

Assessing High School Students Action Control, Student Participation, and School Ability

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The study determined the relationship of action control and high school student's participation with high and low school ability. The participants are fourth year high school students (Year 10, 16-17 years old) with high ($N=114$) and low ($N=114$) school abilities that are studying in a private school in Manila, Philippines. The teachers of the students were requested to use the Student Participation Questionnaire (SPQ) to rate the behavior of their students using the subscales effort, initiative, inattentive, and disruptive. The students then answered the Action Control Scale (ACS). The scores in the SPQ and ACS were correlated. Two sets of correlations were conducted: One for the high ability group and another for the low ability group. The Otis Lenon School Ability Test (OLSAT) was used to determine whether the students belong in a high or low ability group. The results of the study showed that there is a difference in the pattern of relationship between the high and low ability groups: Negative relationships were observed for the action orientations with disruption and inattention for the high group, but this correlation is positive for the low group.

Keywords: Action control, student participation, school ability

Students show different kinds of behavior when inside the classroom that is reflective of their academic performance. Previous studies showed that different types of behavior that students manifest while inside the classroom can either increase or decrease their academic performance. For example, in a study done by Finn, Panozzo, and Voelkl (1995), the four types of student behavior, namely disruptive, inattentive, effort and initiative is related to student's academic performance. However, the behaviors such as showing initiative and effort will depend on students' controllability over their actions (Kuhl, 1994). There are several studies showing that one's controllability of actions increases with performance (Perry et al., 2001). This controllability over one's behavior is termed as

action control. Action control is an individual difference factor described as the persistence of one's goals and the ability to protect goals through the use of different mechanisms and techniques (Diefendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2001). The relationship between participation and action control will depend whether individuals have the ability to use control effectively. Using effective control strategies depends on the extent of student's ability. In the present study, it is hypothesized that the relationship of action control and effort and initiative is stronger with students with high abilities as compared to student with low abilities.

Student's ability is used as a variable that differentiates the link between the relationship of action control and student participation. Previous studies commonly use ability measures as a predictor in determining the student's behavior and performance (Schmitt et al., 2007). It is already established in past studies that results of student ability tests are used to predict the potential of students in relation to their leadership, interpersonal, and ethics (Schmitt et al., 2007). In the present study, the researchers will use student ability to differentiate link of action control and student participation because ability can be an effective condition to explain better the relationship of controllability and student behavior. The present study focused on the relationship of student participation and action control. It would clarify whether the behavior presented by the student is actually linked by their mental abilities.

Action Control

Kuhl's Action Control theory pertains to the processes that enable individuals to perform their intentions or goals despite the presence of competing actions tendencies (Kuhl, 1994). It also specifies the psychological mechanisms regulating the enactment and protection of an intention in the face of competing alternatives, weakening thoughts, and unwanted emotions (Perry et al., 2001). One of the main focus of his theory is the strategies that enable people to protect their intentions from competing action alternatives. It is an important contributor to task performance because it enables individuals to carry out their intentions to complete a goal (Menec et al., 1994). Action control helps to maintain intentions that are difficult to implement. It has been shown that individuals holding unstable intentions are less likely to act on their intentions (Sniehotta, et al., 2006). Applying it to educational setting, a consistent link between academic control and educational success indicates that students with more action control do better. Kuhl's theory would suggest that students who are action-oriented would be better prepared to deal with various challenges such as failing a test or a subject thereby increasing the success in school. Given this control strategy, students can directly act to control inattention and disruptive types of behavior.

Kuhl explained that in order to focus more on the current intention or goal, an individual has to strengthen his or her motivation towards achieving it (Menec, 1994). For example, the individual must focus more on the positive outcomes of his/her goal so that he/she will not be distracted by internal and external factors therefore increasing action control. In relation to student participation, theorists argue that motivation increases student participation because it directs one's behavior towards

classroom tasks and goals (Finn, 1993). It also contributes to the students' academic outcomes because it directs students' action and activities (Wentzel, 1999). It means that the more motivated the student is, the more that he or she participates in all classroom activities and discussion.

