

Determinants of Student Engagement in Learning *Araling Panlipunan*

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ABSTRACT

Student engagement is central to meaningful learning in Araling Panlipunan, yet learners differ in the extent to which they participate, remain interested, and cognitively invest in the subject. This study determined the key determinants of student engagement in learning Araling Panlipunan among Junior High School students and used the findings as the basis for a lesson exemplar. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed. The quantitative phase involved 275 Grade 7 to Grade 10 respondents selected through stratified random sampling, while the qualitative phase involved 24 students selected purposively for individual interviews. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed and expert-validated questionnaire and a validated interview guide.

Quantitative data were analyzed using the weighted arithmetic mean, whereas qualitative data were managed with NVivo and examined through Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The overall weighted arithmetic mean for the four determinants was 3.35 (Strongly Agree). Pedagogical strategies obtained the highest mean (3.45), followed by curriculum content (3.44), use of technology (3.36), and student attitudes and perceptions (3.16). Qualitative findings further showed that engagement increased when instruction was learner-centered, interactive, contextualized, and supported by purposeful technology; when students perceived the subject as relevant to civic life and personal experience; and when curriculum content was organized, interdisciplinary, and connected to contemporary issues. The findings informed the development of "Ka-Ma-Ta: Mula sa Kaalaman patungo sa Makahulugang Talakayan," a lesson exemplar designed to translate these determinants into student-centered classroom practice. The study underscores the value of aligning pedagogy, technology, learner dispositions, and curriculum relevance to strengthen behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in Araling Panlipunan.

Keywords: *Araling Panlipunan, curriculum content, pedagogical strategies, student engagement, student attitudes, technology integration*

INTRODUCTION

Araling Panlipunan is a core area of Philippine basic education that develops learners' understanding of history, geography, economics, governance, culture, society, and contemporary issues while cultivating critical thinking and responsible citizenship. The K to 12 Araling Panlipunan curriculum emphasizes understanding, inquiry, contextual learning, and the application of social concepts to real-life situations rather than the simple memorization of facts (Department of Education, 2016). The MATATAG curriculum continues this direction by seeking to develop holistic and future-ready Filipino learners whose knowledge, skills, and values are connected to national identity, citizenship, and social responsibility (Department of Education, 2024).

Meaningful attainment of these curriculum intentions depends substantially on student engagement. Engagement encompasses learners' attention, participation, emotional involvement, motivation, and cognitive

investment in learning. Ali and Hassan (2018) emphasized that school engagement is associated with positive behavioral, emotional, and cognitive development, while Perry (2022) argued that engaged learners are more willing to sustain attention, explore learning opportunities, and deepen understanding. In Araling Panlipunan, engagement is especially important because the subject requires learners to interpret evidence, discuss social issues, connect past and present events, and form reasoned positions on civic and societal concerns.

The thesis from which this article was developed identified a recurring classroom concern: some Junior High School students participate actively in Araling Panlipunan, whereas others remain passive or lose interest when lessons are dominated by lengthy explanations, memorization, or content they perceive as disconnected from their lives. Research reviewed in the thesis suggests that student-centered and interactive methods can improve engagement in social science learning. Padingding and Gallego (2025) reported that innovative strategies support active participation, and Lawal (2025) emphasized that interactive approaches can improve behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in history and social studies. Contextualized teaching also strengthens interest when lessons are linked to real-world issues and learners' experiences (Bermudo & Galay-Limos, 2025).

Technology and learner dispositions add further complexity. Digital resources can make historical and social concepts more visual, accessible, and interactive, yet technology is most effective when it supports rather than replaces sound pedagogy. Escote and José (2024) linked technology-based instruction and motivated learning strategies with student engagement in Araling Panlipunan, while UNESCO (2023) cautioned that the educational value of technology depends on the conditions and purposes of its use. At the same time, students' interest, confidence, values, and perceptions affect their willingness to participate. Biboso and Dela Cruz (2025) reported that motivation strategies and attitudes are important in social science learning, highlighting the need to examine both instructional and learner-centered determinants.

Accordingly, the study examined student engagement through four interrelated determinants: pedagogical strategies, use of technology, student attitudes and perceptions, and curriculum content. It aimed to determine the extent to which these factors influenced engagement, explore how students experienced their effects, identify implications for teaching, and use the integrated findings to develop a lesson exemplar for Junior High School Araling Panlipunan. By combining quantitative perceptions with qualitative narratives, the study sought to translate evidence about engagement into a practical classroom resource without separating instructional methods from the technological, affective, and curricular contexts in which engagement occurs.

