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CAUSES AND REMEDIES FOR STUDENTS' LACK OF INTEREST IN EDUCATION AT SECONDARY AND HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT
Student engagement is a critical predictor of academic achievement and long-term development. However, secondary and higher secondary schools in Bangladesh particularly in Chandpur district are increasingly witnessing a decline in student interest regarding both academic and co-curricular activities. This disengagement contributes to absenteeism, poor performance, and early dropout. Despite the necessity of research on students' academic pressure, teacher behavior, and peer influence, empirical data on the underlying causes of lack of participation remain limited. So, this study aimed to assess the level of student participation in educational activities, identify the causes of disengagement and their potential remedies. We hypothesized that participation, causes and perceived remedies vary significantly based on students' grade levels or their parents' educational qualifications. A quantitative descriptive survey design was employed, involving 100 guardians. Though poor educational level of parents poses challenge in data collection the researchers managed to get 100 respondents from eight selected rural and semi-urban educational institutions in Chandpur. Due to multiple groups according to level of education and students' grade, Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to analyze differences across student grades and parental education groups. The analysis revealed that student disengagement is a widespread issue that does not significantly vary by students' class or grade and parents' education. The Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated no statistically significant differences in participation levels ($p = 0.554$) or perceived causes of disengagement ($p = 0.648$) across different grade levels. Furthermore, parents' educational backgrounds did not significantly influence their perceptions of necessary remedies ($p = 0.305$). The findings suggest that the uniformity of the results implies that institutional factors—such as school infrastructure, pedagogical strategies, and academic workload—affect all students equally. The study recommends holistic school reforms, including the

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implementation of supportive teaching practices and structured co-curricular programs, to enhance student motivation.

KEYWORDS
Student Engagement, Co-curricular Activities, Chandpur District, Academic Pressure, Teacher Motivation, School Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

Students' interest in education is one of the strongest predictors of academic achievement, long-term learning outcomes, and overall psychosocial development (Sedaghat et al., 2011). When learners remain motivated and engaged, they are more likely to attend classes regularly, participate actively, and build the skills necessary for higher education and employment (Parsons & Taylor, 2011). However, in many parts of Bangladesh—including the Chandpur district—students at secondary and higher secondary levels are increasingly demonstrating a lack of interest in academic activities, leading to absenteeism, poor performance, and early dropout. Previous research has identified several contributing factors such as inadequate learning environments, lack of teacher motivation strategies, peer pressure, and family-related issues (Khurram et al., n.d.). Understanding these causes in specific school contexts is essential to designing actionable interventions that support student participation and enhance learning outcomes.

BACKGROUND OF THE SELECTED LOCAL SCHOOLS

The institutions included in this study represent a diverse mix of rural and semi-urban secondary and higher secondary educational settings within the Chandpur district. These schools play a crucial role in shaping young learners' academic and social development, yet many continue to struggle with student disengagement.

Meher Degree College, Shahrasti, Chandpur

The first and renowned well-established institution serving both intermediate and undergraduate (Hons.) students. Despite having an expanding academic structure, classroom participation among secondary-equivalent students remains inconsistent according to teachers' anecdotal reports.

Hajiganj Govt. Model Pilot High School and College, Hajiganj, Chandpur

One of the leading government schools-cum-colleges in the region, known for strong academic results. Yet student motivation varies significantly between junior and senior groups, particularly in co-curricular participation.

Hajiganj Model Govt. College, Hajiganj, Chandpur

This college provides higher secondary, bachelor's and Master's level education. Although the institution has inadequate infrastructure, adequate students but teachers indicate limited student involvement in collaborative and group-based learning activities.

Hajiganj Degree College, Hajiganj, Chandpur

A long-standing college in Hajiganj thana serving large enrollment numbers. Many students enrolled at higher secondary level attend irregularly, suggesting motivational issues and academic pressure.

Mulpara Samsuddin Khan Technical and Commerce College, Faridgonj, Chandpur

A technical and business-focused college intended to strengthen vocational pathways. Students often express challenges balancing curriculum expectations and hands-on learning activities, which contributes to lack of interest.

Mulpara High School, Faridgonj, Chandpur

A secondary-level institution serving rural learners. Teachers frequently report declining engagement in classroom assignments and club activities among adolescents.

