THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS AS MEDIATED BY THEIR SOCIAL LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

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Abstract:

This descriptive-correlational study aimed to determine whether social language learning strategies (SLLS) mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and classroom engagement (CE) of students. Data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire from junior high school students enrolled in the IP program across four selected secondary schools in the Caraga South District. Respondents were selected through stratified random sampling, and data were analyzed using the mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and path analysis. The results revealed that students demonstrated high levels of emotional intelligence, particularly in self-awareness, and high classroom engagement, with social engagement slightly higher than academic engagement. Students also reported high use of social language-learning strategies, though responses showed greater variability in this area. Correlation analysis indicated that EI was significantly and positively related to both CE and SLLS. Similarly, SLLS had a significant, albeit low, positive correlation with CE. Mediation analysis further showed that SLLS partially mediated the relationship between EI and CE, with both the direct and indirect effects being significant. Integrating social language learning strategies into classroom practices can guide curriculum planning by incorporating activities that enhance social and academic engagement and foster emotional intelligence. It can also inform policy decisions by promoting inclusive and interactive learning environments that support holistic student development.

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1. Introduction

Classroom engagement is widely recognized as essential in learning because it includes students' behavior, emotions, and thinking (Zhang 93). Research shows that engaged students learn better and achieve higher academic results (Salcedo and Paglinawan 2880-2884). However, classroom disengagement is a growing concern in secondary education. This disengagement often manifests as avoiding tasks, participating less, and experiencing negative emotions in school (Steenberghs et al. 1), which, over time, increases the risk of poor performance, academic failure, and dropout (Olivier et al. 2327).

The problem above is supported by Baralt, Gurzynski-Weiss, and Kim (215), who state that classroom engagement has remained a problem among students. This is attributed to classroom practices such as isolating students from peers and denying them opportunities to collaborate. Similarly, the article Unmotivated and Disengaged points out that up to 20% of students each year are described as disengaged, specifically those with cognitive challenges who show unwillingness to participate in class discussion, difficulty processing information, give up easily on learning tasks, and skip classes, resulting in poor classroom engagement. Saripah and Widiastuti (174) highlight that students exhibiting off-task behaviors not only waste valuable learning time but also show severely reduced classroom engagement. Such disengagement is associated with limited understanding of academic tasks, declining academic performance, and negative social perceptions from both peers and teachers, which further compounds the challenges of fostering a productive learning environment (Meany-Wallen et al. 421).

Disengagement in the classroom remains a serious issue. Alicia et al. (759) report that disengaged students miss opportunities for peer interaction, which is linked to better learning outcomes. Adıgüzel Akman et al. (5601) note that students who withdraw from instructional tasks participate less and show lower overall engagement. Saripah and Widiastuti (174) highlight that off-task behaviors and low motivation further demonstrate that engagement remains a challenge in many classrooms. Together, these studies confirm that classroom disengagement is a persistent concern that affects students' learning experiences.

Classroom engagement is very important because it affects students' learning, motivation, and overall success. Engaged students learn better, think more deeply, and feel a stronger sense of belonging, which helps them stay in school and complete their studies (Cambay and Paglinawan 4; Anim-Wright 73). Emotional Intelligence also shows why engagement matters, as students with high EI can manage their emotions, do better in their studies, and reach their full potential (Martín et al. 308; Thomas & Allen 2; Wicks, Nakisher, and Grimm 228). Teachers with high EI create supportive classrooms where students feel valued and motivated to participate, and they encourage the use of social learning strategies that increase interaction and collaboration (Abiodullah et al. 129;

Reyes et al. 11; Mohammadipour 92-93; Montaño-González and Cancino 8). Studying classroom engagement is therefore important to understand how students learn, interact, and succeed.

Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999) explains how emotional Intelligence (IV) influences classroom engagement (DV) through social language learning strategies (MV). Learning occurs when students (subjects) interact with goals (objects) using tools (social strategies). Emotional Intelligence allows students to manage their emotions, understand others, and communicate effectively. Research supports this link: Wicks, Nakisher, and Grimm (228) found that emotional skills improve academic performance and reduce behavioral problems. Mohammadipour (92-93) also showed that students who use social learning strategies experience positive emotions, which supports learning. Montaño-González and Cancino (8) noted that motivation, a component of EI, helps students use social strategies and track their progress. Duran et al. reported that high-performing students frequently use social strategies, improving cooperation and engagement. These studies collectively show that EI helps students use social strategies, thereby enhancing classroom engagement (12).

Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) explains that students engage fully when concentration, interest, and enjoyment are balanced. Students with higher EI can maintain focus and find learning personally meaningful, thereby increasing engagement. Affective Filter Theory (Krashen, 1985) adds that emotions such as anxiety, confidence, and motivation affect learning. High EI students regulate emotions, reduce anxiety, and stay motivated, which improves participation, effort, and attention. Reyes et al. (11) show that teachers who provide emotional support increase students' participation and engagement. Abiodullah et al. (129) found that emotionally intelligent teachers create positive environments and provide helpful feedback, further enhancing engagement. Thus, these theories explain that emotional Intelligence directly increases classroom engagement.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) explains that learning is social and occurs through interaction. Students with higher EI are more likely to ask questions, collaborate with peers, give feedback, and use social strategies effectively. Habok and Magyar found that students who use social strategies are more engaged and effective learners (2). High-proficiency students use social strategies more frequently Yunianika (65). Further, Asty (30) notes that cooperative tasks and peer communication motivate participation. Therefore, Sociocultural Theory shows that EI promotes the use of social strategies even before it directly affects engagement.