Action and State Orientation

The action and state orientation are concerned with the differences when it comes in performing and achieving a certain goal (Kuhl, 1994). It is also defined as the individual differences and persistence of one's goals and the ability to protect goals through the use of different mechanisms and techniques (Diefendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2001). Basically action control is divided into two orientations namely action orientation and state orientation. An individual with a strong action orientation has the ability to use and maximize the cognitive sources that he has in accomplishing a task, thus having the opportunity to move from his present goal to his future goal (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). These individuals have the ability to give equal focus and attention to the strategies they are going to use in accomplishing the task at hand (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). According to Kuhl (1994), an individual who is more action oriented have a better efficiency in his performance and can still perform well even after experiencing a failure.

Action orientation has three components namely: (1) initiative, (2) persistence, and (3) disengagement. On the other hand, an individual who is more state oriented have relentless thoughts on other goals that affects and reduces his cognitive sources for goal accomplishing (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). The effect of state orientation on the individual weakens the engagement to different activities and they tend to have a hard time in accomplishing a task whether it is difficult or not (Brunstein & Olbrich, 1985; Goschke & Kuhl, 1993; Kuhl, 1981; Kuhl, 1994).

According to Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, and Pelletier (2001) the action state orientation has three dimensions namely (1) preoccupation, (2) hesitation, and (3) volatility. The preoccupation dimension talks about the ability and the degree of a person to process information which are from the past, the present, and the future and it is the conflict between preoccupation and disengagement (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). Disengagement is the ability of one person to disregard other undesirable things that can hamper the achievement of his goal. A person in a preoccupation dimension knows how to distinguish and prioritize the important things from the not so important things that are needed in accomplishing a task. A person in this dimension has the tendency to focus on the negative, distracting and worrying events such as failure (Hladkyj, Pekrun, & Pelletier, 2001). The next dimension is hesitation, which is the conflict between initiative and hesitation in doing a task and the lack of a person to initiate himself to activities that can help him in achieving his goal (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). Hesitation is also defined as experiencing difficulty in doing actions and thinking of the right decisions (Perry et al., 2001). Action oriented individuals, who have a strong initiative control have an easier time to instigate to work on their tasks. On the other hand, a state oriented individual lacks this initiative in working at his task. Though preoccupation and hesitation are somewhat similar they have different bases which can be distinguished.

Preoccupation simply talks about different thoughts that can distract an individual in achieving something while hesitation talks more about the behavioral ability of an individual to initiate action (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). The third dimension is volatility, which is the opposite of volatility and persistence. It is the ability of an individual to remain as action oriented when needed and the degree to become distracted when working on a task that catches their interest (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). Volatility is also defined as the inability of an individual to complete a task without being interrupted by other unpleasant distractions (Perry et al., 2001). Action oriented individuals who are inclined to the persistent pole has the ability to keep their focus on the task until they are completely finished while state oriented individuals are the ones that are easily distracted in their task which results their impaired overall performance or simply does not finish the task (Diendorff, Hall, Lord, & Stream, 2000). Basically the action state orientation talks about strategies and ability depending if an individual is more action orientated or more state related in accomplishing a task or behavior.

Students who are able to concentrate and able to do their classroom task is perceived to have initiative and effort to perform well in class. Student's action control is strongly related to the student's participation. Further reviews on student participation to support the claim that action control and student participation are associated.

Student Participation

Student participation is defined as the behavior of a student in a given task or requirement in a class (Dweck, 1989; Finn, 1993; Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994). A student is perceived as participating in class when he or she has the effort or initiative in doing an activity. Previous studies indicate that student participation is related to the student's grades and academic competencies (Valiente, et al., 2008). A study done by Finn, Panozzo, and Voekl (1995) to determine classroom behaviors, showed that student participation has four components namely, initiative, effort, disruptive, and inattentive.

