

# AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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## ABSTRACT

*Since student engagement in academic activities is generally considered a qualified predictor of learning and personal development, this exploratory research study was conducted to find a tool to objectively measure students' academic engagement activities. The main constructs of the tool named the "Student academic report questionnaire," were firstly replicated from the well-known "National Survey of Student Engagement" (NSSE) developed by Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning, but the details were modified to be congruent with the Thai educational and environmental context. The validity, reliability, and credibility of the tool were examined with the data gathered from two-wave pilot surveys. Factor analysis and reliability analyses were performed, and the results showed high construct validity and internal consistency with an alpha-coefficient of 0.8342-0.9118. A questionnaire was primarily used to collect data. The initial sets of data on students' academic engagement activities were gathered and analyzed.*

## INTRODUCTION

To ensure the quality of educational services provided for the undergraduate students, information about student engagement in academic activities is generally considered among the better predictors of learning and personal development (Carini, Kuh, and Klien, 2004). The very act of being engaged in academic activities would be the foundation of skills and dispositions that is essential to perform productive activities in college. These activities help students to develop habits of mind and heart that enlarge their capacity for continuous learning and personal development (Pike, 2003). Thus, the more students study and practice a subject, the more they learn about it. Likewise, the more students practice and get feedback on their analyzing and problem solving, the more adept they should become (Kuh, 2001). As characteristics of student engagement can serve as a proxy for judging quality of both sides; students and university, the results of the survey provide comparative benchmarks for determining how effectively colleges are contributing. The survey results yield the effectiveness of college learning in five areas: 1) level of academic challenge; 2) active and collaborative learning; 3) student/faculty interaction; 4) enriching educational experiences; and 5)

supportive campus environment. This study is an exploratory research aimed to find a tool which can objectively measure students' activities and educational experiences which relates particularly to classroom activities as well as specific faculty and peer practice. It can also measure the degree to which students are engaged in their studies, the quality of student learning and their overall educational experience. The main constructs of the tool were firstly replicated from the well-known "National Survey of Student Engagement" (NSSE) developed by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning, but the details were modified to be congruent with the Thai educational and environmental context.

## Background and Rationale

To establish methods for assuring quality in higher education, "quality" has been focused largely on measuring university resources and processes rather than assessing student learning and development. In contrast, the information on quality of students was found to be more valuable than that of institutions (Kuh, 2001). On the other hand, the degree to which students are engaged in their studies would impact directly on the quality of student learning