equity Practices Experienced by Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Learners*

Dimensions and Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
A. Equitable Access to Learning Resources			
1. The school provided printed or digital learning materials when learners could not obtain their own copies.	3.58	0.78	High
2. Learners were allowed to borrow devices, books, equipment, or other school resources needed for learning.	3.46	0.84	High
3. Learning requirements were adjusted when learners did not have the necessary materials or technology at home.	3.32	0.91	Moderate
4. The school provided assistance for projects, activities, or requirements that involved additional expenses.	3.21	0.96	Moderate
5. Learning spaces and school resources were accessible when learners needed additional time to complete their work.	3.48	0.82	High
Dimension Mean	3.41	0.68	High
B. Responsive Instructional Support			
1. Teachers provided additional explanations when learners had difficulty understanding a lesson.	3.84	0.71	High
2. Teachers allowed alternative ways of completing activities when usual requirements were difficult to meet.	3.79	0.74	High
3. Teachers provided feedback that helped learners improve incomplete or incorrect work.	3.71	0.78	High
4. Catch-up, remediation, or supplementary learning opportunities were provided when learners fell behind.	3.69	0.80	High
5. Teachers checked whether personal or financial difficulties were affecting learners' schoolwork.	3.77	0.73	High
Dimension Mean	3.76	0.61	High
C. Welfare and Attendance Assistance			
1. School personnel followed up learners who had repeated absences or attendance difficulties.	3.44	0.86	High
2. The school communicated with families when learners experienced continuing attendance problems.	3.37	0.89	Moderate
3. Learners were referred to food, transportation, financial, or welfare assistance when necessary.	3.18	1.01	Moderate
4. Assistance was provided soon enough to prevent learners from missing important school requirements.	3.09	1.06	Moderate
5. Learners received assistance without their personal or family circumstances being publicly disclosed.	3.31	0.93	Moderate
Dimension Mean	3.28	0.72	Moderate
D. Fair Treatment and Learner Voice			
1. Learners were treated respectfully regardless of their family's financial condition.	3.78	0.72	High
2. Learners were not excluded from activities because they could not immediately provide money or materials.	3.74	0.77	High
3. Learners were given opportunities to explain difficulties affecting their participation.	3.66	0.81	High
4. School rules were applied with reasonable consideration for documented learner circumstances.	3.59	0.86	High

5. Learners' concerns were considered when school support activities were planned or implemented.	3.68	0.79	High
Dimension Mean	3.69	0.64	High
Overall Mean	3.53	0.58	High

Table 1 showed that school-based equity practices were experienced to a high extent, as indicated by the overall mean of 3.53. The result suggested that the participating schools had implemented visible measures intended to reduce barriers associated with limited household resources. However, the dimension scores were not consistently high, which indicated that learners did not experience the same level of support across all areas.

Responsive instructional support obtained the highest dimension mean of 3.76. Teachers commonly provided additional explanations, alternative ways of completing activities, feedback, and opportunities for remediation. The highest-rated indicator was the provision of additional explanations when learners had difficulty understanding a lesson, with a mean of 3.84. This finding indicated that classroom-level support was the most established form of equity practice. Teachers appeared to respond directly when learning difficulties became visible during instruction.

The relatively high result for responsive instructional support was important because socioeconomically disadvantaged learners might not always have access to tutoring, internet resources, reference materials, or academically knowledgeable adults outside school. Additional guidance from teachers could therefore compensate for some of the instructional support that was not consistently available at home. The results suggested that teachers had recognized that equal lesson delivery did not necessarily provide equal learning opportunities.

Fair treatment and learner voice ranked second, with a dimension mean of 3.69. Respectful treatment regardless of financial condition received the highest mean within the dimension at 3.78. The result indicated that overt discrimination based on socioeconomic condition was not commonly experienced by the participants. Learners also reported that they were generally not excluded from activities because they could not immediately provide money or materials.

Despite the positive result, the application of school rules with reasonable consideration for documented circumstances received the lowest mean within the dimension at 3.59. Although the rating remained high, it suggested that some learners might still have encountered inflexible deadlines, attendance requirements, project expectations, or activity procedures. School personnel might have treated learners respectfully while still applying requirements that were difficult for financially disadvantaged families to meet.

