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Examining students' affective commitment toward country: a case study of a Singapore primary school

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The purpose of this study was to examine students' affective commitment toward Singapore. Affective commitment refers to the sense of attachment to the nation state. The sample was taken from 286 students in a primary school. In the first section of the paper, we described the design of a Likert-type Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire. Factor analyses (principal component analysis and confirmatory factor analysis) showed evidence of construct validity for the 10-item scale, and an overall Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.91. In the second section, we reported the statistics related to the students' affective commitment scores. Overall, a positive affective commitment toward the country was found. Results of our *t*-test analyses revealed that no statistically significant difference was found between boys and girls for each of the questionnaire items. However, students who had higher academic achievement reported significantly higher scores than their lower ability counterparts with regard to six items of the questionnaire. Suggestions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: affective commitment; elementary school; primary school

Introduction

Citizenship education has long been viewed as one of the principal obligations of formal education in many countries (Sears & Hughes, 1996; Sim & Print, 2005). According to Kerr (2000), citizenship education is construed broadly to encompass the preparation of individuals for their roles, responsibilities, and civic participation as citizens of a country. This view of citizenship has also been concerned with the development of a sense of identity (Sears & Hughes, 1996; Sim, 2008), what McLeod referred to "a feeling of being one-people different from all other people" (1989, p. 6), as well as a sense of belonging, commitment or allegiance to one's country (Banks, 2001; Kerr, Cleaver, Ireland, & Blenkinshop, 2003). Although citizenship education

may occur through a variety of sources (e.g., family), formal schooling remains the primary source of citizenship education for students (Sim & Print, 2005).

Singapore is no exception to the notion of citizenship education. Since it gained self-government in 1959, citizenship education has existed in Singapore in various forms (Han, 2000). However, some of the most extensive changes to citizenship education have been those related to National Education (Han, 2000). Launched more than 13 years ago in May 1997, the National Education initiative was aimed at fostering a sense of national cohesion, the instinct for survival, and confidence in the future of Singapore among Singaporean students (Ministry of Education, 2007). According to Han, much of the thrust of National Education is affective in nature, whereby students are encouraged to have a sense of loyalty or commitment to the country. It is aimed at deliberately developing, among Singapore's younger citizenry, a positive attitude toward nationhood (Sim & Print, 2005). There are in total six main National Education messages: 1) "Singapore is our homeland; this is where we belong"; 2) "We must preserve racial and religious harmony"; 3) "We must uphold meritocracy and incorruptibility"; 4) "No one owes Singapore a living"; 5) "We must ourselves defend Singapore"; and 6) "We have confidence in our future" (Ministry of Education, 2007).

In this study, we focus on the first National Education message – "Singapore is our homeland; this is where we belong". Specifically, we investigate a particular dimension of citizenship – that is, students' affective commitment toward Singapore. Affective commitment refers to the sense of attachment to the nation state. This study also attempts to investigate if significant differences in affective commitment toward the country exist between gender (boys and girls), as well as between students who had higher academic achievement and those who did not.

This article is organized as follows: First, in the literature review section, we will briefly describe some of the previous research on citizenship education, followed by the methodology of the study. This is followed by the results and discussion, and conclusion of the study.

Literature review

Previous studies associated with citizenship education have examined particular dimensions or issues including: (a) students' geographical knowledge of their own country and other countries, (b) students' political and civic knowledge, (c) students' attitudes toward government policy, laws, as well as civic concepts such as rights and social justice, (d) students' knowledge of national emblems, (e) students' national stereotypes, and (f) students' national identity. Each of the aforementioned dimensions will be briefly described in the following paragraphs.

First, several previous studies have investigated students' knowledge of national geographies (e.g., Barrett, 1996; Barrett & Farroni, 1996; Bouchier, Barrett, & Lyons, 2002; Jahoda, 1964; Moss & Blades, 1994). These studies were conducted in a number of different national contexts including England, Italy and Scotland.

Overall, these studies have suggested that children's geographical knowledge about their own country begins to develop from about 5 or 6 years of age onwards, that boys are more knowledgeable than girls concerning the geography of both their own country as well as other countries, that middle-class children know more about other countries than their working class counterparts, and that children's geographical knowledge of a particular country is not related to their travel experience to that country or how they feel about that country (Barrett, 2002, 2007).

