

THE IMPACT OF SELF-MONITORING ON STUDENTS' CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION: THE CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS OF ENGLISH IN MOHAMED FIRST UNIVERSITY, OUJDA

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Abstract

Self-monitoring is an intriguing psychological construct that has been receiving much attention from the part of the researchers in a wide range of disciplines. At its core rests the proposition that individuals have the ability to control their expressive behavior, and that they vary in the extent of doing so. This difference results in different outcomes regarding how people behave in their social interactions. Since its inception in the 1970s, myriad articles were written on self-monitoring, and many researches were conducted to explore its effects on people's performance in a variety of contexts; this comprises schools, universities, and hospitals, for example. The paper aimed explore the influence of self-monitoring on students' classroom participation, since no study has ever been conducted in this regard. To attain this aim, 121 of students of English in Mohamed First University in Oujda were selected to participate in this study. The results have shown that self-monitoring indeed affects students' classroom participation. The difference between students who are high self-monitors and those who are low self-monitors, which is manifested in how they think and behave and on which basis they do so, accounts for their differing performance with regard to the various aspects of classroom participation.

Keywords: self-monitoring; classroom participation; students; high self-monitors; low self-monitors; expressive behavior

Introduction

Classroom participation is a communicative activity which offers a valuable opportunity for students to state their opinions, discuss their ideas, and be exposed to various perspectives. Moreover, it gives students the chance to practice being more social, more open to the others' opinions, and more able to clearly articulate their points of view. For teachers, classroom participation is a great opportunity to know their students better. In addition to knowing whether their students understood the lesson or not, classroom participation allows teachers to learn much about the personality of their students and the different ideas they hold. Without the latter, students would be viewed as static and passive receivers of information, which abolishes any chances of establishing a good rapport between teachers and

their students, and therefore causes being in the classroom to be a considerably less fruitful activity. This is far from what the modern teaching/learning approaches aspire to achieve.

Taking into account the foregoing, it is important to mention that classroom participation is affected by a number of internal and external factors, and this involves students' personality. Within the domain of psychology, psychologists identify and measure different aspects of an individual's personality using various psychological constructs. Among these constructs is that of self-monitoring (SM). The latter is a psychological construct that has captured the interest of a plethora of researchers across different domains. SM refers to the differences between individuals in terms of the way in which they monitor their self-presentation, their behavior, and their emotions. Hence, individuals who vary in their level of SM also differ in how they behave in diverse social settings. This difference affects how they think with regard to how to behave in their meetings with the others, be it an interpersonal encounter or a group encounter.

Against this background, this article assumes that SM affects students' classroom participation, since the latter is a social activity where an interaction takes place between a number of individuals – students and teachers. Its main aim is to investigate whether the difference in students' level of SM results in different outcomes concerning their classroom participation. In doing so, researchers in this article take into account various aspects such as students' attitudes towards participation and their frequency of participation. Investigating such aspects with relation to SM helps in understanding the effects of the latter on students' classroom participation. To achieve this understanding, this article endeavors to answer different but closely related questions: Does SM influence students' classroom participation? What are the aspects of classroom participation that SM influence? And to what extent does SM influence classroom participation?

Answering these three questions would add to the overall body of literature by indicating whether SM influences students' classroom participation or not, what aspects does it influence and to what extent, for no previous research has been conducted in this regard. Furthermore, this article highlights the importance of recognizing the fact that students differ significantly. It gives voice to both students who have a high level of SM and those who have a low level by shedding light upon their attitudes towards classroom participation. Practically speaking, these insights would allow teachers to better understand their students in terms of classroom participation, and thus use such understanding to make the latter a smoother and a more fruitful experience for their students. In addition to the aforementioned implications, this article could serve as the foundation for other researches that seek to further explore the effects of SM on students' classroom participation.

Literature Review

Since its inception, various articles were written about SM. Many of these articles suggested that it “promises social psychologists much in the way of explanatory leverage” (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984). Indeed, SM is a rather intriguing concept that affects people's behavior in numerous social settings. Research indicates that it is “positively related to job involvement, emergence as a leader, performance, and advancement.” (Kudret, Erdogan, & Bauer, 2019). In this regard, it is highly likely that SM influences the behavior of students in the classroom as

well. Before delving deeper into exploring the influence of SM on students' classroom participation, it is important to have a sound idea about what it actually is, its historical background, its effects on people's performance, the different processes which it involves, and how it is measured.

