

STADIO



Enhancing Student Engagement in Distance Learning: Opportunities, Challenges, and Insights.

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Introduction

Student engagement - psychological investment in and effort towards mastering academic knowledge, skills, and crafts

Level of interest and motivation towards the learning process.

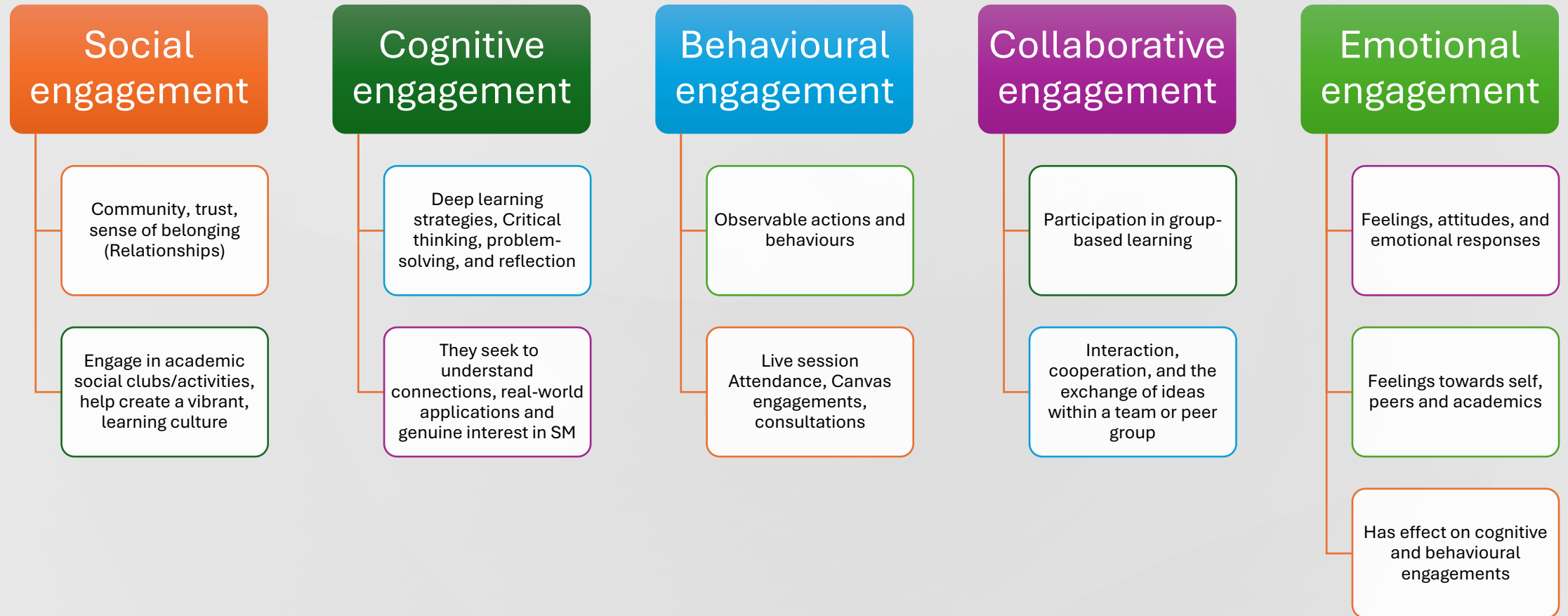
Persistent challenge, particularly within HE distance learning environments

Engaged students: curious, persistent in facing challenges, and connected (Academic outcomes and personal development)

KD - Distance with limited online support

Online engagement framework for higher education

Redmond, Heffernan, Abawi, Brown, & Henderson, (2018)



Profile

Demo-Geographic

Older, adult learners, typically in their 20s to 50s.