Equitable access to learning resources obtained a mean of 3.41, which was located at the lower boundary of the high category. The provision of printed or digital materials received the highest indicator mean of 3.58. This suggested that schools had made basic learning resources available when learners could not provide their own copies. Borrowing arrangements for books, equipment, and devices were also experienced to a high extent.

However, assistance for projects and activities involving additional expenses obtained a moderate mean of 3.21. Adjustments to requirements when learners lacked technology or materials also received a moderate mean of 3.32. These findings revealed that access problems became more evident when schoolwork required expenses beyond ordinary classroom materials. While schools appeared able to provide modules, textbooks, or basic supplies, assistance was less consistent for projects, online requirements, printing expenses, transportation, and specialized materials.

Welfare and attendance assistance received the lowest dimension mean of 3.28 and was interpreted as moderate. Attendance follow-up obtained a high mean of 3.44, but the remaining indicators were only moderately experienced. The lowest-rated practice concerned whether assistance was provided soon enough to prevent learners from missing school requirements, with a mean of 3.09. Referral to food, transportation, financial, or welfare support also received a moderate mean of 3.18.

The pattern indicated that schools were more capable of identifying attendance difficulties than of providing timely material or welfare assistance. Learners might have been contacted after repeated absences, but the underlying causes of those absences were not always resolved immediately. Delayed assistance could have allowed missed lessons, incomplete requirements, and accumulated academic work to continue before an appropriate intervention was provided.

The standard deviations for welfare and attendance indicators were also higher than those found in the other dimensions. This variation suggested that assistance was not equally accessible across schools or participants. Some learners might have received substantial support, while others might have had limited knowledge of available programs or experienced delays in referral and approval. The results therefore reflected a meaningful implementation gap despite the generally favorable overall assessment.

Table 2. *Learning Participation Support Experienced by Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Learners*

Dimensions and Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
A. Attendance Continuity			
1. The support provided by the school helped learners attend classes more regularly.	3.62	0.78	High
2. Learners were assisted in returning to class after absences.	3.51	0.82	High
3. Learners received help in completing lessons missed because of absence.	3.43	0.87	High
4. School support reduced the number of classes missed because of transportation or financial difficulties.	3.39	0.92	Moderate
5. Learners were encouraged to remain enrolled despite personal or family difficulties.	3.50	0.84	High
Dimension Mean	3.49	0.71	High
B. Classroom Involvement			
1. Learners felt comfortable asking questions when they did not understand a lesson.	3.70	0.74	High
2. Learners were encouraged to participate even when they lacked confidence.	3.66	0.76	High
3. Learners were given fair opportunities to contribute during class activities.	3.58	0.81	High
4. Classroom activities allowed learners with limited resources to participate meaningfully.	3.54	0.84	High
5. Learners felt that their ideas and contributions were valued by teachers and classmates.	3.56	0.79	High
Dimension Mean	3.61	0.65	High
C. Completion of Learning Tasks			
1. Learners were able to submit most learning activities within the expected period.	3.48	0.83	High
2. Additional time was provided when valid circumstances prevented timely submission.	3.39	0.88	Moderate
3. Learners received the materials needed to complete projects and performance tasks.	3.27	0.97	Moderate
4. Learners were able to complete technology-based requirements despite limited access at home.	3.18	1.02	Moderate
5. Learners received assistance before incomplete tasks accumulated.	3.34	0.91	Moderate
Dimension Mean	3.33	0.74	Moderate
D. Academic Persistence and Help-Seeking			
1. Learners continued working even when school activities were difficult.	3.66	0.76	High
2. Learners sought help from teachers when they could not complete a task independently.	3.61	0.79	High
3. Learners attempted to improve their work after receiving feedback.	3.55	0.82	High
4. Learners remained interested in learning despite difficulties outside school.	3.47	0.88	High
5. Learners believed that school personnel would assist them when they experienced learning problems.	3.60	0.80	High
Dimension Mean	3.58	0.67	High
Overall Mean	3.50	0.62	High

Table 2 showed that learning participation support was experienced to a high extent, with an overall mean of 3.50. The result suggested that school assistance generally helped disadvantaged learners remain involved in their education. Nevertheless, the moderate score for task completion showed that participation was not equally sustained across all learning requirements.

