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The Effectiveness of the Utilization of the Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) in Enhancing the Academic Engagement of the Key Stage 1 Learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the utilization of Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) and their perceived effectiveness in supporting academic engagement among Key Stage 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026. Using a descriptive–evaluative–correlational design, the study surveyed all 60 Key Stage 1 teachers through total enumeration with a researcher-developed, 141-item five-point Likert questionnaire. Data were analyzed using weighted means, rank orders, Kendall's coefficient of concordance, and chi-square tests at the 0.05 significance level. ILE utilization was rated Much Utilized overall (mean = 4.33), with instructional materials and resources highest (4.43) and assessment and feedback practices lowest (4.18). Perceived effectiveness was rated Much Effective (mean = 4.13), led by collaboration and peer interaction (4.27) and responsiveness to instructional strategies (4.26), while behavioral engagement ranked lowest (3.92). Rank-order agreement across school categories was statistically significant for all utilization and engagement dimensions. These findings indicate broadly favorable teacher assessments of integrated instruction, while identifying priorities for improvement rather than demonstrating causal gains in learner outcomes. Schools and education authorities should strengthen formative assessment, behavioral engagement strategies, collaborative lesson planning, teacher coaching, and contextualized learning resources. As findings relied on teacher ratings from one district, generalizability and causal inference are limited. The study contributes locally grounded evidence to guide sustainable instructional improvement, teacher development, and policy decisions aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

Keywords: *Academic Engagement, Collaborative Learning, Curriculum Integration, Integrated Learning Experiences, Key Stage 1, Learner-Centered Instruction, Quality Education*

1. INTRODUCTION

Financial Academic engagement during the foundational years of education is essential to developing learners' knowledge, skills, motivation, and positive attitudes toward learning. Educational institutions increasingly recognize the importance of providing meaningful, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences that encourage active participation. Wong et al. (2024) established that academic engagement encompasses behavioral, cognitive, and emotional dimensions associated with academic achievement and subjective well-being. Similarly, Vargas-Madriz et al. (2024) emphasized that supportive teaching environments contribute positively to student engagement. Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) provide an instructional approach that connects concepts, competencies, and activities across learning areas through learner-centered, thematic, and contextualized teaching. These experiences encourage learners to relate classroom instruction to real-life situations and participate in meaningful learning activities. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) examined integrated and subject-based curriculum approaches and emphasized the importance of instructional design and implementation quality. Furthermore, Bremner et al. (2022) identified the potential benefits of learner-centered pedagogy for student motivation, participation, and educational experiences, while acknowledging the need for stronger empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd, 2024) established policy guidelines for implementing the MATATAG Curriculum, emphasizing foundational competencies and responsive instructional practices. Within this educational context, examining the utilization of ILEs is important for understanding how integrated instruction may support the academic engagement of Key Stage 1 learners. Consequently, the present study assessed the utilization and perceived effectiveness of ILEs in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026, providing an empirical basis for instructional improvement and policy recommendations.

Research Problem

Despite increasing interest in integrated and learner-centered instruction, questions remain regarding its implementation and effectiveness in different educational settings. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) found that available comparative evidence does not establish the universal superiority of integrated curricula over subject-based instruction. Similarly, Bremner et al. (2022) emphasized the need for rigorous assessment of learner-centered practices to determine their educational outcomes. Recent research highlights instructional approaches and classroom conditions associated with learners' engagement. Sun et al. (2022) reported greater engagement during collaborative group learning than direct instruction in their elementary classroom study, while Li et al. (2024) demonstrated the importance of teacher–student and peer relationships in classroom engagement among early elementary learners. Additionally, Yao et al. (2024) established the positive contribution of formative assessment to learning outcomes across K–12 educational settings. In Jovellar District, Division of Albay, there remains a need to systematically assess the extent to which ILEs are utilized across curriculum integration, learner-centered teaching strategies, thematic and contextualized lessons, instructional materials and resources, classroom activities and learning tasks, and assessment and feedback practices. Equally important is determining their perceived effectiveness in enhancing behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement, responsiveness to instructional strategies, application of knowledge and skills, and collaboration and peer interaction. Addressing these concerns provides a basis for identifying instructional strengths, areas for improvement, and appropriate policy recommendations.

