

# Faculty-Student Engagements: Dimensional Aspirants or Deterrents

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## Abstract

Workforce engagement is a key organizational factor with a set of determinants for organizational excellence for profit or nonprofit businesses that include healthcare and educational establishments. The “engagement” hype has spilled over into the higher educational institutions (HEIs) where student engagement is claimed as a key factor for student success, and is becoming a potentially important measure of student success. While it is recognized that student engagement is important, most HEIs have forgotten that it takes “two to tango”. The premise underlying this paper is that for successful faculty-student engagement, one would need to look at both sides of the aspiring and deterring determinants equation of student and faculty engagements. These determinants represent two sides of the “faculty-student tango engagement” equation, of which this paper aimed to explore. It examined the two main determining dimensions of environmental factors and behavioral factors of both faculty and students. In the environmental dimension, the normal determinants were the organizational factors, work psychological climate and loyalty enhancers. The behavioral dimension explored the psychological and emotive behavior together with personal and beliefs disposition. In determining the aspirants or deterrents dimensions, it aimed at identifying key fundamentals of a holistic framework for faculty-student engagement determinants, which when clarified will potentially strengthen the engagement foundation of institution success underlying student success.

**Keywords:** student engagement, faculty engagement, student success, faculty-student engagement model

## Introduction

HEIs have historically been faculty-centered and only in the past decades have been making efforts to be more student-centered. This is supposedly to be accomplished through a wide array of key teaching and learning approaches like experiential and experience learning, outcome-based learning, case-based, project-based, flipped class room and others. All of these approaches have the singular aim of involving the student as the center of focus of development. A key fundamental is engaging the student, but “student engagement” studies are still based on the basic business and psychological studies done in the business sector.

In trying to disentangle the “student engagement” diaspora, one assumes that understanding the student and providing the necessary engagement mechanisms will serve the student-centric goal in the HEI. Unfortunately, both the student and faculty are involved in an engaged set school and social environments and are influenced by personal and psychological backgrounds. Fundamentally, it takes “two to tango” for the student-faculty engagement to work and this takes place within the plethora of environmental and operational factors provided by the school. Furthermore engagement entails both parties’ consensual agreement which is affected by another set of multifarious social, individual and school needs, as well as personal and psychological variables. These underscore the faculty-student relationship, which is a bi-relational engagement equation, as opposed to a unidirectional engagement that flows from the faculty to the student, and expects the student to want to be engaged.

To understand this bi-relational faculty-student engagement agenda, this paper had two aims: (1) reviewing basic concepts and studies in “engagement”; (2) applying inform from the review to develop and design a student-faculty engagement framework to better understand the dilemma facing the faculty-student engagement success.

## Review on “Engagement” Literature

There are various and conflicting definitions of employee engagement in the psychological literature. Some definitions claim that employee engagement is something that is produced by aspects in the workplace (McCashland, 1999; Miles, 2001 and Harter, et al 2003). These key workplace behaviors can include beliefs in the organization, desire to work to make things better, understanding of the business context and the “bigger picture”, being respectful of and helpful to colleagues, willingness to “go the extra mile” and keeping up to date with developments in the field (Robinson, et al., 2004) or involvement in decisions (Purcell, et al., 2003). All these are based on perception, where Buchanan and Huczynski, (2004, p.215) defined this perception as “the dynamic psychological process responsible for attending to, organizing and interpreting sensory data” which is different from individual to

individual, as each individual receives and interprets information differently based on their personal frame of reference (Towers and Perrin, 2003).

Furthermore others assert that it is something that the individual brings to the workplace (Harter et al 2002 and Goddard 1999). Extraneous variables such as individual differences are important; Harter et. al. (2002) notes that “the individual’s involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work” may not be trivial and could have significant effects (Ferguson, 2007) as employee engagement is related to emotional experiences and wellbeing (May, et al 2004 and Ferguson, 2007). This is supported by Saks (2006) and Roberts (2006) who noted that engagement is most closely associated with the existing construct of job involvement and flow. This is based on the social exchange theory, which states that people make social decisions based on perceived costs and benefits (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) and that the human being evaluates all social relationships to determine the benefits they will obtain from such relationships (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964; Ethugala, 2011 and Ologbo and Saudah, 2012).

