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Homework quality and student achievement: the mediating role of motivation and emotions

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the direction and strength of relationships between homework quality (homework quality, feedback quality, autonomy support), homework motivation (expectancy and value), negative homework emotions, homework behaviour (homework time, homework completion) and academic achievement. Research data were collected from 628 secondary school students. The study tested two theoretical models. According to the findings, students' motivation to do homework increases in parallel with an increase in teacher effort in selecting homework topics and providing feedback. Similarly, practices that provide autonomy in the homework process are also associated with increased motivation. The increase in homework quality leads to a decrease in negative emotions associated with homework. In parallel with the increase in homework quality, there is also an increase in homework completion behaviour. The relationship between homework quality and homework behaviour and academic achievement is mediated by homework motivation, but not by negative homework emotions. Expectancy and value are positively related to both homework completion and academic achievement. Expectancy and value are positively related to each other and negatively related to negative homework emotions.

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Homework quality; expectancy; value; academic emotions; achievement

Introduction

Students often find homework boring (Warton, 2001) and therefore less motivating than other out-of-school activities (Verma et al., 2002). It is often associated with negative emotions due to its unpopularity (Pekrun et al., 2007). As homework is carried out in an environment where there is no teacher control and guidance (Cooper et al., 2006), motivation becomes more important (J. S. Eccles & Harold, 2013). Students are more likely to spend more time on the task and complete it if they find it valuable and feel adequately equipped to do so (Wigfield et al., 2015). In addition, the care teachers take in preparing homework affects the value students place on homework. The amount of time teachers spends checking homework and the quality of the checking also affects students' attitudes and behaviour (Trautwein & Lüdtke, 2009). Authentic and informative feedback from teachers is effective in reducing students' negative emotions about homework

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