Second, some of the previous studies have investigated students' political and civic knowledge (e.g., Kerr, Lines, Blenkinshop, & Schagen, 2002; Kerr, Cleaver, Ireland, & Blenkinshop, 2003; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001). These studies have found that while Year 8, 10 and 11 students in England have a good knowledge of equal opportunities and age-related rights, they are less knowledgeable about democracy, the European Union and the electoral system. These studies also revealed that students' political and civil knowledge scores appeared to increase with age, that level of educational background was positively associated with civic knowledge, and that students whose parents owned their home gained the highest scores.

Third, some of the previous studies have explored students' attitudes toward government policy, laws, as well as civic concepts such as human rights and justice. For example, Cleaver, Ireland, Kerr and Lopes (2005) found that about 45% of Year 8, 10 and 12 students in the United Kingdom strongly agreed that the government should guarantee employment and provide decent living for the unemployed, and that, on average, students supported equal opportunities for women in society. Scores concerning the view that rules and laws should be adhered to were highest among Year 7 students but lowest among Year 10 students, were highest for Asian students compared to other ethnic groups, and were highest for females than for males.

Fourth, other studies have examined students' knowledge of national emblems such as national anthems, songs, flags, costumes (e.g., Barrett, 2005; Jahoda, 1963). Results have suggested that knowledge of emblems begin to develop from about 5–6 years of age onwards, and that acquisition of such knowledge is probably influenced by both the mass media and formal educational input.

Fifth, some studies have explored the development of students' national stereotypes (e.g., Barrett & Short, 1992; Barrett, Wilson, & Lyons, 2003; Jahoda, 1964; Penny, Barrett, & Lyons, 2001). Results of these studies have indicated that English and Scottish children already form some national stereotypes by 5–6 years of age, and that subsequently their knowledge of people belonging to different national groups increase considerably.

Finally, other previous studies have looked at students' ethnic or national identification, or how they feel about their own country (Dixon, 2002; Kerr, Lines, Blenkinshop, & Schagen, 2002; Kerr, Cleaver, Ireland, & Blenkinshop, 2003; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001). Dixon examined adolescents (11–15-year-old children, including White English, White Scottish, White Welsh, White Northern Irish, Caribbean, African, Indian, Bangladeshi) living in south-east England (outside London) to measure their strength of identification with being British. There were no differences in the adolescents' levels of identification with regard to age or gender but the White English, White Scottish, White Welsh and White Northern Irish reported significantly higher levels of identification with being British than the ethnic minority adolescents. Torney-Purta et al. examined 14-year-olds' (nearly 90,000 students from 28 countries) feelings about their own country. Utilizing an *attitude towards one's nation* scale, they found that 87% of students subscribed to feelings of love for their country. A majority of students (77%) indicated that they would not want to live permanently in another country. More recently, Kerr et al. (2002) employed the same scale by Torney-Purta et al. (2001). The sample consisted of 14-year-old United Kingdom students ($n = 3,043$). They reported that slightly over half (59%) of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they had love for their country. Nineteen percent indicated that they would prefer to live permanently in another country. The

researchers also reported that boys had more positive attitudes (i.e., higher average score) to their nation compared to girls. Lee (2003) also utilized the same questionnaire by Torney-Purta et al. (2001). The sample consisted of 4,997 grade 9 Hong Kong students. Lee reported that 82% of respondents loved their country. However, almost half of the respondents (45%) agreed and strongly agreed that they would prefer living permanently elsewhere, instead of Hong Kong.

Knowledge gap

Previous studies examining citizenship education have by and large focused on experiences in Western countries. Studies that involved students from Asia-Pacific countries were few in comparison. The current study reported in this paper helps educators and researchers understand more about citizenship education in the Asia Pacific region, by focusing on one of its nation member – Singapore, a country in South East Asia. The major contribution of the study is to inform readers know about the affective commitment of nearly 300 students aged 11–12 of a primary school in Singapore to their nation.

In addition, we believe that the literature of the measurements of affective commitment to country is still in its infancy. We attempted to find empirical papers that measured affective commitment to country by means of a questionnaire in electronic library databases using the following keyword search *commitment*, *country*, and *measure*. The following databases were used: (a) Academic Search Premier, (b) Business Source Premier, (c) ERIC, and (d) PsycARTICLES. We believe that our choices of the four databases were reasonable and sufficient because together these databases cover more than 11,600 abstracted and indexed journals. In addition, the first database, Academic Search Premier, is considered one of the most prominent databases in academic institutions (Blessinger & Olle, 2004). Furthermore, some of

these databases were frequently used by other scholars in their search for empirical articles (e.g., Hew & Brush, 2007; Luppigini, 2007; Rinke, 2008; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008).

