



Check for updates

Teacher perception of the factors influencing academic engagement among rural secondary school-going adolescents in Kabarole District: Implications for educational practice and learner support

Loyce Kiiza Kobusingye¹ , Moris Matembu Kipuru² ,
Ivan Odongo Okello³  & Teopisita Nabasajji⁴ 

¹ Department of Foundations of Education, Mountains of the Moon University, Uganda.

² Department of Foundations of Education and Educational Psychology, Kyambogo University, Uganda.

³ Department of Professional Studies, Lira University, Uganda.

⁴ Department of Educational, Social and Organisational Psychology, Makerere University, Uganda.

ABSTRACT

The study explored teachers' perceptions of the factors that influence academic engagement among secondary school adolescents in rural schools in Kabarole District, Western Uganda. The participants of the study were Arts and Sciences teachers, selected purposively based on experience, role, and expertise. Data was collected from 24 participants using key informant interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings reveal that academic engagement is influenced by student personal factors that are psychological nature, teacher or instructional, school or institutional, home-based and social, characterized by self-esteem, self-efficacy, value attachment, teaching styles, teacher personality, instructional materials, parenting styles, parental level of education and attitude towards education, learner socio-economic status, quality of recruited teachers, school rules and regulations, and peer pressure/influence. Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that academic engagement is influenced by in-school and out-of-school factors at school, home, and within the student. As a result of such findings, it is recommended that for academic engagement to be improved and sustained at healthy levels, schools, teachers, and parents need to boost support for learners through the impartation of soft skills such as self-esteem and self-efficacy, improvement of teaching strategies, and enhancement of teacher-student, teacher-parent, and student-student relationships.

Keywords: *Academic engagement, teacher, perception, rural secondary schools*

INTRODUCTION

Academic engagement is one of the aims of teaching and learning processes.¹ Learning is possible only when learners as recipients are active and possess a willingness to learn. Academic engagement is also linked to problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking and motivation. It can take the shape of

¹ Feifei Han, "The Relations between Teaching Strategies, Students' Engagement in Learning, and Teachers' Self-Concept," *Sustainability* 13, no. 9 (April 29, 2021): 5020, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13095020>.

CORRESPONDENCE – Loyce Kiiza Kobusingye Email: koloyce@gmail.com

PUBLICATION HISTORY - Received : 9th January, 2026 | Accepted: 1st June, 2026 | Published: 23rd July, 2026.

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE –. Kobusingye, Loyce Kiiza, Moris Matembu Kipuru, Ivan Odongo Okello, and Teopisita Nabasajji. "Teacher perception of the factors influencing academic engagement among rural secondary school-Going adolescents in Kabarole District: Implications for educational practice and learner support." *Journal of Education and Learning Technology* 7, no.6 (2026): 638 – 652. 599-620 <https://doi.org/10.38159/jelt.2026765>

COPYRIGHT AND LICENSING - © 2026 The Author(s). Published and Maintained by Noyam Journals.

This is an open access article under the CCBY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions. One of the advantages of academic engagement is the promotion of a sense of belonging among learners, which in turn enhances motivation. By definition, academic engagement is a complex construct that is often linked to behavior, that is, participation; cognition, that is, thoughtfulness; and motivation, that is, hard work and vigour. It is the mental-cognitive investment in terms of time and energy a learner puts in their learning activities, which comes in affective, cognitive, and behavioural manifestations, working jointly to confirm a learner's positive attitude towards knowledge and skills acquisition, that is, learning.² Academic engagement also manifests psychologically as seen through absorption, vigor, and dedication.

Academic engagement is important in every teaching and learning process, for its personal and collective benefits for students and schools. It is highly associated with enhanced academic achievement, academic motivation, socio-affective growth, in-depth learning, student self-regulation, lowered dropout intention and, last but not least, inspiration for advancement to and for higher education. The drivers of academic engagement include, but are not limited to, peer influence, academic aspirations and goals, school environment, parental involvement, nature of curriculum, personality and teacher-learner relationship. Hence, the drivers are personal, social, and instructional in nature.³

In its absence or low levels, academic engagement leads to poor academic achievement and performance, demotivation, low self-esteem, low academic self-efficacy, destructive classroom behaviours and conduct disorders, poor social skills, poor psychological well-being, and risk of school dropout.⁴ Adolescent learners in secondary schools are at a stage of goal-setting, task tackling, and academic confidence-building. Academic engagement in this category of population is driven by personal, social, pedagogical, and institutional factors that need to be investigated in depth, from a teacher's perspective, if the end goal of academic achievement is to be reached, hence the necessity of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Past research on academic engagement shows variety in populations, education levels, and research methods. Regarding its definition, academic engagement has been described differently by various educators and psychologists. It may refer to learner participation in academic activities. Skinner et al. further explain it as a connection between learners and learning activities, goals, and values across different learning contexts.⁵ Engagement relates to persistence, effort, and action in academic work across various learning tasks. When students value academic outcomes, participate in them, and see

² Chandra P. Carter et al., "Measuring Student Engagement among Elementary Students: Pilot of the Student Engagement Instrument—Elementary Version.," *School Psychology Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (June 2012): 61–73, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029229>.

³ Marie-Christine Opendakker and Alexander Minnaert, "Learning Environment Experiences in Primary Education: Their Importance to Academic Engagement," in *Interpersonal Relationships in Education: From Theory to Practice* (SensePublishers Rotterdam, 2014), 183–94; Dong Yang et al., "Parental Involvement and Student Engagement: A Review of the Literature," *Sustainability* 15, no. 7 (March 28, 2023): 5859, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075859>; Sedighe Yasemi, Fatemeh Khalvandi, and Mohsen Zareie, "Investigating the Relationship between Hidden Curriculum and Students' Academic Engagement and Communication Skills," *Journal of Pouyesh in Education and Consultation (JPEC)* 1401, no. 16 (2022): 113–33; Cristina Serrano, Sergio Murgui, and Yolanda Andreu, "Improving the Prediction and Understanding of Academic Success: The Role of Personality Facets and Academic Engagement," *Revista de Psicodidáctica (English Ed.)* 27, no. 1 (January 2022): 21–28, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psicoe.2021.11.002>; Ruiguang Li, "The Role of Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relations in Flipped Learning on Student Engagement," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (August 12, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.741810>.

