



Social Engagement as an Educational Outcome in a Catholic Higher Education Institution: The Role of Organizational Membership

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study assessed the level of social engagement among third-year college students in a Catholic Higher Education institution during the Academic Year 2025-2026. It examined significant differences in social engagement among respondents when grouped by demographic profile. The study sought to contribute to Integrated Social Science Education by determining the extent to which these dimensions represent educational outcomes.

Methodology: It utilized a quantitative design, specifically a descriptive-comparative approach. The study was conducted with a clustered, randomly sampled group of 226 third-year students. In gathering the data, a validated, reliability-tested 20-item modified questionnaire was used. In analyzing the data, descriptive and comparative analyses, specifically mean, standard deviation, Mann-Whitney U, and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used.

Main Findings: Overall, respondents exhibited high engagement ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.47$). The results showed no significant differences in social engagement when grouped by sex [$U=5989.000$, $p=0.441$] and program [$\chi^2(16)=25.688$, $p=0.059$]. Meanwhile, there is a significant difference when grouped according to membership in any organization [$U=4293.500$, $p=0.027$]. These findings suggest that Integrated Social Science Education, complemented by organizational participation, plays a vital role in promoting civic learning, active citizenship, and the holistic development of socially responsible students in Catholic higher education.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The novelty of this study stems from its examination of social engagement through the dimensions of political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy as educational outcomes of Integrated Social Science Education in Catholic higher education. The findings provide evidence to inform enhancements to student development programs, co-curricular activities, and community engagement initiatives that support the institution's mission of holistic formation and promote social responsibility and active citizenship among higher education students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social engagement is an active and ongoing responsibility that involves individuals utilizing their capabilities to participate in civic and community life, such as voting and joining organizations [1]. As a

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multidimensional construct, social engagement enables individuals to contribute meaningfully to society while fostering personal and social development [2]. In higher education, social engagement refers to students' active involvement and commitment to both their academic pursuits and broader social development [3]. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play a vital role in cultivating this engagement by providing meaningful opportunities that align with students' personal aspirations and institutional goals [4]. The educational environment also shapes students' social engagement through their interactions with peers, faculty, and institutional structures [5]. Collectively, these perspectives demonstrate that social engagement not only encourages students to use their capabilities effectively but also strengthens their commitment to learning, supports their holistic development, and shapes their future educational and professional aspirations [1].

Social engagement plays a crucial role in identifying community needs and developing appropriate mechanisms that contribute to the growth and well-being of many Asian communities [3]. Within higher education, this concept is reflected in students' active participation in both academic and social activities that contribute to their personal development and civic responsibility. Student engagement, a multidimensional construct closely associated with academic achievement, represents an important educational expression of social engagement [6]. Consistent with this perspective, universities in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have increasingly embraced societal engagement as a core institutional mission alongside teaching and research [7]. Similarly, evidence from China indicates that students' social engagement, fostered through interpersonal interactions and institutional support, significantly enhances their participation in high-impact educational practices by transforming their social and emotional competencies into active involvement [8]. Collectively, these findings suggest that cultivating social engagement within higher education not only strengthens students' participation in institutional and community activities but also contributes to their academic success and holistic development.

Student engagement plays a vital role in the academic development of Filipino students because it positively influences their academic performance and psychological well-being [9]. However, fostering student engagement has become increasingly challenging in Philippine higher education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students encountered multiple barriers to engaging effectively in online learning, highlighting the need for institutions to develop more responsive and inclusive learning environments [10]. In response to these challenges, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and various higher education institutions have examined their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement to enhance the quality of higher education and student learning experiences [11]. One institutional initiative that supports student engagement beyond the classroom is the National Service Training Program (NSTP), which promotes civic and social responsibility while strengthening students' sense of community through various programs and activities [12]. These initiatives underscore the importance of creating supportive educational environments that foster meaningful student engagement, ultimately contributing to improved academic achievement, personal well-being, and active participation in society [9].