As of October 26, 2009, our database searches revealed 238 hits. We examined these 238 hits and found none but three (Kerr et al., 2002; Lee, 2003; Torney-Purta et al., 2001) that yielded a questionnaire instrument that measured a sense of attachment or belonging to country. These authors utilized the *attitude towards one's nation* scale that consisted of four items measuring the importance of national symbols (e.g., flag) and sense of attachment to one's country (e.g., love for the nation, willingness to live in one's country). However, the reported Cronbach alpha reliability for the scale was only 0.68 (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2010), a Cronbach's alpha value equal or greater than 0.70 indicates that the items chosen to measure a key dimension are reliable. The mean and standard deviation of the questionnaire scores, Cronbach alpha and factor analyses data were not reported in the Kerr et al. (2002) paper. Although the mean scores were reported, neither the standard deviation nor Cronbach alpha and factor analysis scores were indicated in the Lee (2003) paper.

As a result, we decided to develop a questionnaire that would serve the purpose of this study. The conceptualization of our questionnaire design was based on the work of Allen and colleagues, as well as Porter and his colleagues (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). These researchers conceptualized commitment as an affective or emotional attachment to an entity. Instances of entity include a particular country, group or organization. Affectively committed individuals are seen as having a sense of belonging in a

particular entity. They enjoy the membership of the entity and have a desire to remain with the entity. An individual who shows positive affective commitment to an organization, for example, would remain loyal to the company and is less likely to leave it; likewise the affectively committed individual to the country.

Allen and Meyer (1990) developed the Affective Commitment to Organization Questionnaire to measure the commitment construct. This 8-item scale has been used extensively in organizational research. Researchers using the questionnaire have reported that it forms a single factor with high reliability (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Cohen, 1996; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994; Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990). Porter and his colleagues created the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, and this scale has acceptable psychometric properties (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Our Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire consisted of ten items (see Table 1). Six items of the questionnaire (items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7) were adapted from Allen and Meyer's Affective Commitment to Organization Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990). One item (item 4) was adapted from Mowday, Steers, and Porter's Organizational Commitment questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Two items of the questionnaire (items 9 and 10) were developed in consultation with senior officers from the armed forces, and the sample school's National Education coordinator. One item (item 8) was adapted from Kerr et al.'s (2002) positive attitude toward nation scale. Following Knapczyk, Hew, Frey and Wall-Marencik (2005), as well as Hew and Knapczyk (2007), a 4-point scale was used to force respondents to choose one of the available options. Possible responses were arrayed on a 4-point scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*.

Participants and procedure

The participants were Primary 6 students enrolled at a primary (or elementary) school, hereby referred to as the sample school, in Singapore. The sample school was chosen because we were able to gain access to the site for the research study. Permission to conduct the study was sought and obtained from the teacher in charge of National Education, as well as the principal of the sample school. The sample school was a co-educational (boys and girls) Special Assistance Plan (SAP) school. Currently, there are 15 SAP primary schools in Singapore (Ministry of Education, 2008). At the time of writing, these SAP primary schools constituted about 9% (15 out of 167) of the total number of primary schools in Singapore. The environment of SAP schools allows students to be effectively bilingual in English and Chinese, while at the same time inculcating in them traditional Chinese values and morals (Ministry of Education, 2010). There were more than 1,500 students in the sample school. A majority of the students in the sample school were Chinese and came from families of middle to high social economic status. Primary 6 students were chosen for the study because the school wanted to assess the students' level of affective commitment toward the country after almost 6 years of studying in the sample school.

A total of 293 questionnaires were returned with 286 being usable. The rest were omitted from analysis due to various types of incompleteness. The participants' ages ranged from 11–12 years old and consisted of 149 boys (52.1%) and 137 girls (47.9%). Of the 286 participants, 83 came from higher ability classes. Higher ability classes are defined as classes where the students have higher academic achievement than those who are in other classes. Participation was voluntary and students' responses were kept anonymous. No students' names were recorded on the questionnaire. No monetary benefits or academic credits were given for their participation. Participants were informed that there were no right and wrong answers

to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered in English. No translation was required as English is the medium of instruction for the school.