Definition of Self-Monitoring

Beginning with its definition, the SM theory focuses on the "differences in the extent to which people value, create, cultivate, and project social images and public appearances" (Snyder & Gangestad, 2000). As a concept, SM refers to the individual differences in the way people monitor their self-presentation, their behavior, and their emotions. It examines an individual's observation, regulation, and control of his or her self-presentation, guided by social and situational cues (Snyder, 1974).

In order to better understand it, researchers in this article traced the concept of SM back to its early origins, and found that it was first conceptualized, defined, and introduced by the psychologist Mark Snyder in 1974 in his article "Self-Monitoring of Expressive Behavior." Snyder (1974) maintained that people vary in the degree in which they observe social and situational cues and respond to them for the purpose of determining how to behave appropriately in a social interaction. This sensitivity to cues in a situation is what guides an individual towards behaving appropriately in any situation. In addition to the social cues, the expressive behavior of the others also plays a major role in the SM process. When people find themselves in a situation where they are uncertain of their emotional reactions, they look at people around them and model the expressive behavior of those who appear to be behaving appropriately (Schachter & Singer, 1962).

The central proposition of the SM concept is that individuals have the ability to control their expressive behavior, and that they indeed do so. As a process, SM serves five main goals: 1) it allows individuals to accurately communicate their true emotional states through intensified expressive presentation, 2) it enables people to accurately communicate a random emotional state that is incongruent with their actual feelings, 3) it permits individuals to hide an inappropriate emotional state and appear unexpressive, 4) it enables people to conceal an inappropriate emotional state and appear to be experiencing an appropriate one, and 5) it serves the goal of appearing to be going through some emotional state while in fact one experiences nothing and a nonresponse is not appropriate.

The Construct of Self-Monitoring

While some individuals deliberately control and adjust their behavior, others tend to act more spontaneously. For example, it is obvious that politicians and actors exercise more control over their expressive behavior than laypersons. The differences between people in this regard may be conceptualized in terms of the psychological construct of SM (Snyder, 1972, 1974). In other words, the SM construct is needed in order to understand the difference between people with regard to control over expressive behavior and attention for situational cues. By further exploring SM within the domain of psychology, researchers in this article have found that people can be put into two different categories in terms of SM, namely high self-monitors (HSMs) and low self-monitors (LSMs). The former category of

individuals have the capacity to closely monitor their expressive behavior, whereas the latter category tend to be more spontaneous in their interaction.

HSMs mostly behave responsively with regard to the various social cues around them and the overall context. Not only do they continuously monitor their expressive behavior, but they also monitor the behavior of the people around them. HSMs attempt to understand how others perceive their expressive behavior. Afterwards, they act in a manner that increases their chance of guaranteeing an appropriate social image. One way to look at HSMs is to view them as social pragmatists who are more sensitive to social situations (Snyder, 1974). They are individuals who constantly alter their social image to suit different situations, and who do their best to project an image that would generate positive feedback from the others.

While HSMs rely much on the situation to know how to behave, their LSMs counterparts do not. LSMs are not very concerned with the social cues and the situational appropriateness as much. Compared to HSMs, LSMs are more consistent with their principles; they depend on their inner values and beliefs to determine how to act in a certain situation. LSMs find it difficult to hide their true emotions because their behavior normally corresponds with their inner feelings. The differences between an individual who has a high level of SM and another who has a low level imply that the former is more concerned with the social environment and the behavior of others, and that the latter is more concerned with his or her dispositions. Therefore, it is possible to say that HSMs pay more attention to the aspects of the social self, while LSMs focus more on the existential and experiential self.

Delving deeper into the mechanisms of the SM process, it is noteworthy that the latter can be divided into two modes: outer-loop monitoring and inner-loop monitoring. The former takes place while or after speaking. When people detect a part of their utterance that does not match with what they had originally intended to say, they stop, make the necessary adjustments to the utterance, and then carry on with the updated version of their utterance. The second type of the monitoring process, inner-loop, has a covert nature. It operates before articulation during the early stages of speech production, either at the message construction phase or afterwards during the phonological encoding stage. For example, one could be about to tell someone something which he or she is not supposed to say – a secret, for instance – and then realizes that this must not be told. Thus, the speaker avoids saying it before the actual articulation.