Student engagement is widely recognized as an important factor in promoting academic success, social development, and civic participation in higher education. Although previous studies have examined various dimensions of student engagement, much of the existing literature has focused primarily on academic engagement and learning outcomes. Immanuel et al. [6], who conducted research in Asia, explored conceptual models and factors associated with student engagement. In contrast, Philippine research by Aldaba et al. [11] has largely concentrated on higher education policies, institutional practices, or program-specific initiatives. In addition, Nacario et al. [13] examined how social motivation and the classroom environment influence students' engagement in learning the Filipino subject. However, it did not examine social engagement as an educational outcome, particularly in terms of political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy within higher education. Moreover, Manuel et al. [14] examined the relationship between community engagement and college students' social skills, finding that participation significantly enhanced interpersonal competencies. However, it focused on developing social skills. It did not examine social engagement as an educational outcome in Integrated Social Science Education. These gaps are especially evident in Catholic higher education institution, where holistic formation and service are central educational goals but remain underexplored from the perspective of Integrated Social Science Education [15].

Consequently, the novelty of this study lies in demonstrating how these dimensions of social engagement represent educational outcomes fostered through higher education experiences. It extends the discourse on civic learning, citizenship education, and student development within Integrated Social Science Education. Addressing this gap is timely as higher education institution is increasingly challenged to prepare graduates who are socially responsible and capable of responding to complex societal issues through both curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. Accordingly, this study assessed the level of social engagement among third-year college students in a Catholic higher education institution. It examined significant differences when respondents were grouped by demographic profile, thereby contributing evidence on educational outcomes relevant to Integrated Social Science Education.

This study assumed that the level of social engagement among third-year college students varied by sex, program, and membership in an organization. Hence, Astin's Theory of Involvement [16] served as the foundation for this assumption, proposing that student engagement, particularly social interactions essential for integration,

was significantly influenced by behavior, effort, personal characteristics, and involvement in campus life. In this study, Astin's Theory of Involvement [16] provided a valuable framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of social engagement among third-year college students at a Catholic school. Specifically, this research used TOI to examine how demographic factors (sex, program, and membership in an organization) relate to students' social engagement, as measured by their political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy. Figure 1 presents the study's conceptual framework, with students' demographics as the independent variables and the level of social engagement in political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy as the dependent variables. It implies that these students' demographic characteristics affect their level of social engagement. Meanwhile, the results of this study may serve as input for student affairs services to develop activities and programs that effectively enhance students' social engagement.