⁴ Imaobong D. Akpan and Mfonobong E. Umobong, "Analysis of Achievement Motivation and Academic Engagement of Students in the Nigerian Classroom," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, November 1, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2013.v2n3p385>; Ying Zhao et al., "Self-Esteem and Academic Engagement Among Adolescents: A Moderated Mediation Model," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (June 3, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.690828>; Shama Noreen et al., "The Impacts of Academic Self-Efficacy on Academic Outcomes: The Mediating Effect of Student Engagement," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 11 (November 26, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v8-i11/4904>; Eli Vibeke Eriksen and Edvin Bru, "Investigating the Links of Social-Emotional Competencies: Emotional Well-Being and Academic Engagement among Adolescents," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 67, no. 3 (April 16, 2023): 391–405, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2021.2021441>; Russell W. Rumberger and Susan Rotermund, "The Relationship Between Engagement and High School Dropout," in *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement* (Boston, MA: Springer US, 2012), 491–513, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7_24.

⁵ Ellen A. Skinner, Thomas A. Kindermann, and Carrie J. Furrer, "A Motivational Perspective on Engagement and Disaffection," *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 69, no. 3 (June 14, 2009): 493–525, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164408323233>.

themselves as part of them, they are considered engaged.⁶ Academic engagement can also be seen as psychological, through a commitment to learning.⁷ This aligns with Schaufeli et al.'s definition, which describes it as a positive state of mind characterized by dedication and vigor.⁸ Conversely, Christenson et al.'s comprehensive view of academic engagement includes determination to learn, a sense of belonging and identification with school activities, participation, and the initiation of academic efforts, all aimed at achieving desired outcomes.⁹ The common themes in these definitions include commitment, determination, energy, vigor, initiation, psychological investment, participation, motivation, identification, and dedication concerning learning activities. Academic engagement is considered multi-dimensional and complex, involving emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components that work together to represent a learner's positive approach to learning.¹⁰ However, some scholars, such as Schaufeli et al., define engagement in terms of absorption, dedication, and vigor, rather than strictly emotional, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions.¹¹ Other aspects are agentic, as argued by Reeve and Tseng.¹²

Different frameworks underpin and provide in-depth insights into drivers of academic engagement. The self-determination theory suggests that learners have three basic needs that would require them to be academically engaged, such as the need for relatedness, competence, and autonomy.¹³ These are both individually and collectively found in studies done by Wood, Fuller and Skinner, and Ambikairajah and Ambikairajah as far as relatedness is concerned.¹⁴ Wood further relates academic engagement to learner competence, while Orazbayeva and Van der Sijde relate it to autonomy.¹⁵ Although these different studies tackle diverse categories and levels of learners, their interrogations fit within the stipulations of the self-determination theory. On the other hand, the expectancy theory of academic engagement argues that learners are driven to engage academically primarily because of not only the expectations of succeeding and achievement but also because of the values attached to the academic tasks at hand in terms of the importance of school and its impact on individual learners.¹⁶ The social-cognitive theory asserts that academic engagement is directly linked to self-concept pillars such as self-efficacy, specifically academic self-efficacy, and is a mediator between engagement and academic achievement.¹⁷ Some studies, such as those done by Fatimah et al.,

⁶ Rick Audas and Jon Douglas Willms, *Engagement and Dropping out of School: A Life-Course Perspective* (Citeseer, 2001).

⁷ Susie Lamborn, Fred Newmann, and Gary Wehlage, "The Significance and Sources of Student Engagement," *Student Engagement and Achievement in American Secondary Schools*, 1992, 11–39.

⁸ Wilmar B. Schaufeli et al., "The Measurement of Engagement and Burnout: A Two Sample Confirmatory Factor Analytic Approach," *Journal of Happiness Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 2002): 71–92, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015630930326>.

⁹ James J. Appleton, Sandra L. Christenson, and Michael J. Furlong, "Student Engagement with School: Critical Conceptual and Methodological Issues of the Construct," *Psychology in the Schools* 45, no. 5 (May 3, 2008): 369–86, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20303>.

¹⁰ Katja Upadyaya and Katariina Salmela-Aro, "Development of School Engagement in Association with Academic Success and Well-Being in Varying Social Contexts," *European Psychologist*, 2013.

¹¹ Schaufeli et al., "The Measurement of Engagement and Burnout: A Two Sample Confirmatory Factor Analytic Approach."

¹² Johnmarshall Reeve and Ching-Mei Tseng, "Agency as a Fourth Aspect of Students' Engagement during Learning Activities," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 36, no. 4 (October 2011): 257–67, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2011.05.002>.

¹³ R. M., Ryan and E. L. Deci, *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness* (Guilford Press, 2018).

¹⁴ D. R. Wood, "The Impact of Students' Perceived Relatedness and Competence upon Their Motivated Engagement with Learning Activities: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective" (University of Birmingham, 2016); Carrie Furrer and Ellen Skinner, "Sense of Relatedness as a Factor in Children's Academic Engagement and Performance," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 95, no. 1 (March 2003): 148–62, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148>; Ananthan Ambikairajah, R. Ambikairajah, and Eliathamby Ambikairajah, "The Impact of Improving Feelings of Relatedness on Motivation and Engagement for Tertiary Students," *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology* 52, no. 5 (May 28, 2021): 721–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020739X.2019.1703149>.

¹⁵ Wood, "The Impact of Students' Perceived Relatedness and Competence upon Their Motivated Engagement with Learning Activities: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective"; Balzhan Orazbayeva, Peter van der Sijde, and Thomas Baaken, "Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness – the Facilitators of Academic Engagement in Education-Driven University-Business Cooperation," *Studies in Higher Education* 46, no. 7 (July 3, 2021): 1406–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1679764>.

¹⁶ Jacquelynne S. Eccles and Allan Wigfield, "Expectancy-Value Theory to Situated Expectancy-Value Theory: Reflections on the Legacy of 40+ Years of Working Together," *Motivation Science* 9, no. 1 (March 2023): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1037/mot0000275>.

¹⁷ Anne-Marie Adams et al., "Student Engagement with Feedback and Attainment: The Role of Academic Self-Efficacy," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 45, no. 2 (February 17, 2020): 317–29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2019.1640184>.

have also carried out meta-analyses on how self-efficacy influences academic engagement.¹⁸ Last but not least, the interest theory argues that for a learner to be academically engaged in academic activities, they must possess individual and situational interest in learning activities. This has been reasserted by scholars such as Kahu et al.¹⁹ These theories collectively assume that academic engagement is mainly influenced by relatedness, competence, autonomy, achievement expectations, value attachment, self-efficacy, and motivational interest.

The teacher plays an important role in influencing and enhancing academic engagement among learners in the form of their teaching strategies and teacher-learner relationships.²⁰ How teachers perceive learner motivation, interest, and participation influences the overall outcomes of teaching and learning. Their own perception and measure of self-efficacy influences how well they instigate teaching practices that promote autonomy among learners through respective teaching and learning styles. This, in the long run, influences academic engagement among learners.