Social language learning strategies directly enhance classroom engagement by encouraging students to collaborate, ask questions, and participate in discussions. These strategies help learners clarify doubts, reinforce understanding, and actively contribute to classroom activities Damanik (71). Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) explains that learning occurs through social interaction and guided collaboration, which builds confidence and strengthens connections within the classroom. By using social strategies,

students increase their behavioral, cognitive, and social engagement, making learning more active, meaningful, and effective.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) shows how the variables relate to one another. The independent variable, emotional Intelligence, includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness, and social skills (qtd. in Singh 136). Self-awareness means understanding one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives; self-regulation is managing actions, thoughts, and feelings to achieve goals; motivation drives achievement and personal growth; social awareness is noticing others' emotions and reading situations; and social skills are managing and influencing others' emotions effectively.

The dependent variable, classroom engagement, has two indicators: academic and social engagement. Academic engagement is participation in learning activities, while social engagement is working with others in the classroom (Barghaus et al.). The mediating variable, social language learning strategies, is about communicating and collaborating with peers to clarify doubts, strengthen understanding, and get feedback, which increases participation and engagement (Anggarista and Wayudin 32; Damanik 71; Yunianika 65).
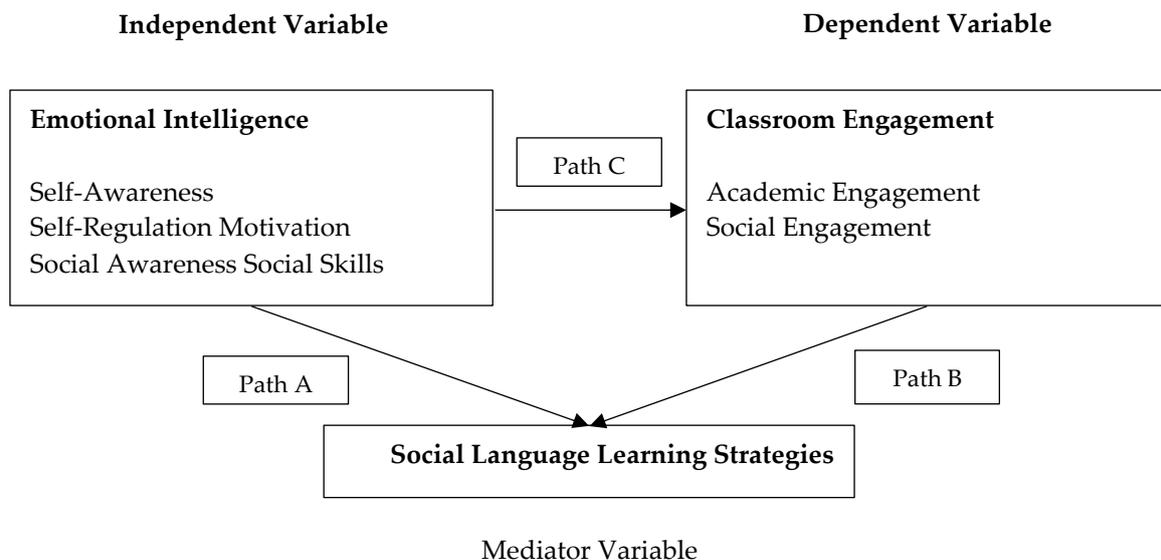
Independent Variable   **Dependent Variable**

Mediator Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Despite extensive studies on factors affecting students' classroom engagement, such as emotional Intelligence, most research has examined this relationship directly and primarily in non-Philippine contexts. In the local setting, specifically in the Caraga South District, such studies are limited. Similarly, research on social language learning strategies has largely focused on language development and peer interaction. In Philippine classrooms, where cultural norms, collaborative learning practices, and social interactions shape student participation, no empirical study has investigated whether social language learning strategies explain or mediate the link between emotional

intelligence and classroom engagement. Therefore, addressing this gap is both timely and important.

In response to this concern, the present study examines whether social language-learning strategies mediate the correlation between students' emotional intelligence and classroom engagement. Specifically, it aims to determine the levels of emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language learning strategies among junior high school students in Caraga South District, Davao Oriental; determine the relationships between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement, emotional intelligence and social language learning strategies, and social language learning strategies and classroom engagement; and determine whether social language learning strategies mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement.

Investigating the interrelationship between emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language learning strategies significantly supports two key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: #4 Quality Education and #3 Good Health and Well-Being. The study recommends modifying instruction, creating highly engaging and motivating learning environments, and providing diverse opportunities that encourage active student participation. It also emphasizes the role of emotional intelligence and social language learning strategies in helping students manage emotions, reduce stress, and maintain a positive classroom experience, thereby fostering both academic and socio-emotional development.

The findings of this study clarify conflicting views in the previous literature by examining whether emotional intelligence, as mediated by social language-learning strategies, contributes to increased classroom engagement. Additionally, the research adds to the existing body of knowledge by identifying underlying issues that contribute to student disengagement. It reminds academic institutions and curriculum developers not to limit teaching methods and strategies to purely academic or cognitive knowledge, but to also develop skills such as emotional intelligence to prepare learners for adaptability and active participation in the learning process.