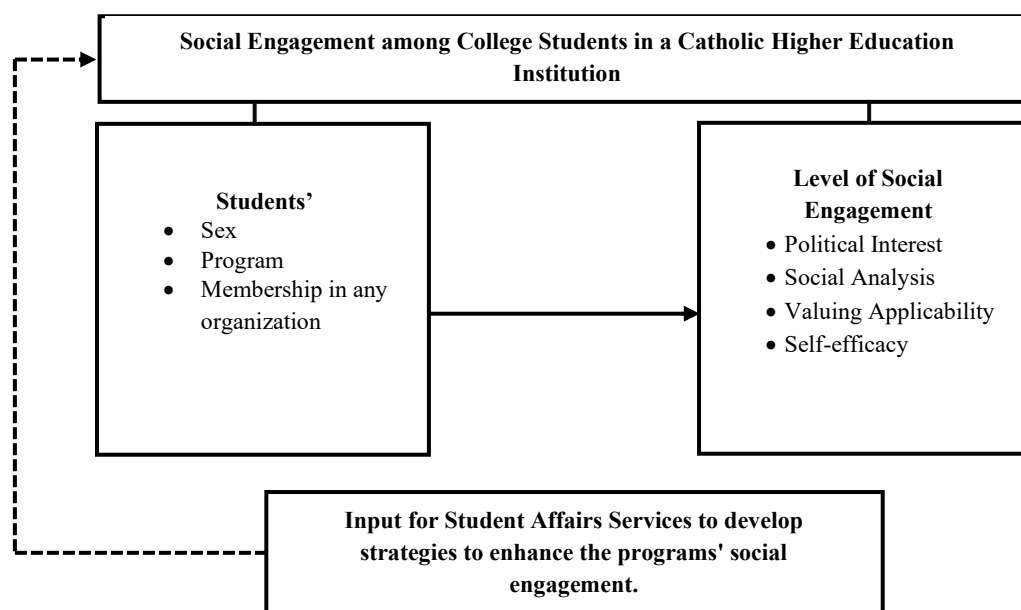


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

This study assessed the level of social engagement in the areas of political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy among third-year college students at a Catholic Higher Education institution, both overall and when grouped by sex, program, and membership in an organization. Additionally, it examined significant differences in the level of social engagement among third-year college students when grouped by demographic variables. The study may contribute to Integrated Social Science Education by determining the extent to which these dimensions represent educational outcomes. Similarly, this study may provide valuable insights and an empirical basis for the college in strengthening its programs and activities related to social engagement. Furthermore, the results may support the institution in advancing its core value of community service while ensuring alignment with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) policies and initiatives that promote holistic student development, civic consciousness, and social responsibility among higher education students.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically the descriptive-comparative approach. The design helped describe and examine the differences among variables and measured demographics to directly answer the hypothesis, guided by theory, and address research problems [17]. On the one hand, the descriptive approach assessed the level of social engagement in the areas of political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy among third-year college students at a Catholic Higher Education institution, both overall and by sex, program, and membership in an organization. On the other hand, the comparative approach examined differences in the level of social engagement among third-year college students when grouped by demographic variables.

2.2 Respondents

The respondents in this study were 226 third-year students at a Catholic Higher Education institution in Western Visayas. The sample size for this study was determined using the Raosoft Online Calculator, with a 95%

confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The respondents were proportionally selected using a cluster sampling technique. Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents by sex, program, and membership in an organization.

In terms of sex, the majority of respondents are male (52.7%; $n=119$), while female respondents comprise 47.3% ($n=107$). In terms of program, the largest proportion comes from Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSCrim) 14.2% ($n=32$), followed by Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) 11.5% ($n=26$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology (BSMT) 10.6% ($n=24$), and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) 8.8% ($n=20$). Meanwhile, the smallest proportion is from Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics 1.8% ($n=4$), followed by Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science 2.2% ($n=5$), Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy 3.1% ($n=7$), and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Specialized in Marketing Management 3.1% ($n=7$). Regarding membership in any organization, most respondents are not members (70.8%; $n=160$), while only 29.2% ($n=66$) reported being members.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Variable	n	%
Sex		
Male	119	52.7
Female	107	47.3
Program		
Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy	7	3.1
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science	10	4.4
Bachelor of Elementary Education	11	4.9
Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English	10	4.4
Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Mathematics	4	1.8
Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Science	5	2.2
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration	7	3.1
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	13	5.8
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management	26	11.5
Bachelor of Science in Accountancy	11	4.9
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	12	5.3
Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering	9	4.0
Bachelor of Science in Criminology	32	14.2
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	17	7.5
Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology	24	10.6
Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering	20	8.8
Diploma in Hospitality Technology	8	3.5
Membership in any Organization		
Yes	66	29.2
No	160	70.8
Total	226	100.0

2.3. Instrument

The study used a validated, reliability-tested 20-item modified questionnaire from Van Den Wijngaard et al. [1]. Regarding the instrument's validity, the study employed the content validity ratio proposed by Lawshe [18]. The result yielded a content validity index of 0.88. In terms of reliability, the instrument was pilot tested with 30 non-actual respondents and yielded an acceptable Cronbach's alpha of 0.95. The questionnaire consisted of four areas: political interest (7 items), social analysis (2 items), valuing applicability (4 items), and self-efficacy (7 items). The instrument consisted of two parts. Part 1 involves gathering demographic information from the respondents. Part 2 assessed the level of social engagement among third-year college students using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Low Engagement) to 4 (Very High Engagement).

The instrument was selected because its four dimensions reflect the intended learning outcomes of Integrated Social Science Education, which seeks to develop students who are socially aware, reflective, and civically engaged. These dimensions are consistent with the expected outcomes of the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program, which emphasizes critical analysis of social and political issues and active participation in democratic and community life. Furthermore, they embody the institution's core value of being committed to serve. Specifically, political interest measures students' awareness of civic and public affairs. At the same time, social analysis assesses their ability to examine societal issues critically. Valuing applicability reflects the extent

to which students perceive social science knowledge as relevant to addressing real-world concerns. In contrast, self-efficacy measures their confidence in participating in civic and community initiatives.

