Student Engagement Framework in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Studying student engagement leads to the positive outcomes for higher education institutions and better learning skills. It also affects students' grades in academics. In past decade notable gains have been made in understanding the factors influencing student engagement in higher education.The present paper attempts to review the literature for understanding the framework of student engagement in higher education. It will enlist the theories, models and various well-known tools developed till now to measure student engagement. Theories of student engagement are helpful for acadamicians in explaining student behavior andcreating unique perspectives and experiences for their engagement. Administrators can design educational experiences and programs using theories of student engagement.The understanding of student engagement framework in higher education will help in framing the strategies and also, further researches can be conducted in the area of enhancing student engagement.

Keywords: Student engagement, Higher education, Institutional quality, learning,

I. INTRODUCTION

Student involvement may be defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experiences [1]. Astin's conceptualization of involvement refers to the behaviours and what students actually do, instead of what they think, how they feel etc. It is concerned mainly with how students spend their time and how various institutional actors, processes and opportunities facilitate development. Astin's theory is most frequently cited theory in the higher education literature.Although conceptually similar, there is a key qualitative difference between involvement and engagement. It is entirely possible to be involved in something without being engaged.e.g., a student who sits passively in the back of classroom never offers an opinion or volunteers for committees, interacts infrequently with the group's advisor or fellow members outside could still legitimately claim that he/she is involved in a study group. Action, purpose and cross-institutional collaborations are requisite for engagement and deep learning [2] [3]. Students should not be solely responsible for engaging themselves, but instead administrators and educators must foster the conditions that enable diverse populations of students to be engaged. Educators should view engaging diverse populations as everyone's responsibility including their on. Student engagement is a measure of institutional quality[4]. Those institutions are considered as better institutions in which there are more engaged students in educationally purposefull activities. Educators must explore the ways through which they could incorporate multicultural perspectives into their class discussions and assigned materials. There is an urgent need of transforming today's campuses into involving college for all students. This must be the vision of todays higher education institutions. These initiatives must accept their responsibility for the engagement of all

students. It is possible through deliberate conversation, collaborative planning, programs, services, curricular enhancements and assessments. Emphasis should be placed on enhancing outcomes and development among diffrent populations.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

There are three leading theories in student engagement literature: Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement, Vincent Tinto's theory on the effects of social and academic integration on student departure[5] [6] [7] and later Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini's general causal model for assessing the effects of the environment on student learning [8].

1. Austin's I-E-O Model : Student input (I) refers to the program entry characteristics of students including demographic, financial, behavioural etc. Environment (E) refers to the students experience throughout the programincluding institutional characterstics, curriculum, faculty, financial aid and student peer group.Student output (O) refers to the student's characteristics after exposure to the environment including course performances and satisfaction.

2. Vincent Tinto's Interactive model of student departure from intitutions of higher education. It includes integrative experiences that reinforce persistence of students(students experiences and integrations with intentions, external commitments with members of academic and social systems of institution contribute to these positive experiences. Students' decisions to leave an institution are due to the relationship between their intentions and their interactions with others. Those students having less social or academic integration, are less likely to persist[5].

3. Ernest T. Pascarella's general causal model assess the effects of differential environments on students learning and cognitive development. Student growth is a function of the direct and indirect effects of five main sets of variables: a) student background characteristics; (b) organizational characteristics; (c) institutional environment; (d) interactions with faculty and peers; and (e) the quality of effort exerted by the student

Understanding the nature and importance of student engagement:

Student engagement refers to the student's participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside of classroom, which leads to a range of measurable outcomes. It represents two critical features first the amount of time an efforts students put into their studies and other educationally purposefull activities. The second component of student engagement is how the institution deploys its resources and organises the curriculum, other learning opportunities, and support services to induce students to participate in activities that lead to the experiences and desired outcomes such as persistence, satisfaction, and learning [2].

Researchers have found that students who are actively engaged in both in and out -of -class educationally purposeful activities are more likely to persist throughout their course completion [9]. Student engagement is positively related with their persistence[10]. Mostly students leave the institution because of feeling disconnected from peers,and faculty of the institution. Integration with academic and social communities at institution as well as involvement in educationally purposeful activities lead to institutional commitment that in turn results into persistence of students.