According to the main streams of studies on “engagement”, there are three potential approaches of “engagement”:

***Psychological approach*** – According to Kahn (1990), engagement at work is the degree of: (1) cognitive (concerns employees’ beliefs about the organization, its leaders and working conditions); (2) emotional (concerns how employees feel about each of those three factors and whether they have positive or negative attitudes toward the organization and its leaders); and (3) physical (concerns the physical energies exerted by individuals to accomplish their roles) involvement in a work role, how much a worker puts into a job and work interactions, and the personal connections with work and co-workers which are basically conceptualization rather than operational (Kim et al., 2009a,b). Employees who exhibit engagement are physically involved in their tasks, are cognitively alert and attentive, and are emotionally connected to their work and to others in the work place (Ferrer, 2005).

***Burnout approach*** – In the second approach, the “burnout approach” of Maslach and Leiter (1997) and Maslach et al. (2001) conceptualized engagement as the opposite or the positive antithesis to the three burnout dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and sense of inefficacy. Models proposed by Kahn (1990) and Maslach et. al. (2001) indicate the psychological conditions or antecedents that are necessary for engagement, but they do not fully explain why individuals will respond to these conditions with varying degrees of engagement.

***State of mind approach*** – Schaufeli et al. (2002) provided a third approach for employee engagement, asserting that job engagement and burnout are independent states of mind inversely related to each other. They defined engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor refers to

the feeling of physical energy, emotional strength, willingness to invest effort, and endurance of difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Finally, absorption refers to the state of being so completely concentrated and highly engrossed in work that an employee feels time passes quickly and has difficulties detaching from work (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Regardless of the approach, Macey and Schneider (2015) found a commonality across the various definitions of employee engagement that reflect the following three things about the concept of engagement:

1. Employee engagement is a desirable condition;
2. Employee engagement has an organizational purpose;
3. Employee engagement suggests absorption, dedication, passion, enthusiasm, focused effort and energy on the part of the employee.

## **How Engagement Works**

Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals when they use discretionary effort to actually care about their work and their company. Such engagement is undertaken not solely for a paycheck, or a future promotion, but work on behalf of the organization's goals which represents activation on the part of the employee, the willingness to expend his or her discretionary effort to help the employer. Employee engagement does not mean employee happiness as someone who is happy might not be productive or working hard or contributing towards organization accomplishment. Employee engagement does not mean employee satisfaction, as s/he might be compliant to regulations and not go the "extra mile" and is easily dissuaded with higher offers. This basically supports the idea that engagement is an emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006 and Shaw, 2005) or the amount of discretionary effort exhibited by employees in their job (Frank et al. 2004).

Kevin Kruse (2012) stated "Engaged Employees lead to... higher service levels, quality, and productivity, which leads to... higher customer satisfaction, which leads to... increased sales (repeat business and referrals), which leads to... higher levels of profit, which leads to... higher shareholder returns (i.e., stock price)". The Gallup Organization (2004) found critical links between employee engagement, customer loyalty, business growth and profitability. In 2005, a survey conducted in Thailand revealed that only 12 percent of Thailand's employed population were "engaged", 82 percent were "actively disengaged" and 6 percent disengaged. Similar Gallup studies have found the levels of engagement in Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore to be 18 percent, 12 percent, 9 percent, 17 percent and 9 percent, respectively (Gallup 2004).

As demonstrated in the Hewitt Associates' research, engagement of the workforce is important, as it showed that companies with an engaged workforce posted shareholder returns 19 times higher than the total stock market index in 2009; unfortunately 46% of the surveyed organizations had seen a decline in employee engagement since 2009 (Hewitt Associates, 2010). In addition, the ASTD/i4cp Learning and Engagement Study 2007 (ASTD, 2008) found that about two-thirds of respondents said that the quality of learning and training opportunities positively influences engagement in their organizations; 54% said the sheer breadth of such opportunities boosts engagement; and, "career development opportunities" were cited by 76% of respondents as driving engagement to a high or very high extent. This was supported by Schweyer's research (2009) which stated that "Disengaged employees" cost U.S. employers up to \$350 billion annually and as many as 84% of U.S.-based employees planned to look for new jobs in 2011 (Manpower, 2010). Categorically, engaged employees put passion into their work, know and do what is expected of them and advocate their company to others. The second category is being responsive to engagement where employees put time, but not necessarily passion into their work. They are satisfied but are unclear about the organization's vision, and are not likely to talk about their organization to others. In the last category of the disengaged, they will talk to others, but the conversations may be negative and may undermine others' efforts rather than concentrate on their own work. This would mean that engagement is a combination of workforce loyalty (comprised of overall satisfaction with the organization, others and a plan to continue working with organization) and workforce contribution (comprised of willingness to go the extra mile and willingness to recommend the organization) (Inforsurf, n.a.).