Academic engagement is driven by learner personal traits such as interest, self-efficacy, and self-esteem as soft skills. Other factors include motivation, family factors such as parental expectations and involvement, socio-economic status, school factors like culture, climate, and teacher factors such as perceptions and teaching styles. Qualitative studies that focus on teachers' perception and understanding of the factors that explain different levels of academic engagement among learners in rural secondary schools are still scanty, and yet these are crucial in understanding and interpreting challenges associated with academic engagement among rural secondary school students specifically.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was informed by several theories, that is, the Self-Determination Theory, Expectancy Value Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Interest Theory.²¹ Of all these theories, the Interest Theory, as advanced by Renninger and Hidi, takes the upper hand.²² The theory posits that academic engagement among learners is determined by interest in academic tasks, which in turn is influenced by various factors. The interest theory presents interest as a central factor in student participation through increased motivation, specifically intrinsic motivation, but also academic self-efficacy, with the end goal of achieving and reaching academic pursuits. Furthermore, the theory posits that learners will most probably engage in academic tasks if they find what is being taught relevant, meaningful, and interesting, at a personal level. This interest drives participation, motivation, and attention for better academic outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological design to explore teachers' perceptions of the drivers of academic engagement among adolescents in rural schools. A qualitative design was preferred because it enables an in-depth exploration and understanding of the determinants of learner academic

¹⁸ Siti Fatimah et al., "Academic Self-Efficacy and Its Effect on Academic Engagement: MetaAnalysis," *International Journal of Instruction* 17, no. 1 (2024): 271–94.

¹⁹ Ella R Kahu, Karen Nelson, and Catherine Picton, "Student Interest as a Key Driver of Engagement for First Year Students.," *Student Success* 8, no. 2 (July 23, 2017): 55–66, <https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v8i2.379>.

²⁰ Xiaofang Xiong, "Influence of Teaching Styles of Higher Education Teachers on Students' Engagement in Learning: The Mediating Role of Learning Motivation," *Education for Chemical Engineers* 51 (April 2025): 87–102, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ece.2025.02.005>; Hunter O'Hara, "The Transcendent Teacher-learner Relationship: A Class Investigation.," *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education* 25, no. 4 (January 25, 2005): 331–37, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1090102050250407>.

²¹ Ryan and Deci, *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*; Allan Wigfield and Jenna Cambria, "Students' Achievement Values, Goal Orientations, and Interest: Definitions, Development, and Relations to Achievement Outcomes," *Developmental Review* 30, no. 1 (March 2010): 1–35, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2009.12.001>; Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective," *Annual Review of Psychology* 52, no. 1 (February 2001): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1>.

²² K. Ann Renninger and Suzanne E. Hidi, *The Power of Interest for Motivation and Engagement* (and Suzanne Hidi. Description: New York, NY : Routledge, 2016. |: Routledge, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315771045>.

engagement.²³ This approach is inherently natural and interpretative.²⁴ Through engaging teachers within their everyday school and classroom situations, the study ensured that the data collected reflected meanings grounded in their lived experiences rather than the researchers' interpretation.²⁵ The phenomenon, academic engagement under study, was thus examined in its natural context to allow participants to interpret and make sense of it from their own perspective, consistent with phenomenological inquiry.²⁶

The study was carried out in the rural schools in Kabarole District in Western Uganda. The schools were non-residential and mixed-gender, serving learners aged 13 to 19 years. The total student population across the participating schools was about 400, with about 30 teachers. These learners represent early, middle, and late adolescence. The focus of the study was academic engagement among middle adolescents (14–19-year-olds), a developmental period punctuated by significant physical, psychological, and social factors that may directly or indirectly influence academic engagement (Salmela-Aro et al., 2021). The study sample was made up of 24 graduate teachers who teach middle school adolescents. The teachers, both male and female, teach Arts and Science subjects, with a minimum of five years of experience at their respective schools.

Since the study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of the factors driving academic engagement among adolescents in rural schools, data were collected through 24 key informant interviews with teachers who are experienced and knowledgeable in teaching and pedagogy. Participants were asked to share their views on the determinants of academic engagement. The selected schools had to be rural, and the teachers had to be working with middle adolescents, and were selected using purposive sampling (Robinson, 2024). Therefore, any school or teacher outside these criteria was excluded from the study based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.²⁷

Collected data from teachers on their perceptions of the factors influencing academic engagement among adolescents in rural secondary schools were managed through audio recording, manual coding, and subsequent theme generation. Teachers were assigned codes T1-T10, representing both Arts and Science subject teachers. The data were analyzed thematically, an approach that facilitates the identification, analysis, and construction of themes within the refined data.²⁸ Thematic analysis is inherently analytical, involving the sifting and sorting of data to facilitate comparability.²⁹ The resultant themes from the data addressed the research question, exploring teachers' perceptions of the factors shaping academic engagement among adolescents. Before undertaking the study, ethical considerations were taken into account as far as confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, and voluntary participation from the study participants were concerned.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the teachers' perceptions, interviews revealed that academic engagement is influenced by factors that are presented in the thematic discussion below.

²³ Mahsood Shah and Ming Cheng, "Exploring Factors Impacting Student Engagement in Open Access Courses," *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 34, no. 2 (2019): 187–202.

²⁴ Jerry W Willis, Muktha Jost, and Rema Nilakanta, *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical Approaches* (Sage Publications, 2007).

²⁵ Brigitte Cypress, "Qualitative Research Methods : A Phenomenological Focus," *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing* 37, no. 6 (November 2018): 302–9, <https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000322>.

²⁶ W. John Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2007).

²⁷ Steve Campbell et al., "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples," *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25, no. 8 (December 18, 2020): 652–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.

²⁸ Helene Joffe, "Thematic Analysis," in *Qualitative Research Methods in Mental Health and Psychotherapy* (Wiley, 2011), 209–23, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119973249.ch15>.

²⁹ Muhammad Faisal Chowdhury, "Coding, Sorting and Sifting of Qualitative Data Analysis: Debates and Discussion," *Quality & Quantity* 49, no. 3 (May 3, 2015): 1135–43, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-014-0039-2>.

Student psychological factors

According to the teachers, academic engagement among learners in rural schools is influenced by personal and psychological factors that affect their participation in learning activities. One such factor was identified as low self-esteem and low self-worth, as one female teacher of English asserted,

In my view, low self-esteem and self-worth resulting in low confidence among students significantly affect their engagement in learning activities. This issue stems from their primary school, where activities that could have boosted their self-esteem, such as debates, are not encouraged. As a result, the students carry this low self-esteem to secondary school (T1)

A similar submission was made by another female Geography teacher, who attributed low self-esteem to a weak foundation during primary school, and argued that low academic engagement has roots in the family or home background.