Results

In this section, we first report the reliability and validity of the 10-item Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire. This is followed by a report on the statistics related to the participants' overall affective commitment scores, gender, as well as academic ability difference with regard to their commitment to country.

Reliability of the questionnaire

The internal consistency, using Cronbach alpha, for the 10-item Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire was 0.91. This is above the acceptable level of 0.70; thus establishing the construct reliability of the questionnaire (Hair et al., 2010; Nunnally, 1978).

Factor structure of the questionnaire

Two types of factor analyses were performed to examine the factor structure of the questionnaire – a principal component analysis, and a confirmatory factor analysis. The 10-item questionnaire was subjected to principal component analysis using SPSS 17.0. Following Nunnally (1978), only factors with eigenvalues greater than one were selected for analysis. The analysis revealed one-factor structure with eigenvalue 5.52, explaining 55.16% of the total variance. Table 1 shows the factor loadings for principal component analysis for the scores obtained in the questionnaire. All the loadings were high, where high loading is defined as greater than .40 (Hair et al., 2010).

(Table 1)

To further examine the factor structure of the questionnaire, we carried out a confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 7.0. We used the maximum likelihood procedure technique because it is one of the most popular and robust approaches for parameter estimation (Hair et al., 2010; Hoyle, 1995). The following four fit indices were employed to establish the levels of goodness-of-fit for the measurement model: (a) chi-square statistic, (b) the chi-square/*df* ratio, (c) the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), (d) the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and (e) the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Figure 1 shows the path diagram for the one-factor model for the Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire.

(Figure 1)

Chi-square statistic is the most fundamental absolute fit index to measure how well the specified model reproduces the observed data (Hair et al., 2010). Customarily, in the interpretation of the closeness of fit, the smaller the chi-square value is the closer the fit (Zain & Gill, 1999). The chi-square/*df* is a ratio of chi-square to the degrees of freedom for a model, where the order of 3:1 or less are associated with better fitting models. The TLI compares the chi-square/*df* values for the null and specified model, taking into account the complexity of the model to some degree. A higher TLI value (approaching one) suggests a closer fit than a model with a lower value. (Hair et al., 2010) The CFI is an incremental fit index which compares how much better the model fits compared to a baseline model in which the observed variables are assumed to be uncorrelated (Kline, 2005). Typically, CFI values above .90 are usually associated with a model that fits well (Hair et al., 2010). Finally, the RMSEA considers the error approximation in the population and is a measure of discrepancy per degree of freedom (Byrne, 2001). Adequate model fit is represented by RMSEA values less than .07 with CFI of .97 or higher for sample sizes larger than

250 and a one-factor model with 10 indicator variables or items (Hair et al., 2010).

The results of these analyses are shown in Table 2.

(Table 2)

As seen in Table 2, the one-factor questionnaire successfully satisfied all the aforementioned criteria of a good fit. Having considered the acceptable reliability and validity of the Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire, we report the statistics related to the participants' overall affective commitment scores, between gender and between students who had higher academic achievement and those who did not.

Overall affective commitment to country

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation for each of the ten individual items.

The mean scores range from 2.93 to 3.49, with a total group mean score of 3.29 out of a possible maximum score of 4.00. All standard deviations are below 1.00, indicating a narrow spread of item scores around the mean. In addition, we examined the data for univariate normality. No items showed a skew or kurtosis value greater than the cut-offs of |3| or |8| recommended by Kline (2005) respectively. This supports univariate normality in the items.

(Table 3)

Table 4 shows the results obtained from the 286 students on the 10 items.

About 83% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they would be glad to live permanently in Singapore. Eighty-six percent indicated that they enjoyed discussing Singapore with foreigners to the city state. Slightly over three-quarters of the respondents felt that the nation's problems were their own. Ninety-four percent of the students were proud to tell other people that they lived in Singapore, and over 93%

perceived that they were accepted as a member of Singapore's society. Eighty-four percent agreed or strongly agreed that they were emotionally attached to the nation, and 90% felt a sense of belonging to Singapore. Ninety-two percent subscribed to feelings of love for their country. Finally, 91% and 92% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they cared about the fate of Singapore and were willing to work hard to help their country be successful respectively. Overall, the data in Table 4 suggest that Primary 6 students have a positive affective commitment towards their country.

