"IMPACT OF TEACHERS' INTERPERSONAL SUPPORTS AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC AMOTIVATION IN MALIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS"

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of teachers' interpersonal supports and students' academic amotivation in Malian primary schools. In this study a questionnaire based on (Academic Amotivation Inventory; AAI) was developed by the researcher. The sample included one hundred primary school teachers in Mali (72 men and 28 women), mean=1.28 (St.d=0.451). This step has been successfully enabled us to collect data which have been computed, analyzed and used to interpret the results. correlational analysis were used to interpret the differences between related groups, through the psychological tools of SPSS 20.00.The finding of this research indicated that there are two types of students in learning context: motivated students and unmotivated students. Those facts might be influenced by the following factors: ability beliefs; effort beliefs; value placed on the task; characteristics of the task, students' engagement, and teachers' positives messages. But, three factors only were found as a positive correlation to students' motivation (Characteristics of the task, students' engagement, Teachers' Positives Messages).It was hoped that this study could make a modest contribution on finding a way to motivate unmotivated students in the Malian primary schools. The implications for educational practice were also discussed.

Key Words: Interpersonal supports, students' academic amotivation, self-efficacy theory, Malian primary schools, Mali.

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1.0. Introduction

1.1. Education Characteristics in Mali

As in other parts of the Francophone world, the Malian educational system inherited most of its principles from the French colonial system. However, since independence, it has undergone a series of reforms to meet the needs of the people. The Ministry of Education is responsible for governing the whole system and implementing the policy of the government. Instruction is given in French. A normal school year runs from September to June. Public education in Mali is, in principle, provided free of charge and is compulsory for nine years between the ages of 7 and 16.[11] The system encompasses six years of primary education beginning at age seven, followed by six years of secondary education, generally divided into two three-year cycles. Mali's primary school enrollment rate is low, in large part because families are unable to cover the cost of uniforms, books, supplies, and other fees required to attend public school.[11]

1.2. Primary Education

In the 2000–01 school years, primary school enrollment was estimated to include only 61 percent of the appropriate age-group (71 percent of males and 51 percent of females). The primary school completion rate is also low: only 36 percent of students in 2003 (and lower for females). [10] The majority of students reportedly leave school by age 12. The secondary school enrollment rate in the late 1990s was 15 percent (20 percent for males and 10 percent for females).[11]

Government expenditures on education in 2000 constituted about 15.6 percent of total government expenditures and about 2.8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). [10] According to Malian government estimates for the 2003–04 school years, Mali had 318 pre-primary institutions with 971 teachers and 35,000 students; 8,714 general primary and secondary institutions with 36,064 teachers and 1,650,803 students; and 37,635 students in tertiary institutions. The education system is plagued by a lack of schools in rural areas, as well as shortages of teachers and materials.[11]

Given the relevance of the views of teachers, it remains to elucidate the following issues: firstly, what are the reasons for the lack of students' motivation in primary schools? Secondly, what are the teachers' views on the motivation of these students? These issues are crucial questions that every teacher wants to answer in their daily tasks. To handle these problems, teachers in Mali

believed that there are motivated and unmotivated students, which might be influenced by the following factors: lack of confidence in their ability, lack of confidence in their effort capacity, unappealing characteristics of the academic task, and lack of value placed on the task, students' engagement, and messages provided by teachers. They also indicate that their positives messages to students reinforce more their motivation to accomplish the tasks.

1.3. Objectives of this study

The objectives of this research are as follows:

✧ To identify the factors of academic amotivation which might influence scholars in Malian primary schools

✧ To evaluate the impacts of teachers' interpersonal supports to student's academic amotivation schools. in Malian primary schools

✧

1.4. Main Hypothesis

✧ The interpersonal supports provided by Malian teachers have numerous impacts on student's academic amotivation in primary schools.

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2.0. Review of literature

The literature focuses on the concept of motivation, amotivation, Self-efficacy theory in the sources of amotivation and the impact to the students' achievement. More explicitly the literature will address: the sources of amotivation: Ability beliefs, effort Beliefs, value placed on the task, task characteristics. Additionally the positive messages provided by teachers and students' engagement in classroom.