Students in rural secondary schools usually have low self-confidence. As much as this is a personal characteristic, it definitely affects the way they participate in classroom activities. As is a practice in most African rural settings, parents do not impart self-esteem, especially what can support confidence in self-expression, essential for classroom management. Moreover, some parents, especially the mothers, struggle with low self-esteem themselves; thus, they cannot impart what they do not possess. This, therefore, explains why, among all students, female learners tend to be less interactive and participatory in academic activities (T3).

The same sentiment was shared by a male History teacher who asserted that,

For the years I have worked in rural schools as a history teacher, I have consistently witnessed low self-esteem. Particularly, during classroom interactions, you notice that many students do not believe in their abilities. Something attributed to growing up in rural settings, with little exposure and interactions with people outside their home environment. As a result, they are usually shy, and although they may wish to participate, they fear being laughed at by their classmates. As a result, they prefer to keep their answers to themselves (T5).

The findings show that self-esteem, as a personal and psychological factor, plays an important role in lessening academic engagement and ultimately reducing classroom participation. The findings also indicate that adolescents in rural secondary school environments, who generally exhibit low self-esteem, tend to have lower levels of academic engagement. This finding aligns with prior studies which recognizes that self-esteem positively predicts academic engagement, something that is consistent with the expectancy–value theory. According to this theory, when learners perceive themselves as capable and of high value, they experience positive self-evaluation, which enhances their engagement in academic activities.³⁰ Moreover, learners with higher self-esteem are better able to regulate emotions associated with negative or disappointing academic outcomes, which often result from elevated expectations.³¹ These findings also resonate with those of Zhang et al., whose studies demonstrated a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic engagement at the secondary school level, as well as the sheltering role of self-esteem in bolstering the link between educational expectations and academic persistence.³²

Secondly, interviews with teachers revealed that another personal or psychological factor affecting academic engagement among adolescents in rural secondary schools is self-efficacy. Typically understood as a person's judgment of their own ability to achieve goals and complete tasks, self-efficacy varies among learners, and these differences influence both academic and non-academic outcomes. According to teachers as participants, it emerged as one factor that impacts academic engagement, as one male Geography teacher stated,

³⁰ Pina Filippello et al., "Italian Version of the Family Almost Perfect Scale: Psychometric Characteristics and Relationships with Academic Engagement, Self-Esteem, and Personal Perfectionism," *Applied Developmental Science* 25, no. 4 (October 2, 2021): 351–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2019.1647106>.

³¹ Lisa A. Kort-Butler and Kellie J. Hagewen, "School-Based Extracurricular Activity Involvement and Adolescent Self-Esteem: A Growth-Curve Analysis," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 40, no. 5 (May 22, 2011): 568–81, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-010-9551-4>.

³² Feng Zhang et al., "Educational Expectations and Academic Persistence among Rural Adolescents: The Protective Role of High Self-Esteem," *Behavioral Sciences* 14, no. 10 (October 1, 2024): 888, <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14100888>.

Many of the students in rural schools where we teach lack self-belief in their potential to succeed and overcome academic difficulties. Resultantly, such students are unlikely to question, participate in group discussions, or even engage in integrative activities that are central to the competency-based teaching and learning curriculum. Basically, they do not believe that academic tasks are manageable or achievable. However, on rare occasions, you will find a student in the class with high levels of self-efficacy. Such a student is active, shows steady improvement, and often excels academically, which underscores the essential role of self-efficacy in academic engagement (T5).

Thus, self-efficacy, as a general personal attribute, in an academic context, translates into academic self-efficacy and shapes academic engagement through influencing how learners perceive their potential and sustain their motivation for academic success. It affects their ability to initiate and maintain effort through processes such as self-motivation, social and vicarious learning, goal setting, persistence, and engagement with task-specific demands. These findings align with Chang and Chien, in whose meta-analysis, a significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and behavioral academic engagement was revealed.³³ This relationship, according to Adams et al., is reinforced by feedback and attainment.³⁴ Similarly, a meta-analysis by Fatimah et al. identified self-efficacy as a key attribute that influences student engagement.³⁵ Since these studies do not specifically target rural students, they set a strong empirical foundation for identifying a research gap that is both geographical and population-specific, thereby underscoring the relevance and necessity of the present study.

Last but not least, interviews with teachers revealed that one of the key personal drivers influencing academic engagement among adolescent learners is the value placed on education. This value placement factor was highlighted by a Mathematics teacher, who asserted,

Many students in our rural schools lack a clear understanding of why they are in school and what they aim to achieve through schooling. The greatness and outcomes of why they are at school or why schools exist are underplayed. Some learners attend school solely because they are sent to school by their parents, while others remain in school merely to pass the time. Therefore, such students tend to be disengaged and aloof during classroom academic activities, refraining from participation because they do not see any value or benefit in doing so. On the contrary, learners who recognize the importance of education invest the effort and actively engage in learning, motivated by both the short-term and long-term benefits of educational and professional accomplishment (T4).

Previous studies examining the role of value judgements placed on education in shaping academic engagement remain limited, which creates an empirical gap that needs further investigation. A deeper understanding of how learners' valuation of education influences academic engagement, particularly among adolescent students in secondary schools, is necessary, perhaps because such perceptions may play a critical role in shaping learning outcomes.

Teacher and Instruction factors

Another theme that emerged from the interviews with teachers on the factors influencing academic engagement was teacher-related or instructional factors. These factors are centered on pedagogical practices and approaches, and the nature of teacher-student relationships. One teacher of Biology stated,

As human beings, teachers come to class with their own personalities, and these affect whether or not they can accommodate active learning. Some teachers, for example, do not value participatory learning. Their teaching styles are more content-oriented than cognitive-oriented. As much as some subjects demand certain teaching styles and techniques, I think every teacher should endeavor to be creative in involving learners in the learning process. If the teacher does not encourage learner participation, academic engagement, and its benefits are denied (T6)

³³ Dianfu Chang and Wei cheng Chien, "Determining the Relationship between Academic Self-Efficacy and Student Engagement by Meta-Analysis," 2015, <https://doi.org/10.2991/ermm-15.2015.37>.

³⁴ Adams et al., "Student Engagement with Feedback and Attainment: The Role of Academic Self-Efficacy."

³⁵ Fatimah et al., "Academic Self-Efficacy and Its Effect on Academic Engagement: MetaAnalysis."