Employed

Seeking flexibility

Behavioural

Motivations: career advancements & PD

Academic, technical and library support

Time management, access to resources and feelings of isolation
typical challenges

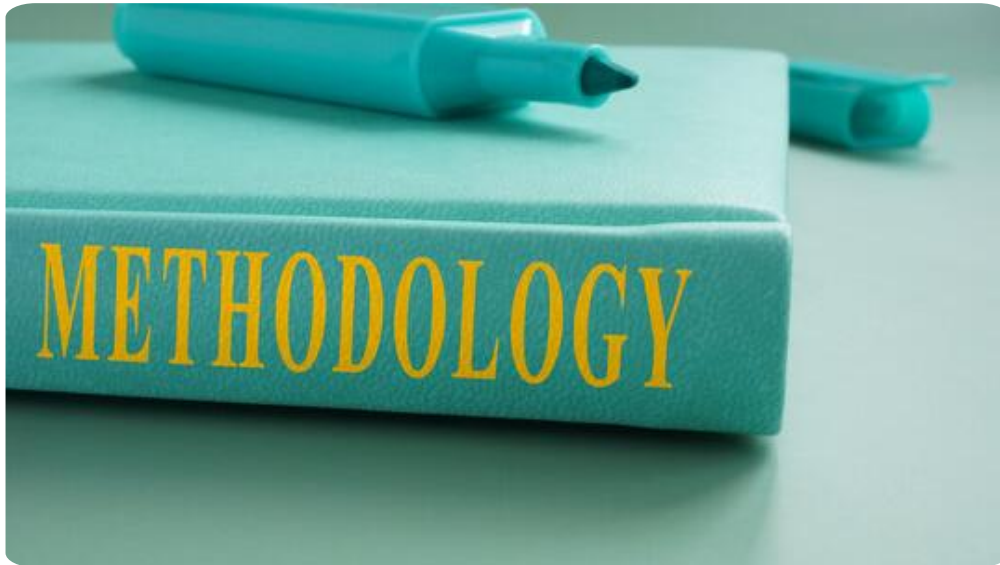
Tech challenges

User rates low

Psychographic

Have first degrees, seeking to upskill
BUT extended absence from an academic environment

Reinforce self-directed learning and independence



Strategy (Qual) - Case Study – KD students

Data collection: Lit Rev and Observation over a period of **18 months** (Digital Ethnographic Observations)

Collection Tools: recordings, chats and field notes

Criteria: Participation/interactions, communication, technology exp, students feedback and reflections

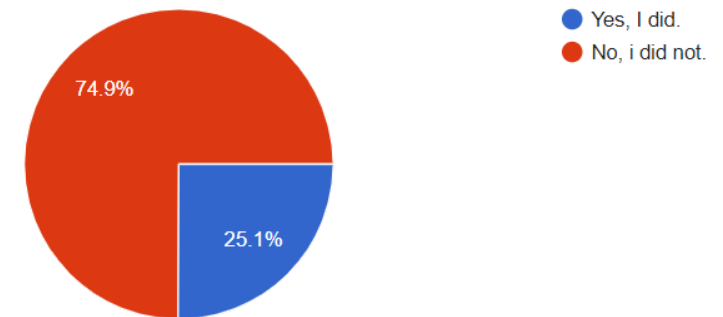
Analysis: Thematic

Findings – challenges

- **Technology aspects: Access** –(student email account, LMS and Cengage), Tech navigation – Canvas and Cengage
- **Motivation levels:** Varying levels of motivations. Driven by competing demands and own performance
- **Individual preferences:** various learning styles, comfort with tech, needs/study mode alignments
- **Socio-economic conditions:** family dynamics, income and time constraints. (Stress levels , textbooks access)
- **Mental Health and Well-being** – life/work/module-specific
- **Faculty-student interactions:** live session attendance, Q&A, consultations and one-on-one.

Q4. Did you seek academic support or assistance in the past when facing difficulties with your studies?

1,584 responses



Findings – Opportunities



Resource Accessibility – eBooks (prescribed and recommended)



Virtual study groups and social events - promote social and emotional engagements



Assessment and Feedback Enhancements: Detailed, constructive feedback



Diverse (interactive) Instructional Methods – accommodate varying learning styles



Onboarding and continuous support - Expectations, self-management, aligned study techniques



Acknowledgement and incentives – on both personal and academic achievements. Create sharing platform/culture.

CONCLUSIONS & WAY FORWARD

- Student engagement in distance learning relies on nurturing a **supportive environment** that prioritise **regular communication** and **effective use of technology**.
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- Enhance **support/engagement opportunities awareness and visibility**
 - Encourage **learner-centered** environments that meet diverse student needs and encourage active participation.
 - **Ongoing Faculty Training** – effective use of tech in T&L

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