Engagement is the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization and how hard they work and how long they stay as a result of that commitment. This commitment has two main components: (1) Rational Commitment which is the extent to which employees believe that managers, teams, or organizations support employees' self-interest (financial, developmental, or professional) and (2) Emotional Commitment which is the extent to which employees value, enjoy and believe in their jobs, managers, teams, or organizations. These lead to the outputs of the (1) Discretionary Effort of the employee's willingness to go "above and beyond" the call of duty, such as helping others with heavy workloads, volunteering for additional duties, and looking for ways to perform their jobs more effectively and (2) Intent to Stay which affects the employee's desire to stay with the organization, based on whether they intend to look for a new job within a year, whether they frequently think of quitting, whether they are actively looking for a job or have begun to take tangible steps like placing phone calls or sending out résumés (Corporate Leadership Council, 2004). Both of these affect the employee's performance and attrition. Based on the Corporate Leadership Council Engagement Model, a basic "10:6:2" Rule was established where: (1) every 10 percent improvement in commitment can increase an

employee's effort level by 6 percent and (2) every 6 percent improvement in effort can increase an employee's performance by 2 percent.

## Discussion of Measurements of Engagement

Engagement measurement instruments include the People Metrics' Employee Engagement Index (EEI), Gallup's Employee Engagement (EE) and the Temkin Employee Engagement Index (TEEI). These, however, do not offer clear definitions of engagement and thus have their measurement constructs reflect more of the satisfaction with supervisors, co-workers, and environment. Three basic approaches in the measures of engagement are:

***Work Engagement Scale*** - This scale is based on the premise that employee engagement can be conceptualized as either a trait or a state and a behavior. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale better reflects and provides measures of employee engagement that include such feelings as absorption, dedication, passion, enthusiasm, focused effort and energy on the part of the employee; these have been used in contemporary engagement literature and research (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003; Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008; Koyuncu et al., 2006; Karatepe and Demir, 2014).

***Affective Commitment Scale (ACS)*** (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001) – This has been conceptualized as having a strong relation to employee engagement (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004) where the employee's affective bond with their organization has been considered an important determinate of dedication, loyalty, and satisfaction (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001). These emphasize the emotional connection employees have with their work and closely parallel the emotive qualities of engagement (Saks, 2006, CLC, 2006, Towers Perrin, 2003; 2007; Macey & Schneider 2008), including such conditions as meaningfulness and safety (Kahn, 1990).

***Psychological Climate Measure*** – This is the employee's interpretation of their organizational setting in relation to their own well-being (Brown & Leigh, 1996 and James, James, & Ashe, 1990). In reality, the psychological climate is the lens employees use to understand their environment and "captures the meaningful psychological representations made by individuals relative to the structures, processes, and events that occur inside the organization" (O'Neil & Arendt, 2008, p. 355). It also "provides constraints on or opportunities for behaviors and attitudes in organizational settings" (Johns, 2001, p. 32).

## Discussion of Drivers of Engagement

In a white paper, Dale Carnegie identified people at the core of engagement as driven by three main sets of drivers: (1) Relationship with immediate supervisor (2) Belief in senior leadership (3) Pride in working for the company. In the MSW Research study, it was found that gender, ethnicity and work status (full/part time) did not emerge as critical variables of employee engagement, while more senior management (Senior VP+ level), people employed in a large corporation, those having a college education, earning a higher than average salary and those under the age of 30, or over 50 had some minor influences on engagement. Groups that are less engaged or disengaged with their organizations, in terms of demographic and organizational segments, were those who were middle-aged employees (40-49 years old), highly educated, i.e., those with a post-graduate education, or lower-level income employees earning or newer employees with less than a year or client-facing and clerical staffers and those working in government, military, education and manufacturing sectors, with only about 29% fully engaged while there were 26% disengaged. Basically, quoted by Andrew Carnegie, the bottom-line is *“You must capture the heart of a supremely able man before his brain can do its best”*.