Disruptive Behavior. Disruptive behavior is defined as any classroom behavior manifested by a student that can be considered as a disturbance not only to him but also to his classmates such as interfering to his classmates work, inclined to making noise once he is inside the classroom and draws attention from the teacher in order to be reprimanded (Cianci & Spivack, 1987). Usually these are the students that are restless once they are inside the classroom and because of their restlessness they start to disturb not only their selves but also possibly the whole class. They would make unnecessary movements and actions that would really disrupt the flow of the class and present actions that can fully draw the attention of the whole class away from the lecture which decreases their learning (Millman et al., 1980). Disruptive students somehow present similar characteristics as students who are inattentive and withdrawn in a way that students who possess these behaviors are all off task (Finn, Panozzo & Voekl, 1995). They all present the same negative attitude towards accomplishing school tasks. Disruptive Behavior has been connected and related to

poor and depressed academic performance (Farrington et al., 1990) which has been evident in the elementary grades (Haskins et al., 1983; Swift & Spivack, 1968, 1969). In a study done by Swift and Spivack, (1968) between students from kindergarten until grade 6, they concluded that boys have a higher tendency to be perceived as disruptive as compared to girls.

Farrington et al., (1990) stated that disruptive behavior is connected and related to poor academic performance of a student which in turn gives the student low grades. Disruptive behavior was also said to be related to associated with depressed academic performance (Haskins et al., 1983; Swift & Spivack, 1968, 1969) during the elementary grades of a student while it is related with behavior problems in the upper grades.

There is evidence that grade school students' disruptive behavior is actually related to their grades in a negative way. Various patterns of disruptive behaviors such as hyperactivity and restlessness combined with lack of academic readiness can actually hinder and decrease the academic capabilities of a student, especially reading (Kazdin, 1993; Moffitt & Silva, 1988). Hinshaw (1992) has evidenced that disruptive behavior can also be a result of academic deficiencies. Once students' get low grades and think that their performance in school is bad, it is due to having disruptive behavior. The relationship between disruptive behavior and school performance is observed (Iacono, Johnson & McGue, 2005). But there are other past studies indicating that the relationship between disruptive behavior and school grades is not directly related and decrement in school grades can be attributed to other behavior problems and low IQ (Ferguson & Horwood, 1995; Fergusson, Horwood & Lynsky, 1993; Frick et al., 1991). Studies done by Clark, Prior, and Kinsella (2002) presented that other students who possess disruptive behavior were still able to perform good in school and got respectable grades.

Inattentive Behavior. Inattentive behavior is indicated when a student is not focusing on the teacher and the content of the lesson that is being delivered (Finn, Panozzo, & Voelkl 1995). A student is considered to be inattentive in class once he/she focuses more on the not so important things and does things that are not related to the class discussions. Swift and Spivack (1968) states that inattentive behavior is usually characterized by extraction from class participation, losing focus and not knowing what is going on with the class according to the perspective of the teacher. Once a student shows behavior of being easily distracted and focuses more on unnecessary things such as daydreaming and even sleeping and gives answers that are not related to the lesson itself, a student can be classified as being inattentive-withdrawn (Finn, Panozzo & Voelkl 1995). These types of students actually don't want attention from the class or from the teacher and actually tries not to be noticed. It can sometimes happen unnoticed and can also be overlooked by the teacher and because of this, students are not usually given proper action or solution to the problem (Millman, et al., 1980). One strategy that these students use to keep a low profile once they are inside the classroom is to seat in a less noticeable locations in order not to draw any kind of attention from the class (Finn, Panozzo & Voelkl, 1995). Students who have this type of behavior usually don't distract and interrupt the flow of class discussions and other school activities. Sometimes, it can even ease the

teaching burden among teachers because they might think that students with this behavior understand the lesson clearly well in fact it's the other way around (Finn, et al., 1995).

Several studies conducted in the past actually stated that students who paid attention and responded to the teachers instructions had a positive effect on their school performance (Attwell, Orpet & Meyers, 1967; Cobb, 1972; Good & Beckerman, 1978; Lahaderne, 1968). Basically students who are active in listening in class discussions and who actively participated in school activities would have a greater possibility to have high grades in school. Since these students listen and participate while inside the classroom, they have the tendency to get a better grip on the lesson being taught by their teachers. And when the time comes that these students fully master the lesson that their teacher taught them through discussions and activities, it would probably predict them having higher grades compared to students who are actually inattentive and withdrawn inside the classroom. At the same time, other researchers did find out that inattentive behavior is not totally related to a student's academic performance (Swift & Spivack, 1968, 1969). In one study done by Haskins, Ramey, and Walden (1983), they found that those students who were considered to be poor readers were students who did not engage in tasks and activities in school as compared to students who belong to high reading groups. The failure to engage and participate in activities predicted low reading capacity in kindergarten and grade one students. Also in this study, the students who were labeled as poor readers were less reactive and less attentive as compared to students who were good readers (Finn, Panozzo, & Voelkl 1995). Based on these studies, attentiveness and learning have a mutual relationship and once the student fails to give full attention to the teacher and to the activities can hinder the academic performance. Recent studies have identified that inattentiveness is more likely to be associated with academic underachievement than other externalizing behaviors such as antisocial or overactive behavior (Dally, 2006). This is due to the fact that inattentive students are less likely to participate and benefit in classroom activities and discussions because they are often times not focused (Lonigan et al., 1999).