The Processes of Self-Monitoring

So far, researchers in this article have defined SM by tracing its roots and investigating how it eventually emerged, discussed SM as a construct and a process, and described how HSMs and LSMs differ in terms of how they behave. What they did not discuss yet, however, is what makes HSMs and LSMs think and by extension behave differently. To shed some light upon that, the processes involved in SM need to be explored in more details.

The first point that needs to be addressed is that HSMs and LSMs think in the way they do because of their different conceptions of the self. Apparently, how one views himself or herself is an important factor that influences how one thinks and behaves. HSMs view themselves as flexible and adaptive people who pragmatically

adjust their expressive behavior to fit a given situation. They tend to rely on situational explanations for their behavior (Harvey, Ickes & Kidd, 1976). Furthermore, HSMs tend to define their identity in terms of the situation in which they are (Sampson, 1978), and their self-conception is affected by their relationship with the other individuals (Ickes, Layden, & Barnes, 1978).

LSMs, on the other end of the spectrum, regard themselves as principled people who value the consistency of their inner attitude with their expressive behavior. Investigations of attributional processes suggest that LSMs prefer to construct relatively dispositional accounts of their actions (Harvey, Ickes & Kidd, 1976), and that they define their identity in terms of enduring attributes that reside within themselves (Sampson, 1978).

To understand how the processes of SM work, and how people's conceptions about the self-influence their actions, it is necessary to explore the psychological operations that result in the behavioral orientations of HSMs and LSMs. The former category of individuals strive to mold their behavior to fit the situation in which they find themselves. In doing so, they first pay heed to the social cues around them, then engage in an attempt to identify the type of person the situation requires. Subsequently, they create a mental image of a prototypical person that would best fit in that situation, and then use this image to control and tailor their expressive behavior. LSMs follow the same psychological processes. The only difference is that they do not construct a mental image about a prototypical person who is a great fit for the situation in which they are. Instead, LSMs draw on their knowledge about themselves in terms of similar situations. That is, they rely on their personal dispositions and past experiences which are related to the situation in which they find themselves, and use them to come up with guidelines to help them monitor their expressive behavior.

There is empirical evidence that individuals do evaluate the appropriateness of behaviors for particular situations (Price & Bouffard, 1981). They may not consciously do it, but they do assess certain behaviors of their own to determine whether those behaviors would be appropriate to enact in their social interactions or not. Therefore, knowing what type of a person a situation requires and having mature notions about what behaviors are appropriate to what situations is an important process in SM.

The Self-Monitoring Scale

The first attempt to empirically investigate the SM processes started with Snyder's (1974) establishment and validation of the Self-Monitoring Scale (SMS). The chief idea behind designing the SMS was – besides determining an individual's level of SM – to identify and validate the SM construct, and to put forward evidence which prove that SM is not correlated with any other construct. Snyder's SMS proved its credibility and gained popularity among researchers in numerous disciplines. However, it has not been without criticism. For instance, it was found that it involved a misalignment between the items used in the scale and the construct of SM, which provoked concerns about construct contamination (Briggs, Cheek & Buss, 1980). Subsequently, Lennox and Wolfe (1984) developed and introduced what they named the Revised Self-Monitoring Scale (RSMS) consisting of only 13 items. In conducting a research concerning SM, the Lennox and Wolfe's (1984)

scale is preferred compared to the SMS thanks to its superior reliability and its brevity.

In brief, SM certainly influences the behavior of people. This has been proven through conducting many researches in various domains. Therefore, it is most likely that SM affects students' classroom participation as well. Surprisingly, researchers in this article could not find any previous research that focused on SM with regard to students' classroom participation in particular. Further, most researches in education treated SM as a method – like self-management – rather than a psychological construct. Therefore, this article intends to explore the influence of SM on students' classroom participation, and thus seeks to answer the following questions: Does SM influence students' classroom participation? What aspects of students' classroom participation does SM affect? And to what extent does SM affect students' classroom participation?