2.1. Motivation

The term motivation is used to refer to the effort that a person puts in his or her pursue of a goal. Nevertheless, some authors (Dale h, Paul r, Pintich, Judith.l, 2006, P.41) [3] showed that this term refers to the process whereby goal –directed activity is instigated and sustained. It affects all classroom activities and influences the learning of new behaviors. On the other hand, consistent with this complex approach, the concept of motivation is inherently broad, multifaceted and unfortunately used in ambiguous ways (Ford, 1992) [6]. Theoretically, the term motivation

describes the output of interactions between motive dispositions of an individual and situational available or anticipated incentive (Heckhausen, 1991) [9]. In various motivational theories, the construct of motivation is illustrated and described in terms of cognitive representations (motives) that have the power to "pull" or "push" behavior, for example, wishes, desires, beliefs, values, expectancies, instrumentalities, attributions, intentions, or goals. Other researches of Graham and Weiner (1996, p.157) [7] point out that psychologists and teachers who are interested in students' motivation can gain valuable insights by looking at four types of learner behaviors or behavioral characteristics: the choices they make; the effort they invest in achieving a goal; the frequency with which they take certain actions and the persistence which they pursue an objective. These four aspects of behavior provide clues about the direction, strength, and duration of people's motivation. However, we recall that there are two main kinds of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is internal, it occurs when people are compelled to do something out of pleasure, importance, or desire. Extrinsic motivation occurs when external factors compel the person to do something. In addition, Patricia L Hardre and David W.Sullivan;(2007, p. 483) conclude that "students' motivation is influenced by factors such as home and family circumstances, interactions with peers, teachers and administrators, school climate and culture. The complexity of the dynamic school-related motivation makes its study daunting but worthwhile being undertaken". [8]

2.2. Amotivattion

In addition to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Deci and Ryan (1985) [4] have recently state that a third type of motivational construct is important to consider in order to fully understand human behavior. This concept is termed amotivation. Individuals are amotivated when they do not perceive contingencies between outcomes and their own actions. They are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated. When amotivated individuals experience feelings of incompetence, and expectancies of uncontrollability, they perceive their behaviors as caused by forces out of their own control. They feel also undeceived, and start asking themselves; why in the world they go to school. Eventually they may stop participating in academic activities.

2.3. Self-efficacy theory in the causes of amotivation

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's self about his/her ability to achieve certain goals or deal with

certain situations. If one holds a generally high level of perceived self-efficacy, it is expected that they will experience a lower level of avoidance behavior and anxiety arousal when attempting to achieve a goal or deal with a situation. In Albert Bandura's understanding of self-efficacy [2] shown in his social cognitive theory, individuals observing others undertaking a task will experience similar levels of enjoyment or distress when they undertake the task themselves. This theory emphasizes the effect that external social factors have on self-efficacy (Bandura & Adams, 1977) [1]. In relation to amotivation, it can be seen that a lack of perceived self-efficacy is one of the underlying causes of amotivation. External social effects can also have an impact on amotivation as seen in Albert Bandura social cognitive theory. Where an individual may observe another person that is unable to undertake a task, therefore creating amotivation through a perceived lack of self-efficacy in the observing individual. Self-efficacy, as observed by Bandura is generally affected by four factors; experience, modeling, social persuasion and physiological factors.

a) Experience: Success raises self-efficacy, while failure lowers it.
b) Modeling: Seen in Bandura 's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is raised when an individual sees others achieve but self-efficacy can be lowered when an individual sees others fail.
c) Social Persuasion: Encouragement increases self-efficacy, while discouragement can lower it.
d) Physiological factors: Observing physical signs of stress can lower self-efficacy.

2.4. Sources of Amotivation

The taxonomy proposes four sources of academic amotivation. Researchers note that under self-determination theory, amotivation is seen as a "one-dimensional construct", as a state of "learned helplessness" where students "cannot perceive a relationship between their behavior and that behavior's subsequent outcome." To increase the understanding of amotivation, researchers have proposed the following four sources for it: Ability beliefs, Effort beliefs, Value placed on the task, Characteristics of the task. Contrary, the present study found six dimensions of students' motivation.

2.4.1. Ability beliefs.

A student's lack of confidence in his ability to do academic tasks can translate into academic disengagement.

2.4.2. Effort beliefs.

Even if they believe they can do the work, however, some students lack belief in their ability to initiate or maintain the effort that is required by academic tasks.