Literature Review

Student Engagement in Araling Panlipunan

Student engagement is a multidimensional educational construct reflected in the degree to which learners participate in classroom tasks, feel interested and connected to learning, and invest mental effort in understanding content. Ali and Hassan (2018) described engagement as an important condition for positive school outcomes, while Perry (2022) emphasized that students learn more meaningfully when they are emotionally invested and able to sustain attention. Within Araling Panlipunan, engagement is not limited to recitation or task completion; it includes curiosity about social realities, willingness to discuss contrasting interpretations, and the capacity to connect historical and civic concepts with present-day life.

The reviewed studies also show that engagement develops through interaction between learner characteristics and the classroom environment. Padingding and Gallego (2025) found that innovative learning strategies in social science promote active participation, whereas Alvizo (2025) reported that learner-centered practices such as collaboration, inquiry, and differentiated instruction support motivation, autonomy, critical thinking, and classroom interaction. These findings justify examining engagement through several determinants rather than treating it as the product of a single teaching method.

Pedagogical Strategies and Learner-Centered Instruction

Pedagogical strategies shape the opportunities students receive to construct knowledge, exchange ideas, and apply concepts. Lawal (2025) argued that movement from teacher-centered history instruction toward

interactive and constructivist approaches improves engagement and supports more complex historical thinking. Taylan and Rabago (2025) similarly documented the use of constructivist strategies such as collaborative learning, think-pair-share, and Socratic questioning in social studies. Sahito (2025) further noted that active-learning approaches, including problem-based and collaborative learning, are associated with stronger engagement and academic performance.

Contextualization strengthens these approaches because it helps learners see why content matters. Bermudo and Galay-Limos (2025) found that integrating current events into Araling Panlipunan is associated with student interest, while Shannon (2022) reported deep engagement when learners participated in problem-based history and social studies experiences. Taken together, the literature supports pedagogies that combine clear teacher guidance with inquiry, discussion, collaboration, experiential tasks, and links to real social issues instead of relying mainly on lecture and recall.

Technology Integration in Social Studies Learning

Technology can expand the ways students encounter and work with social studies content. Alquizar and Vinuya (2025) reported that digitized instructional materials can support learning outcomes, and Escote and José (2024) identified technology-based instruction as a predictor of student engagement in Araling Panlipunan when paired with motivated learning strategies. Digital history approaches also allow students to interpret and produce multimedia representations rather than consume information passively; Swan and Hofer (2025) highlighted the value of student-created multimedia in history learning.

Nevertheless, the reviewed literature consistently treats technology as a pedagogical resource rather than an automatic solution. UNESCO (2023) observed that educational technology produces different outcomes depending on access, instructional purpose, and implementation conditions. The thesis therefore positioned technology alongside, not above, teacher explanation, interaction, contextualization, and collaboration. This perspective is important for Junior High School learners, for whom videos, slides, online quizzes, simulations, and other digital tools may increase interest only when the activities remain meaningful and participatory.

Student Attitudes, Perceptions, and Motivation

Students' willingness to engage is also influenced by how they perceive the subject and their own capacity to succeed. Biboso and Dela Cruz (2025) found that motivation strategies, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and attitudes contribute to learning in the social sciences. Dela Cueva and Tenorio (2025) reported generally favorable perceptions of Araling Panlipunan when learners recognized the subject's real-life, socio-cultural, and civic relevance. These findings indicate that engagement is partly sustained by learners' judgments that the subject is useful, understandable, personally meaningful, and connected to their identities as citizens.

Positive attitudes can also be strengthened by the design of learning experiences. Barotas and Palma (2023) connected attitudes, engagement, and learning strategies with student motivation, while Issar (2021) discussed how teaching practices influence students' attitudes toward studying history. A supportive classroom that welcomes student opinions, provides clear explanations and feedback, and reduces excessive dependence on memorization can therefore help students move from passive compliance toward more confident participation and deeper cognitive involvement.