The Dale Carnegie’s research (2012), “Emotional Drivers of Employee Engagement” showed that the level of engagement increased dramatically with the number of key positive emotions (Inspired, Enthusiastic, Empowered, Confident or Valued) that the employees feel. But three core negative emotions drove disengagement: feeling irritation, disinterest, and discomfort; these were more important than positive emotions because negative emotions were more contagious and were more noticeable than positive ones. Negative emotions could impact co-workers and the organization as a whole and spread beyond the workplace to clients, potential clients and possible future hires. Employees who felt negative emotions were disengaged nearly ten times more than employees who felt positive emotions.

Some of the key drivers of Employee Engagement, as identified and found in some of the workforce engagement studies and researches, are provided below:

- employee welfare, empowerment, employee growth and interpersonal relationships (Mani, 2011).
- 10 Cs of Employee Engagement, namely Connect, Career, Clarity, Convey, Congratulate, Contribute, Control, Collaborate, Credibility & Confidence (Seijit and Crim 2006).
- Contributions, connections, growth and advancement (Wallace et al., 2006).
- Employee involvement and commitment (Britt et al., 2001).
- Leadership, relationships at work, total reward, recognition, work life balance and work itself (IES, 2004).

- Say, Stay and Strive (Hewitt, 2004).
- Job satisfaction, feeling valued and involved, equal opportunity, health and safety, length of service, communication and co-operation (IES, 2005)
- Rational – how well the employee understands roles/responsibilities; Emotional- how much passion employee can bring to work; and Motivational- how willing the employee is to invest discretionary effort to perform their role. (Towers Watson, 2009)
- Organizational culture and organizational communication (Bhatla, 2011).
- Brand alignment, recognition, people/HR practices, and organization reputation (Aon Hewitt Consulting, 2011a, “Trends in global employee engagement”).

The drivers above have also been supported by another major study in employee engagement as published by the Conference Board’s (2006), “Employee Engagement, A Review of Current Research and Future Direction” which was based on 12 research studies, of which four of the studies agreed on these eight key drivers of engagement:

- Trust and integrity – how well managers communicate and ‘walk the talk’;
- Nature of the job – how mentally stimulating the day-to-day is;
- Line of sight between employee performance and company performance – understanding of the employee towards their work that contributes to the company’s performance;
- Career Growth opportunities – the future opportunities for growth;
- Pride about the company – degree of self-esteem the employee feels by being associated with their work;
- Coworkers/team members – degree of influence of one’s level of engagement;
- Employee development – the company’s effort to develop the employee’s skills;
- Relationship with one’s manager – degree to which the employee values his or her relationship with his or her manager.

## **Synthesized Generic Factors Condition of Engagement**

Based on the literature and discussion on engagement and its drivers above, all of which are similar in terms of the key drivers and rationale driving engagement and approaches to and measures of engagement, Table 1 shows a proposed synthesis of the “factors condition of engagement” of any typical organization, with these factors and conditions applied within the context of the a higher education institution.



**Table 1** Synthesized Generic Factors and conditions of Engagement

Generic Factors Condition of Engagement	Factors Condition of Faculty-Student Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization Factors:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of Product/Process</li> <li>- Workplace Environment</li> <li>- Motivational Value Proposition</li> <li>- Organization Profile</li> <li>- Organizational Culture</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization Factors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of Educational Product/Process</li> <li>- School Place Environment</li> <li>- Motivational Value Proposition</li> <li>- Institutional Profile</li> <li>- Institutional Culture</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological-Relational Climate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information and Communication</li> <li>- Customer Orientation of the Management</li> <li>- Managerial-Subordinate Relations and Support</li> <li>- Involvement and Commitment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological-Relational-Connect Climate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information and Communication</li> <li>- Stakeholder Orientation of the Institution</li> <li>- Institutional-Faculty (student) Relations and Support</li> <li>- Involvement and Commitment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Disposition:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal Beliefs and Values</li> <li>- Societal Norms</li> <li>- Work Life Balance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Disposition:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal Beliefs and Values</li> <li>- Societal Norms</li> <li>- Work Life Balance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotive Disposition:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inspiration</li> <li>- Passion</li> <li>- Empowered</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotive Disposition (Faculty/Student):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inspiration</li> <li>- Passion</li> <li>- Empowered</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