Student Effort. Student effort is the total amount of time and energy that a student spends in accomplishing the requirements that the school or the teacher has set up (Carbonaro, 2005). Student effort is one factor that can greatly affect a student in accomplishing his goals that he has set up. According to Carbonaro (2005), there are three types of effort present in students which are Rule oriented, procedural and intellectual. Rule oriented occurs when students comply and follow the rules and regulations that the school has set up. An example of this scenario is when students are obliged to go to class everyday and refrain from being absent. Next type of student effort is procedural, in this type students are required to meet the demands and the requirements that a specific teacher has set up for his class. Example in this type is students are required to submit every assignment that the teacher has given them. Lastly the third type of student effort is intellectual where in this type students are required to exert and use their cognitive and intellectual abilities to meet the demands posted by the subject and the teacher. There are certain factors that affect the effort that students exert in their school performance. In a study conducted by Willis (1977) in England found that resistance is one factor

that negatively affects the exertion of effort of a student. Resistance obviously contributes to the withdrawal of student effort. Other factors that have an effect on students' effort are motivation and self efficacy (Bong & Clark, 1999). It is said that these two factors clearly explains why some students exert greater amount of effort than other students. It is important to know that effort and engagement are two different concepts (Carbonaro, 2005) and keep in mind that effort is a key component of engagement (Johnson, Crosnoe & Elder, 2001; Smerdon, 1999).

Studies done in the past have showed that student effort is directly related to academic achievement (Carbonaro, 2005). In a study done by Farkas et al. (1990), showed that a student's work habits, as measured by class participation, organization, and effort, did have a positive effect on a student's mastery of courses and their grade point averages (GPAs). Since effort can be measured by the time that one student spends on his homework (Natriello & McDill, 1986), studies previously done have indicated that it is directly related to better academic achievement (Alexander & Cook, 1982; Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002; Natriello & McDill, 1986). Once a student exerts a great amount of effort in meeting the requirements of a subject and devotes himself to the subject, it produces a great amount of satisfaction within which eventually can contribute to a better learning. This satisfaction may come in and be evident in the form and of knowledge gained, achievement test scores and school grades (Needham, 1978).

Student Initiative. The traditional school setup involves the principals making decisions for the teachers and teachers making decisions for their students. The classroom management and teaching strategies are typically the teachers always making decisions for the students. Students merely accept the terms and condition of the teacher, not questioning the teacher especially in an Asian context. Giving students a chance to partake in decision making in the classroom encourage students to initiate their own learning (Wade, 1995). Having students to be part on lesson planning, grading system, requirements and classroom policies makes them more enthusiastic on the subject. When students feel enthusiastic and interested in what they do, they develop a high initiative making them achieve better in academics. Teachers have a big role in the development of student initiative. Empowering students to take part of decision making, choice of teaching strategies and alternatives could initiate student learning (Wade, 1995).

Practicing democracy in schools are evident in most schools today. Teachers have always been part in the development of school programs. True democracy in schools will not be attained until the students take part or at least be given the opportunity to participate in the plans and conduct activities that involves them (Bolmeier, 2006). When students get involved in decision making and activities, they tend to be more focused and have high initiative towards learning (Bolmeier, 2006).