Assumptions of the Study

The study was anchored on the assumptions that the extent of ILE utilization can be assessed through curriculum integration, learner-centered teaching strategies, thematic and contextualized lessons, instructional materials and resources, classroom activities and learning tasks, and assessment and feedback practices. It further assumed that the perceived effectiveness of ILEs in enhancing academic engagement can be evaluated through behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement, responsiveness to instructional strategies, application of knowledge and skills, and collaboration and peer interaction. These dimensions are consistent with contemporary research recognizing the multidimensional nature of student engagement (Wong et al., 2024). Finally, the study assumed that its findings could provide a basis for developing policy recommendations to strengthen integrated instructional practices and support quality basic education.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the utilization of Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) in enhancing the academic engagement of Key Stage 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it sought to assess the extent of ILE utilization in terms of curriculum integration, learner-centered teaching strategies, thematic and contextualized lessons, instructional materials and resources, classroom activities and learning tasks, and assessment and feedback practices. It also aimed to determine the significant agreement on the rank orders of ILE utilization across these dimensions. Furthermore, the study evaluated the perceived effectiveness of ILEs in enhancing learners' behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, responsiveness to instructional strategies, application of knowledge and skills, and collaboration and peer interaction. It likewise examined the significant agreement on the rank orders of perceived effectiveness among the different respondent groups. Finally, the study intended to formulate policy recommendations based on its findings to strengthen integrated instruction and improve academic engagement among Key Stage 1 learners.

Theoretical or Conceptual Basis

The study was anchored on four complementary theoretical perspectives: Constructivist Learning Theory associated with Jean Piaget, Sociocultural Theory associated with Lev Vygotsky, Experiential Learning Theory developed by David Kolb, and Multiple Intelligences Theory proposed by Howard Gardner. Together, these perspectives provide a conceptual explanation of how active learning, social interaction, meaningful experiences, and varied instructional activities may support academic engagement. Constructivist learning emphasizes learners' active participation in developing knowledge through experiences and interaction with their environment. This perspective supports the integration of meaningful, contextualized, and learner-centered activities. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) discussed the theoretical and practical considerations associated with curriculum integration, while Bremner et al. (2022) examined outcomes associated with learner-centered instructional approaches. Sociocultural Theory highlights learning through interaction, collaboration, and instructional guidance. This perspective supports cooperative activities and peer engagement within ILEs. Sun et al. (2022) provided empirical evidence of the engagement benefits associated with collaborative classroom participation, while Li et al. (2024) established the relevance of teacher–student and peer relationships to early elementary classroom engagement. Experiential Learning Theory emphasizes learning through meaningful experiences, reflection, and the application of acquired knowledge. Within ILEs, this perspective supports practical activities, contextualized tasks, and opportunities for applying competencies across subject areas. Meanwhile, Multiple Intelligences Theory provides a perspective for considering diverse learner strengths and

designing varied instructional activities, without assuming that learners must be assigned fixed learning styles. The conceptual framework of the study incorporates six dimensions of ILE utilization and six dimensions of academic engagement. The utilization dimensions describe instructional practices, while the engagement dimensions represent the perceived effectiveness of those practices. These dimensions are examined across big, medium, and small schools. The resulting assessments and tests of agreement provide the basis for formulating policy recommendations intended to strengthen the utilization of ILEs and improve the quality of instruction.

The study primarily aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): Quality Education, which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education. The United Nations (2024) emphasized improving learning outcomes, teacher preparation, and educational equity as essential priorities. By evaluating Integrated Learning Experiences and their perceived effectiveness in enhancing academic engagement, the study supports improvements in foundational education and learner-centered instruction. Its findings contribute to educational and institutional sustainability by guiding teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in strengthening instructional planning, assessment practices, professional development, and resource allocation. These contributions promote continuous improvement through evidence-based educational policies, although long-term sustainability outcomes were not directly measured.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive–evaluative–correlational research design. The descriptive–evaluative component assessed the extent of ILE utilization and its perceived effectiveness in enhancing learners' academic engagement, while the correlational component examined the significant agreement among the rank orders of assessments across school categories. This design facilitated the systematic evaluation of instructional practices and the identification of patterns that could inform evidence-based policy recommendations.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted in public elementary schools in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026. The district is a rural educational setting comprising big, medium, and small schools serving learners from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. It was purposively selected because of its implementation of integrated and learner-centered instructional approaches in Key Stage 1 classrooms. The participating schools were classified according to enrollment size to facilitate comparative assessments of ILE utilization and effectiveness.

