

# Student Engagement and Student Life Satisfaction of High School Student

Zagita Rainisha Safira<sup>1,\*</sup>, Monika<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>*Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta*

\*Corresponding Email: [zrainishas@gmail.com](mailto:zrainishas@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

Student engagement is students' effort in forms of behavior, cognitive, and emotion while in school. Any form of students' engagement done by an individual can influence their own assessment of life satisfaction. This study aims to determine the relationship between student engagement and student life satisfaction in high school students. This research is a quantitative study using 111 students in public high schools in Jakarta. Data were collected by purposive sampling method and using a questionnaire. The result showed a significant positive relationship ( $r = 0.519$  and  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ ). It can be concluded that the higher the student engagement, the higher the student life satisfaction, and vice versa. Other findings also show significant differences in the student engagement variable based on extracurricular activities.

**Keywords:** *Student Engagement, Student Life Satisfaction, High School Student*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Every individual hopes for his/her own well-being. There are many factors that contribute to well-being, including life satisfaction. According to Wibisono and Wahyuningsih [1] life satisfaction is an indicator that can help achieve well-being, where the higher the level of life satisfaction, the higher the well-being.

According to Ramachandran et al. [2] life satisfaction is a form of subjective well-being. Raharjo and Sumargi [3] claimed that each individual has a different view of life satisfaction depending on each person's assessment of their quality of life. In addition, Linsiya [4] mentioned various factors that contribute to life satisfaction, such as happiness, satisfaction with health conditions, marriage, family, work, financial situation, and a sense of belonging and trust in others.

Based on research results from Oberle et al. [5] an example of life satisfaction in the context of school

is the forms of support a student can get within the school environment, as well as relationships with

adults who care for them. These can increase the student's life satisfaction whether they're children or adolescents.

The life satisfaction of a student can be influenced by their engagement at school. During their study, everyone certainly has an obligation as a student. Latifah [6] claimed that it is important to teach character to students through activities that contribute to the school, community, and to people around them as a sign of a student's engagement in school. Christenson et al. [7] mentioned forms of student engagement, including attending school, listening to explanations from the teacher, completing assignments given inside the classroom to outside the classroom, and having a positive attitude.

Some researchers conduct research on student engagement in order to see the relationship between, or influence of a student's engagement with, and on other things that can affect one's life. Kahu and Nelson [8] examined the success of

students seen from their engagement as a student. When a student is actively engaged in the learning process, then in addition to acquiring the skills and knowledge obtained from the lessons, the student has a high chance of achieving academic success and being able to develop him/herself.

Meanwhile, Ramachandran et al. [2] conducted a study to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. The results of the study stated that the higher the level of emotional intelligence, the higher the level of life satisfaction based on emotional perception, the ability to regulate emotions, social skills, and the ability to utilize emotions.

In addition to academic activities, non-academic activities can also affect students' life satisfaction, this includes extracurricular activities. Civitci [9] conducted a study regarding engagement in extracurricular activities with life satisfaction in students, and the results of the study showed that students feel less stress when they have high sense of belonging when engaging in extracurricular activities than someone with low sense of belonging. Therefore, personal, social, and academic variables play a positive role in terms of increasing one's life satisfaction.

In contrast to previous researchers, Lewis et al. [10] conducted a study in which the aim of the study was to look at the relationship between late adolescent student engagement and life satisfaction levels seen from student engagement in the form of emotions, cognitive, and behavior. Even though student engagement positively influences life satisfaction, the three engagement components (emotional, cognitive, and behavioral) indicated otherwise. The result of the study stated that only cognitive engagement is found to be a significant predictor for changes in a student's life satisfaction, and not behavioral and emotional engagement.

When comparing these studies, the study by Lewis et al. [10] yielded results that contradict studies from Civitci [9] and Ramachandran et al. [2]. Lewis et al. [10] showed that students' engagement in behavior and emotions did not show significant results as predictors of student life satisfaction, while the results of Civitci's research [9] indicated that the greater the student's engagement in

behavioral aspect, the higher the level of student's life satisfaction, as well as the study by Ramachandran et al. [2] that shows that higher level of emotional intelligence in terms of student engagement equals higher level of students' life satisfaction.

Due to differences between the results of research previously mentioned, this study aims to analyze whether there is a relationship between student engagement in the dimensions of behavior, feelings, and thoughts, and the life satisfaction of high school students in Jakarta.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Student Life Satisfaction

According to Ginting [11] life satisfaction is an assessment of how satisfying his/her life is seen from interpersonal relationships, income, work, health, spirituality, and activity. Al-Sheeb et al. [12] described student life satisfaction as student's happiness or satisfaction related to experiences while at school. According to Varela et al. [13] student life satisfaction also refers to one's assessment of global life satisfaction and other domains such as family, friends, or school.