Munshir Haat G & A Ali High School, Faridgonj, Chandpur
A general secondary school where many students come from low-income families. Family responsibilities and economic pressure often impact regular attendance and learning motivation.

Sholla School & College, Faridgonj, Chandpur
A combined school and college structure intended to provide smooth transition from secondary to higher secondary. Despite its modern curriculum offerings, participation gaps appear in both academic and co-curricular domains.

Together, these institutions provide a practical context to investigate how school environment, family involvement, peer influence, and teaching strategies contribute to reduced student interest in education in the Chandpur region.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Although schools in the Chandpur district have made significant efforts to improve classroom learning, many secondary and higher secondary students still show limited interest in educational activities. The problem is particularly evident in low class attendance, incomplete homework, weak participation in group activities, and declining engagement in co-curricular programs (NDH & NDH, 2024). Existing studies have explored student motivation in urban and national contexts, but there is limited empirical evidence addressing the local and institutional factors influencing student interest in rural and semi-urban schools in Chandpur. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the underlying causes and recommend context-specific remedies to enhance student interest and participation.

VARIABLES OF INTEREST

The study includes three major categories of variables:

Table 1: Variables of Interest

Type	**Variable**
Independent Variables	Students' class, Parents' educational qualification
Dependent Variable	a. Students' participation in educational activities b. Causes of lack of participation c. Remedies of lack of participation

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

Students' Interest / Participation (Dependent Variable): The extent to which students engage in school-related academic and co-curricular activities (class participation, homework completion, group work, sports, clubs, cultural activities, etc.). Higher scores on participation scale indicate higher interest (Ainley, 2012).

Lack of Self-Confidence: The degree to which students avoid participation because they doubt their ability to perform successfully in school or social activities (de Moor et al., 2018).

Fear of Peer Bullying / Mockery: Students' reluctance to participate due to perceived or actual fear of being criticized, teased, or bullied by peers (Bledsoe & Baskin, 2014).

Teacher Behavior / Motivation: The extent to which teachers apply supportive or unsupportive motivational practices that influence students' desire to participate (Maulana et al., 2016).

School Infrastructure & Opportunities: Availability of structured programs such as clubs, sports, cultural programs, and hands-on learning opportunities that support students' involvement (Nugroho & Wibowo, 2020).

Academic Pressure: Perceived imbalance between academic workload and time available for co-curricular engagement (Qomariyah et al., 2023).

Family Encouragement: Supportive communication and involvement of parents/guardians in motivating students toward academic and co-curricular activities (Zaleha Mamat & Mazelan, 2011).

Interest-Based Activity Design: The extent to which school activities match students' talents, preferences, and learning styles (Solari et al., 2022).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the understanding that students' lack of interest in academic and co-curricular activities is not the result of a single factor, but an interaction of multiple psychological, social, pedagogical, and structural conditions (Wang & Hofkens, 2020) (Yonezawa et al., 2009) (Furlong et al., 2003). Drawing from prior research, the model proposes that seven key causal factors directly influence students' interest and participation:

(1) lack of self-confidence,
(2) fear of peer bullying or mockery,
(3) negative teacher behavior,
(4) limited school opportunities,
(5) excessive academic pressure,
(6) lack of family encouragement, and
(7) activities not aligned with students' interests.

The framework assumes that when students encounter discouraging environments (such as bullying or unsupportive teacher behavior), psychological barriers (such as low self-confidence), or structural limitations (such as inadequate school programs or high academic workload), their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to participate declines (Muhyi et al., 2024) (Ntoumanis et al., 2004). Conversely, positive reinforcement from teachers and family, interest-based activity design, and enriched school opportunities are expected to increase participation (Parrish et al., 2009).

The figure below visually represents how these multiple causes converge to shape students' level of engagement:

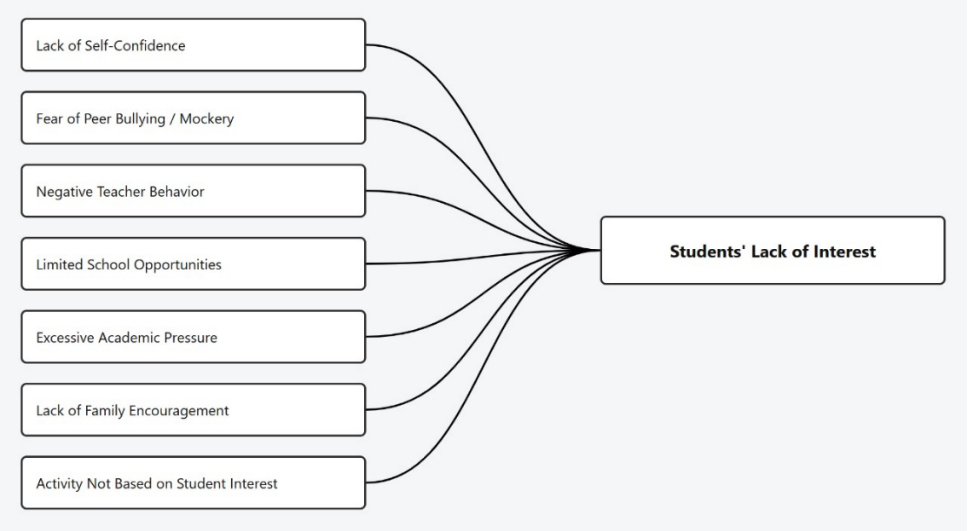

Figure 1 Factors Influencing Students' Participation in Academic & Co-Curricular Activities

In this model, each cause is hypothesized to have a direct and negative effect on student participation, while the remedies proposed later in the study (e.g., motivational teacher behavior, balanced workload, activity redesign, and increased parental involvement) function as potential moderators that can strengthen student interest even when some negative conditions are present. Overall, this conceptual framework reflects a holistic view of student motivation in the Chandpur district, showing how individual, school-based, and family-level variables interact to shape learners' engagement patterns.

Research Question

1. What is the level of participation of students of various grades or classes?
2. Do causes of lack of participation vary according to students' grades?
3. What is the difference among parents of various educational levels in perceived remedies?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly literature largely agrees that student motivation and interest are shaped by complex interactions of individual, institutional, and socio-cultural factors.

Teacher–student relationships and motivational strategies remain crucial in shaping interest. Supportive teacher behavior and classroom encouragement positively influence student participation, while authoritarian or discouraging behavior reduces motivation (Lazarides et al., 2019). Similarly, students respond more favorably when teachers offer praise, personalized attention, and inclusive learning environments (Lumpkin, 2007).

School climate and co-curricular opportunities are also found to be important predictors of engagement. Schools that provide diverse extracurricular and talent-based opportunities report lower absenteeism and better classroom participation (Raza, 2015). However, rural and semi-urban institutions in Bangladesh often lack structured programs or student leadership opportunities, resulting in reduced motivation beyond core academics.

Psychological factors, particularly self-efficacy and social anxiety, play a substantial role. Students with higher self-confidence and lower fear of peer criticism show greater active

learning participation. Conversely, peer bullying and fear of humiliation discourage involvement even among academically capable learners (Severe et al., 2024).

Family involvement has been repeatedly associated with student motivation. Warm parental communication, encouragement, and educational guidance foster better academic interest, while family stress, economic pressure, or lack of attention contribute negatively (Raftery et al., 2012).

Finally, academic workload can also reduce participation when learning demands are excessively high and unbalanced with physical or socio-emotional needs. Students experiencing academic pressure are more likely to develop disengagement, boredom, and burnout at the secondary level (Madigan & Curran, 2021) .

Overall, prior studies consistently highlight that interest in education is not determined by a single factor, but rather a combination of psychological, pedagogical, structural, and socio-family variables—supporting the need for context-specific interventions for schools in Chandpur.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive survey design using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire. The survey aimed to gather some data on student engagement, and to identify specific barriers and potential solutions to the problems of students living in Chandpur.

Population

All secondary and higher secondary students studying in the following schools & colleges in Chandpur district including Meher Degree College, Hajiganj Govt. Model Pilot High School and College, Hajiganj Model Govt. College, Hajiganj Degree College, Mulpara Samsuddin Khan Technical and Commerce College, Mulpara High School, Munshir Haat G & A Ali High School, Sholla School & College

Sampling & Sample Size

Sampling method: Stratified random sampling is used. The minimum sample size required for data analysis was 100 respondents. Stratification basis: school & grade level (Pribadi et al., 2025).