(Table 4)

Gender difference

To examine if there was gender difference with regard to attitude to country, we carried out an independent two-tailed *t*-test statistical analysis. Table 5 summarizes the results. No statistically significant difference was found between boys and girls for each of the ten items. This could be due to the equity in the Singapore context that provides opportunities to all students to enjoy the benefits of living in the country.

(Table 5)

Academic ability difference

To investigate if significant differences in affective commitment toward the country exist between students who had higher academic achievement and those who did not, an independent two-tailed *t*-test statistical analysis was also carried out. Table 6 summarizes the results.

We notice in Table 6 that the mean score on each of the 10 items was higher for the higher achieving students than their lower achieving counterparts. It is also interesting to note that students who had higher academic achievement reported

statistically significant higher scores than their lower ability counterparts with regard to the following six items:

- 1) I am proud to tell others that I live in Singapore; $t(284) = -2.171, p = .031, d = 0.28$
- 2) I feel accepted as a member of society in Singapore; $t(209) = -3.330, p = .001, d = 0.38$
- 3) I feel emotionally attached to Singapore; $t(284) = -2.690, p = .008, d = 0.36$
- 4) I feel a sense of belonging to Singapore; $t(284) = -2.618, p = .009, d = 0.34$
- 5) I love Singapore; $t(189) = -2.350, p = .020, d = 0.28$
- 6) I am willing to work hard to help Singapore be successful; $t(284) = -2.131, p = .034, d = 0.28$

(Table 6)

Discussion and conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to examine students' affective commitment toward Singapore. We collected questionnaire survey data from 286 Primary 6 students with ages between 11 and 12 at a local mixed-gender school. Overall, a positive affective commitment toward the country was found. No statistically significant difference was found between boys and girls for each of the questionnaire items. However, we found that students who had higher academic achievement reported statistically significant higher scores than their lower ability counterparts with regard to six items of the questionnaire.

One theory that could provide explanation for the students' overall positive affective commitment to their country is the social identity development theory (SIDT; Nesdale, 1999, 2004). This theory postulates that after children are aware of

different countries, they are most likely to express positive affect toward their own country compared to other countries; and that foreign countries are not actually disliked, or denigrated, or viewed in negative terms – instead the children's own country is simply preferred over other countries (Barrett, 2007). SIDT also postulates that negative prejudice against other countries occurs when one or more conditions prevail (e.g., when the foreign country has been an enemy of the child's own country in the past or at the current time, or when the foreign countries are perceived as less significant, less positive or inferior in status in relation to the child's own country) (Barrett, 2007).

This theory may help explain why in general the participants, boys as well as girls, in our current study have a positive affective commitment toward their country. This finding is compatible with SIDT's prediction that children tend to express preference or positive affect towards their own nation over other nations. SIDT can also explain why academic ability may influence students' affect toward their own country: Higher achievers tend to read more, travel more widely and take a greater interest to develop their knowledge about Singapore as well as other countries in the world. This acquisition of information can help the high achievers become aware of the positive image or advantages of living in Singapore in relation to other countries (e.g., Singapore is a safer place to live compared to many other cities or countries), which in turn can influence their affective commitment toward the country. We also interviewed two of the teachers who conducted the questionnaire survey. The teachers stated that students who had higher academic achievement tended to provide responses that cause them to look good. The high achievers wanted to convey to other people that they were not only good in their academic studies, but also highly committed towards their own country.

The results of this study cannot be generalized to the entire sample school student population or to other contexts. The current study was situated within a local mixed-gender SAP school, using a cohort of 11–12-year-old students. We urge future research to further explore and confirm the findings surfaced in this study in other schools such as single-gender primary schools, non-SAP schools, or secondary schools. Future research may include presenting students with some possible alternatives to determine if their original responses to the questionnaire items remain unchanged. For example, while students had indicated that they were happy to spend their lives in Singapore, would they still be as pleased with Singapore if they could actually move to Sydney, New York or London? Some of the questionnaire items may be less positive if alternatives were proposed as part of the mix. Future research could also expand the current questionnaire to collect information on additional variables to investigate if a link or relationship may exist between these variables and the affective commitment to the nation. These variables may include parental occupation or educational background, community or school characteristics, interest in politics, and media exposure (e.g., the Internet, television or radio programmes, newspapers). Future studies may also examine if affective commitment toward the nation state differs between local and overseas graduate students. The former refers to students who graduate from local Singapore universities, while the latter to students who completed their studies abroad in foreign universities. Finally, future studies could also investigate if ethnicity may influence the sense of attachment to country.