According to Huebner [14] there are five dimensions to student life satisfaction, namely; a) family, that contributes positively and negatively towards student life satisfaction. Leto et al. [15] claimed that positive influence includes proper upbringing, well-being, to good and warm relationships in the family, while negative influence includes bad physical punishment such as domestic violence to negative emotions shown to children, b) Friends that according to Fletcher et al. [16] can provide affective support that can help children's development, c) School where according to Cakar and Karatas [17], the engagement of a student in a school is seen from the process of development and adaptation of the students themselves, d) The environment around home environment and social environment can shape oneself and even one's community, that can affect the increase in life satisfaction, and e) Self, which includes the

physical and psychological condition of a person until events and achievements affect the level of one's life satisfaction. Lynos et al. [18] stated that someone with the ability to control the problems that can affect a person's psychology will have higher life satisfaction.

Weerasinghe et al. [19] mentioned that factors that can affect student life satisfaction can be derived from the quality of academic staff such as the knowledge and quality of teachers, the availability and adequacy of facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, and cafeterias, the quality of school programs, the quality of administrative staff in the form of reliability and responsiveness in handling students, the quality of school locations in the form of availability of accommodation and transportation, to the quality of the school's image.

## **2.2. Student Engagement**

Payne [20] stated that student engagement is a condition that connects a person with the academic community, so that from this condition each student can obtain and increase their knowledge. Meanwhile, Manzil [21] defined student engagement as actions or experience of students during their education in school, including forms of behavior, experienced emotional state, and one's mindset during learning.

Hart et al. [22] stated that there are five dimensions of student engagement. The first is Affective Engagement, which consists of interest in learning and completing assignments (Liking for Learning) and an interest in going to school such as attending and feeling happy at school (Liking for School). Then, there are behavioral engagements such as behavioral interest in exerting effort and perseverance when doing work, to being voluntarily and actively engaged during learning activities (Effort and Persistence) and behavioral engagement in various extracurricular activities (Extracurricular). Finally, Cognitive Engagement is cognitive engagement related to learning at school.

Isnaeni [23] said that the engagement of students themselves has benefits such as improved knowledge and experience so that it allows a student to apply these theories in social life.

## **3. METHODS**

### **3.1. Participants**

Participants in this study were 111 subjects from 44 Public Senior High Schools in Jakarta, ranging in age from 15 to 18 years old.

### **3.2. Research Type and Sampling Technique**

The research method used in this study is quantitative method. Questionnaires were distributed to obtain data in the form of numbers so that they could be processed using statistical methods.

Data were collected using non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling technique in which samples were selected in accordance with the characteristics that have been determined in the study.

### **3.3. Research Measurement**

To measure student life satisfaction variables, The Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) by Huebner [24] which consists of 40 questions is used. The scale used in this measurement is a Likert scale consisting of five answer choices (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

To measure student engagement variable, The Student Engagement in Schools Questionnaire (SESQ) by Hart et al. [22] which consists of 33 questions is used. The scale used in this measuring instrument is a Likert scale consisting of five answer choices (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

### **3.4. Data Processing and Data Analysis Technique**

The questionnaire that was filled out by students will be coded into data in the form of numbers. The

numbers will be processed using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) using the Pearson correlation test technique if the data are normally distributed, and the Spearman correlation test technique if the data are not normally distributed, to measure the relationship of the two variables.

#### 4. RESULT

The student engagement variable has an empirical mean value of 3.57, which is greater than the hypothetical mean value of 3. In this case it can be said that student engagement on the subject is high. In addition to student engagement, student life satisfaction also has an empirical mean value of 3.60, which is greater than the hypothetical mean value.

The result of Normality Test using One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed that the data is not normally distributed with the value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov  $Z = 0.052$  and the value of  $p = 0.200 > 0.05$  for student engagement variable, and the value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov  $Z = 0.098$  and the value of  $p = 0.010 < 0.05$  for student life satisfaction variable.

**Table 1** Normality test on the total of student engagement and the total of student life satisfaction

	Student Engagement	Life Satisfaction
<i>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</i>	0.052	0.098
<i>p</i>	0.200	0.010

With the data being not normally distributed, a relationship test is performed using the Spearman technique. The first relationship test was conducted between student engagement and student life satisfaction. The results showed that there is a positive relationship between student engagement and student life satisfaction with  $r = 0.519$  and  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . Based on these results it can be concluded that the higher the level of student engagement, the higher the level of student life satisfaction.

Then, a relationship test between the dimensions of student engagement and the total student life satisfaction was conducted. The results show that the Affective (Liking for Learning) dimension showed the value of  $r = 0.397$  and the value of  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . For the Affective (Liking for School) dimension, the value of  $r = 0.486$  and the value of  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . For the Behavioral (Effort and Persistence) dimension, the value of  $r = 0.503$  and the value of  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . For the Behavioral (Extracurricular) dimension,  $r = 0.118$  and  $p = 0.216 > 0.05$ . For the cognitive dimension the value of  $r = 0.196$  and the value of  $p = 0.039 < 0.05$ . Based on these results it can be concluded that only the Behavioral Engagement (Extracurricular) dimension shows a non-significant relationship with student life satisfaction.