Instrumentation

Data for the study were collected using a structured, researcher-developed questionnaire designed to measure the causes and remedies for students' lack of interest in academic and co-curricular activities. The instrument consisted of four sections: (a) demographic information of respondents, (b) parents' general perceptions of students' participation, (c) perceived causes of lack of participation, and (d) perceived remedies to increase participation (Na, 2015). Sections B, C, and D used a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. (Finn et al., 1991)

The items directly reflected key variables of the study, such as self-confidence, peer influence, teacher behavior, academic pressure, family encouragement, school opportunities, and intervention-related remedies. Higher scores in Section B indicated greater reported student participation, whereas higher scores in Section C reflected stronger perceived causes of disengagement. Conversely, higher scores in Section D indicated stronger agreement with proposed remedial strategies to improve students' interest. The instrument was designed to ensure clarity, cultural relevance, and age-appropriate interpretation for secondary and higher secondary learners' families. (Mji & Mbinda, 2005)

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis for this study was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics. The analytical procedures were selected based on the measurement level of variables, the number of groups being compared, and the non-normal distribution of the dataset. Because the independent grouping variables—students' grade levels and parents' educational levels—consist of multiple categorical groups, and the dependent variables (participation, causes, and remedies) are measured using ordinal Likert-scale scores, non-parametric tests were considered appropriate (Tsarev et al., 2025). The following analytical strategies were applied to address the three research questions:

Analysis for Research Question 1

Since grade level contains multiple categories (e.g., Grade 6–8, Grade 9–10, Grade 11–12), and participation scores are ordinal and not normally distributed, the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to compare median participation levels across student grade groups. This approach provided insight into whether participation systematically varies across academic stages, without the assumptions of parametric ANOVA.

Analysis for Research Question 2

First, items related to causes (e.g., lack of self-confidence, peer bullying, negative teacher behavior, academic pressure, etc.) were aggregated into mean composite scores. Because multiple grade groups were compared, Kruskal–Wallis tests were conducted for the causes-scores to examine whether perceived causes differed significantly by grade level.

For each significant test, post-hoc Dunn–Bonferroni comparisons identified specific grade groups with meaningful differences. This procedure allowed for assessing whether younger and older students differ in how strongly they perceive specific factors as barriers to interest and participation.

Analysis for Research Question 3

Here, items of remedies were averaged to create a total remedy perception score. Since parental education has multiple categories (Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary, Bachelor, Master's or above), and remedy scores are ordinal, the Kruskal–Wallis H test was applied to identify significant differences in perceived remedies among these education groups. When the test indicated statistical significance, post-hoc Dunn–Bonferroni pairwise tests were used to explore which parent education groups differed most. This allows the study to determine whether parents with different educational backgrounds prioritize different types of remedies to increase student participation.

Additional Analytical Considerations

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)

Before group comparisons, internal consistency reliability was tested for each scale (participation, causes, and remedies) to ensure acceptable reliability ($\alpha \geq .70$).

Assumption Checking and level of significance

Although non-parametric tests do not require normality, the following assumptions were checked: independence of observations, ordinal nature of Likert-scale data, presence of multiple independent groups. Finally, significance level of **$p < .05$** was applied for all analyses. For multiple comparisons, Bonferroni-adjusted p-values were used to control Type I error inflation.

Table 2: Method of Data Analysis

Research Question	**Test Used**
RQ1: Level of participation across grades	Kruskal–Wallis + Dunn–Bonferroni

RQ2: Causes of lack of participation across grades	Kruskal–Wallis (per cause) + Dunn–Bonferroni
RQ3: Remedies across parental education groups	Kruskal–Wallis + Dunn–Bonferroni

RESULTS

The respondents consisted of a total of 100 individuals distributed across five distinct student class groups. The largest group was the Class 9-10 cohort with 36 participants, followed by Class 6-8 (N=25) and Class 11-12 (N=20). The remaining participants were in Class 1-5 (N=11) and the smallest group, College 1st-2nd year (N=8).

