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Enhancing Education and Equity During Challenging Times

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**Students' and Educators' Perspectives on Student Connectedness to School: Social
Support, Engagement, & Belonging**

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Abstract

A student's level of connectedness to their school community can have a number of short and long-term positive impacts on their well-being. However, not all students appear to be as connected to their school as others. **The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of students' and educators' perspectives regarding student connectedness to school and its relationship to social support, engagement, and belonging at the secondary level.** Ultimately, a richer more nuanced understanding of these concepts can be used to inform policy changes—especially at the secondary level—that increase student connectedness to school. A mixed-method parallel research design was selected in order to understand the phenomenon of school connectedness from the vantagepoint of both students and educators. The quantitative portion of the study will include the analysis of pre-existing survey data from a high school within the Northeastern region of the United States. The qualitative portion of the study includes educator interviews and document analysis. Both the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study will be merged to better understand student connectedness to school.

Research Questions

1. How much of the variance in student-educator connectedness can be explained by students' perspectives on social support, engagement (affective/emotional, behavioral, and cognitive) and feelings of belonging? Which of these variables is the best predictor of student-educator connectedness?
2. Is there a significant mean difference between grade level (9, 10, 11, and 12) and student-educator connectedness?
3. Is there a significant mean difference between secondary students who can identify at least one educator with whom they feel comfortable talking to and students' perspectives on social support, engagement in school (affective/emotional, behavioral, and cognitive), and feelings of belonging? Which, if any, of these variables are most impacted by students that can identify at least one educator with whom they can talk to and those who cannot?
4. What do educators of secondary school students understand about student connectedness and its relationship to areas of social support, engagement, and belonging?

Research Timeline

Action	Timeframe
IRB Submission & Approval	Fall 2020
Qualitative Data Collection (Quantitative is pre-existing)	January 2021
Qualitative & Quantitative Data Cleaning	March – May 2021
Chapters 1-3 Edits	Summer 2021
Chapter 4-5	Summer & Fall 2021
Dissertation Defense	Spring 2022

References for Poster Display

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