Curriculum Content, Relevance, and Contextualization

The Araling Panlipunan curriculum is designed to develop knowledge and skills progressively across history, geography, economics, governance, culture, and contemporary issues. Department of Education (2016) emphasizes thematic, integrative, interdisciplinary, inquiry-based, experiential, and contextual learning approaches, while Department of Education (2024) reinforces a curriculum orientation toward future-ready learners and meaningful competencies. Curriculum content becomes an engagement resource when learners can see clear connections between the topics they study and the social realities they encounter.

Evidence reviewed in the thesis supports this emphasis on relevance and organization. Dhakal (2025) found that secondary learners perceived social studies as relevant when it supported civic participation, global

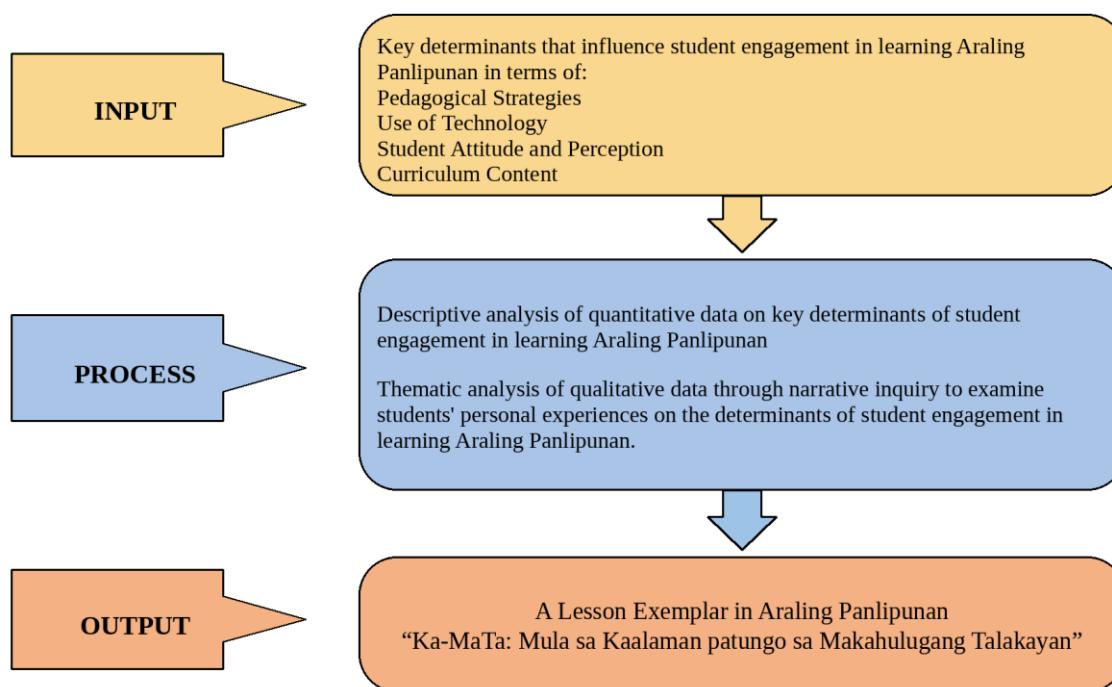
awareness, and contemporary understanding. Gonzales (2023) showed the value of contextualized and localized supplementary materials in Araling Panlipunan, while Paglinawan and Rabanes (2025) emphasized that the accessibility and quality of instructional resources affect learner engagement. Ramsbottom (2017) likewise showed how curriculum exemplars grounded in sociocultural and constructivist approaches can support innovation in social studies teaching. These studies suggest that content selection, sequencing, instructional materials, and contextual relevance operate together in shaping student engagement.

Conceptual Framework

The study organized the four determinants within an Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework. The input consisted of pedagogical strategies, use of technology, student attitudes and perceptions, and curriculum content. These determinants were examined as interconnected influences on behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement rather than as isolated classroom variables.

The process combined descriptive quantitative analysis with qualitative narrative inquiry in a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. Quantitative results established the perceived strength of the four determinants, while qualitative interviews explained how students experienced the factors that facilitated or hindered engagement. The output was a lesson exemplar in Araling Panlipunan, “Ka-MaTa: Mula sa Kaalaman patungo sa Makahulugang Talakayan,” intended to translate the study’s integrated findings into student-centered instructional practice.

Figure 1. *Conceptual Paradigm Utilizing the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model*



METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed first to determine students' perceptions of the four determinants of engagement, after which qualitative data were gathered to explain and elaborate the quantitative patterns. The qualitative phase used narrative inquiry to capture students' experiences, challenges, and successes in learning Araling Panlipunan.