Teachers can benefit from this study, as it provides guidance on modifying instruction, creating highly engaging classroom environments, and offering a range of opportunities to encourage student involvement. Language learners are the primary beneficiaries, as the findings reveal that the effective use of social language-learning strategies and emotional intelligence can enhance their classroom engagement. Furthermore, students gain awareness of how disengagement affects their performance and participation. Finally, this study offers a framework for future researchers to explore additional variables and serve as a reference for similar investigations.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Research Participants

This study was conducted among the IP junior high school students of four secondary schools in the Caraga South District, Caraga, Davao Oriental. The four schools were coded as Schools A, B, C, and D to protect their privacy and confidentiality. The total population was 754, and only 255 were selected as the sample; RAOSOFT was used to determine the appropriate sample size. In the same manner, the proportion was used to determine the sample size for each stratum, yielding the following distribution: School A, 104; School B, 90; School C, 26; and School D, 35. The computed sample size per school was distributed using stratified random sampling. This technique was typically used when evaluating data from different subgroups or strata (Thomas, 39). The researcher utilized this sampling method to exhibit no bias and minimal spread. It allowed the researcher to quickly obtain a sample that best represented the entire population under study.

To ensure that there was no bias in the selection of respondents and to maintain equal representation across all variables presented, the researcher considered selection criteria. The 255 junior high school students were officially enrolled in four secondary schools in Caraga South District for the S.Y. 2025–2026 and had the willingness to participate in the study. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria included students who explicitly declined to participate in the study, withdrew during the administration of the survey, or failed to submit a signed consent form from both the parent and the child, all of whom were excluded.

Consequently, one of the withdrawal criteria was that the researcher had violated the respondents' right to privacy and to the confidentiality of their identities, which needed to be maintained. Participants were not subject to any penalties or loss of benefits if they chose to withdraw, decline to participate, or end their involvement at any time. The researcher also considered the definition and clarification of the likelihood and potential distress, including cognitive and emotional hazards, and identified the steps taken to reduce such risks, as well as the necessary actions to be taken when needed.

2.2 Research Instruments

The study used three adapted questionnaires to collect data. The first part of the instrument applied Goleman's (1998) model of emotional intelligence competencies. Singh (140) adapted all five domains of emotional intelligence. Nonetheless, the researcher adapted twelve statements per indicator. The instrument included indicators of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness, and social skills. A rating system used in questionnaires to gauge respondents' attitudes, beliefs, or perceptions was called a Likert scale, in which each item had an assigned numerical value and a descriptive equivalent. According to Santos (2007), the Likert Scale required individuals to tick a box or blank in response to many items concerning an attitude, object, or stimulus.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of a 60-item construct, with respondents rating each item on a 5-point scale, with 5 representing the highest score and 1 the lowest. Moreover, the instrument underwent reliability examination, which yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .80. Therefore, the instrument was reliable and accepted.

The second instrument utilized in this study was the Classroom Engagement Scale (CES) by Barghaus et al. (1), which originally used the ratings "outstanding," "satisfactory," and "needs improvement," and was modified to create the five-point Likert scale utilized in this study. This CES was originally a research-based measure of observable and teachable engagement skills. The questionnaire had twelve questions. The two primary sections of the questionnaire were academic engagement (items 1–5) and social engagement (items 6–12).

The third instrument used was a social language-learning strategy. This mediating variable was one of the indicators of Language Learning Strategies by Oxford (1989), version 7.0, which originally had a rating of 1–5 with the interpretations: never or almost never true of me, usually not true of me, somewhat true of me, usually true of me, and always or almost always true of me. This was then changed to always manifested, manifested most of the time, manifested occasionally, manifested in a few instances, and not manifested at all. The questionnaire had only six statements, adapted by the researcher from the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (6).

To interpret the data on emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language learning strategies, the following rating scales were utilized. Means ranging from 4.20–5.00 were described as Very High. This implied that emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language-learning strategies were always manifested. Means of 3.40–4.19 were described as High, indicating that all three indicators were often manifested. Means from 2.60–3.39 were described as Moderate, which implied that they were sometimes manifested. Means of 1.80–2.59 were described as Low, indicating that the variables were rarely observed. Means from 1.00–1.79 were described as Very Low. This implied that emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language learning strategies were never manifested at all.

The adapted instruments were modified to align with the study's objectives and were validated by expert validators from the University of Mindanao Professional Schools. There were four internal validators and one external validator who verified the instruments' validity. Thus, the average validation rating of the expert validators was 4.01, which meant Very Good.

2.3 Research Design and Procedure

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design, which examines the relationships between two or more variables in their natural setting without manipulation or control (Schmitz, 527). This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to measure emotional intelligence, classroom engagement, and social language-learning strategies, and to assess how these variables are related. Additionally, a mediation analysis was employed to examine whether social language learning

strategies mediate or transmit the effect of emotional intelligence on classroom engagement (Baron & Kenny, 1173). This approach effectively identifies the strength and nature of relationships among variables while revealing the underlying mechanism by which emotional intelligence may influence classroom engagement.

Moreover, specific procedures were observed. In doing so, ethical procedures were also observed. To facilitate data collection, the following steps were undertaken for this study. The researcher submitted the study to the UM Research Ethics Committee (UMERC) and obtained certification and approval before conducting the study to ensure that all ethical considerations were properly observed. The researcher sought approval from the Dean of the University of Mindanao Professional Schools to conduct the study. The respondents' involvement was entirely voluntary, and parents or legal guardians were provided with an assent form in both English and the respondents' local language before the study was conducted.

