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ABSTRACT

This research project examines the impact of the Eisenhower Decision Matrix on student participation and engagement in a secondary classroom.

Over a three-week period, students completed the Matrix each Monday as a writing warm-up, categorizing academic and personal tasks into four quadrants: Do (urgent and important), Schedule (important but not urgent), Delegate (urgent but not personally necessary), and Delete (not important). The goal was to promote time management, self-awareness, and organizational skills.

Following the Matrix activity, student participation was tracked daily using a five-point checklist measuring Listening and Following Along, Verbal Contributions, Nonverbal Engagement, Small Group/Pair Work, and On-Task Behavior. Data was collected and each student received a daily attention percentage based on how many criteria were met, with weekly classroom averages used to assess engagement trends.

Class data was compiled and visualized in a line graph to illustrate participation changes over time. This method allowed analysis of both individual checklist components and overall engagement. At the end of each week, individual data was anonymized and discarded, retaining only cumulative class averages. The study aims to determine whether consistent use of the Eisenhower Matrix can improve classroom participation.

INTRODUCTION

Many secondary students struggle with engagement due to poor time management and a lack of organizational structure. This disengagement can show itself as missed assignments, incomplete work, and an overall decrease in academic performance. As students advance through middle and high school, the increasing complexity of their workload can feel overwhelming, leading to avoidance behaviors and lowered self-efficacy. This concern is especially pressing in today’s educational climate, where students are expected to juggle academic responsibilities, extracurricular activities, and sometimes even part-time jobs or family obligations.

This study explores whether the Eisenhower Decision Matrix—a time-management tool that categorizes tasks into Do, Schedule, Delegate, and Delete—can improve student participation by helping students make more intentional choices about how they spend their time. When students are taught to distinguish between what is urgent and what is important, they may feel more in control of their schedules, leading to greater focus and investment in classroom activities. Improving time-management skills is a critical step in empowering students to become active participants in their own learning journey. By equipping them with the tools to prioritize their educational responsibilities, this intervention has the potential to address a root cause of disengagement and create a more supportive and productive classroom environment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants:

- 9 Students Total
- 2 Female Students
- 7 Male Students

All were enrolled in 9th grade.

Students were selected based on signed Consent and Assent forms.

This class had the highest percentage of failing grades and non-participation among four periods

Study Design:

Duration: 3 Weeks

Matrix Activity: Mondays

Students filled out the Eisenhower Decision Matrix to organize weekly tasks

Participation Monitoring: Monday–Friday

Measured with 5-point Participation Checklist:

1. Listening and Following Along
2. Verbal Contributions
3. Nonverbal Engagement
4. Small Group/Pair Work
5. On-Task Behavior