This sequence enabled the study to move from a descriptive measurement of perceived determinants to an interpretive understanding of how those determinants shaped engagement in actual learning experiences. The integration of both phases was used to formulate teaching implications and develop the lesson exemplar.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Junior High School Department of a private Catholic educational institution in Quezon Province, Philippines. The institution offers basic education from Kindergarten to Senior High School and provides academic facilities and programs guided by Vincentian values. The locale was selected because it provided direct access to Grade 7 to Grade 10 learners enrolled in Araling Panlipunan and a context in which the four identified determinants could be examined through students' classroom experiences.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The quantitative phase involved 275 Junior High School students from Grades 7 to 10. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure proportional representation by grade level and section. The operational grade-level population figures reported in the detailed methodology were 244 students in Grade 7, 253 in Grade 8, 219 in Grade 9, and 261 in Grade 10. Using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the sample comprised 69 Grade 7 students, 72 Grade 8 students, 61 Grade 9 students, and 73 Grade 10 students.

For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was used to select 24 Junior High School students for individual interviews. The participants were selected because they were enrolled in the research locale, were taking Araling Panlipunan, were willing to participate, and could articulate their learning experiences and recommendations. Class advisers assisted in identifying students capable of providing detailed accounts.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used in the quantitative phase. The instrument measured students' perceptions across four determinants: pedagogical strategies, use of technology, student attitudes and perceptions, and curriculum content. Three experts in education and curriculum development reviewed the questionnaire for relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives, and the researcher's oral examination committee also reviewed the instrument before administration.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 30 students to assess clarity, readability, and reliability, and revisions were made based on the results and feedback. For the qualitative phase, a semi-structured interview protocol was developed around the same four determinants. Three experts in education and curriculum development validated the interview guide before it was used with the 24 participants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher secured ethics review approval and administrative permission from the Vice-President for Academics, the Principal of the Basic Education Department, and the class advisers of Grades 7 to 10. Because the participants were minors, parental or legal-guardian consent and student assent were obtained. The researcher also oriented the respondents to the four determinants so that the questionnaire items could be answered with a common understanding of the concepts.

Data collection proceeded in two phases. Printed questionnaires were administered to the 275 respondents, after which the quantitative results were examined to guide the qualitative inquiry. Individual interviews were then conducted with 24 students using the validated guide. With permission, interviews were audio-recorded and

transcribed verbatim. The data-gathering activities were completed over approximately four weeks from January to February 2026. Findings from the two phases were triangulated and reviewed with school administrators and curriculum experts before the instructional output was finalized.

Data Analysis

Quantitative responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly the weighted arithmetic mean (WAM), to determine the perceived influence of each determinant and its indicators. The interpretation scale used in the thesis was 3.26-4.00 = Strongly Agree, 2.51-3.25 = Agree, 1.76-2.50 = Disagree, and 1.00-1.75 = Strongly Disagree.

Qualitative data were managed using NVivo and analyzed through Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic process: familiarization, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Open coding was applied to significant statements in the interview transcripts. The quantitative and qualitative datasets were then integrated to explain how the determinants influenced student engagement and to derive teaching implications.

Ethical Consideration

Participation was voluntary, and respondents and interview participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, confidentiality protections, and right to withdraw without penalty. Parental or guardian consent was secured for minors, together with student assent. The study observed the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), used codes or pseudonyms instead of personally identifiable information, and limited access to collected data to the researcher.

Following completion of the study, physical research materials were securely disposed of and digital files were permanently deleted in accordance with the procedures stated in the thesis. Administrative and ethics approvals were obtained before the start of data gathering.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented by integrating the quantitative ratings with the qualitative explanations obtained from student interviews. The four determinants were first summarized using weighted arithmetic means, after which the qualitative themes were used to clarify the experiences that supported or constrained engagement. The section concludes with the teaching implications and the instructional output developed from the integrated findings.