Method

The aim of this article is to explore the influence of SM on the classroom participation of the students of English in Mohamed First University, Oujda. From the very first glance at the nature of this research, it was assumed that it needed to be conducted with the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, a process known as triangulation. This assumption began to slowly turn into an apparent fact with the progression of the data collection procedure. The employment of the quantitative approach was necessary in the first part of data collection, for a survey was used to collect such data. For the second part, relying on a qualitative approach was essential, as more in-depth insights were needed in order to not merely state whether there is an influence or not, but to try to understand more about how SM influences students' classroom participation.

Design

After exploring a variety of research designs, one design was found to be the most suitable one: mixed methods design. The latter allows the mixing of quantitative methods and qualitative methods in the data collection phase. This was important because researchers in this article relied on collecting data using a survey at first to investigate the differences between students who are HSMs and those who are LSMs in terms of classroom participation, and interviews afterwards to explore the effects of SM more comprehensively. The mixed methods design allows quantitative data to be collected first and analyzed before proceeding to collecting and analyzing qualitative data, and then combining both types of data to arrive at a well-founded interpretation. All things considered, the mixed methods design, particularly the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, was selected to treat and present the collected data.

Participants

A multitude of options were available concerning the choice of the target population, but it was students of English in Mohamed First University, Oujda who were selected to be the participants for the following reasons: available time and resources, contextualization of the study, suitability of participants, and the researchers' familiarity with this population.

Sampling

Three different types of sampling were utilized. Collecting quantitative data was done through the use of convenience sampling and snowball sampling. Surveys were given to participants who were able and willing to participate. For the qualitative data, two types of purposeful sampling were used: snowball sampling and theory sampling. Snowball sampling was employed to reach suitable individuals who were willing to participate. Theory sampling, on the other hand, was used to identify students who are HSMs and those who are LSMs.

Instruments

Two types of instruments were used to collect data for this article: surveys and interviews. The first section of the survey consisted of 21 open-ended questions which aimed at exploring students' attitudes towards classroom participation and detecting if the level of students' SM influences their participation in the classroom, whereas the second section aimed at measuring the level of students' SM using the scale which was developed by Lennox and Wolfe in 1984. The scale consisted of 7 statements targeting the participants' ability to modify self-presentation. An example of such statements is the following: "I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them." In addition to the 7 statements, the scale also included another 6 statements that focus on the participants' sensitivity to socio-emotional expressiveness. "I am often able to read people's true emotions correctly through their eyes" is an example of such statements. Combined together, the 13 statements aim at measuring the participants' level of SM.

Interviews, on the other hand, were subsequently conducted in order to collect more in-depth data about the attitudes of students towards classroom participation. They involved open-ended questions such as "what is your goal behind participation?" and "what motivates you to participate?", which aimed at eliciting detailed insights to help in fully exploring the influence of SM on the classroom participation of the students of English in Mohamed First University, and thus help in providing answers to the research questions.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure followed the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. It was divided into two different phases. In the first phase, two surveys were distributed among students in the form of one survey consisting of two sections and one demographics section. After receiving and treating the quantitative data that the students' answers to the survey provided, another data collection procedure took place through the use of interviews. In other words, the quantitative data was first collected and analyzed, followed by the gathering and analysis of the qualitative data, then the two types of data were used to arrive at a well-founded interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

It was made clear to the participants that all of the information which they provided will be used for research purposes only. It was also made clear that any information provided by the participants will be considered confidential, and that their personal identity will not be disclosed.

Findings and Discussion

The main hypothesis on which this article is based is that SM affects students' classroom participation. In order to confirm the latter, the data collected through surveying and interviewing participants needs to be analyzed and thoroughly discussed to determine whether it supports the main hypothesis or not.

Demographics

Table 1. Participants' Demographics

Participants' Gender		Participants' Age			
Males	Females	17-20	21-24	25-29	Above 29
61	60	16	63	29	13

Participants' Self-Monitoring Data

Concerning the participants' level of SM, out of 121 participants, only 5 (4.13 %) were found to be LSMs according to the RSMS, while the rest 95.87% were identified as HSMs. Because of this extreme difference between the number of participants who were found to be HSMs and those who were identified as LSMs, another measure was added to shun any potential bias and to further strengthen the credibility of the data and by extension the validity of its interpretation. The added measure – the average measure – divides the participants into HSMs and LSMs appertaining to their average score on the RSMS, which was identified as 44. According to this measure, 47.83% of the participants were found to be HSMs, while 52.17% of them were found to be LSMs.

