Teachers’ attitudes towards and actual use of five factors that motivate students in the classroom (HVS)

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Motivation theories promote constructs that through research have been shown to motivate and engage students.

But do we know how teachers feel about motivational constructs?

Research on teachers’ attitudes towards motivational constructs is scarce.
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<td>Autonomy - Deci &amp; Ryan, 1991</td>
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<td>Self-Determination Theory</td>
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<td>Usefulness</td>
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The MUSIC Model of Academic Motivation (Jones, 2009)

Students are likely to be motivated when they

- believe that they have some control over some aspect of their learning
- understand why the content is useful, now or in the future
- believe that they can succeed if they put forth the effort
- are interested in and even enjoy learning the course content
- believe that the instructor cares about them achieving the course objectives
- believe that the instructor cares about them as a person

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The Research Question

What are the attitudes of teachers (HVS) towards the MUSIC motivational constructs and are they using these constructs in the classroom?
Survey development

Statements representing MUSIC Model components

“It is a part of my responsibilities as a teacher to:

- give my students choices in some aspects of their learning.” - eMpowerment
- explain to students why the knowledge and skills they are learning could be useful to their goals.” - USefulness
- strengthen, by good organization and feedback, my students’ belief that they can succeed.” - Success
- generate student interest about my subject matter.” - Interest
- communicate respect and caring to my students”. - Caring
Methods

Survey developed using 6-point Likert Scale
• Strongly disagree to strongly agree

Translation/back-translation and Review
• 2 independent bilingual experts
• Expert panel review

Pilot study

Statistical analysis
• Wilcoxon signed rank

Survey available to all

Survey review
Participants

863 emails (25% tenured faculty)
298 responses
35% response rate (33% tenured faculty)

65% female
Age: 20% < 40
39% 40-52
41% > 52
Results

Teacher response: "It is part of my responsibilities as a teacher to...

- give my students choices in some aspects of their learning." - eMpowerment
- explain to students why the knowledge and skills they are learning could be useful to their goals. - Usefulness
- strengthen, by good organization and feedback, my students’ belief that they can succeed." - Success
- generate student interest about my subject matter." - Interest
- communicate respect and caring to my students". - Caring

a - significant difference from all other components p<.0001
b - significant difference from all other components (p < .0001) except component C
d - significant difference from all other components (p < .0001) except component I
Responsibility vs used in course last year

MUSIC Components: Responsibility-usage gap

Wilcoxon signed rank – all differences between responsibility and usage significant (p<.0001) except ‘S’
Results

• Constructs of eMpowerment (through giving choices) and supporting students’ beliefs in Success (by good feedback and course organization) less supported as a responsibility of teacher

• Usage pattern mimics responsibility pattern in all components but at lower levels
These results suggest that health science faculty agree and support strongly some motivational components of the MUSIC Model but not other components.

If teachers do not support motivational concepts, it is doubtful they will utilize them in their classroom.
Giving students some choices

- Theories - **Self-determination theory** (Deci & Ryan 2008), control theories (Skinner, 1996), and **interest theories**, when students are allowed to pursue areas of personal interest (Linnenbrink-Garcia, Patall, Messersmith, 2013)

- Giving students some choices is one strategy of supporting engagement, autonomous learning (Kusurkar & Croiset, 2015) and **self-regulation**.

- It is thought that teachers may resist giving students some choices due to concerns over loss of classroom control.
Making sure students perceive they can be successful

- Theories - self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997), expectancy-value theory (Eccles et al., 1983), self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan 2008), and attribution theory (Weiner, 2000).

- It is theorized that teachers may not understand the importance of regular feedback and clear course expectations as a way to enhance students’ belief in their ability in the subject matter and thus, actual success.
This research...

- supports the idea that teachers may not value giving choices in learning or making sure students feel they can succeed through feedback and organization as a way to motivate students.

- suggests that faculty development programs need to consider ways to educate faculty theoretically and practically on
  - the importance of giving students some choices in their learning to empower them.
  - ensuring that students believe they can be successful by providing regular, timely feedback and utilizing good course organization with clear expectations.
Teachers who are taught to enhance the perceived autonomy and beliefs of students in their success may enhance student motivation in the classroom, leading to **better student satisfaction and learning outcomes.**
References

A Related Study

From students’ perspective

RQ:
To what extent do students perceive that the five MUSIC factors are present in their classroom context?
Comparison of the five MUSIC Model factors

- Empowerment: 3.98
- Usefulness: 4.66
- Success: 4.43
- Interest: 4.21
- Caring: 4.97

Average scale total
E1 I try my hardest to do very well in this course
A1 My stress level in this course is very high
• Thank you for coming!
MUSIC Model of Motivation™

Instructors need to ensure that students:

- perceive that they have some control over some aspect of their learning
- understand why the content is useful
- perceive that they can succeed if they put forth the effort
- are interested in what they are supposed to be learning
- perceive that the teacher cares about whether they meet the course objectives

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