Closely related to the above theme is the nature of instructional resources, particularly in subjects with a strong practical orientation. As one Chemistry teacher observed,

We cannot separate teachers' instructional styles from the availability of teaching or instructional materials. Even highly competent teachers face challenges, or better say limitations, in fostering academic engagement when essential laboratory materials are unavailable. In practical subjects, such as chemistry, that I teach, participatory learning is complex to achieve in the absence of the required chemicals and apparatus. Certain subjects cannot be taught theoretically, and students are expected to engage actively. As the availability of instructional materials decreases, so too do the levels of academic engagement and vice versa (T8).

The findings indicate that instructional factors at both the teacher and material level play a crucial role in shaping academic engagement in rural secondary schools, with teacher personality, teaching styles, and the availability of instructional resources being particularly influential. This finding aligns with studies by Sandlin et al., who argue that specific teacher personality traits, namely extraversion and agreeableness, have a significant influence on learners' academic engagement.³⁶

Yet about teaching styles, prior studies also demonstrate a clear association with academic engagement. For instance, Shaari et al. examined the relationship between lecturer teaching styles and student academic engagement, while Chan et al. highlight learner motivation as a key mediating factor in this relationship.³⁷ Moreover, Mohammad and Ghalavandi understand this relationship as being mediated by educational ethics.³⁸ Beyond engagement, the association between teacher personality and learner engagement has also been linked to broader educational outcomes, including student academic performance and learners' experiences and well-being.³⁹

Home-based factors

From the interviews with teachers, it also emerged that student academic engagement among adolescent students in rural secondary schools is triggered by home and family factors. These factors range from socio-economic status, parenting styles, attitude towards education, and educational level. As a male teacher of History stated,

Surely, if a parent is not educated, they will not see the value of education, and in taking their child to school, they will not bother to motivate their child or children to do whatever it takes to work towards excelling academically. Active participation will be like a foreign language to them, and they will not bother to encourage their children to do it. If parents are not educated, their attitude towards it will not be enough to encourage academic practices such as participatory learning among their children. At the end of the day, if a parent is educated, they will have a positive outlook on learning practices such as academic engagement, for it helps their children reap its benefits (T5)

This assertion was further complemented by another parent-related factor, specifically parenting styles, as highlighted by another teacher, who asserted that,

Parents who adopt varying parenting styles exert varying effects on their children's academic engagement. For example, in rural contexts, parents who employ authoritative parenting, characterized by high levels of control alongside warmth and responsiveness, can foster greater

³⁶ Cole Sandlin, "Teacher Personality and Student Engagement: A Case Study," 2019.

³⁷ Abdull Sukor Shaari et al., "The Relationship between Lecturers' Teaching Style and Students' Academic Engagement," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 118 (March 2014): 10–20, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.02.002>. Sokhom Chan, Sorakrich Maneewan, and Ravinder Koul, "Teacher Educators' Teaching Styles: Relation with Learning Motivation and Academic Engagement in Pre-Service Teachers," *Teaching in Higher Education* 28, no. 8 (November 17, 2023): 2044–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1947226>.

³⁸ Aqeel M. Mohammad and H. Ghalavandi, "Analyzing the Relationship between Teaching Styles and Academic Engagement with Emphasis on the Mediating Role of Educational Ethics," *Ethics in Science and Technology* 20 (2025): 141.

³⁹ Madiha Liaqat, Asifa Yasin, and Mariyam Nadeem, "The Effect of Teacher Personality on Student Performance and Engagement," *Global Language Review* VIII, no. II (June 30, 2023): 422–33, [https://doi.org/10.31703/glr.2023\(VIII-II\).34](https://doi.org/10.31703/glr.2023(VIII-II).34); Wajiha Qamar, "Exploring The Effect of Teacher Personality Traits on Engagement, Learning Experience, and Well-Being," *Pakistan Orthodontic Journal* 15, no. Suppl (2023): 85–90.

academic engagement. Such parenting practices, often operating indirectly and unconsciously, cultivate confidence and autonomy in children. Consequently, when these children enter school, they are more likely to demonstrate positive academic behaviours and sustained engagement (T3).

This was further validated by another teacher, who also observed that,

...sometimes you meet a parent who is so carefree with their child, and you confirm why the child never bothers with actively participating... Some parents simply do not care, so when reporting their child to them, do not expect any intervention (T1)

In the interviews, the teachers also identified students' socioeconomic status as a critical factor explaining variations in academic engagement among adolescents in rural schools. As one participant asserted, socioeconomic status influences learners' academic experiences in ways that extend beyond the mere payment of school fees.

The higher or more favorable the socioeconomic status, the higher the academic engagement is expected to be. Unfortunately, our students here in village schools come from largely economically impoverished backgrounds, and no wonder their engagement is always low. This is mainly because once a child or student comes from a home that can afford to buy books and extra instructional services, they become stimulated cognitively and will end up being active in class. Once this is lacking, they become dull and dormant in lessons (T8).

Another teacher echoed the same sentiment but extended it by offering a psychological perspective, highlighting the underlying mental and emotional dimensions associated with the issue, stating,

Socio-economic status has significant financial implications for learners. Limited financial resources often generate stress among learners, which can adversely affect their psychological well-being. Such finance-related stress is associated with reduced academic motivation, which in turn contributes to lower levels of academic engagement. (T7).

These findings align with prior studies. For instance, Tomaszewski and Xiang consider academic engagement as a mediator between socioeconomic status and academic performance,⁴⁰ while Li et al. identify socioeconomic status as a mediator between behavioural engagement and academic achievement.⁴¹ Similarly, Nasir et al. show the impact of socioeconomic status on classroom engagement among elementary school learners,⁴² and Chen et al. highlight its effect on parental involvement and student academic engagement.⁴³ These empirical studies collectively underscore the significance of home-based factors, especially parent educational level and attitudes toward education, parenting styles, and home socioeconomic status, in shaping learners' academic engagement.

School/institutional factors

Interviews with teachers regarding the factors influencing academic engagement further revealed school-related factors, particularly those associated with schools as institutions of formal learning. As one teacher observed,

If the school leadership fails to motivate teachers, who in turn are expected to motivate learners toward academic engagement, such engagement is unlikely to happen. Conversely, the deliberate efforts by school leadership to motivate learners directly or through teachers are

⁴⁰ Wojtek Tomaszewski, Ning Xiang, and Mark Western, "Student Engagement as a Mediator of the Effects of Socio-economic Status on Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Australia," *British Educational Research Journal* 46, no. 3 (2020): 610–30.