Frequency of Participation

The results of the survey indicated that students who have a high level of SM tend to participate more compared to those who have a low level of SM. Additionally, they showed that the frequency of participation of HSMs has increased overtime, whereas that of LSMs has decreased. At first, these results may be surprising. Anyone who has respectable knowledge concerning the difference between HSMs and LSMs would be aware of the fact that the latter category of people are more spontaneous in their social interactions. Therefore, it would be rational if one hypothesized that students who are LSMs participate more in the classroom than their HSMs counterparts. As rational as this may sound, the results suggested otherwise. This, however, also has a compelling justification. HSMs view themselves as flexible, adaptive, and pragmatically adjustive individuals. Moreover, they pay close attention to the social cues around them. LSMs, on the other hand, regard themselves as principled people whose expressive behavior is mostly consistent with their inner attitudes, and they rely more on their inner values and dispositions in their interactions. The fact that students who are HSMs participate more than those who are LSMs could be explained by referring to this difference in terms of self-conception and the basis on which they rely to interact and behave in the classroom.

The self-conception of students who have a high level of SM, which echoes flexibility and adaptability, makes them act accordingly in the classroom. Moreover, their attention to the social cues around them offers them an advantage over students who are LSMs, as sometimes listening to what the teacher and

classmates say provides some hints that help other students participate, even if they initially had nothing to say. On top of that, the responses of students who are HSMs to the interview questions also showed that they focus much on the attitudes of their teachers and their peers. LSMs, on the other hand, rely more on the knowledge that they have and less on their social environment, and thus may be less effective at responding to the social cues of their teachers and classmates.

Participation Tendencies

In addition to the difference between students in terms of their frequency of participation, they also differ in their tendencies towards participation. In this connection, the survey to collect data included questions which were fashioned to tackle this aspect of classroom participation. The results suggested that students who have a high level of SM tend to volunteer more compared to those who have a low level of SM, and that HSMs tend to ask questions more than their LSMs counterparts. Such findings could be justified in the same way in which the results of the survey regarding students' frequency of participation were explained. The self-conception of students who are HSMs and their heavy reliance on the social cues around them drive them to participate more. Likewise, the same factors propel them to ask more questions when they do not understand something, and to volunteer more in different classroom activities.

The results of the survey also indicated that the majority of HSMs participate only when they are certain about their answer, while most of LSMs participate even when they are not sure about it. Additionally, the results implied that the majority of students avoid participating when they do not have a clear idea about what to say. However, compared to LSMs, students who have a high level of SM tend to participate less when they do not have a fully formulated answer to be shared.

Explaining these results requires shifting focus from self-conception towards another chief difference between HSMs and LSMs. The former category of people care more about their social image. They rely on the expressive behavior of their interactants to decide how to behave appropriately and in a manner that would brighten their social image. Therefore, it is likely that students who are HSMs follow the same strategy. They avoid participating when they are unsure about their answers to shun putting themselves in any embarrassing situations that could threaten their social image. This also indicates that they engage more in inner-loop monitoring, meaning that they monitor their words and actions before actually articulating and performing them. This can be inferred from their answers to the interview questions, for they stated that they engage in the processes of brainstorming, making their answer as coherent as possible, and anticipating their teachers and classmates' reactions before they decide to raise their hands to participate.

Peers' and Teachers' Influence on Students' Participation

Individuals in social interactions are susceptible to being influenced by the words and actions of the others; that is one of the main characteristics of social interactions. Classroom participation is a social activity that requires interaction as well. Accordingly, it is commonplace that students and teachers are constantly affected by one another. However, not everyone involved is equally influenced. The survey used to collect data involved some questions which focus on the influence

of teachers and peers on students' classroom participation. The results showed that the friends of HSMs participate more than those of LSMs. This could be subject to various interpretations, but the most valid ones are the following: it could be that students who are HSMs are more inclined towards making friends with other students who are HSMs as well. This, however, is a less valid interpretation compared to the next one. The literature review suggests that HSMs pay more attention to their surroundings and to the expressive behavior of the others. Hence, it is more likely that students who are HSMs are simply more aware of how often their friends participate, while students who are LSMs are less aware of that. That makes HSMs more likely to notice and remember their friends' participation, and thus more prone to stating that their friends indeed tend to participate more.