In accordance with the required standards, the researcher secured permission letters from the Department of Education, Division of Davao Oriental, addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS), and the Secondary School Principals (SSP) of Caraga South District. Considering that the respondents belonged to an IP community, the researcher sought permission from the council of elders through a Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) process in the area where the school was located before administering the instruments. The advisers were similarly informed about the study's purpose and process. Thereafter, the researcher secured assent and consent forms from the respondents. The respondents were given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and were never coerced into giving consent; consent was given freely and voluntarily.

Furthermore, the researcher assured the respondents that their data would be protected and kept private, and that their rights would be upheld at all times during and after the research. The researcher adhered to the Data Privacy Law. The data were included in printed and electronic reports transmitted through secure channels. The researcher administered the questionnaire and provided explanations in the local dialect to ensure respondents understood each question and provided accurate responses. All questionnaires were retrieved on the same day they were distributed to ensure proper data collection. After data collection, interpretation was conducted. The survey lasted for approximately 30 minutes.

Necessarily, the researcher gave due credit to the writers whose works were included in the references by properly citing them, and the use of plagiarism software in this research was permitted. The validation of the research instruments was based on expert evaluations, and the data gathered for this study were likewise based on statistical results provided by a certified statistician to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the statistical techniques used in the research.

The Mean, Pearson r, and Path Analysis were the statistical tools used to interpret the data. The mean was used to describe the levels of Language Learning Strategies, Classroom Engagement, and Emotional Intelligence among junior high school students

in the Caraga South District, Caraga, Davao Oriental. To ascertain the significance of the interrelationship among Language Learning Strategies, Emotional Intelligence, and Classroom Engagement, Pearson r was utilized, while Path Analysis was employed to determine causal modeling by examining the path between Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Engagement; the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Social Language Learning Strategies; and the relationship between Social Language Learning Strategies and Classroom Engagement.

Finally, this study was conducted in compliance with ethical principles throughout data collection. The researcher was compliant with the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) and held an approved compliance certificate (UMERC-2025-268) dated June 10, 2025. This implied that all ethical standards were duly observed.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the study's findings based on respondents' and participants' responses. The data shown in this chapter reflect the mediating effect of Social Language Learning Strategies on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Engagement, as they align with the study's purpose and questions.

3.1 Emotional Intelligence

Table 1 shows the emotional intelligence among junior high school students defined by the following indicators: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness, and social skills.

Table 1: Level of Emotional Intelligence

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Self-Awareness	3.95	.47	High
Self-Regulation	3.85	.50	High
Motivation	.387	.54	High
Social Awareness	.383	.49	High
Social Skills	3.80	.56	High
Overall	3.86	.43	**High**

The overall mean of emotional intelligence is high (M = 3.86; SD = .43), indicating that it is often manifested among the respondents. The low standard deviation shows that responses were generally similar. The indicator self-awareness (M = 3.95; SD = .47) also shows a high mean and low variability, reflecting consistent responses. Motivation (M = 3.87; SD = .54) shows a high mean, while the moderate SD suggests some variation in responses. Self-regulation (M = 3.85; SD = .50) similarly has a high mean, with moderate variability, reflecting slight differences among responses. Social awareness (M = 3.83; SD = .49) is high and shows low variability, indicating generally similar responses. Finally,

social skills (M = 3.80; SD = .56) are also high, with moderate variability, making it the most dispersed indicator.

The findings of high emotional intelligence align with Iqbal et al. (4), who emphasized that emotional intelligence predicts relational engagement, educational achievement, and work-related success. Likewise, Taibolatov et al. (6-7) identified emotional intelligence as a strong predictor of academic motivation. Estrada et al. (4-5), in their study Does Emotional Intelligence Influence Academic, highlighted that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, demonstrate resilience, foster positive social interactions, and show stronger study engagement.

All indicators of emotional intelligence—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness, and social skills were found to be at a high level, underscoring their crucial role in student development and engagement. High self-awareness has been shown to correlate with educational growth, as evidenced by Derla and Baguio (149-150) among 133 public elementary students in the Philippines. Similarly, Sohail & Akram (5) emphasized that enhanced self-awareness and reflection significantly improve students' learning outcomes in mathematics and related programming courses. Together, these studies reinforce that fostering self-awareness supports stronger educational development, improved academic outcomes, and better self-regulated learning.

High self-regulation also contributes to academic achievement. Pooled effect size analyses for children and adolescents indicate improvements in academic outcomes (Graham et al., 6). Further, a meta-analysis by Kogut et al. (2923) found that self-regulated learning interventions significantly enhance student outcomes in online, blended, and face-to-face contexts. In the Philippines, Salpocial and Palma (8-10) reported that self-regulation significantly correlates with effective instruction and study habits, serving as a strong predictor of learning performance among 417 Grade 12 students. These studies suggest that strengthening self-regulation not only boosts academic achievement but also improves study habits, behavior, and overall well-being.

High motivation allows learners to perform better and adapt effectively to challenges. Calo and Salvaña (1003) demonstrated that motivation significantly predicts resilience and positively influences achievement. It also sustains engagement, with a unit increase in motivation leading to a 28% rise in student engagement (Azila-Gbettor et al., 11). Howard et al. (90) found that motivation is consistently linked to higher achievement, greater persistence, and stronger well-being, emphasizing its influence on both academic performance and overall learner well-being.