Kreisberg (1992) studied empowerment in schools that involves the development and confidence and efficacy as well as skills in self-expression, organization, decision making and communication. The results of the study showed that having a democratic classroom greatly affects student's initiative thus affecting their academic grades. Having high initiative in their studies makes students exert effort to perform better and attain a higher academic grade (Wade, 1995). Developing

empowerment to students is critical for student's initiative to learn. The teacher's teaching style should include effort in developing initiative on students. Encouraging student initiative is done by having a democratic classroom (Wade, 1995). The democratic classroom practices include having the students facilitate the class having their own choice on how to present the given topic. Consultation with the teacher is done before the actual presentation. This example practice encourages students to have initiative to learn, resulting to a higher grade achievement.

Having initiative starts with the student having interest in going to class and being there on time. One of the steps for students to exert effort to be in class is to provide a proper physical environment (Bolmeier, 2006). This includes the teacher giving no tension to the students. Teachers should be careful not to ridicule their students for it has a negative effect to student initiative to learn having a negative effect on the academic performance. It is in the classroom environment that students feel the interest to learn and having initiative to do school work and learn. When students have an initiative to do their work, it will affect their academic performance hence having the teachers give them a high grade.

School Ability

School ability is associated to the ability of a student to learn and how quickly a student can learn. A learner possessing high ability can give remarkable performance and is confident in doing his or her work well. On the other hand, a low ability learner is associated with poor learning capacity and unable to sustain or engage in a given task (Wentzel, 1993). Students who usually possess high ability are the ones who achieve, perform better in class compared to the low ability students.

Having a high ability sets the student apart from the low ability learners in terms of their school performance and behavior. For many years the high ability status of students has been determined based on the results of their school ability tests. School ability tests are generally valid criteria for classroom performance (Crano, Messe, & Rice, 1979). Ability tests have been the most used tests in predicting classroom performance. Studies show that high ability students are capable of controlling their action and behavior inside the classroom and know how to maintain and engage in a specific task (Crano, Messe, & Rice, 1979). However, other researchers have tried to debunk this argument. The school ability test results are not an indicator of classroom performance (Goldman & Hartig, 1976). Not just because a student performed low in school ability tests doesn't necessarily follow that the student will perform poorly in classroom tasks and seen as disruptive in classrooms.

Student's school ability is a key factor in action control and student participation. A student who is high in ability is perceived to also have an ability to be able to engage and disengage in a task. Also, the student who is high in ability is able to control his or her emotion thus able to control his or her behavior. On the other hand, students with low school ability is perceived to have less control of his emotions thus not being able to control his or her behavior. School ability serves as the mediating factor in comparing action control and student participation among high and low ability students.

The Present Study

The study is anchored on the Action Control theory by Julius Kuhl (1985) to explain the relationship of action control and students' participation of students with high and low school ability levels. Students' participation is carried effectively if a student can control distractions from the environment. This mechanism is called action control (Kuhl, 1986). Action control have two components: Action orientation and state orientation. Action orientation has three components namely, initiative, persistence, and disengagement, while state orientation also has three components, hesitation, volatility and preoccupation. According to previous studies, the relationship of the student's participation and action control happens when a student uses action orientations (initiative control, persistence, and disengagement) and is perceived to have increased initiative and effort. However, their relationship will depend on students' school ability.

For students with high ability, the components of action orientation is hypothesized to have a stronger positive relationship with student participation (initiative and effort) than students with low ability. Students who have high ability are said to have good determination and confidence with their school works (Wentzel, 1993) and they are more likely capable of using action orientation to complete their task.

On the other hand, the relationship of action orientation with inattentive and disruptive student participation will be negative as compared with students with low ability. When state orientation is correlated with initiative and effort, a negative relationship is expected among students with low ability. Previous studies have stated that students with low ability levels have a hard time engaging in task and have poor learning capacity (Wentzel, 1993). They also get easily distracted and tend to think of the negative consequences or outcomes of their actions (Hladkyj, Pekrun & Pelletier, 2001).

When state orientation is correlated with initiative and effort, a negative stronger relationship is expected among students with low ability. On the other hand, state orientation when correlated with inattentive and disruptive student participation will results to a stronger negative relationship among students with low ability.