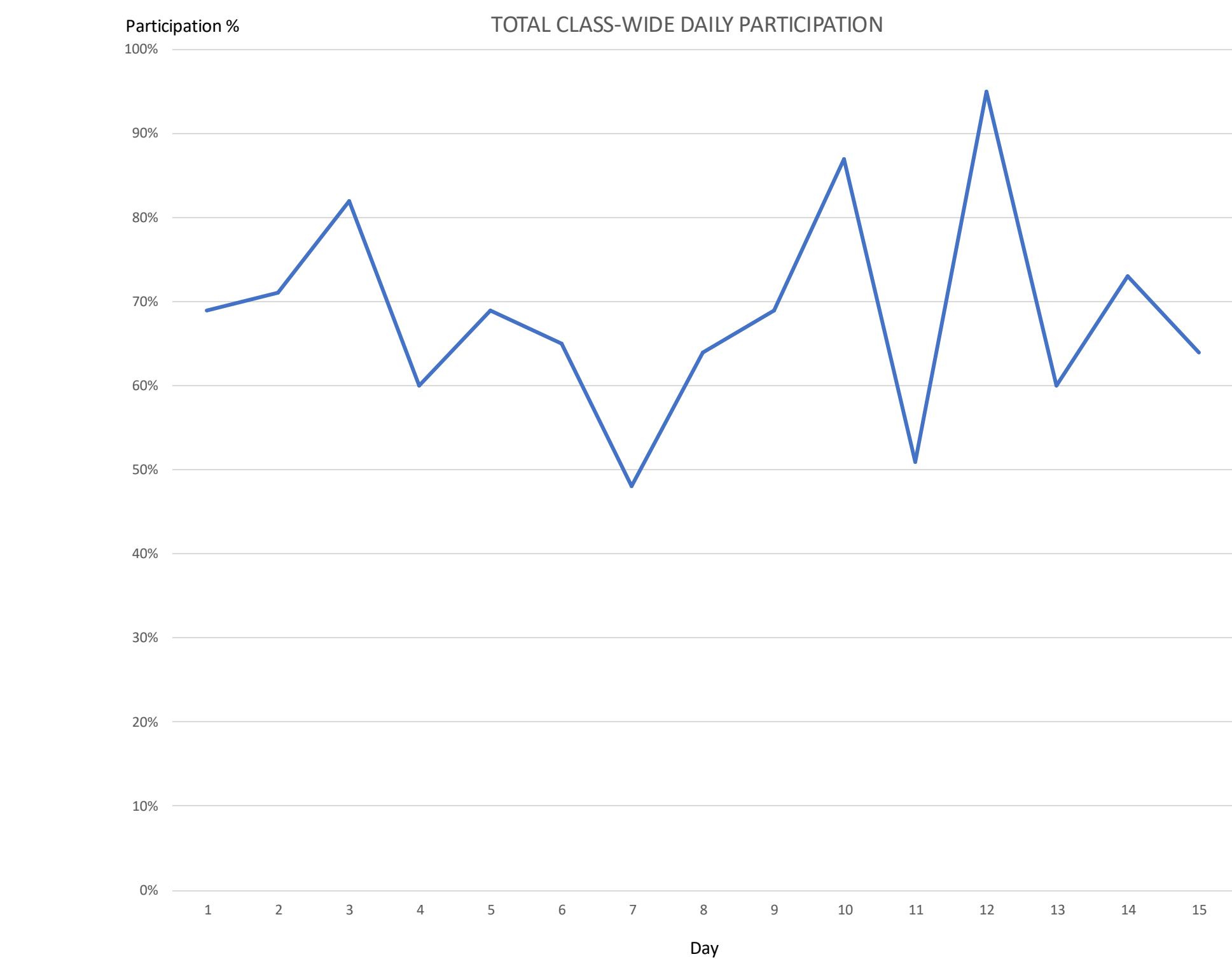
Data Sources:

- Visual Observation (1–3)
- Google Classroom (4)
- GoGuardian Screenshots (5)