High social awareness benefits students' interpersonal functioning and academic engagement. A descriptive study of 1,600 junior high school students in Manila found that social awareness was the highest-rated competency among SEL domains (Ramos, 5). In China, Liu & Chng (4) reported that social awareness is positively associated with emotional competence. In the Philippines, BSHM students at Bestlink 22 College indicated that social awareness enhances empathy, ethical behavior, self-esteem, and

communication skills. Overall, high social awareness not only helps students recognize others' feelings but also plays a key role in emotional development, ethical conduct, and preparing students to interact meaningfully and responsibly in society (Batica et al., 8-9).

Finally, high social skills are linked to reduced disruptive behavior and stronger engagement and sense of belonging in school. Greenberg (181) emphasized that social skills, when enhanced through SEL programs, reduce disruptive behavior and strengthen engagement. Cipriano et al. (7) found that social learning interventions significantly improve students' social-emotional skills, attitudes, classroom behavior, and academic achievement. Booth (par. 3) highlighted that mentoring programs centered on relationship-building increased well-being among at-risk students, with participants reporting a 0.6-point improvement in life satisfaction on a 0–10 scale.

3.2 Classroom Engagement

Table 2 presents classroom engagement among junior high school students, defined by the following indicators: academic and social engagement.

Table 2: Level of Classroom Engagement

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Academic Engagement	4.00	.67	High
Social Engagement	4.15	.52	High
Overall	4.07	.542	**High**

The overall mean of classroom engagement among junior high school students is high (M = 4.07; SD = .542), indicating that engagement is often manifested. The moderate standard deviation suggests noticeable but not extreme differences in responses. This high engagement is reflected in its indicators: social engagement (M = 4.15; SD = .52) is high with moderate variability, showing some differences in how students interact socially, while academic engagement (M = 4.00; SD = .67) is also high but has the highest variability, indicating greater differences in students' academic participation.

Research shows the significance of classroom engagement for academic success. Okunuki and Kashimura (72) emphasized that high levels of engagement lead to stronger academic achievement, as students who actively participate and invest effort are more likely to perform well. Similarly, Anim-Wright (71–74) found that engagement not only improves knowledge acquisition and higher-order thinking but also strengthens motivation and a sense of belonging, which are essential for persistence and eventual degree completion. Li and Xue's meta-analysis (59–61) further demonstrated that supportive teacher–student relationships significantly enhance engagement, highlighting their role as a key link between effective teaching and learning outcomes.

High social engagement, in particular, contributes to learners' persistence, achievement, and overall well-being. Sá (4) emphasized that students who are both academically and socially engaged are more likely to remain in school, feel a strong sense of belonging, and experience greater satisfaction with their studies. Additionally,

students' positive relationships with peers and teachers are significantly associated with higher academic engagement and reduced behavioral disaffection (Collie et al., 19).

3.3 Social Language Learning Strategies

Table 3 shows the mediating variable, social language learning strategies, among junior high school students. The level of social language learning strategies among junior high school students is high (M = 4.03; SD = .60).

Table 3: Level of Social Language Learning Strategies

	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Overall	4.03	.60	**High**

The overall mean score for social language learning strategies is M=4.03 (SD=0.60), indicating that these strategies are often manifested. However, the standard deviation indicates high variability, suggesting that students' responses were more dispersed, reflecting greater differences in their use of social language learning strategies.

High levels of social language learning strategies are said to improve speaking skills, increase willingness to speak, and reduce speaking anxiety. This provides evidence that frequent use of social strategies helps not only with performance but also in reducing affective barriers to participation in language classes (Balkaya, 513). Similarly, Nurwinda and Jaiyari (13) found that among several language-learning strategies, social strategies were strongly correlated with students' English GPA. These findings support the notion that engaging socially in language learning through peer interaction, seeking help, and active practice significantly boost learners' academic performance. Also, a study of 306 third-year nursing students in Quezon City revealed a significant positive correlation between social engagement and academic performance, demonstrating that students who participate more actively in extracurricular and peer-related activities tend to perform better academically ("Effects of Social Engagements" 7).

3.4 Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Engagement

Table 4 shows the correlation between the independent variable (emotional intelligence) and the dependent variable (classroom engagement) of junior high students in the Caraga South District.

Table 4: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Engagement

Variable	Self-awareness	Self-Regulation	Motivation	Social Awareness	Social Skills	IV
Academic Engagement	0.442	0.435	0.418	0.458	0.492	0.54
	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001
Social Engagement	0.431	0.415	0.366	0.371	0.411	0.479
	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001
DV	0.483	0.471	0.436	0.463	0.504	0.567
	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001

The first bivariate correlation between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement yielded an r-value of 0.567 (p < .001), indicating a moderately positive relationship. This suggests that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to demonstrate greater classroom engagement, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between EI and classroom engagement. By dimensions, EI correlated more strongly with academic engagement (r = 0.540, p < .001) than with social engagement (r = 0.479, p < .001), indicating that emotionally intelligent students are particularly consistent in sustaining focus and persistence in academic tasks. Among EI components, social skills (r = 0.504, p < .001) showed the strongest link with engagement, followed by self-awareness (r = 0.483, p < .001), self-regulation (r = 0.471, p < .001), and social awareness (r = 0.463, p < .001), while motivation (r = 0.436, p < .001) was the weakest, suggesting that interpersonal and regulatory abilities contribute more strongly than motivation alone. Overall, all correlations were significant, highlighting the crucial role of emotional intelligence in fostering both academic and social engagement, helping learners stay focused, collaborate effectively, and remain resilient in their studies.