⁴¹ Longfeng Li et al., "Longitudinal Relations between Behavioral Engagement and Academic Achievement: The Moderating Roles of Socio-Economic Status and Early Achievement," *Journal of School Psychology* 94 (October 2022): 15–27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2022.08.001>.

⁴² Rimsha Nasir, Sher Zaman, and Shahzada Adeel, "Impact of Students' Socio-Economic Status on Classroom Engagement: A Case of Elementary Schooling," *Journal of Asian Development Studies* 14, no. 2 (July 4, 2025): 1188–1200, <https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2025.14.2.93>.

⁴³ Xin Chen et al., "The Impact of Family Socioeconomic Status on Parental Involvement and Student Engagement during COVID-19 in Promoting Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Study in Chinese Children," *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 246 (October 2024): 105992, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2024.105992>.

likely to enhance student academic engagement. The absence of such efforts definitely generates the opposite effect. (T4)

The same teacher further noted,

...the schools play a critical role in determining the type of teachers they employ, which ultimately influences learners' academic engagement. For instance, the deployment of enthusiastic and committed teachers could more likely enable greater learner participation and engagement in academic activities.

The third way the school as an institution influences learner engagement is through its organizational culture, as another teacher asserted,

Some schools have a good culture that helps learners to embrace academic engagement. For example, at a school where I teach, you find that learners have the freedom to express themselves in class without fear of being laughed at. Also, a school that reprimands any teacher or student who bullies a learner trying to express themselves is a good school that can improve engagement towards benefits like academic growth (T1).

Hence, a school can influence academic engagement through the type of teachers it recruits and by fostering a culture that promotes freedom of expression while discouraging practices that suppress such freedoms. These findings are consistent with Del Toro and Wang, who broadly link school culture to academic engagement.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, further studies are needed to examine the specific aspects of school culture and how they directly influence students' engagement.

Social factors

Last but not least, the interviews with teachers revealed that academic engagement is also shaped by social factors, particularly peer pressure and peer influence. One teacher asserted,

If a student sees other students being active in class, they too will become active. On the contrary, if classmates and friends are disengaged, they will likely follow suit. Adolescents often act based on social influences; if active participation is rewarded, students are motivated to emulate it, but if low engagement is punished, that behavior is also copied (T8).

Hence, the presence of peer pressure leads to the vicarious learning of academic engagement as an academic behaviour. This is consistent with Furrer and Marchand, who examined the influence of peer pressure and its influence on student adolescents' academic engagement.⁴⁵

SUMMARY

In conclusion, according to teachers, academic engagement in rural secondary schools is influenced by multiple interrelated factors. These are personal factors, which include students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and value attachment to education; teacher-related factors, which include teacher personality, teaching styles, and the use of instructional materials; home-based factors such as socio-economic status, parenting styles, parental educational level, and parental attitudes towards education; and finally, social factors such as peer influence. The construct model below provides a visual summary of these findings.

Theme	Description	Indicators
Personal/Psychological Factors	Individual learner attributes and characteristics that influence academic engagement.	Self-esteem, self-efficacy, and value attached to education

⁴⁴ Juan Del Toro and Ming-Te Wang, "Longitudinal Inter-Relations between School Cultural Socialization and School Engagement: The Mediating Role of School Climate," *Learning and Instruction* 75 (October 2021): 101482, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2021.101482>.

⁴⁵ Carrie J. Furrer and Gwen C. Marchand, "The Adolescent Peer System and Academic Engagement," *Educational Psychology* 42, no. 4 (April 21, 2022): 459–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2019.1706722>.

Home-Based Factors	Family-related influences on academic engagement.	Parental educational level, parental attitude to education, Parenting Styles, Socio-economic status
Teacher-Based Factors	Qualities, characteristics, and practices of teachers that influence academic engagement.	Teaching styles, Instructional Strategies, Teacher Personality
Institutional/School Factors	Structural, administrative, and environmental aspects of the school system	School culture, school's rules and regulations, and teacher quality recruited
Social Factors	Student-student dynamics influencing academic engagement.	Peer Influence and Peer Relationships

RECOMMENDATIONS

For purposes of learner support and general educational practice, and to promote and sustain academic engagement among rural secondary school adolescents, because of its short-term and long-term benefits, there is a need to put in place mitigations that tackle behavioural, emotional, and, more importantly, the cognitive dimensions of academic engagement. Firstly, there is a need to revise teaching styles and strategies to emphasize cognitive-oriented approaches, including inquiry-based learning and interactive methods that encourage both teacher-student and student-student engagement. Teachers should foster healthy teacher-student relationships by demonstrating empathy, providing constructive feedback, and maintaining mutual respect. Motivation should be actively cultivated using a variety of strategies, including social, activity-based, and token-based approaches. Teachers should impart and promote academic self-efficacy feelings and attitudes among learners, as this strengthens students' self-concept and directly influences engagement. To tackle or address home-related factors, schools and teachers should involve parents more actively in the learning process through regular communication and by encouraging parental participation in their children's study routines. Additionally, life skills, particularly soft skills such as assertiveness, self-efficacy, and effective communication, should be intentionally developed among learners. Finally, further research is recommended on the relationship between value attachment to education and academic engagement, as existing studies on this issue remain limited, as discovered in the course of this study.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at exploring the factors that influence academic engagement among rural secondary school-going adolescents, and established that academic engagement is influenced by student personal factors that are psychological nature, teacher or instructional, school or institutional, home-based and social, characterized by self-esteem, self-efficacy, value attachment, teaching styles, teacher personality, instructional materials, parenting styles, parental level of education and attitude towards education, learner socio-economic status, quality of recruited teachers, school rules and regulations, and peer pressure/influence. Various recommendations have been made to manage behavioural, emotional, and, more importantly, the cognitive dimensions of academic engagement. The study concludes that any effort geared towards improving academic engagement must therefore tackle and enhance these attributes for greater and holistic educational outcomes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Anne-Marie, Hannah Wilson, Julie Money, Susan Palmer-Conn, and Jamie Fearn. "Student Engagement with Feedback and Attainment: The Role of Academic Self-Efficacy." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 45, no. 2 (February 17, 2020): 317–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2019.1640184>.
- Akpan, Imaobong D., and Mfonobong E. Umobong. "Analysis of Achievement Motivation and Academic Engagement of Students in the Nigerian Classroom." *Academic Journal of*