Classroom involvement received the highest dimension mean of 3.61. Learners felt comfortable asking questions, were encouraged to participate, and were given opportunities to contribute during class activities. The highest-rated indicator was learners' comfort in asking questions when lessons were not understood, with a mean of 3.70. This result was consistent with the strong rating obtained by responsive instructional support in Table 1.

The findings suggested that interpersonal and instructional forms of assistance were more consistently experienced than material assistance. Teachers were able to encourage participation, explain lessons, recognize learner contributions, and establish supportive classroom interactions even when financial resources were limited. This form of support appeared to have created classroom conditions in which learners felt more comfortable becoming involved.

Academic persistence and help-seeking ranked second, with a dimension mean of 3.58. Learners generally continued working when activities became difficult and sought assistance from teachers when they could not complete tasks independently. The result indicated that the participants had developed a reasonable level of confidence in approaching school personnel for academic help.

The lowest indicator within academic persistence concerned maintaining interest despite difficulties outside school, which received a mean of 3.47. Although this was interpreted as high, it remained lower than the indicators related to seeking teacher assistance and responding to feedback. This difference suggested that school support could encourage learners to continue specific tasks, but it could not fully remove the emotional and practical effects of continuing household difficulties.

Attendance continuity obtained a high dimension mean of 3.49. School support appeared to help learners attend more regularly, return after absences, and remain enrolled despite personal or family difficulties. However, support that reduced absences caused by transportation or financial difficulties obtained a moderate mean of 3.39.

The result revealed an important distinction between encouraging attendance and resolving the conditions that caused absence. Schools appeared capable of communicating with learners, encouraging their return, and helping them recover missed lessons. They were less consistently able to address transportation costs, household responsibilities, food insecurity, and other financial conditions that prevented regular attendance.

Completion of learning tasks received the lowest dimension mean of 3.33 and was the only participation dimension interpreted as moderate. The lowest-rated indicator concerned the completion of technology-based requirements despite limited access at home, with a mean of 3.18. Access to materials for projects and performance tasks also received a moderate mean of 3.27.

These results showed that learners could participate during classroom discussions but still encounter difficulty completing work outside the classroom. Task completion frequently depended on access to mobile devices, internet connectivity, printing services, art materials, transportation, and appropriate study spaces. These requirements created participation barriers that supportive classroom relationships alone could not fully address.

Assistance before incomplete tasks accumulated received a moderate mean of 3.34. This result suggested that intervention sometimes occurred only after several activities had already been missed. Delayed identification could have caused learners to experience increasing workloads, reduced confidence, and greater difficulty catching up. A more systematic early-warning process might therefore have been necessary to identify incomplete work before it developed into prolonged academic disengagement.

The comparatively high standard deviations for technology access and project materials indicated uneven experiences among the participants. Some learners might have had access to school devices, community internet services, or teacher-provided alternatives, while others might have depended entirely on limited household resources. The results confirmed that the main concern was not complete absence of participation support but its inconsistent reach and timing.

Table 3. *Assessment of Indicator Reliability, Internal Consistency, and Convergent Validity*

Construct	Number of Items	Loading Range	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Equitable Access to Learning Resources	5	0.712 to 0.843	0.856	0.865	0.897	0.636
Responsive Instructional Support	5	0.731 to 0.866	0.881	0.887	0.913	0.678
Welfare and Attendance Assistance	5	0.701 to 0.829	0.842	0.851	0.888	0.614
Fair Treatment and Learner Voice	5	0.744 to 0.872	0.894	0.899	0.922	0.703
Attendance Continuity	5	0.719 to 0.851	0.864	0.871	0.902	0.648
Classroom Involvement	5	0.728 to 0.862	0.879	0.884	0.911	0.672
Completion of Learning Tasks	5	0.704 to 0.838	0.848	0.856	0.892	0.624
Academic Persistence and Help-Seeking	5	0.736 to 0.874	0.888	0.893	0.918	0.691

Table 3 presented the assessment of the reflective measurement model. The indicator loadings ranged from 0.701 to 0.874. All retained indicators exceeded the minimum loading requirement of 0.70, which indicated that each statement contributed adequately to the construct it was intended to measure. No indicator was removed from the final model.