These results are consistent with prior studies emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence in student engagement. Shengyao (art. 1886) found that emotional intelligence promotes motivation, resilience, and self-efficacy, which sustain participation and collaboration in learning. Similarly, Liu, Ma, and Chen (art. 1357936) reported that emotional engagement and intrinsic motivation improve academic performance, showing that students with higher emotional intelligence invest more fully in classroom tasks. These findings align with Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory (1990), which emphasizes concentration, interest, and enjoyment as drivers of optimal engagement (103). By enabling students to regulate their emotions, maintain attention, and derive satisfaction from learning, emotional intelligence provides a foundation for achieving flow states, thereby reinforcing its integral connection to classroom engagement.

3.5 Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Social Language Learning Strategies

Table 5 shows the correlation between the independent variable (emotional intelligence) and the mediating variable (social language learning strategies) of junior high students in the Caraga South District.

Table 5: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Social Language Learning Strategies

	MV		Interpretations
	R-value	**p-value**	
Self-awareness	0.38	< .001	Significant
Self-regulation	0.368	< .001	Significant
Motivation	0.315	< .001	Significant
Social Awareness	0.422	< .001	Significant
Social Skills	0.446	< .001	Significant
IV	0.465	< .001	Significant

The second bivariate correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and social language learning strategies, with an overall r-value of 0.465 (p < .001), indicating a low positive correlation. This suggests that students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to use social strategies such as asking questions, seeking clarification, and collaborating with peers. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. Among all dimensions, social skills (r = 0.446, p < .001) exhibited the strongest correlation, followed by social awareness (r = 0.422, p < .001) and self-awareness (r = 0.380, p < .001), all of which fall within the low positive range. These findings imply that students who are more socially adept and aware are better able to interact, cooperate, and engage in peer-supported learning activities.

Self-regulation (r = 0.368, p < .001) also showed a low positive correlation, suggesting that students who can control their impulses and manage emotions are more inclined to apply social strategies effectively. Motivation (r = 0.315, p < .001) had the weakest but still significant correlation, indicating that while motivation plays a role in the use of social strategies, it is less influential than the interpersonal and regulatory dimensions. Overall, all correlations were significant, indicating that emotional intelligence, particularly social skills and awareness, facilitates the use of social language-learning strategies. This highlights that emotionally intelligent students better utilize social interactions to enhance learning, strengthening both classroom engagement and collaboration.

Recent studies further strengthen the claim that emotional intelligence and social language learning strategies are interdependent in fostering active learning. Le Huu Tri (181) found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and language learning strategies, noting that students with higher emotional intelligence reported more frequent use of strategies, including the social dimension of Oxford's SILL. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Howard et al. found that emotional intelligence has a moderate positive correlation with language achievement (r = 0.41), underscoring its predictive value in how learners engage with tools and peers. Complementing this, a study in the *Journal of Azerbaijan Language and Education Studies* (71) highlighted that cultivating emotional intelligence in ESL classrooms fosters collaboration, empathy, and peer support, all of which are core aspects of social language strategies.

Together, these findings align with Krashen's Affective Filter Theory 1985, 45) by explaining how emotionally supportive internal conditions facilitate active social interaction and language use. When affective filters are lowered through higher emotional intelligence, learners are better positioned to participate in meaningful communicative exchanges, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and frequency of their social language learning strategies, which, in turn, translate into greater student engagement in class.

3.6 Correlation between Social Language Learning Strategies and Classroom Engagement

Table 6 shows the correlation between the mediating variable (social language learning strategies) and the dependent variable (classroom engagement) of junior high students in the Caraga South District.

Table 6: Correlation between Social Language Learning Strategies and Classroom Engagement

Variable	MV		Interpretation
	R-value	p-value	
Academic Engagement	0.362	< .001	Significant
Social Engagement	0.312	< .001	Significant
DV	0.376	< .001	Significant

The third bivariate correlation analysis between social language learning strategies (SLLS) and academic engagement yielded an R-value of 0.362 (p < .001), which falls within the range of low positive correlation. This means that the use of SLLS has a small yet significant positive effect on how students engage academically, suggesting that students who actively apply social strategies are more participative and focused in their academic tasks. For social engagement, the R-value of 0.312 (p < .001) also indicates a low positive correlation. This suggests that social language learning strategies likewise play a role in enhancing students' ability to interact with peers and participate in group or social activities. However, the strength of the relationship remains modest.

Meanwhile, the overall correlation between social language learning strategies and classroom engagement was 0.376 (p < .001), which still falls within the low-positive correlation range. This implies that while social language learning strategies significantly contribute to students' classroom engagement, other factors beyond these strategies may also play a larger role in sustaining active and meaningful participation. In sum, the findings reveal that social language learning strategies positively correlate with both academic and social dimensions of classroom engagement, though the correlations are relatively low. This highlights that social strategies are beneficial but may need to be complemented with other skills (such as emotional intelligence) to maximize their impact on overall classroom engagement.