The results of the aforementioned survey questions also indicated that the majority of students think that their classroom participation is not affected by their peers. When comparing HSMs to LSMs, however, it appears that HSMs are more affected by their peers in terms of classroom participation. This could be based on the fact that HSMs monitor the expressive behavior of people around them more than LSMs, and thus are more disposed to be affected by it. In fact, HSMs not only monitor others' expressive behavior, but they also depend on it in order to create, maintain, and alter their social identity. Thus, it is reasonable that students who have a high level of SM are affected more by their peers concerning classroom participation. Nonetheless, the participants' answers to one of the survey questions, which seeks to measure the extent to which students are affected by their peers with regard to classroom participation, showed some inconsistency, for it seems that it is LSMs who are affected the most by their peers.

Shifting focus from peers' influence on students' classroom participation towards that of teachers, the participants' responses suggested that the majority of students are indeed influenced by their teachers with regard to classroom participation. Comparing HSMs to their LSMs counterparts, nonetheless, indicated that LSMs are more affected by their teachers. These results are further supported by the participants' responses to a follow-up question which seeks to measure the extent to which students are affected by their teachers with reference to classroom participation.

In engaging in different social interactions, HSMs rely more on the social cues that surround them. LSMs, on the other end of the spectrum, base their social interactions more on their system of beliefs and values and on their past experiences. Within these beliefs could be the belief that the teacher is someone who is considered as an ultimate authority and perhaps the most significant element in the classroom. Thus, it is sensible to assume that LSMs are more affected by the teacher in terms of their classroom participation. This claim is supported by the participants' answers to the interview questions, which showed that LSMs consider having a good teacher as the most important participation condition.

Participation Incentives and Participation Barriers

With reference to classroom participation, numerous factors contribute to the motivation and demotivation of students. For this reason, the survey employed to collect data included questions that address students' participation incentives and barriers. The responses indicated that the majority of students, regardless of their level of SM, are motivated primarily by the nature of the topic, then by the teacher,

and then by their classmates. When comparing HSMs to LSMs, however, the former category seem to be more motivated by their classmates and teachers, while LSMs were found to be more motivated by the topic. It was also indicated that the nature of the topic is what prevents most of the students from participating. However, comparing HSMs to LSMs suggested that the nature of the topic prevents HSMs from participating more, whereas what hinders the participation of LSMs are teachers. Moreover, it was found that the nature of the topic represents the most important participation condition for students, followed by teachers, and then by classmates. For students who are HSMs, it seems that the most important participation condition is the topic then followed by the teachers, whereas that of LSMs are primarily the teachers.

It is challenging to explain why teachers represent the factor that motivates HSMs to participate, since it is the classroom participation of LSMs that is affected the most by the teacher, not that of HSMs. Nevertheless, a possible explanation could be that the teacher still plays an important role in motivating students who are HSMs, especially through his or her manner of interaction. The qualitative data provided by the participants' responses to the interview questions further supported this justification, for students who are HSMs focused in their responses on the teacher's ability of being engaging, supportive, and capable of attracting students' attention.

As for the teacher being the most important participation factor as well as the factor that hinders participation in the eyes of LSMs, this is compatible with the results which indicated that students who are LSMs are mostly affected by the teacher. The qualitative data suggested that negative behavior on the part of the teacher such as being careless and making students feel uncomfortable renders LSMs less likely to participate; hence, the latter case makes the teacher the most important participation condition for LSMs and the factor that hinders their classroom participation at the same time.

Feelings Associated with Participation

This article takes into consideration how students feel about classroom participation as well. The responses of the participants to the survey showed that most of the students feel stressed and excited at the same time when they are about to participate. Comparing HSMs to LSMs, however, indicated that HSMs feel more excited, and that LSMs feel more neutral. The responses also suggested that most of the students feel stressed and excited during the period in which participation takes place. Comparing HSMs to LSMs, nonetheless, showed that HSMs feel more stressed, and that LSMs feel more neutral. With regard to how students feel after participation, the responses implied that most of the students feel mainly neutral after they participate, and that many students experience a feeling of excitement. However, it was found that HSMs feel more excited after participation, and that LSMs feel more neutral.