2.4.3. Value placed on the task.

If a student does not value a task, does not think there is any point to it, amotivation may result.

2.4.4. Characteristics of the task.

Finally, if a student is not stimulated or engaged by the work, when it is seen as boring, routine or tedious, the activity is likely to be neglected.

Under this taxonomy, students will be motivated to do academic work if they have confidence in their ability to do the work and in their ability to put out the effort and if they place value on the task and are engaged or stimulated by it.

2.4.5. Students' engagement in classroom

Engagement in school is an important academic outcome in its own right. It improves performance and validates positive expectations about academic abilities (Skinner, Zimmer-Gembeck, & Connell, 1998). [13]Engagement refers to active, goal direct, and flexible, constructive, persistent, focused interactions with the social and physical environments.

Educators have plausibly wondered whether it is likely that students who feel good about being in school may nevertheless fail to learn anything. According to this model, children who are engaged in ongoing learning activities should not only feel pride and satisfaction in their accomplishments but should also increase their actual competencies.

2.4.6. Teachers' Positives messages

Positive message is a strategy that teachers use for enhancing students' motivation. Teachers should communicate positive beliefs, expectations, and attributions in their interactions with students. They can do this explicitly, by telling students that they know they will be able to achieve a particular outcome, or implicitly, by providing opportunities to work on challenging tasks, by encouraging them to persist when they encounter difficulty, by praising only performance that truly deserves praise, and in countless other subtle ways to convey confidence in students' ability that they perform well in the classroom tasks. Primary school students seem to be very sensible in the education area because they are all children, so they need praise and positive message. In contrast, Parson, Kaczala, and Meece (1982) [12] showed the potential for negative effects of praise and positive effects of criticism on children's self-confidence in a naturalistic study.

3.0. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The original sample consisted of one hundred teachers. Multiple responses were gained from Malian primary schools of whom 28% were female and 72% male, aged between 21 and 61years (Mean = 2.53), from 45 different schools in Malians schools. Their teaching experience ranges from 1 to 29 years. (Mean = 1.83).

Table 1.Demographics characteristics of participants (N=100)

Characteristics	N	percentages%
Gender		
Men	72	72.0
Women	28	28.0
Age in years		
21-30	31	31.0
31-40	31	31.0
41-50	13	13.0
51-60	7	7.0
61-plus	15	15.0
6.00	3	3.0
Total	100	31.0

3.2. Procedures

The researcher was selected a sample of 100 primary schools teachers randomly with mixed sex, and then draw up one questionnaire with six factors and 37 items. The 37-item questionnaire was

administered on six separate factors, namely students engagement, value placed on the task, ability beliefs, tasks of characteristics, effort beliefs, and positive message. For the collection of the data, the researcher has translated the questionnaire from English into French with assistance. The items describe primary schools students' engagement, the task value, ability beliefs, task characteristics, effort beliefs, positive message from teachers. Teachers were asked to rate all items by using a 3-point Likert scale: (1=never, 2=often, 3=always). And they completed questionnaires at school, during class time. In this study, analysis was conducted with assistance of SPSS 20.00 for windows evaluation version to point out the descriptive statistics.

3.3. Data collection

The questionnaire was firstly trilled before sending it to the teachers of Mali. Still, we have developed one questionnaire in English which was translated into French, because most of participants speak French, and then the researcher was given instructions to help filling the questionnaire. In total, there were 45 primary schools, and 100 teachers (N=100) participated in this study. For more specifically details (see table1and table2)

Table 2. Characteristic of students' classroom grades and teachers' gender

Grades/ Gender	f^{st} grade	S^{d} grade	t^{d} grade	F^{t} grade	F^{h} ^{t}grade	S^{x} ^{t}grade
Men	12	13	10	11	09	17
Women	05	05	04	03	03	08
Total	17	18	14	14	12	25