Participants or Data Sources

The study involved 60 Key Stage 1 teachers from public elementary schools in Jovellar District. Total enumeration was employed to include all teachers directly involved in Key Stage 1 instruction. Of the respondents, 20 (33%) represented big schools, 12 (20%) represented medium schools, and 28 (47%) represented small schools. Their responses served as the primary data for evaluating ILE utilization and its perceived effectiveness in enhancing learners' academic engagement.

Research Instruments or Materials

A researcher-made questionnaire-checklist using a five-point Likert scale was utilized to gather data. The instrument contained 141 items divided into two components. The first consisted of 71

items assessing ILE utilization in terms of curriculum integration, learner-centered teaching strategies, thematic and contextualized lessons, instructional materials and resources, classroom activities and learning tasks, and assessment and feedback practices. The second comprised 70 items evaluating perceived effectiveness in terms of behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, responsiveness to instructional strategies, application of knowledge and skills, and collaboration and peer interaction. Responses were interpreted using a five-point scale ranging from 1.00–1.49 (Not at All) to 4.50–5.00 (Very Much Utilized or Very Much Effective), with intermediate categories reflecting the corresponding levels of utilization and effectiveness. The questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of educational experts and was pretested to improve item clarity and appropriateness. Reliability was assessed using the Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (KR-21), as cited by Diederich (1976), yielding a reported coefficient of 0.81. The significance of the reliability coefficient was further assessed using a t-test for correlation analysis (Freund, 1988), with a reported computed value of 8.91.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher initially presented the research proposal to the university thesis committee and incorporated its recommendations. Subsequently, the questionnaire was developed, reviewed by experts, pretested, and revised. Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Jovellar District, Division of Albay. Following instrument validation and approval from the Graduate Studies Dean, the researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the 60 Key Stage 1 teachers. The accomplished questionnaires were retrieved, organized, and tabulated for statistical analysis. The findings were subsequently interpreted and used to formulate policy recommendations for improving ILE utilization and learners' academic engagement.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and rank orders to describe and compare respondents' assessments of ILE utilization and its perceived effectiveness. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W) was employed to determine the degree of agreement among the rank orders across respondent groups (Siegel, 1988). The corresponding chi-square test was utilized to determine the statistical significance of the observed agreement (Siegel, 1988). All hypothesis tests were evaluated at the 0.05 level of significance. The results provided the basis for identifying instructional priorities and formulating policy recommendations.

Ethical Consideration

The study followed the institutional authorization procedures described in the original manuscript. The research proposal was submitted to the university thesis committee, and permission to conduct data collection was sought from the Public Schools District Supervisor of Jovellar District. The questionnaire underwent expert validation and was administered following approval from the Graduate Studies Dean. Data were gathered directly from participating Key Stage 1 teachers and used to address the study objectives and develop policy recommendations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Extent of Utilization of Integrated Learning Experiences

The overall extent of ILE utilization obtained a weighted mean of 4.33, interpreted as Much Utilized. All six dimensions received the same descriptive interpretation. Instructional Materials and Resources ranked highest (4.43), followed by Curriculum Integration (4.42), Thematic and Contextualized Lessons (4.37), Classroom Activities and Learning Tasks (4.32), Learner-

Centered Teaching Strategies (4.28), and Assessment and Feedback Practices (4.18). These results indicate generally high levels of reported implementation, although differences among dimensions suggest areas requiring further instructional improvement.

3.1.1 Curriculum Integration

Curriculum Integration obtained a weighted mean of 4.42, interpreted as Much Utilized. Connecting lesson objectives across different subject disciplines received the highest rating (4.53), followed by assessing learners through performance tasks integrating multiple skills (4.50). Developing lesson plans reflecting cross-curricular linkages received the lowest rating (4.34), although it remained within the Much Utilized category. The findings indicate that teachers frequently connect learning objectives across disciplines, but the documentation of interdisciplinary relationships in lesson planning remains comparatively less developed. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) emphasized that integrated curriculum approaches require careful instructional organization and alignment to support meaningful learning. Their review also cautioned that curriculum integration is not inherently superior to subject-based instruction, highlighting the importance of implementation quality. Strengthening collaborative lesson preparation may therefore improve the consistency of curriculum integration.