Emerging research provides strong evidence that social language learning strategies and classroom engagement are intrinsically linked in shaping effective learning experiences. Alqarni (133) found that the use of language-learning strategies, particularly the social dimension, positively predicted learners' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement, indicating that students who frequently collaborate, ask questions, and seek feedback are more actively involved in classroom tasks. Likewise, a study published in Riwayat Educational (9) found that students who employed language-learning strategies demonstrated higher levels of participation and attentiveness, underscoring the role of strategy use in sustaining meaningful involvement. Complementing these findings, an experimental study in Studies in Educational Evaluation (6) revealed that explicit

instruction in interaction strategies enhanced learners' verbal contributions and reflective engagement during lessons. Collectively, these studies are reinforced by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which views learning as a socially constructed process shaped by interaction and collaboration. through interaction, scaffolding, and peer collaboration (86). Thus, the significant correlation between social language learning strategies and classroom engagement underscores the role of social participation in fostering confidence, motivation, and sustained engagement during classroom activities.

3.7 Mediating Effect of Social Language Learning Strategies to the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Classroom Engagement

In Table 7, path analysis is used to determine the variables' interrelationships and to help verify the beta coefficients in the mediation analysis. The beta coefficient measures the strength of each independent variable's effect on the dependent variable. Mediation is the process of unraveling how a third variable affects the relationship between two variables. In Table 7, the direct path from IV to DV yielded an estimate of 0.635 (SE=0.073, p<.001). This indicates a strong, highly significant positive effect of emotional intelligence on classroom engagement among junior high school students in the Caraga South District. Moreover, the indirect path coefficient of IV on DV through MV is 0.085 (SE = 0.035, p < .017), with a z-value of 2.387 indicating that this mediating effect is statistically significant.
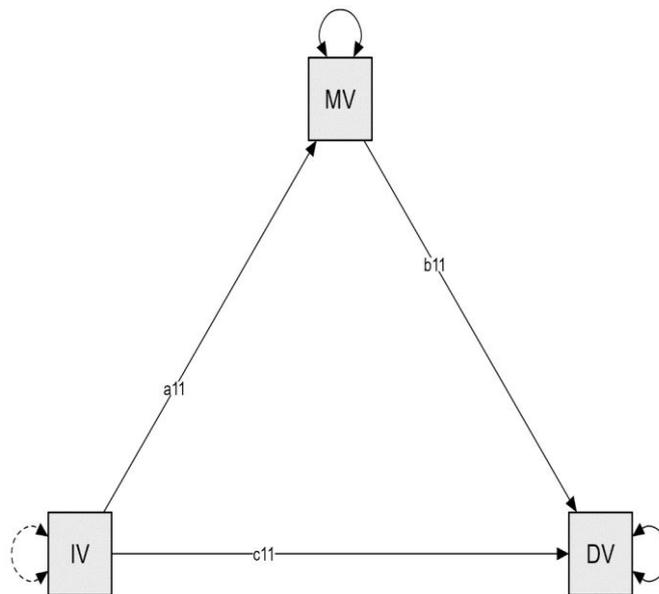
The z-value (10.981) and p-value (<.001) confirm that the combined effect is highly significant. Indeed, this highlights that emotional intelligence has a substantial overall impact on classroom engagement, and the inclusion of social language learning strategies reinforces and provides a more complete picture of how these variables are connected at the 0.05 level.

Effects					Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
									Lower	Upper
IV	→	DV			0.635	0.073	8.682	< .001	0.492	0.778
IV	→	MV	→	DV	0.085	0.035	2.387	0.017	0.015	0.154
IV	→	DV			0.72	0.066	10.981	< .001	0.591	0.848

Path coefficients										
								95% Confidence Interval		
				Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	P	Lower	Upper	
MV		→		DV	0.129	0.052	2.489	0.013	0.027	0.230	
IV		→		DV	0.635	0.073	8.682	< .001	0.492	0.778	
IV		→		MV	0.657	0.078	8.400	< .001	0.504	0.811	
Note: Delta method standard errors, normal theory confidence intervals, ML estimator.										

Path plot

This implies that emotional intelligence not only influences the classroom engagement of junior high school students of the Caraga South District but also exerts an additional effect on classroom engagement through its impact on social language learning strategies. Moreover, the 95% confidence interval confirms that MV significantly mediates the relationship between the IV and the DV. When both direct and indirect pathways are considered, the total effect of IV to DV is 0.72 (SE=0.066). The z-value (10.981) and p-value (<.001) confirm that the combined effect is highly significant. Indeed, this highlights that emotional intelligence has a substantial overall impact on classroom engagement, and the inclusion of social language learning strategies reinforces and provides a more complete picture of how these variables are connected.

To further explain the path coefficients, the results showed that the independent variable significantly predicted the mediator (β = 0.657, p < .001) and the dependent variable (β = 0.635, p < .001). The mediator also had a small but significant effect on the dependent variable (β = 0.129, p = .013). These findings indicate that social language-learning strategies partially mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement.