The lowest loading was recorded within welfare and attendance assistance at 0.701. Although this value was acceptable, it showed that experiences under this dimension were slightly less uniform than experiences under the other constructs. This result corresponded with the higher standard deviations observed in Table 1, where learners reported varied access to welfare assistance and attendance-related support.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.842 to 0.894. The rho_A values ranged from 0.851 to 0.899, while composite reliability values ranged from 0.888 to 0.922. These results demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency without coefficients becoming excessively high. The absence of values above 0.95 also suggested that the indicators were related but did not merely repeat the same statement.

Fair treatment and learner voice obtained the highest composite reliability of 0.922. This result indicated that respectful treatment, inclusion, opportunities to explain difficulties, reasonable application of rules, and consideration of learner concerns formed a coherent dimension. Welfare and attendance assistance had the lowest composite reliability at 0.888, but it still exceeded the accepted standard.

The average variance extracted values ranged from 0.614 to 0.703. Each construct therefore explained more than half of the variance in its indicators. Fair treatment and learner voice obtained the highest AVE at 0.703, while welfare and attendance assistance obtained the lowest at 0.614. The findings established adequate convergent validity and supported the continuation of the structural model assessment.

Table 4. *Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations*

Construct	EAR	RIS	WAA	FTLV	AC	CI	CLT	APH
EAR								
RIS	0.612							
WAA	0.536	0.589						
FTLV	0.573	0.671	0.608					
AC	0.489	0.552	0.629	0.541				
CI	0.521	0.702	0.485	0.663	0.604			
CLT	0.654	0.617	0.578	0.559	0.661	0.692		
APH	0.546	0.681	0.536	0.714	0.623	0.748	0.706	

Note. EAR = Equitable Access to Learning Resources; RIS = Responsive Instructional Support; WAA = Welfare and Attendance Assistance; FTLV = Fair Treatment and Learner Voice; AC = Attendance Continuity; CI = Classroom Involvement; CLT = Completion of Learning Tasks; APH = Academic Persistence and Help-Seeking.

Table 4 showed that the heterotrait-monotrait ratios ranged from 0.485 to 0.748. All values remained below the conservative threshold of 0.85, which established discriminant validity. The results indicated that the eight constructs measured related but distinguishable aspects of school equity and learner participation.

The highest HTMT value was 0.748 between classroom involvement and academic persistence and help-seeking. This comparatively strong association was reasonable because learners who participated actively in class were also more likely to seek assistance, respond to feedback, and continue working when tasks became difficult. However, the value remained sufficiently below the threshold, which indicated that the two constructs were not statistically identical.

Fair treatment and learner voice also had a relatively strong relationship with academic persistence and help-seeking, with an HTMT value of 0.714. This finding suggested that learners who felt respected and heard were more willing to continue participating and approach teachers for assistance. Respectful treatment appeared to reduce the hesitation learners might have felt when discussing academic or personal difficulties.

The relationship between equitable access to resources and completion of learning tasks produced an HTMT value of 0.654. This association supported the practical connection between resource availability and learners' ability to finish activities. Nevertheless, the constructs remained separate because access described the assistance provided by the school, while task completion described the resulting learner participation.

The lowest ratio was 0.485 between welfare and attendance assistance and classroom involvement. This result suggested that welfare support was more closely connected with remaining present in school than with speaking, contributing, or interacting during classroom instruction. Learners might have received attendance assistance without automatically becoming active participants during lessons.

Overall, the discriminant validity results showed that the instrument did not treat all forms of equity support and participation as a single undifferentiated experience. The constructs captured distinct school practices and participation outcomes, which allowed their individual contributions to be examined in the structural model.

Table 5. *Assessment of the Higher-Order Learning Participation Support Construct*

Lower-Order Dimension	Outer Weight	Outer Loading	t-value	p-value	VIF
Attendance Continuity	0.257	0.814	4.360	<0.001	1.82
Classroom Involvement	0.286	0.861	5.270	<0.001	2.09
Completion of Learning Tasks	0.221	0.783	3.720	<0.001	1.96
Academic Persistence and Help-Seeking	0.309	0.874	5.810	<0.001	2.21

Table 5 presented the contribution of the four participation dimensions to the higher-order learning participation support construct. All outer weights were positive and statistically significant. Their confidence estimates did not contain zero, which indicated that each dimension provided a meaningful contribution to the broader construct.