3.1.2 Learner-Centered Teaching Strategies

Learner-Centered Teaching Strategies obtained a weighted mean of 4.28, interpreted as Much Utilized. Adapting teaching strategies to sustain learners' attention and interest received the highest rating (4.50), followed by allowing creative expression (4.46) and providing meaningful learning choices (4.45). Providing hands-on and experiential learning opportunities received the lowest rating (3.97). The findings suggest that teachers prioritize instructional flexibility and learner interest, although experiential learning opportunities require further strengthening. Bremner et al. (2022) reported that learner-centered pedagogy is generally perceived positively by teachers and students, particularly regarding motivation, participation, and learning experiences. However, their systematic review also identified limitations in objective evidence of effectiveness. These findings support the importance of combining responsive instructional approaches with meaningful activities and systematic assessment.

3.1.3 Thematic and Contextualized Lessons

Thematic and Contextualized Lessons obtained a weighted mean of 4.37, interpreted as Much Utilized. Developing lessons around themes relevant to learners' experiences received the highest rating (4.54), followed by integrating community-based examples into classroom discussions (4.53). Organizing learning activities around a unifying theme received the lowest rating (4.22). The results indicate that teachers frequently incorporate familiar experiences and community contexts into instruction, although organizing these experiences into coherent thematic sequences remains an area for improvement. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) emphasized that integrated learning approaches vary considerably in structure and implementation. The findings suggest that strengthening the alignment of themes, learning objectives, and classroom activities may improve instructional coherence and provide more meaningful learning experiences.

3.1.4 Instructional Materials and Resources

Instructional Materials and Resources obtained the highest overall utilization rating, with a weighted mean of 4.43, interpreted as Much Utilized. Providing materials responsive to diverse learner needs received the highest rating (4.53), followed by using manipulatives and hands-on materials (4.52). Utilizing varied instructional materials and integrating digital or multimedia resources both obtained ratings of 4.51. Updating instructional resources to maintain relevance

received the lowest reported rating (4.32). These findings suggest that teachers recognize the value of varied instructional resources in supporting integrated learning, particularly through practical and visually engaging materials. Bremner et al. (2022) emphasized that learner-centered instructional practices depend partly on appropriate classroom conditions and implementation support. The comparatively lower rating for updating resources indicates the importance of continuous instructional-material development, particularly in schools with differing resource capacities.

3.1.5 Classroom Activities and Learning Tasks

Classroom Activities and Learning Tasks obtained a weighted mean of 4.32, interpreted as Much Utilized. Facilitating interactive activities that promote learner participation and differentiating classroom tasks according to learners' abilities received the highest ratings (4.56 each). Structuring learning tasks that promote critical and creative thinking received the lowest rating (3.93). The findings indicate that teachers emphasize interactive and differentiated classroom participation, although designing tasks that require deeper reasoning remains comparatively less practiced. Sun et al. (2022) demonstrated that collaborative learning environments can provide greater opportunities for cognitive-behavioral and emotional engagement than teacher-directed instruction under the conditions examined. Similarly, Talkhan et al. (2025) found positive effects of structured cooperative learning on primary learners' mathematics achievement. These studies support the importance of purposeful classroom activities that combine participation, collaboration, and higher-order thinking.

3.1.6 Assessment and Feedback Practices

Assessment and Feedback Practices obtained the lowest overall utilization rating, with a weighted mean of 4.18, interpreted as Much Utilized. Incorporating performance-based assessments in integrated lessons received the highest rating (4.54), while providing clear instructions before assessment activities (3.93) and adjusting assessment strategies according to learners' needs (3.95) obtained the lowest ratings. The findings suggest that performance-based assessment is commonly implemented, but differentiated assessment, clear assessment instructions, and systematic feedback practices require further attention. Yao et al. (2024), through a meta-analysis of K–12 studies, established the positive contribution of formative assessment to academic achievement. Their findings support strengthening teachers' competencies in designing authentic assessments, providing constructive feedback, and utilizing assessment results to improve subsequent instruction.