From a generic organization perspective, the synthesized factors can be broadly categorized into 4 key categorical areas of factorial conditions of:

**1) Organizational Factors and conditions** – This is from the main premise that key organizational factors which are more extrinsic in nature within the organization create an environment for other intrinsic factors to work within. These can be typified by the degree of conduciveness of the organizational environment of the work space, infrastructures and facilities, the organizational norms and culture, the organizational policies and procedures, organizational practices and players. All of these typify the collective actions towards organizational performance and pursuits of the organizational platform, on which the play is staged as a whole by the internal players with the external stakeholders. What and how the players perform and how well they will perform or intend to perform is dependent on their

perception of the motivational tangible and intangible cost/benefits of the value additions proposed to them by the organization. Performance is related to their perception of the type / nature of the organization culture that they and their peers subscribe to as the work and behavioral norms within the organization. All of these lead to and affect how they perceive the quality of the processes affecting the final product or service quality. Basically, their performance is affected by and relates to their perceptions of these key organizational factors and conditions that thus show their degree of engagement and willingness to engage based on these organizational factors and conditions.

**2) Psychological-Connect Climatic Conditions** – People work and interact within a work environment that is not static, but an ongoing ever dynamic and multifarious and multifaceted set of human interactions. While organizational factors are external to the human, the work performance is executed by a human and this goes into the psychological and psychosomatic domains where people have tried for centuries to fathom and solve this intriguing human puzzle, which ultimately might not be explained or is unfathomable. This has caused the world a multitude of problems and issues that show that decades of research and studies in comprehending the human intrigues and idiosyncrasies have always come to naught for the missing one element that lies in a single man's psychological or emotive actions that are contrary to basic research evidence. This underscores the organization relationships of the human interactions and relations based on their interpretations of information signals and the way or form and formats they are communicated across, all of which have an individualistic affectivity on actions leading to the manager-subordinate relationships contained within the influence of the external organizational factors. In reality, a relationship does not amount to much if they do not “connect” and the chemistry of connect goes beyond the normal superficiality of relationship. The intricacies of psychological affectivity of the human relationships, and at a more realistic level, the “real” connection chemistry goes into the blurry area of human psychosomatic behavior which has been studied, but presumably would be more aptly categorized as individualistic than group behavior. This will be a more realistic determinant of the levels and degrees and depths of engagement and relational engagement in the work situation or environment leading to commitment and involvement in the organization.

**3) Personal Disposition Condition Factors** – This goes into the more intrinsic individual human or people-level domain that is more personal than collective actions. Humans live in a world based on their beliefs and their values conditioned or dictated by social norms which are demonstrated externally in a “herd mentality”, but not displaying the true internal intent or inherent disposition within the “heart and mind” which is individualistic and can drive real actions as opposed to social norms. These are not demonstrated openly but can affect the degree of intention and intensity of engagement, which ultimately cannot be totally forced due to intrapersonal-psychological affective resistance or heart-brain struggle of

logic and feelings. But these intra dispositions can be influenced by other extrinsic factors, resulting in a reduced level of potential engagement.

**4) Emotive Disposition Condition Factors** – This key factor is based on both the psychological and personal conditioning factors, as they shape and form the innate and internal emotive response which is a “black hole” which science has tried to understand and interpret with a certain degree of presumptuous assertions. Ultimately, this is still based on the final emotive disposition of an individual which can be erratic and irrational to others but rational and acceptable during a split nanosecond impulsive decision of the decision maker. This is the main driving force of passions for work, pursuit of empowerment, the inclination and inspiration to work or not work, as well as engagement, disengagement or pretentious engagement.