Descriptive statistics for the study revealed that the mean participation level across all 100 respondents was 3.64 (SD = 1.036), rated on a scale of 1 to 5. While participation varied across different grade levels, a Kruskal-Wallis test conducted to compare participation levels between student classes showed no statistically significant difference $H(4)=3.021$, $p = 0.554$). Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the level of participation differs significantly by student class.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Participation	100	3.64	1.036	1	5
Student Class	99	2.87	1.085	1	5

Level of Participation across Grades

Findings of the First Research Question is presented under the answer of the first research question. The Kruskal-Wallis test results indicate there is no statistically significant difference in the level of participation across the different student classes. This means we cannot reject the null hypothesis that all groups have the same distribution of participation ranks. Thus, the null hypothesis for the Kruskal-Wallis test is that the distribution of participation is the same across all student classes (Class 1-5, Class 6-8, Class 9-10, Class 11-12, and College 1st-2nd year). The alternative hypothesis is that at least one group's distribution of participation is different from the others. In the results, the *Asymp. Sig.* (p-value) is. This value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05. Because the p-value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. There is not enough evidence to conclude that the level of participation is significantly different across the various student class groups. Since the primary test was not significant, running a post-hoc analysis is generally not recommended because no significant differences were found overall.

Causes of Lack of Participation

This analysis addressed the second research question: Do causes of lack of participation vary according to students' grades? The Kruskal-Wallis test was employed to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the distribution of the causes of lack of participation across the five student class groups (Class 1-5, Class 6-8, Class 9-10, Class 11-12, and College 1st-2nd year).

Test Statistics

Table 4: Test Statistics

	Causes
Kruskal-Wallis H	2.481
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.648
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: Student Class	

The test resulted in a Kruskal-Wallis H value of 2.481 with 4 degrees of freedom (df). Crucially, the Asymptotic Significance or p-value was calculated as 0.648. Since this value 0.648 is substantially greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This finding indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the distribution of the causes of lack of participation among the different student class groups. Consequently, we conclude that the reasons students cite for their lack of participation do not vary significantly based on their grade level, meaning students from all surveyed classes tend to report the same types of causes.

Remedies according to Parents and Guardians

Descriptive Statistics: Education Qualification of Guardian

The table titled "Education Qualification of Guardian" describes the educational level of the guardians in the sample of N=100 respondents. Secondary education represents the largest group of guardians, accounting for 42.0 of the total sample (N=42). The second largest group is Higher Secondary, at 24.0 (N=24). Guardians with Primary education and those who are Graduate both represent 13.0% of the sample (each N=13). The smallest group is guardians with Post Graduate qualification, making up 8.0% of the sample (N=8).

The analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis Test results indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the distribution of the "Remedies" variable across the five different levels of "Education Qualification of Guardian." This conclusion is based on comparing the calculated p-value (Asymp. Sig.) of .305 to the conventional significance level (alpha) of 0.05. Since the p-value is considerably greater than 0.05 (0.305 > 0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. While the Ranks table shows some numerical differences in the Mean Ranks—ranging from a low of 40.77 (Primary) to a high of 65.13 (Post Graduate)—the Kruskal-Wallis H statistic of 4.831 with 4 degrees of freedom suggests that these observed differences are likely due to random chance and are not sufficient evidence to conclude that the guardian's educational background has a significant effect on the variable "Remedies."

Table 5: Education Qualification of Guardian

Ranks			
	Education Qualification of Gurdian	N	Mean Rank
Remedies	Primary	13	40.77
	Secodary	42	53.02
	Higher Secoundary	24	50.77

	Graduate	13	42.58
	PostGraduate	8	65.13
	Total	100	

Table 6: Test Statistics

Test Statistics[a,b]	
	Remedies
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.831
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.305
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: Education Qualification of Gurdian	

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the levels of student participation in academic and co-curricular activities in the Chandpur district, identify the causes of disengagement, and explore potential remedies. The investigation was framed against a backdrop of local challenges, including absenteeism and poor performance in rural and semi-urban schools. The findings provide critical insights into the nature of student engagement and the 'universal' nature of disengagement. Results revealed that the challenges are widespread rather than confined to specific demographic groups. The most noticeable finding from the quantitative analysis is the lack of statistical significance across the demographic variables tested. (Panth & Chayank, 2025)

In terms of participation levels (RQ1) of the students, the Kruskal-Wallis test ($p = 0.554$) revealed that student participation does not vary significantly by grade level. Whether a student is in Class 6 or College, the level of engagement (and conversely, disengagement) remains relatively consistent. Likewise, perceived causes (RQ2) among parents regarding their children's participation ($p = 0.648$) were found almost same across all grade levels. Similarly, perceived remedies (RQ3) by parents are not significantly influenced by their educational background and qualification ($p = 0.305$) (Careemdeen, 2024). Authors feel a pressing need for designed interventions to address the common barriers to student engagement, regardless of grade or parental education levels.