3.2 Significant Agreement on the Utilization of Integrated Learning Experiences

The tests of significant agreement revealed high levels of concordance among respondents' rank orders across the six ILE utilization dimensions. Curriculum Integration obtained Kendall's $W = 0.87$ and $\chi^2 = 28.71$ ($p < 0.005$); Learner-Centered Teaching Strategies, $W = 0.95$ and $\chi^2 = 28.50$ ($p < 0.005$); Thematic and Contextualized Lessons, $W = 0.95$ and $\chi^2 = 28.50$ ($p < 0.005$); Instructional Materials and Resources, $W = 0.87$ and $\chi^2 = 26.10$ ($p < 0.005$); Classroom Activities and Learning Tasks, $W = 0.93$ and $\chi^2 = 25.11$ ($p < 0.005$); and Assessment and Feedback Practices, $W = 0.94$ and $\chi^2 = 25.38$ ($p < 0.005$). All results indicated statistically significant agreement at the established significance level. These findings demonstrate consistency in the relative rankings of ILE utilization indicators across the school categories. Such agreement suggests shared assessments of instructional practices despite differences in school size. However, concordance reflects consistency of rankings rather than direct evidence of improved learning outcomes. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) highlighted the importance of rigorous evaluation when interpreting the effectiveness of integrated curriculum approaches. Accordingly, the observed

agreement provides support for identifying common instructional priorities but does not establish causal effectiveness.

3.3 Perceived Effectiveness of Integrated Learning Experiences in Enhancing Academic Engagement

The overall perceived effectiveness of ILE utilization obtained a weighted mean of 4.13, interpreted as Much Effective. Collaboration and Peer Interaction ranked highest (4.27), followed by Responsiveness to Instructional Strategies (4.26), Cognitive Engagement (4.15), Application of Knowledge and Skills (4.11), Emotional Engagement (4.08), and Behavioral Engagement (3.92). All dimensions were assessed as Much Effective, indicating favorable teacher perceptions across the academic engagement indicators.

3.3.1 Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral Engagement obtained a weighted mean of 3.92, interpreted as Much Effective, ranking lowest among the six engagement dimensions. Promoting attentiveness during lesson discussions received the highest rating (4.54), while reducing disruptive behaviors during integrated lessons received the lowest rating (3.62). Other relatively lower ratings concerned participation in group work (3.71) and maintaining on-task behavior (3.74). The findings indicate that ILEs are perceived to support attentiveness, although maintaining consistent participation and appropriate classroom behavior remains challenging. Patall et al. (2024) found that structured classroom environments are positively associated with student engagement and academic achievement. Likewise, Korpershoek et al. (2026) reported positive, though generally small, effects of classroom management interventions on primary learners' academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and motivational outcomes. These findings support strengthening classroom routines, learner participation, and positive behavioral guidance alongside integrated instruction.

3.3.2 Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive Engagement obtained a weighted mean of 4.15, interpreted as Much Effective. Motivating learners to ask meaningful questions received the highest rating (4.48), followed by encouraging independent thinking (4.40). Promoting deeper understanding of concepts across subject areas received the lowest rating (3.84). The results indicate that integrated instruction is perceived to stimulate curiosity, questioning, and independent thinking, although developing deeper conceptual understanding remains comparatively less evident. Wong et al. (2024) established significant associations between student engagement, academic achievement, and subjective well-being, highlighting the importance of cognitive involvement in learning. Furthermore, Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) emphasized that learning outcomes associated with curriculum integration depend on how instructional content is organized and delivered. These findings support strengthening inquiry-based activities and opportunities for conceptual application.

3.3.3 Emotional Engagement

Emotional Engagement obtained a weighted mean of 4.08, interpreted as Much Effective. Motivating learners to look forward to daily lessons received the highest rating (4.28), followed by fostering positive attitudes toward school tasks (4.21). Enhancing learners' confidence in classroom participation received the lowest rating (3.75). The findings suggest that ILEs are perceived to support positive learning attitudes and enjoyment, although confidence in active classroom participation requires further development. Wong et al. (2024) identified emotional engagement as an important dimension associated with students' educational experiences and well-being. Similarly, Li et al. (2024) demonstrated the importance of teacher–student and peer

relationships in classroom engagement among early elementary learners. These findings underscore the relevance of supportive classroom interactions and meaningful participation in strengthening learners' emotional involvement.