Method

Participants

The participants were 224 students who are all studying in a private high school in Manila. Participants' age range is 16 to 18 years old and they are currently in fourth year high school (Year 10). The participants were pre selected according to the ability group they belong to (high or low). Purposive sampling was used in selecting participants. The selection criteria would be: (1) High school students who are studying in a private school in Metro Manila, (2) students who are willing enough to

answer the different instruments that the researchers are going to use for this study and (3) students who are classified as either high ability or low ability.

Instruments

Student Participation Questionnaire. The instrument was developed by Finn, Panozzo and Voelkl (1995) to measure the behavior and participation of students. This instrument has two scales that reflect positive behavior, which are effort (“is persistent when confronted with difficult problems”) and initiative (“does more than just the assigned work”), and two scales that reflect negative behavior, which are disruptive (“acts restless, is often unable to sit still”) and inattentive (“doesn’t seem to know what is going on in the class”). Using this instrument, the researchers would know whether the students possess these types of behavior according to the rating that their teachers. The instrument has a response scale ranging from Never (1) to Always (5). Each factor has different number of items in which for the negative behavior, disruptive has a four item scale and inattentiveness has a five item scale. While for the positive behavior, effort has a nine item scale and initiative has a seven item scale. Coefficient alpha reliabilities for the four scales for the students were, .93 for effort, .89 for initiative, .90 for disruptive and .75 for inattentive. The raters in this study were the advisers of the participants. They used this questionnaire to rate each students’ class participation and classroom performance based from their perception.

Academic Control Questionnaire (ACS-90). The instrument was developed by Julius Kuhl in 1994 to measure the action control of students. It has six dimensions, initiative, persistence and disengagement for Action Orientation and preoccupation, hesitation and volatility for State Orientation. The instrument has a 36 item questionnaire and the response scale is from never (1) to always (4). Different items target the different components of the Action State Orientation. The reliability for the components are as follow, for preoccupation is .66, hesitation is .74 and for volatility .51.

Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT). This instrument was developed by Arthur Otis and Roger Lennon in order to provide an accurate and efficient measure of the abilities needed to acquire the desired cognitive outcomes of formal education. It has a total of eighty items which are all multiple choice and each number has five choices. The Otis Lennon aims to concentrate on assessing the verbal educational factor, to the virtual exclusion of practical mechanical abilities. The OLSAT series is organized in five levels that collectively asses the range of ability commonly found in grade one through grade twelve. Knowing whether the student who took this test either belongs to the high or low ability depends of the norms that have been used. Age norms or grade norms can be used in order to estimate the school learning ability. Kuder Richardson was used in order to know the reliability of this instrument while correlating the Otis Lennon scores and teacher grades for the elementary and high school curricular areas were obtained from information supplied by four diverse school systems.

Students who got raw scores from 80-54 had an equivalent score of 9-7 in their stanine thus classifying them as high ability students. Students who had raw scores of 53-36 and had an equivalent score of 6-4 in their stanine were students classified as average students. And students who got raw scores of 27-0 and had equivalent stanine scores of 3-1 were classified as the low ability students. This process of classifying the high ability, the average and the low ability was based from the stanine conversions presented in the OLSAT manual for interpreting the scores.

Procedure

A letter of consent would be signed by the adviser and the parents of the students stating that they are allowing their child/student to participate in the study. First, the researcher identified which students belong to the high and low ability group in different sections through the OLSAT scores provided. The high and low ability students were classified by using the stanine for interpreting the OLSAT scores. Then after identifying and selecting students who belong in low and high ability groups, these students were asked to answer the ACS-90 and their respective teachers were asked to rate them using the SPQ. The participants were pre-selected according to the ability group they belong to based on their prior scores in the OLSAT. Then the teachers were asked to complete the Student Participation Questionnaire to determine their students' behavior presented in the instrument. The SPQ is given to the teacher and one student corresponds to one SPQ. One adviser is given instructions how to accurately rate his/her students. Rater fatigue was avoided since the participants are pre-selected where each teacher only rated 10-14 students. After the rater have completed the SPQ's they were thanked and debriefed about the purpose of the study.