2.4 Data Collection

In gathering the data, the study utilized the Google Form, which was sent to respondents. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles and guidelines established by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB). Before data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school administrators. The respondents were informed of the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. They were also assured that all information collected would be kept strictly confidential and used solely for research purposes. All research data were securely stored in password-protected files, and documents containing identifiable or raw information were disposed of through manual shredding after the prescribed retention period.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) under the guidance of a qualified statistician. The descriptive and comparative analyses were employed. Frequency count (f) and percentages (%) were utilized to describe the distribution of respondents. The mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) were used to analyze the level of social engagement. In addition, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test of normality revealed that the engagement scores [$W=0.106$, $p=0.000$] have a p-value less than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is sufficient evidence to reject the assumption of normality. In other words, the distribution of engagement scores deviates significantly from normality. Consequently, the assumption required for parametric tests is not met; therefore, appropriate nonparametric statistical tests are recommended for subsequent analyses. Hence, a Mann–Whitney U test was conducted to determine whether there are significant differences in the level of social engagement when grouped by sex and membership in any organization, while a Kruskal–Wallis H test was used for the program.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Level of Social Engagement Among the Third Year College Students

Social engagement is an active and ongoing responsibility that involves individuals utilizing their capabilities to participate in civic and community life, such as voting and joining organizations [1]. Table 2 presents the level of social engagement in terms of political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, self-efficacy, and overall engagement, when taken as a whole and grouped by sex, program, and membership in any organization.

In terms of political interest, the respondents exhibited high overall engagement ($M=2.53$, $SD=0.56$). The finding suggests that, as an educational outcome, Social Science Education generally fosters students' awareness of political and civic affairs, thereby supporting the development of informed and responsible citizens prepared to participate in democratic processes. When grouped by sex, male respondents ($M=2.59$, $SD=0.62$) demonstrated high engagement, while female respondents ($M=2.45$, $SD=0.47$) showed low engagement. Across programs, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy ($M=2.24$, $SD=0.77$), Bachelor of Elementary Education ($M=2.18$, $SD=0.46$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science ($M=2.46$, $SD=0.56$), Bachelor of Science in Nursing ($M=2.35$, $SD=0.32$), Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management ($M=2.39$, $SD=0.42$), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy ($M=2.45$, $SD=0.64$), Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering ($M=2.31$, $SD=0.52$), Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering ($M=2.30$, $SD=0.63$), and Bachelor of Science in Information Technology ($M=2.42$, $SD=0.57$) showed a low engagement, while Bachelor of Arts in Political Science ($M=2.86$, $SD=0.51$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in English ($M=2.54$, $SD=0.40$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics ($M=2.64$, $SD=0.38$), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration specialized in Marketing Management ($M=2.82$, $SD=0.56$), Bachelor of Science in Criminology ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.59$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology ($M=2.54$, $SD=0.65$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.52$), and Diploma in Hospitality Technology ($M=2.70$, $SD=0.53$) demonstrated a high engagement. In terms of membership, members ($M=2.60$, $SD=0.57$) demonstrated high engagement, while non-members ($M=2.50$, $SD=0.55$) showed low engagement.

In terms of social analysis, the respondents demonstrated high overall engagement ($M=2.78$, $SD=0.58$). From an educational perspective, this finding indicates that Social Science Education effectively develops students' ability to critically examine social issues, an essential competency for evidence-based decision making and responsible citizenship. Both male ($M=2.77$, $SD=0.61$) and female ($M=2.79$, $SD=0.55$) respondents exhibited a high engagement. Across programs, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy ($M=2.71$, $SD=0.99$), Bachelor of Arts in Political Science ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.62$), Bachelor of Elementary Education ($M=2.95$, $SD=0.61$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in English ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.53$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.00$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.27$),

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration specialized in Marketing Management ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.65$), Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management ($M=2.62$, $SD=0.50$), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.63$), Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering ($M=2.67$, $SD=0.71$), Bachelor of Science in Criminology ($M=2.88$, $SD=0.49$), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology ($M=2.82$, $SD=0.56$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology ($M=2.71$, $SD=0.64$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.56$), and Diploma in Hospitality Technology ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.53$) all demonstrated a high engagement, while Bachelor of Science in Nursing ($M=2.31$, $SD=0.38$) and Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering ($M=2.50$, $SD=0.60$) reflected a low engagement. In terms of membership, both members ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.61$) and non-members ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.57$) demonstrated a high engagement.

