
Title	Thinking about engagement: Time for a clearer discussion
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Thinking about engagement: Time for a clearer discussion

Sport Psychology

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Introduction

□ Background

- The current global, fast-changing economic world requires **knowledgeable workers** who can synthesize and evaluate new information, think, critically, and solve problems (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).
- **An entrepreneurial and enterprising spirit and resilience in the face of adversity** are desired outcomes of secondary and pre-university education (Singapore Ministry of Education, 2009).

Introduction (Cont.)

❑ Question

- *How can educators assist students in achieving the desired learning outcomes?*

❑ A possible answer

- One of keys to achieve the desired learning outcomes would be to promote students' engagement in learning.

Engagement

- The concept of *engagement* has attracted increasing attention in recent years as

A leitmotif in research that attempts to identify the factors that **enhance academic achievement and resilience**, and **protect adolescents from drop-out and delinquency** (Fredricks et al., 2004; Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009).

Conceptual issues

□ Example 1

- The names for the engagement construct and corresponding definitions have been varies across studies (e.g., *academic engagement*, *school engagement*, *student engagement*).
- **Any construct loses its scientific utility if it is defined too broadly** (Fleming & Courtney, 1984).

Conceptual issues (Cont.)

□ Example 2

- Despite the myriad conceptualization of engagement and the inconsistent terminology, engagement has been constantly described as a multidimensional construct.
- However, the number and types of engagement dimensions differ across studies (e.g., Applenton et al., 2008).

Conceptual issues (Cont.)

□ Components of Engagement

Engagement is usually described as consisting of two or three components.

- E.g., Engagement is defined in three ways (e.g., Applenton et al., 2008):
 - ✓ Behavioural engagement
 - ✓ Emotional engagement
 - ✓ Cognitive engagement

Conceptual issues (Cont.)

□ Components of Engagement

- ***Behavioural engagement***—the idea of participation (e.g., involvement in activities) and following the rules.
- ***Emotional engagement***—positive and negative reactions, including interest, values and emotions.
- ***Cognitive engagement***—psychological investment in learning and strategic learning (e.g., willingness to make the effort, self-regulation).

Conceptual issues (Cont.)

□ Research on engagement

- The majority of educational research has focused on behavioural engagement, which is more observable (Appleton et al., 2008; Fredicks et al., 2004).
- Less research has focused on emotional and cognitive engagement.
- Research on cognitive and emotional engagement should be advanced by overcoming difficulties with their measurement (Appleton et al., 2008).

Methodological issues

❑ Measures of engagement

- Conduct measures (e.g., completing homework and complying school rules) and self-report surveys for behavioural engagement (Fredicks et al., 2004).
- Observation techniques for behavioural and cognitive engagement (e.g., Stipek, 2002).

Methodological issues (Cont.)

❑ Potential problem with observational measures

- The ideas of commitment or investment is critical the common understanding of the term engagement (Fredicks et al., 2004).
- However, it is difficult to distinguish the degree of behavioural, emotional, or cognitive engagement with current existing measures (Fredicks et al., 2004).

Methodological issues (Cont.)

□ Potential problem with observational measures

- It is strongly desired to develop a measure that can assess **the quality of engagement** adequately.

I have recently started research projects to develop such a measure.

Thank you for your attention!

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