Academic persistence and help-seeking had the largest outer weight at 0.309 and the highest outer loading at 0.874. This result indicated that persistence, willingness to improve, and readiness to seek assistance were central components of continued learning participation. Learners who maintained effort and approached teachers for assistance demonstrated a stronger capacity to remain involved despite socioeconomic difficulties.

Classroom involvement had the second-largest outer weight at 0.286. Its outer loading of 0.861 also showed a strong relationship with the higher-order construct. This result established that meaningful participation included active classroom contribution rather than mere physical attendance.

Attendance continuity contributed an outer weight of 0.257. The result confirmed that regular attendance and return after absence were necessary components of participation, although attendance alone did not fully

describe how learners engaged with learning. A learner could attend school but still remain passive or struggle to complete requirements.

Completion of learning tasks had the smallest outer weight at 0.221. Despite being the weakest dimension, its contribution remained statistically significant. The lower weight did not mean that task completion was unimportant. Rather, it suggested that task completion was more strongly affected by practical conditions, including materials, technology, time, and home responsibilities, that might not be fully captured by learners' willingness to participate.

The variance inflation factor values ranged from 1.82 to 2.21. These values were below the conservative threshold of 3.30 and showed that the four dimensions contributed distinct information without problematic collinearity. The results supported their combination into a higher-order measure of learning participation support.

Table 6. *Structural Model Results for the Prediction of Learning Participation Support*

Structural Path	Beta	SE	t-value	p-value	95% Bias-Corrected CI	f ²	VIF	Decision
Equitable Access to Learning Resources → Learning Participation Support	0.214	0.098	2.184	0.029	0.036 to 0.392	0.066	1.62	Significant
Responsive Instructional Support → Learning Participation Support	0.326	0.091	3.582	<0.001	0.151 to 0.488	0.157	2.08	Significant
Welfare and Attendance Assistance → Learning Participation Support	0.167	0.084	1.988	0.047	0.006 to 0.329	0.044	1.76	Significant
Fair Treatment and Learner Voice → Learning Participation Support	0.283	0.090	3.144	0.002	0.108 to 0.455	0.118	1.94	Significant
Endogenous Construct	R ² Adjusted R ²		Q ² SRMR					
Learning Participation Support	0.614		0.595		0.421 0.067			

Table 6 showed that all four dimensions of school-based equity practices had positive and statistically significant effects on learning participation support. The confidence intervals for all paths remained above zero. The result indicated that improvements in each equity dimension were associated with stronger participation among socioeconomically disadvantaged learners.

Responsive instructional support was the strongest predictor, with a path coefficient of 0.326, a t-value of 3.582, and a probability value below 0.001. The result meant that increased access to explanations, alternative activities, constructive feedback, remediation, and teacher monitoring was associated with stronger attendance, involvement, task completion, persistence, and help-seeking.

The effect size of responsive instructional support was 0.157, which indicated a medium practical contribution. This was the only predictor that reached the conventional medium effect threshold. Its result was consistent with the descriptive findings, where responsive instructional support was also the most highly experienced equity practice. Classroom-level actions therefore represented both a current strength and the most influential support mechanism.

Fair treatment and learner voice emerged as the second strongest predictor, with a path coefficient of 0.283 and a probability value of 0.002. The result indicated that respectful treatment, inclusion, opportunities to explain difficulties, and consideration of learner concerns encouraged continued participation. When learners believed that their circumstances would be understood rather than judged, they appeared more willing to attend, contribute, persist, and request assistance.

The effect size of fair treatment and learner voice was 0.118. Although this was below the medium threshold, it represented a meaningful contribution. The finding showed that equity was not limited to the distribution of resources. The manner in which learners were treated also shaped whether school assistance resulted in genuine participation.

Equitable access to learning resources had a positive coefficient of 0.214 and a probability value of 0.029. The result indicated that access to materials, devices, learning spaces, and reasonable alternatives improved participation. Its effect size of 0.066 was small but meaningful. This result was especially relevant to completion of learning tasks, which received the lowest descriptive score.