Notwithstanding the reported limitation and the fact that further research is called for, we believed we have been able to contribute to a better understanding of students' affective commitment toward their country. Perhaps the overall strength of this study lies in the creation of a reliable and validated Affective Commitment to

Country questionnaire instrument for other researchers or educators to use. This study also helps educators and researchers understand more about citizenship education in the Asia Pacific region, by focusing on one of its nation members – Singapore, a country in South East Asia. We argue that one of the major contributions of the study is to inform readers know about the affective commitment of nearly 300 students aged 11–12 of a primary school in Singapore to their nation. It is rare to have such an empirical study about citizenship education in Singapore in the international literature. Given the importance of citizenship education in today's globalized world context, we hope that our findings will be useful to other researchers and educators who are similarly engaged in efforts to enrich our collective understanding regarding student commitment to their country.

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Table 1. Factor loadings of the Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire.

Item	Component
Q1: I would be happy to spend my whole life in Singapore	.650
Q2: I enjoy discussing Singapore with people from other countries	.649
Q3: I feel as if Singapore's problems are my own	.657
Q4: I am proud to tell others that I live in Singapore	.771
Q5: I feel accepted as a member of society in Singapore	.673
Q6: I feel emotionally attached to Singapore	.792
Q7: I feel a sense of belonging to Singapore	.815
Q8: I love Singapore	.822
Q9: I care about the fate of Singapore	.799
Q10: I am willing to work hard to help Singapore be successful	.766

Note: Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis model fit indices.

Model	χ^2	χ^2/df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
One-factor	75.130	2.348	.958	.970	.069

Note: $N = 286$; χ^2 = chi-square; χ^2/df = chi-square/df ratio; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation

Table 3. Mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis scores of the questionnaire.

Item	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q1: I would be happy to spend my whole life in Singapore	3.22	.793	-.797	.118
Q2: I enjoy discussing Singapore with people from other countries	3.12	.672	-.498	.522
Q3: I feel as if Singapore's problems are my own	2.93	.744	-.407	.035
Q4: I am proud to tell others that I live in Singapore	3.48	.679	-1.414	2.449
Q5: I feel accepted as a member of society in Singapore	3.42	.675	-1.166	1.737
Q6: I feel emotionally attached to Singapore	3.15	.725	-.565	.135
Q7: I feel a sense of belonging to Singapore	3.34	.682	-.755	.246
Q8: I love Singapore	3.49	.714	-1.492	2.281
Q9: I care about the fate of Singapore	3.39	.691	-1.018	1.004
Q10: I am willing to work hard to help Singapore be successful	3.33	.677	-.914	1.248

Table 4. Affective commitment toward Singapore.

Item	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
Q1: I would be happy to spend my whole life in Singapore	41.6	42.0	13.3	3.1
Q2: I enjoy discussing Singapore with people from other countries	27.6	58.7	11.9	1.7
Q3: I feel as if Singapore's problems are my own	21.0	54.9	20.6	3.5
Q4: I am proud to tell others that I live in Singapore	55.9	38.5	3.1	2.4
Q5: I feel accepted as a member of society in Singapore	50.7	43.0	4.2	2.1
Q6: I feel emotionally attached to Singapore	32.5	51.7	13.6	2.1
Q7: I feel a sense of belonging to Singapore	45.1	45.1	8.7	1.0
Q8: I love Singapore	58.7	33.9	4.5	2.8
Q9: I care about the fate of Singapore	49.3	42.3	6.6	1.7
Q10: I am willing to work hard to help Singapore be successful	42.3	50.0	5.6	2.1

Table 5. Gender difference with regard to affective commitment scores.