**Figure 1** 4 T “Takes Two to Tango” Framework of Faculty- Student Engagement

Workplace or Workforce Engagement has traditionally been studied from the unidirectional approach through perception studies on the workforce elements affecting engagement behavior. In reality, researchers have oversimplified the engagement “connection chemistry” and its multifaceted and multi-directional interactions, which make the “engagement equation” more complicated and complex than recognized.

An analogy to this is the creation of a rhythmic and beautiful, yet successful Tango dance. For this to happen, it takes two to tango, with a pure flow of connection chemistry of both parties within a suitable set of environmental factors and supplementary fixtures. This “connection chemistry” is also affected by the psychological, emotional and personal dispositions of both parties. This means that these three dimensions must “connect and click” at all points of split nanosecond actions conditioned by these 3 main sets of factors and its sub-factors. This would inadvertently also mean that all these factors must “connect and click” at these split nanoseconds simultaneously to create a beautiful successful tango.

To better understand the complexity involved in engaging both the student and the faculty, the analogy of the “Takes Two to Tango” can be applied to establish the faculty-student engagement framework. The premises of this “Takes Two to Tango” Faculty-Student engagement framework (Figure 1) are based on the factors and conditions discussed earlier and can be either a deterrent or an aspirant. Specifically these are:

**Premise 1:** For a successful and fruitful faculty-student engagement, it must be established as a bi-relational and consensual agreement to connect for the chemistry action to click so that both parties can fully and emotionally engage.

**Premise 2:** The factors and conditions of the “bi-relational and consensual agreement to connect for the chemistry action to click” that exist for both parties are similar. However, in an engaged situation these conditions and factors must be synchronized for a successful and fruitful faculty-student engagement.

**Premise 3:** These factors and conditions, when synchronized, demonstrate a multitude of multifaceted directional interplays of the factors and conditions that ultimately create very complicated and complex “engagement situations” that can either be a set of aspirants or deterrents for a successful and fruitful faculty-student engagement.

Based on these premises under which the factors and conditions for each of the key faculty-student factors and conditions operates, the following section will discuss each of these factors and conditions from both sides of the parties that affects a successful and fruitful faculty-student engagement. These are:

**(1) Organization Factors and Conditions** – This set of factors and conditions deal with paraphernalia, the “staged set”, the physical aspects and infrastructure, external motivators, environmental setting where the engagement and the split second interplay is played out by the faculty and student.

**Faculty and student Perspectives** – A faculty or student has a choice to choose to engage, disengage or partially engage or completely ignore the importance of engaging, which inherently means more time taken to make the faculty-student engagement successful and fruitful. Basically, since the components of these organizational factors are external to

each party, it is subsumed that they affect both the faculty and student similarly. All these take place within the school place environment and infrastructure whereby the interactions take place in a set of physical settings and surroundings, assisting to create a conducive environment that supports the quality of the educational process and its final product. This engagement is influenced by the set of motivational value that each party perceives to derive from this engagement and leads to the same output of a high quality product in the form of the student's competencies and capacities. These motivational value propositions of the faculty involve the tangible and intangible incentives or requirements like the pay, cost/benefits, extras, additional perks and privileges or just the fulfilment of the basic work requirements that motivate or demotivate the faculty's contribution to this successful and fruitful faculty-student engagement. On the other hand, the motivational value proposition to the student can further development of student's self, knowledge and skills sets, and propensity to operate under a more student centric or caring environment from a human that "cares" for his/her well-being. The profile of the institution or the institutional culture works the same way for both, as it is a common operant to both in terms of the institution's reputation, its standing and status, or a pervasive "caring" culture that places the human as the basic priority factor. This works the same way for both, as the better these factors are, the more the parties will work to maintain and sustain the profile and culture, thus forming a common platform of engagement.

**(2) Psychological-Relational-Connection Factors and Conditions** – This set of factors and conditions goes into the relationship which to a certain extent can be superficial in nature, as the relationship will not work unless there is depth and breadth which is dependent on "the chemistry to connect". Unless two person "connect and click", the engagement just touches on the superficiality of needed necessity or requirements, the tip of the engagement iceberg.