3.3.4 Responsiveness to Instructional Strategies

Responsiveness to Instructional Strategies obtained a weighted mean of 4.26, interpreted as Much Effective. Following teacher instructions accurately during classroom activities received the highest rating (4.62), followed by participating in cooperative learning when instructed (4.61) and responding positively to differentiated instruction (4.57). Applying instructional strategies independently in learning activities received the lowest rating (3.96). The findings indicate that learners are perceived as highly responsive to teacher guidance and structured instructional activities, although independent application of learning strategies is comparatively less developed. Patall et al. (2024) demonstrated that appropriate classroom structure supports academic engagement by providing clear expectations and instructional guidance. These findings suggest the importance of gradually strengthening learner independence while maintaining structured and developmentally appropriate instructional support.

3.3.5 Application of Knowledge and Skills

Application of Knowledge and Skills obtained a weighted mean of 4.11, interpreted as Much Effective. Demonstrating understanding through hands-on activities received the highest rating (4.33), followed by applying knowledge creatively to real-life situations (4.19). Applying learned concepts in classroom tasks received the lowest rating (3.91). The results indicate that practical and experiential activities are perceived to support the application of acquired knowledge, although consistent transfer of learning requires further improvement. Kreijkes and Greatorex (2024) noted that the outcomes of integrated instruction vary according to instructional design and the nature of learning activities. Additionally, Talkhan et al. (2025) demonstrated that structured cooperative approaches can improve primary learners' mathematics achievement. These findings support integrating authentic tasks, practical problem-solving, and opportunities for applying competencies across learning contexts.

3.3.6 Collaboration and Peer Interaction

Collaboration and Peer Interaction obtained the highest effectiveness rating, with a weighted mean of 4.27, interpreted as Much Effective. Participating actively in team-based problem-solving activities received the highest rating (4.47), followed by supporting classmates in completing learning tasks (4.46). Taking turns and following assigned roles during collaborative activities received the lowest rating (4.09). The findings suggest that integrated activities are perceived to promote cooperation, peer assistance, and shared learning experiences. Burns et al. (2024) emphasized that peer collaboration among young children can be strengthened through structured activities, role assignments, and adult guidance, although intervention outcomes vary. Similarly, Sun et al. (2022) identified greater classroom engagement during peer interaction in collaborative learning settings. These findings reinforce the importance of well-structured group activities that develop communication, cooperation, and shared responsibility.

3.4 Significant Agreement on the Perceived Effectiveness of Integrated Learning Experiences

The tests of significant agreement revealed statistically significant concordance among respondents' rankings across all six academic engagement dimensions. Behavioral Engagement obtained Kendall's $W = 0.91$ and $\chi^2 = 27.30$ ($p < 0.005$); Cognitive Engagement, $W = 0.96$ and $\chi^2 = 28.80$ ($p < 0.005$); Emotional Engagement, $W = 0.88$ and $\chi^2 = 26.40$ ($p < 0.005$); Responsiveness to Instructional Strategies, $W = 0.82$ and $\chi^2 = 24.60$ ($p < 0.01$); Application of Knowledge and Skills,

$W = 0.69$ and $\chi^2 = 18.63$ ($p < 0.05$); and Collaboration and Peer Interaction, $W = 0.93$ and $\chi^2 = 27.90$ ($p < 0.005$). The strongest agreement was observed in Cognitive Engagement, while Application of Knowledge and Skills showed the lowest concordance, although it remained statistically significant. These findings indicate that respondents across the school categories generally shared similar perceptions of the relative effectiveness of ILE-related practices. Nevertheless, agreement was less pronounced for the application of knowledge and skills, suggesting comparatively greater variation in respondents' rankings within this dimension. Wong et al. (2024) emphasized the multidimensional nature of academic engagement, while Bremner et al. (2022) noted the importance of distinguishing perceived instructional effectiveness from objectively demonstrated outcomes. Thus, the significant concordance strengthens the consistency of the descriptive assessments but should not be interpreted as proof of causal relationships between ILE utilization and learner achievement.