Overall Determinants of Student Engagement

Table 1. *Summary of the Key Determinants Influencing Student Engagement in Araling Panlipunan*

Determinant	WAM	Interpretation
Pedagogical strategies	3.45	Strongly Agree
Use of technology	3.36	Strongly Agree
Student attitudes and perceptions	3.16	Agree
Curriculum content	3.44	Strongly Agree
Overall weighted arithmetic mean	3.35	Strongly Agree

Table 1 shows that the respondents generally perceived all four determinants as influential, with an overall WAM of 3.35. Pedagogical strategies received the highest mean (3.45), followed closely by curriculum content (3.44) and use of technology (3.36). Student attitudes and perceptions obtained a lower, although still positive, mean of 3.16. The pattern indicates that engagement was most strongly associated with how learning was designed

and delivered, while students' internal dispositions remained an important but comparatively more variable dimension.

At the indicator level, the strongest pedagogical item was the connection of lessons to current social issues and real-life situations (WAM = 3.57), while clear explanation and active participation remained strongly endorsed (WAM = 3.34). For technology, multimedia presentations received the highest rating (WAM = 3.53), whereas the general use of digital tools received 3.23. In the attitude dimension, students most strongly agreed that Araling Panlipunan helps them become responsible citizens (WAM = 3.46), but confidence in sharing opinions was lower (WAM = 2.89). Curriculum relevance and interest received the highest curriculum rating (WAM = 3.56), while clarity and organization of learning materials, although still strongly agreed upon, received 3.30. These results support literature emphasizing interactive, contextualized, and learner-centered social studies instruction (Bermudo & Galay-Limos, 2025; Lawal, 2025; Padingding & Gallego, 2025).

Pedagogical Strategies

Table 2. *Qualitative Themes on the Effects of Pedagogical Strategies*

Theme	Occurrences
Learner-centered strategies affecting student engagement	18
Interactive teaching strategies affecting student engagement	14
Experiential learning affecting student engagement	9
Teacher-centered strategies affecting student engagement	8
Inclusion of ICT materials affecting student engagement	6
Assessment-based strategies affecting student engagement	6

The dominant qualitative theme was learner-centered strategy use (18 occurrences), followed by interactive teaching strategies (14). Students described group work, class discussions, real-life examples, collaborative tasks, and opportunities to exchange perspectives as experiences that improved understanding and helped them remember lessons. Experiential activities were also identified as engaging because they allowed learners to relate social studies concepts to actual situations. These findings are consistent with active-learning and constructivist studies showing that collaborative, inquiry-oriented, and problem-based approaches can strengthen participation and higher-order thinking (Sahito, 2025; Shannon, 2022; Taylan & Rabago, 2025).

Teacher-centered practices were not rejected entirely. Students still valued clear explanations, teacher expertise, and organized presentation, particularly when these provided a foundation for subsequent interaction. ICT-supported instruction and formative assessment were also reported as useful when they made ideas more visible, checked understanding, or prompted participation. The integrated result therefore suggests that engagement is strengthened by a balanced instructional approach: direct explanation establishes conceptual clarity, but sustained engagement depends on opportunities to discuss, collaborate, inquire, apply, and connect the lesson to meaningful contexts (Lawal, 2025; Montoya, 2019).

Use of Technology

Table 3. *Qualitative Themes on the Effects of Technology Use*

Theme	Occurrences
Perceived benefits of using technology in learning Araling Panlipunan	40
Challenges in technology integration in learning Araling Panlipunan	9

Technology was described more often as a benefit than as a challenge. The theme on perceived benefits accumulated 40 occurrences and reflected students' view that videos, slides, visual aids, online resources, and other digital tools helped them visualize historical events, understand difficult concepts, sustain attention, and participate more actively. This pattern parallels the strong quantitative rating for multimedia presentations (WAM

= 3.53) and supports the thesis literature on technology-based instruction and digitized materials (Alquizar & Vinuya, 2025; Escote & José, 2024).

The challenge theme (9 occurrences) shows that technology did not guarantee engagement. Students reported losing interest when digital instruction was reduced to long slide presentations or passive reading. The result is important because the lowest technology indicator was the broad statement that digital tools themselves enhanced interest (WAM = 3.23), suggesting that students responded more positively to specific interactive and multimedia uses than to technology in the abstract. Consistent with UNESCO (2023), technology was most effective when it complemented discussion, explanation, collaboration, and guided learning rather than replacing them.