Therefore, these 'null' results suggest that the lack of interest in education in Chandpur is not a developmental issue (specific to a certain age) nor a socio-economic issue strictly tied to parental literacy. Instead, the problem appears to be systemic and environmental. When a problem is homogeneous across different ages and family backgrounds, it implies that the 'responsibility' for the issue lies within the shared environment—specifically the school system, pedagogical practices, and the prevailing social climate—rather than the individual characteristics of the students or parents.

This study's findings may overlook an important item in student engagement that warrant deeper exploration. The assertion that disengagement is a systemic issue could be misleading, as it risks ignoring the complexities of individual circumstances. The absence of variation in participation levels by grade or parental education does not necessarily negate the influence of these factors; rather, it may suggest that the study's methodology failed to capture

underlying differences that exist in more qualitative dimensions. So, the future researchers should attempt to cover these qualitative variables. For instance, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may experience barriers that are not adequately addressed when viewed through a broad lens (Green-Johnson, 2025).

In this study it is not considered the individual and personal motivation, which can significantly influence student engagement. Additionally, the call for designed interventions based solely on systemic issues may not address the diverse needs of students (Chin et al., 2024).

Who is Responsible? Insights from Literature

Results suggests that student grade and parental education are not primary differentiators for disengagement, it is crucial to consider that these factors may still play a significant role in the broader context of student engagement. Socioeconomic status and parental involvement always influence a student's motivation and commitment to their education (Johnson et al., 2022). Instead of solely relying on current literature, it is essential to incorporate diverse perspectives and empirical evidence that highlight the interplay of various elements contributing to student disengagement. Since the study results rule out student grade and parental education as primary differentiators for disengagement, we must turn to current literature to identify the responsible factors. The literature reviewed in this study points to three key 'responsible parties':

The Educational Institution and Infrastructure

The literature suggests that the school environment itself is a primary driver of disengagement. Rural and semi-urban institutions are often responsible for failing to provide the necessary structure for engagement. The school administration is responsible for creating a pull factor. Without diverse clubs, sports, or cultural activities, students have no outlet for intrinsic motivation beyond rote academics (Finn & Voelkl, 1993).

Teachers and Pedagogical Strategies

A recurring theme in the literature is the pivotal role of the teacher. If students of all ages are disengaged, the responsibility heavily falls on pedagogical methods. The literature identifies 'authoritarian or discouraging behavior' and a lack of 'motivational strategies' as key culprits. When teachers fail to offer praise, personalized attention, or inclusive learning environments, student interest declines regardless of their age (Haider et al., 2023).

So again, the teachers are responsible not just for content delivery but for the *motivational climate*. The consistency of the results across grades suggests that teaching styles in these regions may not be adapting to the changing needs of students as they mature.

The Peer Environment (i.e. Psychosocial Factors)

The study's conceptual framework highlighted 'fear of peer bullying' and 'lack of self-confidence.' The literature supports this, identifying peer culture as a significant responsible factor. Some studies note that fear of humiliation discourages involvement even among capable learners. So, if a student fears mockery, their parents' education level or their own grade level will not protect them from disengagement (Ganotice & King, 2014).

The findings of this study contest the assumption that student maturity (grade) or home literacy (parent education) are the defining variables for educational interest in Chandpur. Instead, the data supports a systemic deficit model.

The lack of significant variation suggests that the barriers—likely high academic pressure, unsupportive teacher behaviors, and inadequate facilities—are omnipresent. Therefore, the 'blame' or responsibility, according to the convergent evidence from this data and the supporting literature, lies with the structural and pedagogical rigidities of the school system. Interventions, therefore, should not be targeted at specific 'at-risk' age groups or 'less

educated' families, but rather at reforming the classroom climate and school infrastructure for *all* students (Venkatesan, 2011).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the study found no difference in participation across grades, schools must create opportunities that appeal to all age groups. Schools must move beyond anecdotal activities and institutionalize clubs (e.g., Science Club, Debating Club, Cultural Forum, Sports Teams). These should be integrated into the weekly routine, not treated as after-thoughts. To counter 'Academic Pressure,' administrations should review the homework and exam load. A balanced schedule that allows time for recreation and rest is essential for maintaining long-term academic interest. Where possible, lesson plans should be redesigned to include hands-on activities and group work, which are proven to increase engagement compared to passive listening.