Regarding the importance of applicability, the respondents exhibited high overall engagement ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.54$). The result implies that Social Science Education enables students to recognize the relevance of social science concepts in understanding and addressing real-world issues. It reinforces the practical value of classroom learning in promoting social responsibility. Both male ($M=2.89$, $SD=0.58$) and female ($M=2.91$, $SD=0.50$) respondents demonstrated a high engagement. Across programs, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy ($M=2.61$, $SD=0.98$), Bachelor of Arts in Political Science ($M=3.08$, $SD=0.39$), Bachelor of Elementary Education ($M=3.14$, $SD=0.52$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in English ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.44$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics ($M=2.94$, $SD=0.31$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.54$), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration specialized in Marketing Management ($M=2.96$, $SD=0.44$), Bachelor of Science in Nursing ($M=2.79$, $SD=0.50$), Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management ($M=2.78$, $SD=0.42$), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy ($M=3.30$, $SD=0.49$), Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering ($M=2.58$, $SD=0.59$), Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering ($M=2.61$, $SD=0.72$), Bachelor of Science in Criminology ($M=3.03$, $SD=0.53$), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology ($M=2.84$, $SD=0.48$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology ($M=2.83$, $SD=0.62$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering ($M=3.03$, $SD=0.47$), and Diploma in Hospitality Technology ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.51$) all demonstrated a high engagement, with Bachelor of Science in Accountancy showing a very high engagement. In terms of membership, both members ($M=3.03$, $SD=0.57$) and non-members ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.52$) exhibited a high engagement.

Regarding self-efficacy, the respondents demonstrated high overall engagement ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 0.51$). The finding indicates that Social Science Education helps build students' confidence in their ability to participate in civic and community initiatives, reflecting its role in preparing socially engaged graduates committed to serving their communities. Both male ($M=2.84$, $SD=0.55$) and female ($M=2.89$, $SD=0.45$) respondents exhibited a high engagement. Across programs, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy ($M=2.49$, $SD=0.68$) showed a low engagement, while Bachelor of Arts in Political Science ($M=3.03$, $SD=0.30$), Bachelor of Elementary Education ($M=3.03$, $SD=0.46$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in English ($M=2.84$, $SD=0.20$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics ($M=2.89$, $SD=0.43$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.27$), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration specialized in Marketing Management ($M=3.04$, $SD=0.59$), Bachelor of Science in Nursing ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.56$), Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management ($M=2.64$, $SD=0.40$), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy ($M=3.34$, $SD=0.48$), Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.32$), Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering ($M=2.60$, $SD=0.52$), Bachelor of Science in Criminology ($M=2.99$, $SD=0.58$), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.52$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.63$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering ($M=2.99$, $SD=0.43$), and Diploma in Hospitality Technology ($M=2.88$, $SD=0.29$) all demonstrated a high engagement. In terms of membership, both members ($M=2.99$, $SD=0.48$) and non-members ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.51$) demonstrated a high engagement.

In terms of engagement, the respondents exhibited a high level overall ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.47$). Both male ($M=2.76$, $SD=0.53$) and female ($M=2.73$, $SD=0.38$) respondents demonstrated a high engagement. Across programs, Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy ($M=2.45$, $SD=0.78$) and Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering ($M=2.51$, $SD=0.58$) showed a low engagement, while Bachelor of Arts in Political Science ($M=2.98$, $SD=0.38$), Bachelor of Elementary Education ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.34$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in English ($M=2.77$, $SD=0.24$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Mathematics ($M=2.83$, $SD=0.33$), Bachelor of Secondary Education Specialized in Science ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.33$), Bachelor of Science in Business Administration specialized in Marketing Management ($M=2.94$, $SD=0.53$), Bachelor of Science in Nursing ($M=2.60$, $SD=0.36$), Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management ($M=2.58$, $SD=0.33$), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy ($M=2.99$, $SD=0.50$), Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering ($M=2.53$, $SD=0.40$), Bachelor of Science in Criminology ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.52$), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology ($M=2.68$, $SD=0.43$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Technology ($M=2.69$, $SD=0.58$), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.38$), and Diploma in Hospitality Technology ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.39$) all demonstrated a high engagement. In terms of membership, both members ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.46$) and non-members ($M=2.70$, $SD=0.46$) demonstrated a high engagement.