3.5 Comparative Findings and Areas for Instructional Improvement

The findings revealed differences in the mean assessments across school categories. Big schools reported the highest overall ILE utilization (4.39), followed by medium schools (4.32) and small schools (4.29), all interpreted as Much Utilized. Conversely, small schools obtained the highest perceived effectiveness rating for academic engagement (4.17), compared with 4.11 for both big and medium schools. Across utilization dimensions, Assessment and Feedback Practices consistently received the lowest ratings, while Behavioral Engagement ranked lowest among the perceived effectiveness dimensions. These patterns suggest that a higher reported level of instructional utilization does not necessarily correspond to a higher perceived effectiveness rating across school categories. However, the descriptive differences were not established as statistically significant differences between school types. The findings identify assessment practices, behavioral engagement, instructional planning, and practical application of learning as areas for improvement. Yao et al. (2024) provided evidence supporting formative assessment, while Korpershoek et al. (2026) emphasized the contribution of structured classroom management to educational outcomes. The findings therefore support targeted instructional development rather than assuming that increased use of integrated activities alone will improve academic engagement.

3.6 Policy Recommendations Derived from the Findings

Based on the findings, the study identified the need to strengthen curriculum integration, assessment and feedback, teacher professional development, classroom management, and collaborative learning practices. The original policy recommendations emphasized coordinated support from the Department of Education, regional and division offices, district supervisors, school heads, master teachers, classroom teachers, parents, and community stakeholders. Proposed measures included curriculum integration workshops, instructional coaching, Learning Action Cells, peer mentoring, improved instructional resources, and stronger assessment practices. These recommendations are consistent with recent research emphasizing the importance of instructional quality and professional development. Visscher et al. (2025) found that teacher professional development interventions produced positive average effects on student achievement, although the magnitude of these effects varied substantially among studies. Similarly, Burns et al. (2024) emphasized the need for educator development and structured instructional support to strengthen children's peer collaboration. The findings of the present study therefore provide a basis for coordinated and evidence-informed improvements in the utilization of ILEs, particularly in strengthening assessment, behavioral participation, and meaningful application of learning among Key Stage 1 learners.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that Integrated Learning Experiences (ILEs) were widely utilized and generally perceived as effective in supporting the academic engagement of Key Stage 1 learners in Jovellar District, Division of Albay, during School Year 2025–2026. Assessments from 60 teachers across big, medium, and small schools revealed particularly high utilization of instructional materials and curriculum integration, while assessment and feedback practices were comparatively less developed. Collaboration and peer interaction and responsiveness to instructional strategies emerged as the strongest perceived engagement outcomes, whereas behavioral engagement received the lowest rating. Significant agreement in respondents' rank orders indicated consistent assessments of ILE utilization and perceived effectiveness across school categories. Collectively, these findings suggest that integrated instruction is well established and positively assessed by teachers in the district. However, strengthening assessment practices, behavioral engagement, and the application of knowledge remains essential for improving instructional quality and sustaining meaningful learning experiences.

Based on the findings, the Department of Education, regional and division offices, and district supervisors should strengthen instructional policies, professional development, and resource allocation, prioritizing assessment practices, curriculum integration, and behavioral engagement. School heads and master teachers should institutionalize Learning Action Cells, collaborative lesson planning, instructional mentoring, and coaching focused on interdisciplinary teaching, differentiated assessment, and effective classroom management. Key Stage 1 teachers should maintain effective instructional practices while improving formative feedback, experiential activities, structured collaborative tasks, and opportunities for learners to apply acquired knowledge. Learning resource coordinators should regularly develop, update, and share contextualized instructional materials responsive to different school settings. Parents, parent–teacher associations, local government units, and community stakeholders should strengthen school partnerships by supporting learning activities and providing appropriate educational resources. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of ILE implementation should guide instructional improvements and ensure that identified priorities are systematically addressed.

The study was limited to 60 Key Stage 1 teachers from public elementary schools in Jovellar District during School Year 2025–2026, restricting the transferability of findings to other educational settings. Data were obtained through a researcher-made, teacher-completed questionnaire; therefore, the reported effectiveness reflected teachers' perceptions rather than directly measured improvements in learner outcomes. Furthermore, the descriptive–evaluative–correlational design and concordance analysis established patterns of assessment and agreement but could not demonstrate causal effects. Future studies may involve larger populations, additional grade levels, direct measures of learner engagement, and different educational settings to strengthen and extend the findings.

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