**a. Information and Communication** – The information science discipline is as intriguing as the psychological science especially when it examines the human domains of perception and interpretation of the information signals from sound, sight and bodily collations, which vary from one person to the next. The same set of information can be perceived and interpreted differently by the faculty or student within the similar set of institutional environment and settings discussed earlier. In the high speed information technology era, these information signals are dispersed, communicated and received through a multitude of channels like mobile or virtual technologies or third party communications, which could be distorted through interpretations. This creates a more complicated situation whereby the faculty and student communicate, exchange and interpret information signals in the faculty-student engagement equation.

**b. Stakeholder orientation and Institutional Support** – This is dependent on what and how the faculty and student perceive of the institution as an “orientation or culture towards all stakeholders of a good caring, positive and outwards looking and oriented” where the faculty-student engagement occurs. In this case, these are the emotive and psychological aspects of the physical hardware where the faculty-student engagement is staged. Technically, this is the intangible aspects of the physical hardware, which are the “software and peopleware” aspects of the institution towards stakeholders and the support for the faculty-student engagement to “connect and click”.

**c. Involvement and Commitment** – When the institution embarks on the “engagement” imperatives to support better and more productive learning and development, the institution subsumes that both the faculty and student want to be engaged. The institution forgets that engagement cannot be willfully forced on two persons, if they do not wish to or if they prefer to distance themselves from this engagement due to psychological and emotive reasons, personal dispositions or perceptions and organization conditions that influence the degree of success of the faculty-student engagement. Each faculty and student have the choice of their degree of involvement and commitment, and these cannot be forced or created but can be supplemented through the organization settings, environments and common understanding. These are intrinsic to each individual faculty and student as there could be a thousand and one trivial or significant or insignificant reasons to be involved or be committed, as this is a human social connection-clicking factor that science can try to understand but can only fathom or fantasize on scientific grounds, which are limited to lab studies.

**(3) Personal Disposition Factors and Conditions** – This goes into the personal values, beliefs or norms that each faculty or student choose to select and behave according to their fascinating but individualistic set of beliefs, which unfortunately cannot be dictated to a person, even though there is the pressure of social conformity, but in the end, it is a last minute individual decision that science could not possibly explain. No two faculty or students will have the same set of personal beliefs or values even though they work and live within the same or similar social norms but do not technically “breathe the same beliefs or values” within the establishment’s beliefs and values or norms. No amount of law or regulations can force “herding towards a common set of beliefs and norms”, as the personal disposition of the faculty and student is too individualistic to just pretend to accept or act within the societal beliefs or norms that will not dictate their unconscious choice of the work life or student life balance that one chooses, which is ultimately an individual choice or preferred condition.

**(4) Emotive Factors and conditions** – This set of emotive determinants is influenced by the psychological and personal disposition in the school place as conditioned by a set of organizational conditions where the faculty-student engagement is played out. The key question here is whether the faculty or student is inspired or passionate enough to

engage, disengage or pretend to engage. While the faculty feels that s/he has the responsibility to engage, the school settings and environment, their work load, their work-social-life balance, what will inspire, empower or even make them to be passionate about engaging the students, and institutional mission or goals may play a significant role. On the other hand, the students are already pushed by their immediate families or peers to do well to save the “face” of the family or for a better future through education, what can inspire or make them passionate to study. This can add to the engagement requirements, all of which are beyond the understanding of the normal student, or wanted by the students as these are more of a burden to be engaged with the faculty when they prefer to do what they want and hang out with their peers.

## **Implications and Recommendations**

An analogy is the fateful June 23, 2016 event that marked the “Brexit – Britain Exit” exercised when the U.K divorced itself from EU, after 43 years of a tumultuous confrontational and conflicting relationship that did not show any forms of successful engagement and did not connect or click. This relationship clearly missed out on the chemistry of the connectivity required of a successful engagement.

This analogy also holds true to the success of faculty-student engagement. It does take two to tango to ensure successful engagement, as it is not in just a relationship between two parties or many parties. The relationship must connect and click with chemistry of both parties’ engagement to the function in an active, enthusiastic and dynamic matter. The above discussion of the “Takes Two to Tango” faculty-student engagement framework does paint a black picture that faculty-student engagement is a burden and will not work. On the contrary, this paper aims to demonstrate that full comprehension and understanding of the factors conditioning the two-way partnership between the faculty and student is an imperative to be studied and reviewed as opposed to the present line of thought that “engagement” is about the physical attributes of the environment or the tangible and intangible motivators that influences a person to engage. These are just the superficial external factors and conditions, of which the internal personal and psychological factors and conditions are what really matters.