The findings indicate a high level of social engagement across all dimensions, namely political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy. This suggests that students actively engage in understanding social issues, apply academic learning to real-life situations, participate in institutional and community initiatives, and demonstrate confidence in contributing to meaningful social action. Within the context of a Catholic higher education institution in the Philippines, these findings may be attributed to the school's commitment to integrating Catholic values into student formation and its core value of Committed to Serve, which encourages students to participate in civic discussions, collaborative learning, and community service. Such experiences foster critical reflection, social responsibility, and the practical application of academic knowledge in addressing societal concerns. This interpretation is supported by Hipolito-Delgado et al. [19], Thelma et al. [20], and Timidi and Okuro [21], who assert that opportunities for meaningful participation and critical reflection in schools enhance civic efficacy, political interest, and civic participation by enabling students to practice democratic skills and appreciate diverse perspectives. Likewise, Bradberry and De Maio [22] and Pole and McGee [23] emphasize that experiential learning activities, such as seminars, workshops, and guest lectures, allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts, thereby strengthening their competence and confidence in engaging with society. These findings imply that integrating faith-based values with experiential learning and community engagement effectively promotes students' social engagement and prepares them to become socially responsible individuals committed to serving both the institution and the wider community.

Conversely, students enrolled in the AB Philosophy and BSCPE programs had the lowest mean scores, indicating a low level of social engagement. This suggests that these students participate less frequently in school-based activities than their peers from other programs. Within the institution, the low level of social engagement among AB Philosophy students may be attributed to their distinctive learning environment. Most of their classes and formation activities are held at a seminary located off the main campus. Since the seminary is an exclusively male environment attended only by Philosophy students, opportunities for interaction with the broader student population are naturally limited. Moreover, their academic and formation schedules often coincide with campus-wide activities, making participation in institutional programs difficult. This observation is consistent with the findings of Sá [4], Rashed et al. [24], and Fernando et al. [25], which emphasize that the institutional environment and the availability of meaningful opportunities for participation influence students' academic and social engagement. Likewise, Moore [26] argues that engagement in the academic community is shaped by institutional structures that promote students' interaction, participation, and sense of belonging. Meanwhile, the low level of social engagement among BSCPE students may be explained by the demanding nature of their curriculum, which requires substantial time for laboratory work, programming tasks, and project development, thereby reducing opportunities to participate in extracurricular and campus activities. This finding is supported by Luciano [27] and Werner and Blazquez [28], who reported that students in information technology-related programs often face barriers to extracurricular participation due to intensive academic workloads. These findings imply that the lower level of social engagement among students in both programs is influenced not merely by individual motivation but also by the institutional context, curricular demands, and learning environments that shape opportunities for participation. Consequently, the institution may consider developing more flexible and program-responsive engagement initiatives that accommodate diverse academic contexts while remaining consistent with its Catholic mission of holistic formation and its core value of Committed to Serve.

Table 2. Level of Social Engagement of the Respondents

Variable	Political Interest		Social Analysis		Valuing Applicability		Self-Efficacy		Social Engagement	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Sex										
Male	2.59	0.62	2.77	0.61	2.89	0.58	2.84	0.55	2.76	0.53
Female	2.45	0.47	2.79	0.55	2.91	0.50	2.89	0.45	2.73	0.38
Program										
AB Philosophy	2.24	0.77	2.71	0.99	2.61	0.98	2.49	0.68	2.45	0.78
AB Political Science	2.86	0.51	3.00	0.62	3.08	0.39	3.03	0.30	2.98	0.38
BEED	2.18	0.46	2.95	0.61	3.14	0.52	3.03	0.46	2.75	0.34
BSED in English	2.54	0.40	2.85	0.53	3.00	0.44	2.84	0.20	2.77	0.24
BSED in Mathematics	2.64	0.38	3.00	0.65	2.94	0.31	2.89	0.43	2.83	0.33
BSED in Science	2.46	0.56	2.80	0.27	2.80	0.54	3.00	0.27	2.75	0.33
BSBA	2.82	0.56	3.00	0.65	2.96	0.44	3.04	0.59	2.94	0.53
BSN	2.35	0.32	2.31	0.38	2.79	0.50	2.81	0.56	2.60	0.36
BSTM	2.39	0.42	2.62	0.50	2.78	0.42	2.64	0.40	2.58	0.33
BSA	2.45	0.64	3.00	0.63	3.30	0.49	3.34	0.48	2.99	0.50
BSCE	2.31	0.52	2.50	0.60	2.58	0.59	2.74	0.32	2.53	0.40
BSCPE	2.30	0.63	2.67	0.71	2.61	0.72	2.60	0.52	2.51	0.58