Teacher behavior was identified as a key variable. Since students of all ages report similar causes for disengagement, teaching strategies must become more universally supportive. Teachers should undergo training on positive reinforcement and student psychology. The focus should shift from authoritarian discipline to mentorship.

Teachers must actively discourage 'mockery' and 'bullying' within the classroom. Creating a psychologically safe space where students are not afraid to answer questions is a prerequisite for active participation. Given the fear of peer bullying/mockery, schools must implement and strictly enforce anti-bullying policies to protect students' self-confidence.

The data showed that parents, regardless of education level, share similar views on remedies. Schools should leverage this. Instead of traditional meetings that focus only on grades, schools should organize sessions on 'Student Motivation' to guide parents on how to encourage their children at home. Schools should communicate with parents about their children's co-curricular successes, not just exam results, to foster a broader definition of success within the family unit.

CONCLUSION

The principal aim of this research was to evaluate the levels of student engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities within secondary and higher secondary educational institutions in the Chandpur district, as well as to explore the fundamental causes and potential solutions for student disengagement. The empirical results yield a significant revelation: the phenomenon of disengagement within these educational establishments is pervasive, transcending demographic boundaries. The statistical evaluation illustrated that the extent of student involvement, the identified causes of disengagement, and the preferred interventions do not exhibit significant variability across diverse grade levels or parental educational attainment. Regardless of whether a student is enrolled in primary education or higher education, or whether a parent possesses a master's degree or only primary schooling, the challenges encountered remain remarkably similar. This consistency implies that the disinterest observed is not influenced by individual student maturity or familial literacy rates, but rather by systemic and contextual factors inherent within the educational frameworks. The continual presence of 'academic pressure,' 'insufficient school opportunities,' and 'apprehension regarding bullying' across all demographic segments signifies that the prevailing educational culture in Chandpur establishes a uniform obstacle to engagement. Consequently, rectifying the issue of disinterest necessitates a comprehensive reformation of the educational environment—transitioning from traditional academic pressures to a nurturing, inclusive, and activity-centered learning ecosystem.

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Appendix: Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic Information

1. **Relationship with student:** ☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ Brother ☐ Sister ☐ Other
2. **Age:** ☐ 25–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46–55 ☐ 56+
3. **Education level:** ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Higher Secondary ☐ Bachelor ☐ Master's or above
4. **Occupation:** _____

5. **Student's grade level:**
   ☐ Primary/Pre-secondary ☐ Grade 6–8 ☐ Grade 9–10 ☐ Grade 11–12 ☐ College / Equivalent
6. **Family type:** ☐ Nuclear ☐ Joint ☐ Single-parent

Section B: General Opinions About Students' Participation

(Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1 My child regularly participates in school academic and co-curricular activities (classes, homework, sports, clubs, etc.).

2 Teachers' motivation plays a key role in students' participation in school activities.

3 Family and society influence students' willingness to participate in school activities.

Section C: Possible Causes of Lack of Participation

4 Lack of self-confidence prevents my child from participating in school activities.

5 Fear of bullying or being mocked by friends reduces participation.

6 Negative or discouraging attitudes of teachers reduce participation.

7 Limited opportunities for activities/events in school discourage participation.

8 Excessive pressure of academic study prevents participation.

9 Lack of encouragement from family reduces students' motivation to participate.

10 There is a lack of opportunity for students of different talents and abilities.

11 The school environment is not supportive for participation.

12 Participation does not bring any real-life benefits or recognition, so students lose interest.

13 School activities do not match students' interests or skills.

Section D: Remedies / Ways to Increase Participation

14 Participation will increase if teachers use more motivational and supportive behavior.

15 Schools should arrange clubs, sports, cultural and co-curricular activities regularly.

16 Providing rewards and recognition will encourage students' participation.

17 Parents should be more aware of and involved in students' educational activities.

18 Counseling programs or workshops should be arranged to increase students' self-confidence.

19 Schools should design activities based on students' interests and abilities.

20 Balance between study load and extracurricular activities is necessary.

21 Families should provide regular encouragement and appreciation to students.

22 Schools should ensure a safe and friendly environment for participation.

23 Providing leadership opportunities to students will improve participation.