S. No.	Measure	Dimensions
1.	NSS	Teaching on my course, assessment and feedback, academic support, learning resources, personal development
2.	AUSSE	Active learning, student and staff interaction, enriching educational experiences, supportive learning environment, ork-integrated learning
3.	CEQ	Generic skills, appropriate workload, learning community, intellectual motivation
4.	NSSE	Level of academic challenge, active and collabortive learning, student interactions

There are various tools developed to measure student engagement in higher education context.They are listed in the table given below:

Table: 1 Tools on student engagemnet in higher education context

		with faculty members, enriching educationl experiences, supportive campus environment
5.	QSEQ	Student effort, perceptions, personal estimates of gains
6.	CCSEQ	Personal goals, facilities and opportunities, student impressions/perceptions, progress made by students
7.	CSXQ	Student expectations and interactions with faculty members, peer involvement, use of campus learning resources and opportunities, experiences with college, experiences of nature of college learning environment
8.	CIRP	Academic preparedness, expectations of college, interactions with peers and faculty, student values and goals, financial concerns
9.	YFCY	Learning strategies and pedagogical practices, residential and employment experiences, behaviour patterns, self-confidence, interaction and feeling of personal success.
10.	CSS	Cognitive and affective development, satisfaction with college experience, degree aspirations and carrier plans, post college plans
11.	CCSSE	Active and collaborative learning, academic challenge, student-faculty interactions, support for learners
12.	SEQ	Academic challenge, interaction with staff, outside classroom learning, individual students needs, participation in extra-curricular activities, living on campus, participating in a learning community.

Experiences of ethnic minority students: The experiencces of first year ethnic minority students matter a lot in understanding engagment phnomenon. If they feel prejudiced campus climate, they become detached with the institution and it will negatively affect student engagement.Those students who actively participate in purposeful campus activities, they are more likely to persist in their first year of college [11].

Ethnic minority students have not only to manage the normal academic rigor of college, but also adjust to the environment that is socially exclusive and culturally irresponsible [12]. For their proper engagement and adjustment, the first year students need a positive environment where they feel themselves as valued part of the campus community [13].

For the first year ethnic minority sudents, the adjustment experiences is especially critical and more difficult than it is for other students [12]. Campus climate plays a very important role in engaging ethnic/racial minority students [14]. The feeling of being a part of the campus have a major influnce on student's involvement in campus purposeful activities [14], whereas perceived prejudicial campus environment detaches students from the institution experiences [12].

III. DISCUSSION

In the present global era, we can assume diverse student populations at the campuses. At the time of entry to new institution, students may feel marginalised, as initially, they are unble to identify themselves as part of a

predominantly large group. It is possible to create the engaging campus environment. Cultural perspectives must be taken into consideration in student engagement like in reading, curricular activities and class discussions. Student engagement strategies based on sameness can no longer be appropriate due to enhancing student diversity in higher education. To support student diversity, campus must support the co-existence of sub-communities that permit students to identify themselves, so they can feel comfortable in becoming involved in larger campus community. Student engagement patterns for diverse populations over the campus should be carefully studied in order to help faculty and administrators to align advising and learning facilities accordingly. Student engagement has become an important way of asessing student outcomes for higher education institutions. It is used to provide information to accreditation agencies for internal accountability.

IV.CONCLUSION

The paper contributed to a better understanding of student engagement framework and helps in providing a starting point for future studies in the field. There is an urgent need of transforming today's campuses into involving institutions for all students. It is clear that student engagement is a promising area for future research. Student engagement in academic programs would facilitate better learning outcomes and retention and ultimately, institutional loyalty. Studies found positive relationship among student engagement, positive outcomes and retention. If students assume their resposibility and obligations and feel others dependency on them for service or guidance in important activities, they will be more engaged and less likely to leave the institution. Thus, the institutions must create opportunities for engaging students on campus. Faculty in the classroom must arrange such activities in which students can actively conribute to class discussions and learning.

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