BSCRIM	2.75	0.59	2.88	0.49	3.03	0.53	2.99	0.58	2.90	0.52
BSIT	2.42	0.57	2.82	0.56	2.84	0.48	2.80	0.52	2.68	0.43
BSMT	2.54	0.65	2.71	0.64	2.83	0.62	2.74	0.63	2.69	0.58
BSMarE	2.74	0.52	2.85	0.56	3.03	0.47	2.99	0.43	2.90	0.38
DHT	2.70	0.53	3.00	0.53	2.81	0.51	2.88	0.29	2.81	0.39
Membership in any Organization										
Yes	2.60	0.57	2.85	0.61	3.03	0.57	2.99	0.48	2.85	0.46
No	2.50	0.55	2.75	0.57	2.85	0.52	2.81	0.51	2.70	0.46
Whole	2.53	0.56	2.78	0.58	2.90	0.54	2.86	0.51	2.74	0.47

Mean Range: 1.00- 1.75 (Very Low), 1.76-2.50 (Low), 2.51-3.25 (High), 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

3.2. Differences in the Level of Social Engagement When Grouped According to Profile

Table 3 presents differences in the level of social engagement when grouped by profile. The results showed no significant difference in social engagement when grouped by sex [$U=5989.000$, $p=0.441$]. Additionally, the results showed a significant difference in social engagement when grouped by membership in any organization [$U=4293.500$, $p=0.027$]. This indicates that students who are members of organizations differ significantly in their level of social engagement from those who are not. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference in social engagement when grouped according to program [$\chi^2(16)=25.688$, $p=0.059$]. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that the level of social engagement is relatively similar across academic programs. These findings imply that while Social Science Education provides a common foundation for developing social engagement among students regardless of sex or academic program, participation in student organizations serves as an important experiential learning opportunity that further strengthens this educational outcome.

The findings indicate a significant difference in social engagement when respondents are grouped by membership in an organization, suggesting that students who belong to organizations exhibit higher levels of social engagement than those who do not. This finding may be attributed to the structured opportunities that student organizations provide for collaboration, leadership, service, and interpersonal interaction, enabling members to develop stronger social connections and participate more actively in campus life. Within the context of a Catholic higher education institution, student organizations also serve as important venues for cultivating the institution's core value of community service by encouraging participation in outreach activities, leadership formation, and community-oriented initiatives. This interpretation is supported by Mustaqim and Wahjoedi [29] and Davenport and Criscione-Naylor [30], who emphasized that active organizational membership promotes greater commitment, collaboration, and social integration through clearly defined roles and shared responsibilities. Similarly, Aw et al. [31] and Costello et al. [32] found that participation in campus organizations enhances students' social connectedness and well-being by providing structured opportunities for meaningful interaction and collective engagement. Likewise, Skinner et al. [33] and Borup et al. [34] highlighted that interactions with peers and other members of the academic community significantly influence student engagement. These findings imply that Catholic higher education institution may continue strengthening student organizations as essential platforms for leadership development, social responsibility, and community engagement while providing inclusive opportunities, such as institution-wide service programs, interdisciplinary projects, and campus-wide activities, that allow non-members to meaningfully participate in the institution's mission of holistic formation and service. From the perspective of Integrated Social Science Education, these formal and co-curricular learning experiences complement classroom instruction by cultivating political interest, social analysis, an emphasis on applicability, and self-efficacy, thereby advancing civic learning, active citizenship, and the holistic development of socially responsible graduates.