Student Attitudes and Perceptions

Table 4. *Qualitative Themes on Student Attitudes and Perceptions*

Theme	Occurrences
Students' interest in learning Araling Panlipunan	19
Value formation and social awareness	9
Emotional responses in learning Araling Panlipunan	9
Self-efficacy in learning Araling Panlipunan	8
Learning preferences in Araling Panlipunan	6

Student interest was the most frequently identified attitudinal theme (19 occurrences). Learners generally viewed Araling Panlipunan as important for understanding history, culture, governance, society, and national identity, although some associated the subject with heavy memorization and difficult content. Value formation and social awareness also emerged strongly; students described the subject as a means of understanding rights, responsibilities, national issues, and their role as future citizens. This is consistent with the high quantitative rating for the belief that Araling Panlipunan helps students become responsible citizens (WAM = 3.46) and with studies linking positive perceptions of social studies to civic and real-life relevance (Dela Cueva & Tenorio, 2025).

The interviews further showed that engagement was affected by emotions, self-efficacy, and preferred modes of learning. Curiosity and enjoyment supported attention, whereas boredom, anxiety, lengthy lectures, and excessive memorization could weaken participation. Confidence increased when lessons were clearly explained and connected to students' interests, yet the quantitative item on confidence in sharing opinions was the lowest in the attitude dimension (WAM = 2.89). The combined findings indicate that teachers need not only engaging activities but also a supportive climate that validates student perspectives, scaffolds difficult concepts, and creates safe opportunities to speak, question, and collaborate (Barotas & Palma, 2023; Biboso & Dela Cruz, 2025; Issar, 2021).

Curriculum Content

Table 5. *Qualitative Themes on the Effects of Curriculum Content*

Theme	Occurrences
Relevance of curriculum content affecting student engagement	17
Student engagement through curriculum content	13
Interdisciplinary integration affecting student engagement	9
Historical content coverage affecting student engagement	7
Value integration affecting student engagement	7
Difficulty of curriculum affecting student engagement	6
Organization of learning competencies affecting student engagement	6

Curriculum relevance was the most frequently reported theme (17 occurrences), followed by direct engagement through curriculum content (13). Students were more interested when topics helped them understand current social issues and connect past events with present realities. Interdisciplinary integration across history, economics, culture, governance, and social issues was also valued because it supported broader understanding. The quantitative results reinforce this pattern: curriculum content received an overall WAM of 3.44, and the relevance and interest of topics obtained the highest curriculum item rating (WAM = 3.56). These findings align with the curriculum's emphasis on contextualization and interdisciplinary learning (Department of Education, 2016, 2024) and with evidence that learners value social studies when its relevance to contemporary citizenship is visible (Dhakal, 2025).

At the same time, curriculum difficulty and the organization of learning competencies were identified as constraints. Students reported reduced engagement when topics were excessively broad, information-heavy, rushed, or insufficiently connected to clear objectives. This helps explain why the clarity and organization of learning materials, while still positively rated, received the lowest curriculum mean (WAM = 3.30). The integrated finding suggests that relevant content must be paired with logical sequencing, scaffolding, accessible materials, and activities that move beyond memorization toward conceptual understanding and application. Contextualized materials and thoughtfully organized instructional resources can support this goal (Gonzales, 2023; Paglinawan & Rabanes, 2025).

Implications for Teaching

Table 6. *Integrated Teaching Implications from the Four Determinants*

Determinant	Implication for teaching practice
Pedagogical strategies	Prioritize learner-centered, interactive, experiential, inquiry-based, and collaborative activities while retaining clear teacher guidance and formative assessment.
Use of technology	Use multimedia, digital platforms, gamification, and online resources purposefully; balance technology with discussion, collaboration, explanation, and consideration of access and digital literacy.
Student attitudes and perceptions	Design relevant and supportive learning experiences that build interest, civic awareness, confidence, emotional safety, and opportunities for students to express ideas.
Curriculum content	Connect content to real-life situations and current events; integrate disciplines and values; scaffold complex topics and sequence competencies around clear objectives.

Across the four determinants, a common instructional principle emerged: engagement was highest when students experienced Araling Panlipunan as active, understandable, personally relevant, and socially meaningful. Pedagogy supplied the structure for participation; technology amplified visualization and access; attitudes and perceptions shaped students' willingness to invest effort; and curriculum content supplied the substantive relevance that connected classroom learning with citizenship and society. These elements therefore operate best as an aligned instructional system rather than as separate interventions.