- Interdisciplinary Studies*, November 1, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2013.v2n3p385>.
- Ambikairajah, Ananthan, R. Ambikairajah, and Eliathamby Ambikairajah. "The Impact of Improving Feelings of Relatedness on Motivation and Engagement for Tertiary Students." *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology* 52, no. 5 (May 28, 2021): 721–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020739X.2019.1703149>.
- Appleton, James J., Sandra L. Christenson, and Michael J. Furlong. "Student Engagement with School: Critical Conceptual and Methodological Issues of the Construct." *Psychology in the Schools* 45, no. 5 (May 3, 2008): 369–86. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20303>.
- Audas, Rick, and Jon Douglas Willms. *Engagement and Dropping out of School: A Life-Course Perspective*. Citeseer, 2001.
- Bandura, Albert. "Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective." *Annual Review of Psychology* 52, no. 1 (February 2001): 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1>.
- Campbell, Steve, Melanie Greenwood, Sarah Prior, Toniele Shearer, Kerrie Walkem, Sarah Young, Danielle Bywaters, and Kim Walker. "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples." *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25, no. 8 (December 18, 2020): 652–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.
- Carter, Chandra P., Amy L. Reschly, Matthew D. Lovelace, James J. Appleton, and Dianne Thompson. "Measuring Student Engagement among Elementary Students: Pilot of the Student Engagement Instrument—Elementary Version." *School Psychology Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (June 2012): 61–73. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029229>.
- Chan, Sokhom, Sorakrich Maneewan, and Ravinder Koul. "Teacher Educators' Teaching Styles: Relation with Learning Motivation and Academic Engagement in Pre-Service Teachers." *Teaching in Higher Education* 28, no. 8 (November 17, 2023): 2044–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1947226>.
- Chang, Dianfu, and Wei Cheng Chien. "Determining the Relationship between Academic Self-Efficacy and Student Engagement by Meta-Analysis," 2015. <https://doi.org/10.2991/ermm-15.2015.37>.
- Chen, Xin, Yinghe Chen, Xiao Yu, Jun Wei, and Xiujie Yang. "The Impact of Family Socioeconomic Status on Parental Involvement and Student Engagement during COVID-19 in Promoting Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Study in Chinese Children." *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 246 (October 2024): 105992. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2024.105992>.
- Chowdhury, Muhammad Faisol. "Coding, Sorting and Sifting of Qualitative Data Analysis: Debates and Discussion." *Quality & Quantity* 49, no. 3 (May 3, 2015): 1135–43. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-014-0039-2>.
- Creswell, W. John. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. London: Sage Publications, 2007.
- Cypress, Brigitte. "Qualitative Research Methods : A Phenomenological Focus." *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing* 37, no. 6 (November 2018): 302–9. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000322>.
- Eccles, Jacquelynne S., and Allan Wigfield. "Expectancy-Value Theory to Situated Expectancy-Value Theory: Reflections on the Legacy of 40+ Years of Working Together." *Motivation Science* 9, no. 1 (March 2023): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1037/mot0000275>.
- Eriksen, Eli Vibeke, and Edvin Bru. "Investigating the Links of Social-Emotional Competencies: Emotional Well-Being and Academic Engagement among Adolescents." *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 67, no. 3 (April 16, 2023): 391–405. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2021.2021441>.
- Fatimah, Siti, Fulgentius Danardana Murwani, Ika Andriani Farida, and Imanuel Hitipeuw. "Academic Self-Efficacy and Its Effect on Academic Engagement: Meta-Analysis." *International Journal of Instruction* 17, no. 1 (2024): 271–94.
- Filippello, Pina, Caterina Buzzai, Luana Sorrenti, Sebastiano Costa, Annarita Abramo, and Kennet T. Wang. "Italian Version of the Family Almost Perfect Scale: Psychometric Characteristics and

- Relationships with Academic Engagement, Self-Esteem, and Personal Perfectionism.” *Applied Developmental Science* 25, no. 4 (October 2, 2021): 351–63.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2019.1647106>.
- Furrer, Carrie J., and Gwen C. Marchand. “The Adolescent Peer System and Academic Engagement.” *Educational Psychology* 42, no. 4 (April 21, 2022): 459–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2019.1706722>.
- Furrer, Carrie, and Ellen Skinner. “Sense of Relatedness as a Factor in Children’s Academic Engagement and Performance.” *Journal of Educational Psychology* 95, no. 1 (March 2003): 148–62. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148>.
- Han, Feifei. “The Relations between Teaching Strategies, Students’ Engagement in Learning, and Teachers’ Self-Concept.” *Sustainability* 13, no. 9 (April 29, 2021): 5020.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13095020>.
- Joffe, Helene. “Thematic Analysis.” In *Qualitative Research Methods in Mental Health and Psychotherapy*, 209–23. Wiley, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119973249.ch15>.
- Kahu, Ella R, Karen Nelson, and Catherine Picton. “Student Interest as a Key Driver of Engagement for First Year Students.” *Student Success* 8, no. 2 (July 23, 2017): 55–66.
<https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v8i2.379>.
- Kort-Butler, Lisa A., and Kellie J. Hagewen. “School-Based Extracurricular Activity Involvement and Adolescent Self-Esteem: A Growth-Curve Analysis.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 40, no. 5 (May 22, 2011): 568–81. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-010-9551-4>.
- Lamborn, Susie, Fred Newmann, and Gary Wehlage. “The Significance and Sources of Student Engagement.” *Student Engagement and Achievement in American Secondary Schools*, 1992, 11–39.
- Li, Longfeng, Carlos Valiente, Nancy Eisenberg, Tracy L. Spinrad, Sarah K. Johns, Rebecca H. Berger, Marilyn S. Thompson, et al. “Longitudinal Relations between Behavioral Engagement and Academic Achievement: The Moderating Roles of Socio-Economic Status and Early Achievement.” *Journal of School Psychology* 94 (October 2022): 15–27.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2022.08.001>.
- Li, Ruiguang. “The Role of Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relations in Flipped Learning on Student Engagement.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (August 12, 2021).
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.741810>.
- Liaqat, Madiha, Asifa Yasin, and Mariyam Nadeem. “The Effect of Teacher Personality on Student Performance and Engagement.” *Global Language Review* VIII, no. II (June 30, 2023): 422–33.
[https://doi.org/10.31703/glr.2023\(VIII-II\).34](https://doi.org/10.31703/glr.2023(VIII-II).34).
- Mohammad, Aqeel M., and H. Ghalavandi. “Analyzing the Relationship between Teaching Styles and Academic Engagement with Emphasis on the Mediating Role of Educational Ethics.” *Ethics in Science and Technology* 20 (2025): 141.
- Nasir, Rimsha, Sher Zaman, and Shahzada Adeel. “Impact of Students’ Socio-Economic Status on Classroom Engagement: A Case of Elementary Schooling.” *Journal of Asian Development Studies* 14, no. 2 (July 4, 2025): 1188–1200. <https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2025.14.2.93>.
- Noreen, Shama, Ali Hasan, Iqra Batool, and Awais Ali. “The Impacts of Academic Self-Efficacy on Academic Outcomes: The Mediating Effect of Student Engagement.” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 11 (November 26, 2018).
<https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v8-i11/4904>.
- O’Hara, Hunter. “The Transcendent Teacher-learner Relationship: A Class Investigation.” *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education* 25, no. 4 (January 25, 2005): 331–37.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1090102050250407>.
- Opdenakker, Marie-Christine, and Alexander Minnaert. “Learning Environment Experiences in Primary Education: Their Importance to Academic Engagement.” In *Interpersonal Relationships in Education: From Theory to Practice*, 183–94. SensePublishers Rotterdam, 2014.
- Orazbayeva, Balzhan, Peter van der Sijde, and Thomas Baaken. “Autonomy, Competence and