Justifying the feelings of students before, during, and after participation is not an easy task, and certainly requires a study that puts this aspect of classroom participation in its focal point. However, the results have shed some light on this matter. It was found that students who are HSMs feel excited prior to participation mainly because they tend to participate more than LSMs. During participation, HSMs feel more stressed due to the fact that they pay close attention to what they

say and do. This may cause them to focus on themselves more than they focus on the thoughts that they want to share, and this in turn increases their level of stress. After participation, however, their level of excitement increases mainly because of the constructive feedback they receive from their teachers and classmates, and secondly because of their satisfaction about their answer. What indicates this is that many students who are HSMs reported that they feel not excited, but embarrassed and sometimes even humiliated after a bad participation. Furthermore, HSMs tend to do most of the work before actually participating. This involves brainstorming, formulating answers and making sure of them before participating, and thinking about the potential result of their participation. This gives them the chance to feel a sense of achievement and excitement after participation.

As for students who have a low level of SM, they mainly remain neutral throughout the participation process thanks to their more spontaneous nature. They tend to participate even when they are not sure about their answers and even when they have an incomplete idea. However, this does not mean that students who are LSMs do not experience the feelings of stress and excitement. They definitely do. It is just a matter of less or more, compared to HSMs.

Attitudes towards Classroom Participation

In addition to all of the aspects of classroom participation discussed earlier, this article also takes into account students' attitudes towards classroom participation. Thus, the survey involved questions which were fashioned to elicit students' opinions about classroom participation. The results indicated that students who are HSMs surpass those who are LSMs with regard to the extent to which they think classroom participation is important. Regarding the reasons why they participate, the results suggested that HSMs participate mainly to share their knowledge and to start a discussion.

It is possible that HSMs regard classroom participation as more important than their LSMs counterparts because they view it as a chance to start a valuable discussion and to become more social. HSMs depend to a large extent on the social world to define themselves. Therefore, classroom participation provides a great opportunity for them to create and maintain a favorable social image, especially when the feedback they get is constructive and somehow corresponds to the social image they initially wanted to reflect.

In addition to the aforementioned, the results also implied that HSMs perceive their participation as more valuable compared to their LSMs counterparts, and that the majority of HSMs are against forced participation, while the majority of LSMs support it. Students who are HSMs may not be in favor of forced participation because they need time since they tend to think more about what to say before sharing it with the rest of the class. This is the same reason that makes them perceive their own participation as valuable and that it adds value to the lesson. Put in other words, HSMs tend not to participate unless they have put together a full thought and of which they are certain. Therefore, it is rational that they think that their participation does add value to the lesson.

SM and Students' Classroom Participation: Does the Former Influence the Latter?

A number of researches were conducted with reference to the influence of SM on people's social interactions in distinct contexts. Taking into consideration the

foregoing, researchers in this article hypothesized that SM affects the participation of students in the classroom. To test this hypothesis, this article endeavored to answer three different yet closely related questions: Does SM affect students' classroom participation? If so, what aspects of classroom participation does it affect? And to what extent does it affect them?

The results have suggested that the answer to the first research question is a strong yes. The differences between HSMs and LSMs in terms of how they tend to think and behave impels them to act differently towards classroom participation. Not just that, this difference also influences how they perceive the latter, which also affects how they act towards it. The answer to this question provides valuable insights to be added to the available knowledge on the effects of SM in the domains of education and communication. Moreover, it may function as the basis on which further research on this topic could be based. For instance, a researcher may start from the premise that SM affects students' classroom participation, and proceed to exploring the influence of SM on other aspects or opt for exploring its influence on a specific area of participation only.

Regarding the second and third research questions, the results also showed that various aspects of classroom participation are affected by SM. The extent to which they are affected by it, however, varies significantly. For instance, it seems that there is an appreciable difference between students who have a high level of SM and those who are LSMs in terms of the frequency of participation, tendencies of participation, and attitudes towards participation. Nevertheless, the difference between students who are HSMs and those who are LSMs in terms of other aspects of classroom participation such as what motivates them to participate, what prevents them from participating, and to what extent their teachers and peers influence their participation remains a bit ambiguous. More specific researches are needed to explore these aspects of classroom participation in particular.