For classroom practice, teachers are encouraged to combine structured explanation with collaborative discussion, inquiry, simulations, project or problem-based tasks, real-life cases, current events, multimedia, and formative feedback. Curriculum topics should be sequenced clearly and scaffolded when conceptually difficult. The findings also indicate that opportunities for student voice are important because confidence in sharing opinions was relatively lower than other attitudinal indicators. Such an approach is consistent with learner-centered and curriculum-exemplar literature that treats teaching quality as the purposeful coordination of content, pedagogy, and students' experiences (Alvizo, 2025; Ramsbottom, 2017).

Research Output: “Ka-Ma-Ta: Mula sa Kaalaman patungo sa Makahulugang Talakayan”

The integrated findings served as the basis for “Ka-Ma-Ta: Mula sa Kaalaman patungo sa Makahulugang Talakayan,” a lesson exemplar in Araling Panlipunan. The exemplar was designed to bridge knowledge acquisition and meaningful discussion by embedding the four identified determinants in lesson planning. Its structure incorporates curriculum content, standards and learning competencies; strategies for teaching and learning; and evaluation of learning through assessment and reflection. The design emphasizes active participation, the use of relevant and contextualized content, appropriate technology integration, and opportunities for students to articulate interpretations and connect lessons to real-world issues.

As an instructional output, the exemplar does not constitute a new experimental finding; rather, it translates the evidence generated by the study into a practical model for teachers. It is intended to support evidence-based lesson design, strengthen student engagement and learning outcomes, and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in Araling Panlipunan. This function is consistent with curriculum-exemplar approaches that provide teachers with structured ways to implement constructivist and sociocultural pedagogies in classroom practice (Ramsbottom, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that student engagement in learning Araling Panlipunan is shaped by the combined influence of pedagogical strategies, technology use, student attitudes and perceptions, and curriculum content. The quantitative findings showed an overall strong perception of these determinants, with pedagogical strategies receiving the highest mean, closely followed by curriculum content and use of technology. Student attitudes and perceptions remained positive but showed greater variability, particularly in confidence to share opinions. These results demonstrate that engagement cannot be strengthened through a single instructional component alone.

The qualitative findings explain how the determinants work in practice. Students became more engaged when learning was interactive, learner-centered, contextualized, and connected to current issues and lived experience; when technology made ideas more visual and participatory; when classroom experiences supported interest, confidence, and civic awareness; and when curriculum content was relevant, interdisciplinary, organized, and scaffolded. Conversely, long passive presentations, excessive memorization, difficult or poorly organized content, and limited opportunities for student voice weakened engagement.

Taken together, the findings support a holistic and responsive approach to Araling Panlipunan instruction in which pedagogy, technology, learner dispositions, and curriculum design are intentionally aligned. The “Ka-Ma-Ta: Mula sa Kaalaman patungo sa Makahulugang Talakayan” lesson exemplar represents the study’s practical contribution by translating these findings into an instructional structure intended to promote behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Recommendation

Junior High School students are encouraged to participate actively in discussions, group activities, simulations, and other collaborative learning tasks; use appropriate educational videos and online resources to clarify difficult concepts; connect historical and social issues with personal experiences and current events; and approach challenging topics with persistence and curiosity. These practices can strengthen both independent learning and meaningful participation in class.

Araling Panlipunan teachers are encouraged to use a balanced combination of collaborative learning, inquiry, debate, discussion, simulations, problem-solving, and contextualized examples. Technology should be used purposefully through multimedia, interactive tools, and digital platforms while avoiding overreliance on passive slide presentation. Teachers should provide clear objectives, scaffolding, formative feedback, and varied opportunities for student voice so that learners with different levels of confidence and learning preferences can participate meaningfully.

Curriculum developers and school administrators may use the findings to refine instructional materials, organize competencies progressively, and support the development and validation of lesson exemplars and other engagement-focused interventions. Professional development may also focus on student-centered pedagogy, technology integration, contextualization, and strategies for connecting Araling Panlipunan content with contemporary social issues and citizenship education.

Future researchers may examine additional determinants such as peer influence, parental support, learning environment, and socio-economic background. Longitudinal and comparative studies across grade levels, schools, subject areas, and educational settings are also recommended to determine how student engagement develops over time and whether the patterns identified in this study are sustained in other contexts. The developed Ka-MaTa lesson exemplar may likewise be subjected to classroom validation or effectiveness testing in subsequent research.

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