- Relatedness – the Facilitators of Academic Engagement in Education-Driven University-Business Cooperation.” *Studies in Higher Education* 46, no. 7 (July 3, 2021): 1406–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1679764>.
- Qamar, Wajiha. “Exploring The Effect of Teacher Personality Traits on Engagement, Learning Experience, and Well-Being.” *Pakistan Orthodontic Journal* 15, no. Suppl (2023): 85–90.
- Reeve, Johnmarshall, and Ching-Mei Tseng. “Agency as a Fourth Aspect of Students’ Engagement during Learning Activities.” *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 36, no. 4 (October 2011): 257–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2011.05.002>.
- Renninger, K. Ann, and Suzanne E. Hidi. *The Power of Interest for Motivation and Engagement*. and Suzanne Hidi. Description: New York, NY : Routledge, 2016. |: Routledge, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315771045>.
- Rumberger, Russell W., and Susan Rotermund. “The Relationship Between Engagement and High School Dropout.” In *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement*, 491–513. Boston, MA: Springer US, 2012. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7_24.
- Ryan, R. M., and E. L. Deci. *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. Guilford Press, 2018.
- Sandlin, Cole. “Teacher Personality and Student Engagement: A Case Study,” 2019.
- Schaufeli, Wilmar B., Marisa Salanova, Vicente González-romá, and Arnold B. Bakker. “The Measurement of Engagement and Burnout: A Two-Sample Confirmatory Factor Analytic Approach.” *Journal of Happiness Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 2002): 71–92. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015630930326>.
- Serrano, Cristina, Sergio Murgui, and Yolanda Andreu. “Improving the Prediction and Understanding of Academic Success: The Role of Personality Facets and Academic Engagement.” *Revista de Psicodidáctica (English Ed.)* 27, no. 1 (January 2022): 21–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psicoe.2021.11.002>.
- Shaari, Abdull Sukor, Nurahimah Mohd Yusoff, Izam Mohd Ghazali, Rafisah Hj Osman, and Nur Fatirah Mohd Dzahir. “The Relationship between Lecturers’ Teaching Style and Students’ Academic Engagement.” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 118 (March 2014): 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.02.002>.
- Shah, Mahsood, and Ming Cheng. “Exploring Factors Impacting Student Engagement in Open Access Courses.” *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 34, no. 2 (2019): 187–202.
- Skinner, Ellen A., Thomas A. Kindermann, and Carrie J. Furrer. “A Motivational Perspective on Engagement and Disaffection.” *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 69, no. 3 (June 14, 2009): 493–525. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164408323233>.
- Tomaszewski, Wojtek, Ning Xiang, and Mark Western. “Student Engagement as a Mediator of the Effects of Socio-economic Status on Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Australia.” *British Educational Research Journal* 46, no. 3 (2020): 610–30.
- Toro, Juan Del, and Ming-Te Wang. “Longitudinal Inter-Relations between School Cultural Socialization and School Engagement: The Mediating Role of School Climate.” *Learning and Instruction* 75 (October 2021): 101482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2021.101482>.
- Upadyaya, Katja, and Katariina Salmela-Aro. “Development of School Engagement in Association with Academic Success and Well-Being in Varying Social Contexts.” *European Psychologist*, 2013.
- Wigfield, Allan, and Jenna Cambria. “Students’ Achievement Values, Goal Orientations, and Interest: Definitions, Development, and Relations to Achievement Outcomes.” *Developmental Review* 30, no. 1 (March 2010): 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2009.12.001>.
- Willis, Jerry W, Muktha Jost, and Rema Nilakanta. *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical Approaches*. Sage Publications, 2007.
- Wood, D. R. “ The Impact of Students’ Perceived Relatedness and Competence upon Their Motivated Engagement with Learning Activities: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective .”

University of Birmingham, 2016.

- Xiong, Xiaofang. “Influence of Teaching Styles of Higher Education Teachers on Students’ Engagement in Learning: The Mediating Role of Learning Motivation.” *Education for Chemical Engineers* 51 (April 2025): 87–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ece.2025.02.005>.
- Yang, Dong, Peng Chen, Kai Wang, Zhuoran Li, Chen Zhang, and Ronghuai Huang. “Parental Involvement and Student Engagement: A Review of the Literature.” *Sustainability* 15, no. 7 (March 28, 2023): 5859. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075859>.
- Yasemi, Sedighe, Fatemeh Khalvandi, and Mohsen Zareie. “Investigating the Relationship between Hidden Curriculum and Students’ Academic Engagement and Communication Skills.” *Journal of Pouyesh in Education and Consultation (JPEC)* 1401, no. 16 (2022): 113–33.
- Zhang, Feng, Xiaodan Xu, Wei Peng, and Cheng Guo. “Educational Expectations and Academic Persistence among Rural Adolescents: The Protective Role of High Self-Esteem.” *Behavioral Sciences* 14, no. 10 (October 1, 2024): 888. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14100888>.
- Zhao, Ying, Zeqing Zheng, Chenchen Pan, and Lulu Zhou. “Self-Esteem and Academic Engagement Among Adolescents: A Moderated Mediation Model.” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (June 3, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.690828>.

ABOUT AUTHORS

Loyce Kiiza Kobusingye is an Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at Mountains of the Moon University in Western Uganda. She has also taught Educational Psychology at Makerere University, the oldest university in Uganda.

Moris Matembu Kipuru is a Lecturer of Educational Psychology at Kyambogo University in Uganda.

Ivan Odongo Okello is a Lecturer of Educational Psychology at Lira University in Uganda.

Teopisita Nabasajji is a PhD student of Educational Psychology at Makerere University. She holds a Master of Education in Educational Psychology from Makerere University in Uganda.