To highlight the proposition that social language-learning strategies mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement, Alqarni (133) emphasized that learners who actively apply social strategies, such as cooperating with peers, asking questions, and seeking feedback, tend to demonstrate higher levels of participation and involvement in class. Building on this, social language-learning strategies serve as a mediating bridge between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement. Students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to use these strategies, which in turn enhances their engagement in learning. Similarly, Le Huu Tri (184) reported that students with higher emotional intelligence frequently employ

language-learning strategies, particularly those involving social interaction, which contribute to improved participation and motivation. Jin et al also confirmed that emotional intelligence shapes learning outcomes through mediating variables, such as anxiety reduction and self-efficacy, providing a precedent for considering social strategies as mediators. Building on this evidence, social language learning strategies can be seen as a mediating factor between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement: students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to use these strategies, which, in turn, enhance their engagement in learning. Indeed, this significant finding aligns with Engeström's Activity Theory 1999, which conceptualizes learning as a mediated activity rather than an isolated process. Within this framework, emotional intelligence functions as a personal resource that influences classroom engagement by mediating through social language learning strategies. The results indicate that classroom engagement does not stem solely from emotional intelligence, but is strengthened when learners actively employ social strategies that enable interaction, collaboration, and communication Engeström (78). This theoretical perspective supports the study's findings by explaining how social language learning strategies transform emotional capacities into observable engagement and meaningful participation in classroom activities.

4. Conclusion And Recommendation

Based on the findings, the level of emotional intelligence of the junior high school students in Caraga South District is high. This implies that they are capable of understanding and managing their own emotions, as well as recognizing and responding appropriately to others' emotions. Among the indicators of emotional intelligence, self-awareness yielded the highest score, indicating that students can identify their emotions and recognize their strengths and limitations, which, in turn, aids their learning and decision-making. Social skills ranked lowest among the indicators, showing that students may find it challenging to establish positive relationships, work with peers, and fully engage in classroom activities, which could impede their growth and academic performance.

Additionally, students' classroom engagement is high, indicating active participation, persistence in learning activities, and a positive attitude toward learning, which translates into improved academic performance. Among the two indicators, social engagement ranked first, signifying that students mostly demonstrate cooperation, respect, responsibility, and positive interaction in school. Academic engagement ranked second, indicating that students frequently put in effort, show responsibility, work independently and collaboratively, and are committed to producing quality work. Moreover, students' use of social language learning strategies is high, suggesting that students with high emotional intelligence participate more actively by asking questions, collaborating with classmates, and seeking clarification, thereby facilitating the link between emotions and classroom engagement. The disparity between the mean and

standard deviation shows that the level of consistency in responses differs across the various indicators.

The correlation test indicates that emotional intelligence, social language learning strategies, and classroom engagement are significantly correlated. These findings underscore the need to develop both emotional intelligence and social learning strategies to improve students' participation and academic achievement. Furthermore, mediation analysis verified that emotional intelligence significantly predicts classroom engagement both directly and indirectly through the use of social language learning strategies. These results show that students with high emotional intelligence are also highly engaged in the classroom, and this effect is stronger when they actively use social learning strategies. Therefore, social language learning strategies serve as a bridge, reinforcing the effect of emotional intelligence on classroom engagement.

Results indicate a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement, thereby rejecting the first hypothesis. This implies that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of classroom engagement among the respondents. Additionally, social language-learning strategies partially mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom engagement. These findings support Engeström's Activity Theory (1999), which asserts that learning is not an isolated act but a mediated activity where the subject (learner's classroom engagement) interacts with the object (development of emotional intelligence) through tools or mediators (social language learning strategies).

This implies that the Department of Education should incorporate the development of emotional intelligence, especially social skills, in the curriculum through activities such as cooperative learning, peer mentoring, and group projects that promote collaboration, communication, and relationship-building. Schools should also promote social language-learning strategies by allowing students to ask questions, work together, and seek clarification not only in classroom discourse and group activities but also in peer-mentoring exercises, project-based learning, and out-of-classroom activities. These practices create genuine opportunities to improve communication and strengthen connections among emotional intelligence, social language learning strategies, and classroom participation. At the school level, administrators should establish monitoring committees, incorporate monitoring and evaluation into the School Improvement Plan, and hold regular reflection and feedback sessions to assess program effectiveness. They should also strengthen and diversify student clubs and organizations, host inter- and intra-school activities, and recognize active participation. Teachers should be trained as facilitators to guide students in applying these skills, through both formal training and scheduled School Learning Action Cell (SLAC) sessions.

Parents are encouraged to support their children's emotional intelligence and classroom participation by practicing open communication at home, guiding them on conflict management, and fostering cooperation through daily routines. They should facilitate their children's involvement in school activities that promote social interaction. Schools can further support this initiative by conducting quarterly orientation sessions

and parenting seminars to equip parents with strategies to reinforce social skills, emotional regulation, and good study habits at home. Target students, who are the immediate beneficiaries of this research, can develop effective communication habits by questioning, collaborating, and seeking clarification from teachers or peers when lessons are challenging. Students are also encouraged to fully participate in group work, peer mentoring, and extracurricular activities, which offer opportunities to develop teamwork, communication, and interpersonal skills.

Finally, future researchers may replicate this study, considering other variables that may affect the findings. Other geographic and industry-specific contexts could be included, using different instruments and methodologies, which may yield different results. Future studies should also consider alternative predictors that could influence the variables and include samples from multiple grade levels in various schools. Schools and community organizations might find these findings useful as additional suggestions and perspectives. To validate the results, a qualitative examination of the study's findings is also recommended.

Consent Statement

As per the international standard, parental written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

Ethical Approval Statement

The study acquired the Ethics Review Certification from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee.

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Competing Interests Statement

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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