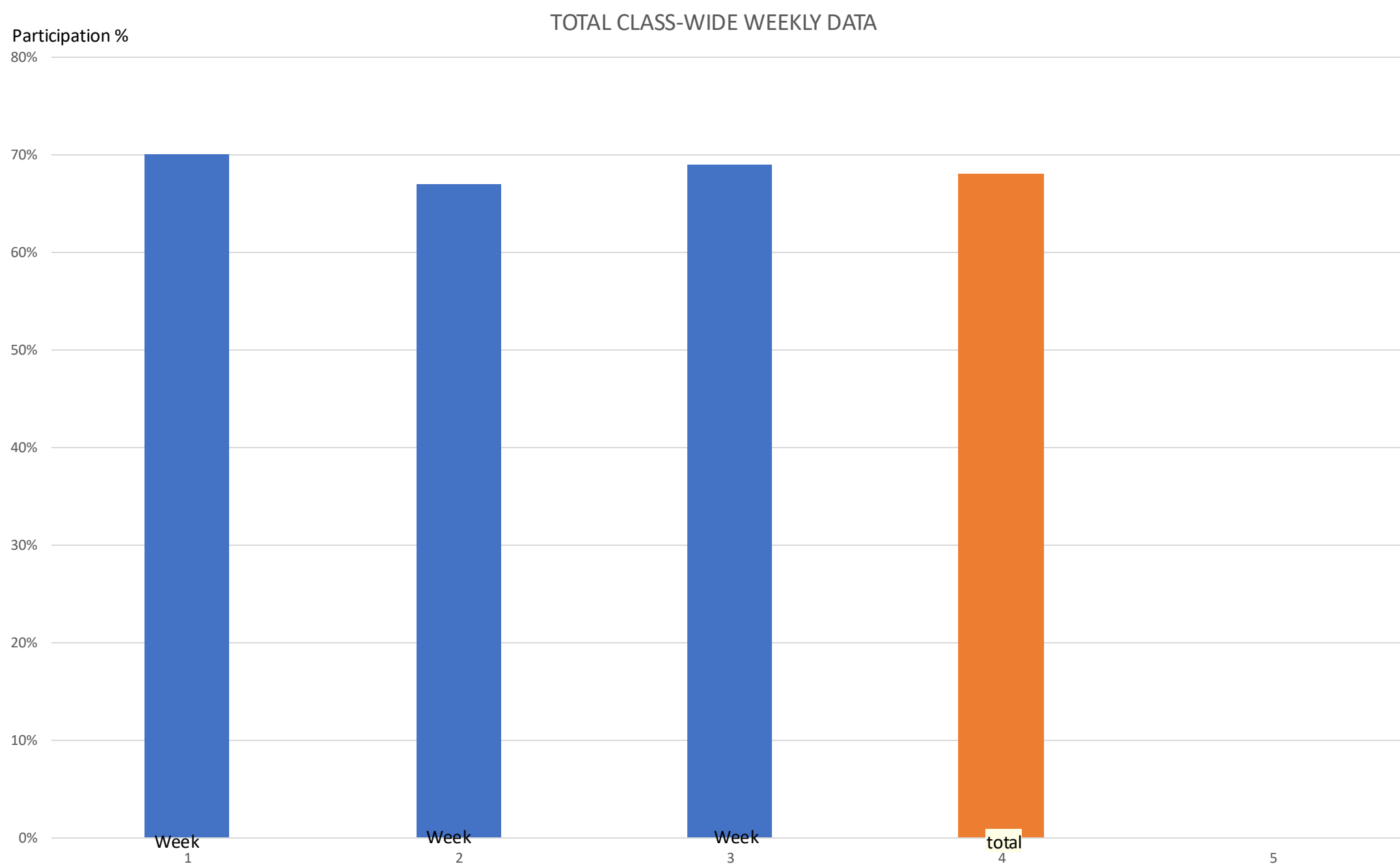
Scoring and Analysis:

- Daily attention percentages: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%
- Weekly averages per student calculated.
- Class-wide weekly average visualized on a line graph.
- Individual data anonymized and discarded weekly.
- Only aggregate data retained for analysis.
- Absent students were not incorporated for data, ensuring participation was not skewed due to students not being present to participate.

DAILY RESULTS



WEEKLY RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

The data collected over the three-week implementation of the Eisenhower Decision Matrix shows a generally positive trend in student participation. With a mean participation rate of 68.47%, a median and mode of 69%, the class demonstrated consistent engagement throughout the study. Notably, participation peaked at 95%, indicating that the strategy may have contributed to heightened involvement on certain days. This is mirrored by a downwards spike of 48% and 51% on other days. Although fluctuations occurred, likely influenced by external factors such as class dynamics or weekly scheduling, the overall stability of participation through the entire fifteen-day period suggests that integrating time management and self-prioritization tools like the Eisenhower Matrix can support sustained engagement in a secondary classroom. These findings highlight the potential of intentional planning practices to positively influence student behavior and participation.