Item	Boys (<i>n</i> = 149)		Girls (<i>n</i> = 137)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Q1	3.20	.788	3.24	.800	-.421	284	.674
Q2	3.10	.724	3.15	.613	-.569	284	.570
Q3	2.95	.747	2.91	.742	.461	284	.645
Q4	3.42	.727	3.55	.618	-1.650	282.30	.102
Q5	3.38	.692	3.47	.654	-1.236	284	.218
Q6	3.13	.750	3.16	.699	-.307	284	.759
Q7	3.33	.662	3.36	.704	-.356	284	.722
Q8	3.45	.775	3.53	.643	-.897	284	.370
Q9	3.38	.740	3.41	.637	-.402	284	.688
Q10	3.34	.694	3.31	.661	.270	284	.787

Note: *p* < .05 (two-tailed)

Table 6. Academic ability difference with regard to affective commitment scores.

Item	Low ability (<i>n</i> = 203)		High ability (<i>n</i> = 83)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Q1	3.21	.756	3.25	.881	-.418	133.78	.677
Q2	3.10	.656	3.17	.713	-.744	284	.457
Q3	2.89	.750	3.04	.723	-1.494	284	.136
Q4	3.42	.709	3.61	.581	-2.171	284	.031*
Q5	3.35	.718	3.60	.517	-3.330	209.65	.001*
Q6	3.07	.717	3.33	.718	-2.690	284	.008*
Q7	3.28	.670	3.51	.687	-2.618	284	.009*
Q8	3.43	.750	3.63	.599	-2.350	189.32	.020*
Q9	3.36	.692	3.47	.687	-1.226	284	.221
Q10	3.27	.668	3.46	.686	-2.131	284	.034*

Note: $p < .05$ (two-tailed)

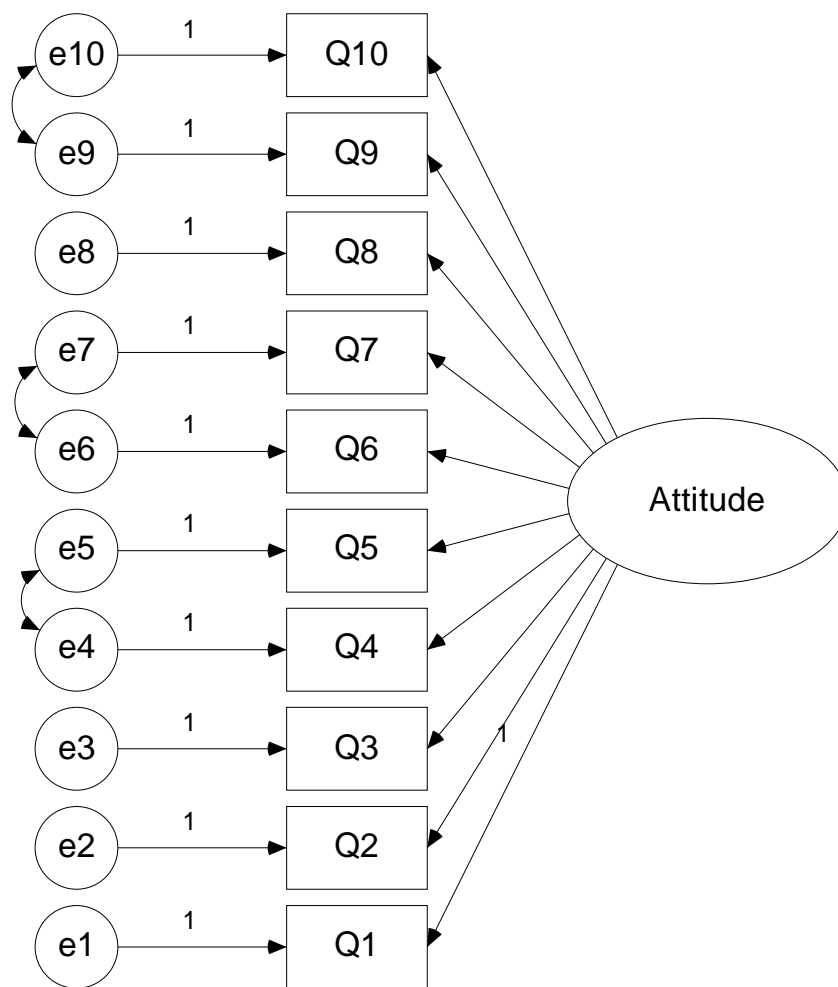


Figure 1. Path diagram of the one-factor model for the Affective Commitment to Country questionnaire.