Data Analysis

First, the researchers classified the students whether they belong to the high ability or low ability group through the OLSAT scores. The norms that the school has set up in identifying the students' ability groups were used. Using the stanine for interpreting the scores from the OLSAT, students who got raw scores from 80-54 had an equivalent score of 9-7 classifying them as high ability students. Students who had raw scores of 53-36 had an equivalent score of 6-4 in their stanine classifying them as average students. And students who got raw scores of 27-0 had equivalent stanine scores of 3-1 classified as the low ability students.

The Pearson r was used to correlate the components of the action control and student participation. The researchers correlated Action Orientation and State Orientation to the four components of student participation. Two sets of correlations were conducted: One for the high ability and another for the low ability group.

The correlation coefficients were compared using the formula provided by Cohen and Cohen (1975)

$$z = \frac{z'_1 - z'_2}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1 - 3} + \frac{1}{n_2 - 3}}}$$

The correlation coefficients were first converted into z' using the formula: $z' = .5[\ln(1+r)-\ln(1-r)]$ (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). The resulting z is then tested for significance.

Results

Table 1 shows the mean and the standard deviation of all the subscales of Action Control and subscales of Student Participation. Table 1 also shows the reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, of Action Control, and Student Participation. While Table 2 shows the correlation values between the subscales of action control and student participation among the high and low ability group.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Action Control and Student Participation

	High ability			Low ability			Cronbach's Alpha
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Action Orientation							.70
Disengagement	114	35.16	3.58	110	31.97	3.86	.53
Initiative Control	114	33.99	5.60	110	33.47	4.45	.57
Persistence	114	34.54	4.28	110	33.52	4.73	.64
State orientation							.86
Hesitation	114	31.71	5.28	110	30.58	5.00	.75
Preoccupation	114	29.38	5.47	110	28.22	4.90	.75
Volatility	114	31.75	4.73	110	29.86	4.59	.68
Student Participation							.90
Effort	114	34.04	3.98	110	13.24	1.88	.96
Initiative	114	27.38	3.54	110	11.70	1.63	.94
Disruptive	114	8.11	1.84	110	16.14	0.75	.92
Inattentive	114	10.53	2.92	110	18.59	1.54	.90
OLSAT	114	65.40	5.92	110	23.53	2.83	

The means show a pattern that the high ability group have higher action orientation scores than the low ability group. However, higher means were also obtained for state orientation among the high ability group. The participants in the high ability group were rated higher on effort and initiative while the low ability group was rated higher on disruptive and inattentive subscales of the SPQ.

The subscales of the action control were intercorrelated with the subscales of the student participation questionnaire. The intercorrelations were done separately for the high and low ability group. The correlation coefficients obtained between the high and low ability group were compared using a z statistic and the difference of the r 's was tested for significance.

Table 2 shows that among the low ability group, significant correlations were found only between disruptive and volatility ($r=-0.22^*$). A correlation indicates a negative magnitude where the higher disruptive, the lower the volatility scores.

Table 2
Correlations of Action Control and Student Participation for High and Low School Ability Groups

	Low ability	High ability	Low ability	High ability	Low ability	High ability	Low ability	High ability
	effort		Initiative		disruptive		Inattentive	
Action Orientation								
Disengagement	-0.09 z=0.24	-0.12 p=.40	-0.04 z=0.02	-0.05 p=.49	-0.09 z=-0.32	-0.04 p=.37	0.05 z=1.61*	-0.18 p=.04
Initiative control	0.02 z=-0.96	0.15 p=0.16	0.10 z=0.28	0.06 p=.39	0.09 z=1.00	-0.05 p=.15	0.06 z=-1.48*	-0.25* p=.00
Persistence	0.11 z=-1.20	0.26* p=.11	-0.12 z=-1.07	0.02 p=.14	0.21* z=2.83*	-0.17 p=.002	-0.06 z=-1.22	0.10 p=.11
State orientation								
Hesitation	-0.05 z=-0.74	0.05 p=.22	-0.08 z=-0.68	0.02 p=.24	-0.10 z=-1.01	0.04 p=.15	0.03 z=-0.69	0.12 p=.25
Preoccupation	0.03 z=-0.82	0.14 p=.21	-0.02 z=-0.75	0.08 p=.22	0.20 z=1.19	0.04 p=.11	0.03 z=-1.99*	0.29* p=.02
Volatility	0.11 z=2.23	-0.19 p=.01	-0.03 z=-0.16	-0.01 p=.43	-0.22* z=-1.62	-0.01 p=.05	0.05 z=-1.30	0.23* p=.09