Answers to the second and third research questions also provide some valuable insights. First, it gives researchers an idea about the aspects of classroom participation that are influenced the most by SM. This allows researchers to further investigate the influence of SM on these aspects separately. In practice, the results related to the second and third research questions present an opportunity for teachers and practitioners in the field of education to become more aware of the psychological factors that may either motivate or hinder the classroom participation of students. Knowing this would allow them to become more understanding and more effective. For instance, the results have indicated that students who are HSMs do not participate until they form a complete idea of which they are sure. Knowing this makes the teacher more inclined towards giving students enough time to provide him or her with answers, and not to rush them to participate.

The results have also demonstrated that giving constructive feedback is always a good practice to follow, but without being too passive to the extent of agreeing with every student's answer, as this was found to be a reason that may demotivate some students. With regard to the emotional states of students, the results have uncovered a significant insight. They indicated that most of the students feel excited and stressed before and during participation. However, as soon as they are done participating, they start to feel relieved, more excited, and more willing to participate. This may be good news for the teachers, as pushing their students to participate, even once, would encourage them to participate again. Nonetheless,

teachers must be careful with this and should avoid forcing their students to participate most of the times, because some students, as the results implied, could become less willing to participate if their first participation resulted in feeling embarrassed or in being put in an awkward situation.

Conclusion

SM is a psychological construct which has captured the interest of various researchers in a large number of disciplines. It focuses on the individuals' differences with respect to the extent to which they monitor and control their expressive behavior. In terms of SM, people are categorized as either HSMs or LSMs. The difference between those two categories of people in terms of SM affects how they behave in their social interactions. Therefore, this article hypothesized that the psychological construct of SM affects the classroom participation of students. Motivated by this hypothesis, this article attempted to investigate whether SM indeed influences students' classroom participation, look into what aspects of the latter does it influence, and examine to what extent it affects classroom participation.

To assure credibility of the results, researchers in this article have employed the triangulation approach along with the mixed-methods design because of the need to collect and analyze both quantitative as well as qualitative data. A total of 121 students of English in Mohamed First University were selected to be the sample. They were chosen based on convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and concept sampling. The results obtained through the implemented instruments indicated that the difference in the level of SM between students indeed results in differences in terms of their performance with regard to classroom participation. These differences emerge from the fact that students who are HSMs and those who are LSMs rely on different grounds while engaging in social interactions. Besides, they also have different self-conceptions, which influence how they behave in different social settings. It was also found that some aspects of classroom participation are more influenced by SM than the others. Therefore, HSMs are less like LSMs in some aspects, and more like them in others.

Despite all what this article has offered concerning the influence of SM on students' classroom participation, a number of factors caused it to face some shortcomings. First, only two instruments were used: surveys and interviews. Adding more instruments would have provided more comprehensive insights. For instance, implementing classroom observations and experiments would have added great value. The former instrument would have shed some light upon how students who are HSMs and those who are LSMs behave/participate in the classroom, while experiments would have made it possible to focus on particular participation aspects and use them to compare between the two categories of students.

Second, the sample size was not large and diverse enough to allow for a full exploration of the influence of SM on students' classroom participation. Out of 121 participants, only 5 were found to be LSMs. This imposed a new challenge that called for the addition of another measure: the average measure.

Finally, this article aimed at exploring the influence of SM on students' classroom participation and determining whether it affects different aspects of classroom participation or not. It did not focus much on the variables of gender,

age, and the educational level of the participants. Therefore, this article does not provide insights about whether these three variables affect students' level of SM.

Nevertheless, since it was found in this article that SM indeed affects the classroom participation of students, this widens the horizons of research concerning SM in the field of education. There is certainly more to be explored in this regard. In the end, it is noteworthy that the differences between students who have a high level of SM and those who are LSMs in terms of classroom participation do not imply that they perceive and act towards participation in entirely different ways. Rather, it is a matter of more or less, meaning that students who are HSMs are more inclined towards certain attitudes, while LSMs are more inclined towards other behaviors and attitudes. However, just like knowing about the theory of multiple intelligences has positively contributed to the development of the teaching/learning process, being aware of the differences between students in terms of SM may expand teachers' perspective and create opportunities for changing education towards the better.

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