The relatively smaller effect of resource access might have resulted from variation in the type and timing of assistance. Providing a textbook or printed activity could support learning, but it might not fully resolve transportation difficulties, internet limitations, project expenses, or home responsibilities. The effect of resources therefore depended on whether the assistance matched the actual barrier experienced by the learner.

Welfare and attendance assistance had the weakest path coefficient at 0.167. The relationship remained statistically significant at the 0.05 level, with a probability value of 0.047. Its confidence interval was narrowest near zero, and its effect size was 0.044. These findings indicated a small contribution that required cautious interpretation.

The weaker result did not suggest that welfare assistance was unnecessary. Instead, it might have reflected the limited and inconsistent availability of such support. Welfare and attendance assistance also received the lowest descriptive mean. A practice that was not regularly or promptly experienced would have had less opportunity to produce a strong effect across the entire group.

The four predictors jointly explained 61.4 percent of the variance in learning participation support. The adjusted coefficient of determination was 0.595, which indicated that the model retained substantial explanatory capacity after considering the number of predictors. The remaining 38.6 percent could have been associated with family support, personal motivation, health conditions, peer relationships, prior achievement, community access, and other factors outside the model.

The Stone-Geisser Q^2 value was 0.421, which was substantially above zero and indicated strong predictive relevance for the endogenous construct. The standardized root mean square residual was 0.067, which suggested an acceptable difference between the observed and model-implied correlation structures.

The inner variance inflation factor values ranged from 1.62 to 2.08. These values showed that the predictor dimensions did not create problematic multicollinearity. Each equity practice therefore made a distinguishable contribution to explaining learning participation support.

Table 7. *PLSPredict Results for Learning Participation Dimensions*

Participation Dimension	$Q^2_{predict}$	PLS-SEM RMSE	Linear Model RMSE	PLS-SEM MAE	Linear Model MAE	Predictive Comparison
Attendance Continuity	0.312	0.601	0.618	0.468	0.481	PLS-SEM produced lower errors
Classroom Involvement	0.354	0.548	0.566	0.431	0.447	PLS-SEM produced lower errors
Completion of Learning Tasks	0.228	0.673	0.665	0.529	0.521	Linear model produced slightly lower errors
Academic Persistence and Help-Seeking	0.341	0.572	0.589	0.449	0.461	PLS-SEM produced lower errors

Table 7 presented the out-of-sample prediction results. All $Q^2_{predict}$ values were above zero, which indicated that the structural model predicted the participation dimensions better than a basic mean-based benchmark. The model therefore demonstrated practical predictive relevance beyond explaining relationships in the original sample.

The PLS-SEM model produced lower root mean square error and mean absolute error values than the linear model for attendance continuity, classroom involvement, and academic persistence and help-seeking. This result indicated that the equity practice dimensions had useful predictive capability for three of the four participation outcomes.

Classroom involvement obtained the highest Q^2 predict value at 0.354. This indicated that equity practices were particularly useful in predicting whether learners asked questions, contributed during activities, felt included, and believed that their ideas were valued. Responsive teaching and fair treatment were likely to have been closely experienced within classroom interactions, which made this dimension more predictable.

Academic persistence and help-seeking obtained a Q^2 predict value of 0.341, while attendance continuity obtained 0.312. These positive values suggested that school practices helped predict whether learners continued working, sought assistance, returned after absences, and remained enrolled despite difficulties.

Completion of learning tasks obtained the lowest Q^2 predict value at 0.228. The PLS-SEM error values were also slightly higher than those of the linear model. This result indicated weaker predictive performance for task completion. The structural model explained some variation in completing tasks, but its predictive accuracy was limited.

The weaker prediction of task completion supported the descriptive finding that this participation dimension was the most problematic. Completion of activities was likely affected by factors that were not fully represented by school-based equity practices. These could have included household responsibilities, availability of electricity or internet service, personal study time, distance from school, health concerns, and the complexity of specific learning requirements.

Because the PLS-SEM model produced lower errors for most but not all outcomes, its out-of-sample predictive power was interpreted as moderate rather than uniformly strong. This result provided a more realistic assessment than relying only on statistically significant structural paths. The model was useful for anticipating general participation, but additional predictors would have been necessary to improve the prediction of task completion.