Table3. Listing of the schools involved in this study

List of primaries schools in Mali which take part in this study	
(Ecole communautaire Bakaribougou (Bamako)	24 .Sebenikoro
Banconi 2^{e} cycle 2	25 Sebenikoro "fraternite.2eme année"
Banconi E (Espace Razel)	26 Sebenikoro"fraternite3^{eme} année"
Defi Lafiabougou (Bamako)	27 Sebenikoro"fraternite.4eme année"
DefiLafiabougou Bougoudani	28 Banconi PLATEAU "D"
Sikoro "C	29 Banconi PLATEAU "C"
Fadjiguila "A"	30 Kalabanbougou"A'
Ecom Nafadji	31 Mamana
Djoumanzana site "C"	32 Mandela"A"
Fadjiguila "A"	33 Kita "A1"
Djoumanzana "B"	34 Banconi "C"
Djoumanzana"A"	35 Mandela"B"
Banconi Plateau "D"	36 ECOM Lafiabougou
Sikoro 2eme Cycle (Bamako)	37 ECOM Djoumanzana
Banconi"F"	38 ECOM Lafiabougou Bougoudani(Bamako)
Banconi "C'	39 Fadjiguila"A"
Sikoro "C"	40 ECOM Nafadji
Mandela "A"	41 Banconi Plateau "D"
Sikoro "D"	42 Kolokani 2eme cycle
Sikoro"E'	43 Kita"A1"
Fraternite (Bamako)	44 SEBENIKORO 5eme année"
Kalabambougou"A"	45. SEBENIKORO 6eme année"
Sourakabougou	

3.4. Data Analysis

In this study we evaluate the impact of teachers' interpersonal supports and students' academic amotivation in Malian primary schools. The values of mean and standard deviation show the intensity of respondents toward the questionnaire.

Data was calculated to test for the relationships between the dependent variables and the independent variables. The instrument used in this research was (Academic Amotivation Inventory; AAI).This instrument measures the four proposed dimensions of academic amotivation: Ability Beliefs (AB) (e.g., "Because I don't have what it takes to do well in school"), Effort Beliefs (EB) (e.g., "Because I don't have the energy to study"), Characteristics of the Task(CT) (e.g., "Because I find it boring"), and Value Placed on the Task (VPT) (e.g., "Because studying is not important to me").However , the researcher has added two dimensions, which are students engagement(SE) and positives messages provided by Malians teachers (TPM) for more exploration. The responses obtained on the survey software were inserted in an SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) data file. The researcher explores the data to determine the most appropriate inferential statistics to be used. In totally six dimensions were

chosen and analyzed.

3.5. Results

A Pearson's correlation was computed to assess the relationship between the interpersonal supports provided by teachers and students academic amotivation in Malian primary schools. There is a positive and moderate correlation between the six factors of amotivation. $p<0.05$

These findings confirm the main hypothesis of this study. In connection with the first result, teachers from the first grade to six grade indicated that their students have more motivation in the dimensions such as ability belief (AB), effort belief (EB), and value placed on the tasks (VPT) (See table5). Therefore, others teachers indicated that the students seem to be less motivated in school for three distinct reasons: A characteristic of the Task (CT), Teachers' Positives Messages (TPM), and Students engagement (SE).The results of correlation analyses indicated that respondents showed higher positive correlation between, Characteristics of the Task (CT), ($r=0.99$, $p=0.007$, $p<0.05$), Students engagement (SE), ($r=0.96$, $p=0.03$, $p<0.05$); and Teachers' Positives Messages (TPM) ($r=0.97$, $p=0.0.02$, $p<0.05$). (See table5).

Table4. Pearson's Correlations Test between the interpersonal supports provided by teachers and students academic amotivation in Malians' primary schools.(N=100)

Statistical Tests		Mean	St.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
Value Placed on the Task	Pearson Correlation	64.12	41.37	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.				
Ability beliefs	Pearson Correlation	57.08	32.25	.944	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.056					
Characteristics of the task	Pearson Correlation	52.85	28.81	.910	.993**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.090	.007				
Effort Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	36.80	29.40	.517	.768	.811	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.483	.232	.189			
Students engagement	Pearson Correlation	38.53	34.73	.592	.802	.816	.965*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.408	.198	.184	.035		
Teachers' Positives Messages	Pearson Correlation	61.37	37.71	.975*	.950*	.939	.562	.578	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.025	.050	.061	.438	.422	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.0. Discussion

In the main sources of amotivation, the researchers propose the following four sources for it: Ability beliefs, Effort beliefs, Value placed on the task, Characteristics of the task. The results of this present study have revealed that teachers think students have less motivation in the dimensions such as, student' engagement, positives messages provided by teachers, and task characteristics. They also think that students have more motivation in the areas, such as value placed in the tasks, effort belief, and ability belief. The results provided by Pearson's correlation analysis reveals that, teachers' positives messages could support students' academic amotivation in Malians primary schools.