* $p < .05$

For the high ability group, significant correlations were found between inattentive and initiative control ($r = -0.25^*$), between inattention and preoccupation ($r = 0.29^*$), and between inattention and volatility ($r = 0.23^*$). It can be observed that within the correlation coefficients in the high ability group, negative correlations were found for inattention which is negative student participation and initiative which is an action orientation. Positive correlations were found for inattention (negative student participation) and preoccupation and volatility (state orientations). These magnitudes are consistent with the hypothesis.

When the correlation coefficients were compared for the high and low ability groups, significant difference was found for the correlations of disruptive and persistence (low ability = .21, high ability = -.17), inattentive and disengagement (low ability = .05, high ability = -.18), inattentive and initiative control (low ability = .06, high ability = -.25), and inattentive and preoccupation (low ability = .03, high ability = -.29), $p < .05$. The difference in the correlation coefficients show that majority of difference between high and low ability groups were among inattentive and the action orientation subscales. For state orientation, only the correlation between preoccupation and inattentive was different between the high and low ability group.

The differences in the correlation coefficients show that when persistence is high, disruption is low among the high ability group, but both of them increase among the low ability group. The higher the disengagement, the lower the inattention for the high ability group, but a weak correlation exists for the low ability group. Initiative control increases, and inattention decreases for the high ability group, but this correlation is very weak for the low ability group. A higher correlation was found

between preoccupation and inattention among the high ability group, but this correlation is weak for the low ability group.

Discussion

It was found in the study that as disengagement increases, inattention decreases among the high ability group. This result supports the claim that high ability students who are able to block all negative thoughts (e. g., fear of failure) and focus more on their task at school do not become inattentive anymore. But a student that uses disengagement with low ability still becomes inattentive because of the fact that they are preoccupied with negative thoughts. Disengagement for high ability students is more effective because they are more capable of focusing on their school tasks and they are able to block all negative thoughts regarding their actions. They are able to focus on the teacher and the content of the lesson that is being delivered to them. For low ability students, even though they use disengagement, it is not effective because they do not have the right skill and capability to block all distractions and they fear that they will not be able to accomplish their task. They cannot focus on the lesson that the teacher is trying to impart to them.

It was also found out in the study that for high ability students, as initiative increases inattention decreases. Initiative is the students' ability to make rational decisions and actions that are needed in order to fulfill his or her task. High ability students who are initiative in their class are often the ones who can easily listen to the lesson being delivered by the teacher and accomplish they task on time because they choose the right actions and make the decisions needed for their task class. On the other hand, initiative students with low ability are not that effective in accomplishing their school task because they do not have the right skill and proper mindset. They still get easily distracted by various factors coming from their environment such as noise and class atmosphere and as well as factors coming from their selves like teacher preference and subject interest.

Another finding that the researcher were able to obtain from the study is that for students with high ability level, as persistence increases, disruption decreases. High ability students who are persistent are able to pursue or finish school activities without being distracted by other factors. Persistent students are very determined when doing a school task that is why they do not get distracted easily by factors coming from their environment or problems from within. Students with low ability who are persistent on the other hand still get easily distracted because they do not have the right mindset and determination to accomplish their task at hand. They manifest behaviors that can cause disturbance not only to his or herself but the whole class as well. They tend to distract other people in class because they cannot focus and are too impulsive.

The last finding that the researcher was able to obtain is that for high ability students, as preoccupation increases, inattention also increases. However, the results showed no significant relationship between the two variables. For students with low ability, students who are preoccupied are also inattentive in class. They are preoccupied with a lot of different things when they are in class and because of this they loose their focus in class. Students cannot focus on the lesson being delivered by

the teacher because they do not have the ability to block the things that distracts them.

The present study was only able to partially support the hypothesis posed. The difference high and low students' abilities only occurs in some of the relationships between action control and student participation. Inattention showed to have a stronger negative correlation with disengagement and initiative among students with high ability. Inattention also converges with preoccupation among students with low ability.

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