Table 8. *Importance and Performance of School-Based Equity Practices*

Equity Practice	Importance or Total Effect	Performance Score	Rank in Importance	Priority Interpretation
Responsive Instructional Support	0.326	69.00	1	Highest influence; strengthen consistency and early intervention
Fair Treatment and Learner Voice	0.283	67.25	2	High influence; deepen learner consultation and flexible responses
Equitable Access to Learning Resources	0.214	60.25	3	Lower performance with meaningful influence; prioritize resource access
Welfare and Attendance Assistance	0.167	56.95	4	Lowest performance; improve referral speed and coverage

Table 8 showed that responsive instructional support had the greatest importance in improving learning participation, with a total effect of 0.326. It also obtained the highest performance score of 69.00. This placement indicated that instructional support was a strong school practice that should have been maintained and refined rather than treated as a completed concern.

Despite its relatively favorable performance, responsive instructional support still had room for improvement. Its high total effect meant that even a modest increase in the consistency of remediation, feedback, monitoring, and alternative learning arrangements could have produced a meaningful improvement in participation. Schools could therefore have prioritized early instructional intervention before learners accumulated absences or incomplete requirements.

Fair treatment and learner voice ranked second in importance, with a total effect of 0.283 and a performance score of 67.25. This result indicated that respectful and inclusive school experiences had considerable value in sustaining participation. The practice performed relatively well, but greater learner consultation and more consistent consideration of individual circumstances could have strengthened its effect.

Equitable access to learning resources had a total effect of 0.214 and a performance score of 60.25. Although it ranked third in importance, its lower performance made it an important improvement area. The result

suggested that existing resource support did not fully cover technology-based requirements, project expenses, printing needs, specialized materials, and access outside regular class hours.

Improving equitable resource access could have directly addressed the moderate task-completion result. Schools could have established clearer borrowing procedures, shared device schedules, school-based printing support, low-cost activity alternatives, take-home learning kits, and designated periods for learners to use school facilities.

Welfare and attendance assistance received the lowest performance score of 56.95 and the smallest total effect of 0.167. Its low performance indicated that assistance was not consistently available, timely, or known to all eligible learners. The small total effect might therefore have reflected implementation weakness rather than a lack of practical value.

The result suggested that welfare support required a targeted rather than isolated response. Schools needed clearer referral systems, defined personnel responsibilities, confidential records, coordination with families, and stronger connections with government and community assistance programs. Support should have been provided before repeated absence resulted in extensive missed work.

The importance-performance findings showed that the strongest immediate gains could have been obtained by improving instructional responsiveness and fair treatment while addressing the lower performance of resource access and welfare assistance. The findings did not support concentrating on only one area. Classroom support had the strongest direct influence, but material and welfare barriers remained responsible for the most visible participation difficulties.

CONCLUSION

School-based equity practices contributed meaningfully to the learning participation of socioeconomically disadvantaged learners in Quirino, although the support provided across schools was not equally consistent in all areas. Responsive instructional support and fair treatment emerged as the strongest practices associated with attendance, classroom involvement, academic persistence, and help-seeking, while limited access to learning materials, technology, transportation assistance, and timely welfare services continued to affect the completion of learning tasks. The findings further showed that the schools had established supportive classroom relationships, but some learners still experienced delays in receiving assistance before absences and incomplete requirements accumulated. It is therefore recommended that schools strengthen early identification and intervention systems for learners experiencing participation difficulties, provide accessible borrowing and printing services, prepare low-cost alternatives for financially demanding activities, expand access to devices and learning spaces, and establish confidential and timely referral procedures for food, transportation, financial, and welfare assistance. Teachers should continue using flexible instructional strategies, additional explanations, constructive feedback, remediation, and reasonable task adjustments while maintaining appropriate academic expectations. School leaders should also include learners and families in planning support programs, monitor whether assistance reaches eligible learners, coordinate with government and community organizations, and use the importance-performance findings to prioritize practices with high influence but lower implementation. Future researchers may examine other factors affecting participation, such as family support, distance from school, health conditions, digital access, peer relationships, and learner motivation, and may conduct longitudinal or mixed-method investigations involving a wider group of schools to determine how equity practices influence participation over time.

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