The last relationship test was conducted between the dimensions of student life satisfaction with total student engagement. The results showed that the Family dimension shows the value of  $r = 0.286$  and the value of  $p = 0.002 < 0.01$ . For the Friends dimension, the value of  $r = 0.346$  and the value of  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . For the School dimension  $r = 0.723$  and  $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ . For the Living Environment dimension, the value of  $r = 0.255$  and the value of  $p = 0.007 < 0.01$ . For the Self dimension  $r$  value = 0.423 and  $p$  value = 0.000 < 0.01. Thus it can be concluded that each dimension of student life satisfaction has a significant relationship with student engagement.

After conducting the main data analysis, an additional data analysis was performed. Additional data analysis was conducted in order to see the differences in each variable based on various factors such as age, sex, alumni, majors, extracurricular, and achievement. Below is a table of the results of the analysis of the differences between the two variables.

**Table 2** Analysis of difference between student engagement and student life satisfaction based on various factors.

Student Engagement	Based on	Student Life Satisfaction
0.597	Age	0.343
0.792	Sex	0.603
0.287	Alumni	0.149
0.95	Major	0.382
0.000	Extracurricular	0.509
0.288	Achievement	0.349

Overall, both of the two variables indicate that there are no significant differences based on various factors, with a value of  $p > 0.05$ . Even so, there is a significant difference in the variable of student engagement based on extracurricular activities with  $p = 0,000 < 0.01$ . Following is a table showing the result of the analysis of differences in student engagement variable based on extracurricular activities.

**Table 3** Analysis of differences in student engagement variable based on extracurricular activities

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>
Not participating	25	25.20
Sports	13	68.77
Art	18	59.17
Scout	6	49.42
Religion	15	65.93
Other	34	68.87

## 5. DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that there is a significant relationship between student engagement and student life satisfaction in Public High School students in Jakarta. Thus it can be concluded that the higher the level of student engagement, the higher the level of student life satisfaction. The result of this study is in line with the studies by several researchers such as Doğan and Çelik [25] who stated that the increase in student life satisfaction is influenced by the school environment that can encourage students to be more engaged within the school environment. In addition, a study by Kahu and Nelson [8] also showed that someone who is actively engaged in learning activities at school tends to achieve academic success.

In addition to the main data, this study yielded several other findings, the first of which is that one dimension of student engagement has no significant relationship with student life satisfaction, namely the behavioral (extracurricular) dimension. This result is similar with the results of a study by Lewis et al. [10] which shows that besides the emotional dimension, the behavioral dimension is not a predictor of changes in student life satisfaction.

In Fletcher and Tan's study [26] academic activities have significant benefits because they are a means for students to prepare for further education, while not many students participate in non-academic activities such as extracurricular activities due to time restrictions. A study by Camerato et al. [27] shows that it is important for schools to pay attention to the goals of each extracurricular activity, as well as to look at the contexts such as the environment and time of these activities, and their relationships. In other words, the extracurricular activities are considered valuable or beneficial for students if those activities can provide benefits that are in accordance with the interests and goals of the students.

Another finding in this study is that there are significant differences in the variables of student engagement based on the extracurricular activities they participate in. This finding is in line with the results of a study by Myers [28] proving that extracurricular activities can help improve students'

social skills, help students sharpen their imagination and improve their problem solving abilities, help students to express themselves better, to encourage students to be actively engaged in group activities. The study also mentioned that students who do not participate in extracurricular activities have a tendency towards behavioral problems such as skipping classes, and increases the number of drop outs. In accordance with the results of this study, students who did not participate in extracurricular activities had the lowest relationship value with the variable of student engagement.

Thus, it can be concluded from the two findings that extracurricular activities are indeed related to student engagement, that it helps students to be more actively engaged in matters relating to learning, and to be actively engaged in group activities, but extracurricular activities are not related to student life satisfaction. That is because the content of each extracurricular activity must be in accordance with the interests and objectives of the student, and not only seen by student participation.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that there is a significant relationship between student engagement and student life satisfaction of high school students in Jakarta.

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Based on the results of the relationship test between the dimensions of student engagement and student life satisfaction, it was found that four dimensions of the measuring instrument of student engagement, namely; affective (liking for learning), affective (liking for school), behavioral (effort and persistence), and cognitive have significant relationships with student life satisfaction, while behavioral (extracurricular) dimension does not show a significant relationship with student life satisfaction.

In addition, judging by the results of the correlation test between dimensions of student life satisfaction and student engagement, it was found that each dimension of measuring instruments of student life satisfaction has a significant relationship with student engagement.

Based on the results of the additional data analysis test, overall it was found that there were no significant differences in both student engagement variable and student life satisfaction variable based on various factors. The only variable with a significant difference is the student engagement based on extracurricular activities.

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