### **(1) Deterrents of Faculty-Student Engagement**

While the institution can set the stage in the forms of the supporting external paraphernalia by creating a conducive environment or the tangible and intangible motivators or through rules and regulations, these are external factors where the engagement play is staged. These can be manipulated and orchestrated but it belies the real personal disposition in terms of being passionate and inspired for the faculty to engage when they are burdened

with their primary roles of teaching and learning, research and societal responsibilities, social and family life to really “care” about “kids of other families”. On the other hand, what inspires or make the student to be passionate about engaging with the faculty as they are duty bound to their family through studying for a better future in a “dog kill dog” society as imposed by the supposed to know all forebears and seniors who have gone through the same stages but in another era and time dimensions of which the geo-political, social-cultural requirements have changed. Even if the two parties are inspired and passionate enough to make the engagement relationship work, the bottom line is still the psychological and emotive factors and conditions, though studied and researched as shown by leading researchers in the literature discussion, are no longer in the domain of theoretical comprehension or understanding of the human behavior but the split nanosecond human decisions and actions that make both parties potentially connect and click. Unfortunately, this split nanosecond decision to connect and click normally occurs on two separate time-frame segments, where the faculty might have good intentions but the student is not ready or vice versa or the external institutional factors and conditions that interplay are not conducive or attractive as a stage or as motivational inducers. This would practically mean that all these theoretical aspects with good intents can fail to materialize as the psychological and personal and emotive factors reign as dominant mysterious factors that can change the faculty-student engagement equation from success to ultimate failures. This means that the faculty-student engagement cannot be forced as long as these inherent factors exist and “play the devilish” part of engagement.

## **(2) Aspirants of Faculty-Student Engagement**

While the deterrent factors and conditions do not paint a positive and successful picture of the faculty-student engagement equation, this does not mean that it spells the end of the faculty-student engagement’s pursuit of the betterment of the student achievements and development. A better comprehension and understanding of these strong and omnipresent personal, emotive and psychological factors and conditions could pave the way to more fruitful and more successful faculty-student engagement. Better comprehension and more understanding by both parties can potentially lead to a more amicable and desirable connect-click chemistry of engagement, as everyone has their own unique set of likes and dislikes, periodic emotive ups and downs, introverted or extroverted personal nature, and psychological fleeting moments governing decision making and actions, based on the interpretation of information signals and communications mechanisms. As such, these aspirants, when understood can be managed within one’s notions and desires, though it takes a longer time where the short periods and the program of study might not sustain a more fruitful faculty-student engagement.



### (3) Recommendations

Based on this discussion of the faculty-student engagement as a set of aspirants or deterrents factors condition, some recommendations are called for:

**i. *Bi-directional two way faculty-engagement*** – This practically means that a one-sided study or research into the faculty-student will not work well as these engagements are more personal, emotive and psychological which are human based. As such, future research or for that matter, to make faculty-student engagement work, one must look at it or approach it as a two way bi-directional personal, psychological and emotive of two human interactions.

**ii. *Psychological, personal and emotive factors and conditions*** – As discussed above, dealing with the external organizational factors and conditions are not adequate and appropriate. The external influencers are only the stage where the core behavioral aspects of the psychological, emotive and personal factors reign dominant as key influences of success. Fruitful faculty-student engagements need to be identified, studied and managed.

**iii. *Faculty-student engagement craze*** – While the faculty-student engagement equation is potentially a very strong student developer focused on student-centricity for the benefit of the student as hyped by institutions, the institutions have to recognize that success is dependent on all the interplays of the multifarious and multifaceted factors and conditions. These should be better comprehended and understood before embarking on this “engagement” journey which should be longer term focused and sustainable, and not be treated as a fleeting moment of infatuated fad.

In conclusion, while this paper was aimed at reviewing the faculty engagement and the student engagement or faculty-student engagement, there are many more in-depth issues that have not been involved and need to be studied. The multifarious and multifaceted dimensions affecting faculty-student engagement that connect and click should be recognized and taken into consideration. Recognizing these can be deterring, but at the same time can lead to more successful and fruitful engagement of the faculty-student.

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