However, no significant difference was found in the level of social engagement when respondents were grouped according to sex and academic program. This indicates that students, regardless of their sex or degree program, exhibit comparable levels of social engagement. Within the context of a Catholic higher education institution, this finding may be attributed to the availability of inclusive, accessible opportunities for student participation in academic, co-curricular, religious, and community service activities that are open to all students. Guided by the institution's commitment to holistic formation and its core value of Committed to Serve, these initiatives provide equitable opportunities for students to engage in meaningful social, civic, and service-oriented experiences regardless of their personal or academic backgrounds. This interpretation is supported by Winstone et al. [35] and Ćirić [36], who reported that although demographic characteristics such as sex and academic program may influence participation, universities or colleges can minimize these differences by fostering inclusive environments and offering diverse engagement opportunities that promote equitable access and representation in extracurricular activities. Similarly, Bentrim and Henning [37] and Jabbour Al Maalouf et al. [38] found that social engagement remains consistent across sex and academic programs when students share comparable levels of institutional support and opportunities for community involvement. Likewise, Schmelzer et al. [39] observed that

while engagement in meaningful activities contributes to well-being, sex does not significantly influence the level of engagement, despite differences in how individuals may perceive the personal meaning of these experiences [40]. These findings imply that the institution's inclusive policies and student formation programs have effectively fostered an equitable environment in which students of different sexes and academic programs are provided with comparable opportunities to participate, collaborate, and serve, thereby promoting consistently high levels of social engagement across the student population. This further suggests that Integrated Social Science Education, supported by an inclusive institutional learning environment and student formation initiatives, can cultivate active citizenship and social responsibility regardless of students' demographic or academic backgrounds.

Table 3. Significant Differences in the Level of Social Engagement when Grouped According to Profile

Variable	U	z	p
Sex	5989.000	-0.770	0.441
Membership in any Organization	4293.500*	-2.210	0.027
	χ^2	df	p
Program	25.688	16	0.059

Note: *difference is significant when $p \leq 0.05$

4. CONCLUSION

The study implies that third-year college students in the Catholic higher education institution demonstrate a high level of social engagement across political interest, social analysis, valuing applicability, and self-efficacy, reflecting the effectiveness of the institution's student formation programs in integrating its core value of being committed to serving in students' academic, civic, and community experiences. Additionally, the findings suggest that these dimensions represent important educational outcomes of Integrated Social Science Education. While students generally exhibit comparable levels of social engagement regardless of sex or academic program, membership in a student organization significantly enhances it by providing structured opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and service. Conversely, the lower levels of social engagement observed among AB Philosophy and BSCPE students suggest that institutional context and program-specific academic demands may limit participation despite students' willingness to engage. Overall, the findings highlight the complementary roles of classroom learning and organizational participation in fostering civic learning, active citizenship, and social responsibility among students in Catholic higher education. These findings underscore the need for the institution to sustain inclusive, faith-centered engagement initiatives while developing flexible, program-responsive strategies that accommodate the unique learning contexts of different academic programs, particularly those with curricular constraints. Consequently, the findings provide an empirical basis for strengthening student development programs, co-curricular activities, and community engagement initiatives that advance the institution's mission of holistic formation and support the Commission on Higher Education's goals of promoting civic consciousness, social responsibility, and active citizenship among higher education students.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the study was conducted among third-year college students from a single Catholic higher education institution during the Academic Year 2025–2026; thus, the findings may not be generalizable to students from other year levels, non-Catholic institutions, or higher education institutions with different institutional contexts. Second, the study employed a cross-sectional descriptive-comparative design, which allowed the identification of differences among demographic groups but did not establish causal relationships between the variables. Third, the data were collected via a self-administered online questionnaire administered through Google Forms, making the responses susceptible to self-report and social desirability biases, as well as differences in respondents' interpretations of the questionnaire items. Although the instrument demonstrated satisfactory content validity and excellent reliability, it primarily measured four dimensions of social engagement. It did not account for other potentially influential factors, such as socioeconomic status, academic workload, leadership experience, religious involvement, or frequency of participation in institutional activities. Future studies may address these limitations by including multiple higher education institutions, employing longitudinal or mixed-methods designs, and examining additional variables that may further explain variations in students' social engagement.

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