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**Title**

Student engagement in academic activities: a social support perspective / Matthew J. Xerri ; Katrina Radford ; Kate Shaklock

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**Abstract**

Student engagement in academic activities is a critical factor contributing to the overall success of students studying in higher education institutions. Yet the factors influencing student engagement in academic activities are still largely unknown. This study begins to address this knowledge gap by investigating the influence of student connectedness (relationships with peers and teachers), motivation to study (sense of purpose) and perception of workload upon student engagement in academic activities. During 2015, a total of 209 students responded to a survey distributed to first-year undergraduate students enrolled in a university business school in Queensland, Australia. Structural equation modelling was used to investigate the proposed relationships. Results suggest that student-student (peer) relationships, teacher-student relationships, and students' sense of purpose for studying a higher education degree, were central to student engagement in academic activities. In addition, teacher-student relationships, and a strong sense of purpose were central to perceptions of student workloads. Finally, sense of purpose was found to moderate the relationship between both

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teacher-student and student-student relationships and also, perceptions of workload and student engagement. The findings from this study support the importance of developing effective teacher-student relationships, facilitating positive student-student relationships and communicating a clear sense of purpose to students, so as to improve their engagement in academic activities and optimise perceptions of workloads. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Xerri, Matthew J., E-Mail: [m.xerri@griffith.edu.au](mailto:m.xerri@griffith.edu.au)