These results showed that academic amotivation really does have a negative effect on primary schools students' achievement. Specifically, the results suggest that when teachers provided positive messages, a best task characteristics, best strategies that enhance students' engagement, their motivation in classroom increases.

According to the researchers of academic amotivation, the four dimensions can influence negatively students' achievements in the school. Bandura, A. (1982) [2], Legault.L.,Pelletier.L.,and Green-Demers(2006) [10]. Similarly, these findings confirm this assumption, but only one dimension still in the factors of motivated students than amotived in the present study. The dimension of Characteristics of the Task (CT) ($r=0.99$, $p=0.007$, $p<0.05$). Researchers are interested in basic questions about how and why motivated and unmotivated students learn, more or less at primary school.

According to an assumption of a Malian teacher Diakité Drissa, (2000) [5], "School is no longer an environment for socialization. Recently the biggest problematic issue in Mali is the lack of trust between the management officials of the schools. Moreover, there are growing tendencies for psychological barriers between different sides of the learning process (i.e. students, teachers and school authorities), when one of the sides lacks, the process of cooperation is hindered". Taken together this finding the hypothesis of this study was supported.

5.0. Conclusion

Educators and psychologists alike have struggled with how to motivate and teach children who

seem to be disengaged or unmotivated from the learning process. Eventually, we believe that after this study, teachers can actively contribute to enhance motivated and unmotivated students in Malians primary schools. Many theories of motivation focus their views to students' academic amotivation such as self- efficacy theory. To this point Stipeck. D, (1998, P.66) [14] points out that the performance of children who indicate that they tend to blame their failures on uncontrollable factors, such as the difficulty of the task or their lack of ability. These students gave up quickly when they encountered difficulty on the experimental task. Faced with unmotivated students teachers may express their confidence to succeed, avoid creating competitive situations in which they can only lose, avoid reprimanding in front of their peers, avoid expressing their sympathy before a failure, give them as much attention as they give to good students, show their enthusiasm to teach and an interest in the students' success and continue to encourage them by telling positive messages.

The findings of this study showed that in Malian primary schools, there are both, students motivated and unmotivated .Therefore; students have three reasons for lack of motivation: Ability beliefs, effort Beliefs, value placed on the task. Then they have more engagement in classroom task .Additionally, the positive messages provided by teachers and the Characteristics of the Task (CT) have also revealed a good interpersonal support to students' academic amotivation. Given the findings of this study, the teachers agreed in a positive way of motivating their students. On the other hand, they also recognized their weakness in stimulating students' motivation in the classroom. However, the results of this study have important implications for helping all children, regardless of their abilities, to reach their fullest potentials.

5.1. Study limitations

Future research would benefit from a more elaborated design on teachers' strategies that enhance students' motivation at primary school than the one used in the present study. Moreover, future studies could explore a wider range of academic performance outcomes, distinguishing from, for example teachers' opinions in subject areas, including other markers of school success, such as attendance or motivation in extracurricular activities. This study is the first study in the field of motivation at primary schools in the country of Mali. Similarly, in many other African countries reviews about students 'academic amotivation are not available. This problem is due to the

poverty and scarcity of resources that they spend on academic research.

5.2. Implications for practice

The present study suggests that, teachers' supports may target many features of student's motivation in the classroom. Teachers look as supervisors of students who are unmotivated. Students' enthusiasm, interest, happiness, and comfort during new and ongoing academic tasks seem to be shaped by their sense of motivation. Likewise feelings of boredom, anxiety, sadness, anger in the classroom are exacerbated when children feel alienated from others. The results on this current study suggest that teachers' attitude and view have the most significant place of students' academic amotivation and their emotion in the classroom. Conversely, to the educational implications, we found that schools needed to be mindful of changes in motivation that characterize the students as a whole over the transition from primary schools to secondary schools. Understanding these different changes would assist in developing contexts that enhance students' academic amotivation to learn at this critical time in each student's life. The importance of this article rests in the fact that students' motivation predicts academic behavior. Hence, students' amotivation affect negatively their achievement .This fact predict also Malian primary schools students' achievement.

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