*4.7. Limitations*

Even though we consider study results here credible, we note a number of limitations of the study design, which may ultimately also affect the representativeness of the findings. First, within our study we focused on classroom-based motivation. Motivation, however, is a multi-level construct that can also be investigated amongst others at the subject as well as school level. Thus, a different study focus could result in a different distribution of the coding results across the different motivational factors. For example, it could be conceivable that student may be more likely to revert to more distal factors such as goals when asked about school motivation. Comparing the results of studies on motivation at the different levels would then help to consolidate the different motivational factors into a coherent framework. Second, student statements collected were vague and unspecific at times. This may suggest students were not used to activities like our questionnaire exercise. Future studies should therefore also employ more immersive research methods such as in-depth interviews or observations. If student interviews manage to circumvent problems of social desirability, they could help to generate a more nuanced understanding of students’ perceptions of motivational factors. Also, our data was predominantly subjective in the sense that they mainly reflected what students believed are the drivers of their motivational experiences within imagined classroom exercises. Within observational studies, actual cases of classroom exercises could be analysed. Within follow-up interviews, observational could then be used to structure the discussions with students on what actually distinguishes instances of high engagement from instances of low engagement. A final limitation concerned the correlational analysed we performed. It was based on a listing exercise, which might have been a very crude way to capture students’ level of motivational experiences within subjects. Within future studies, latent factor analyses should be run that adequately model student motivation and its relations with educational outcomes such as school marks. This design would require motivational scales that were not available at the time of study implementation.

*4.8. Conclusion*

The present exploratory, mixed-method study aimed at exploring the internal structure of achievement motivation and its external relations with school grades within the Rwandan school context. We found that the cognitive-affective factors of expectancy beliefs, school utility, and emotions describe well the students’ descriptions of those determinants they perceive to be drivers of (a)motivation within classroom contexts. Through a simple listing exercise, we were able to gauge what subjects students associate with (a)motivation. Despite this very crude design, we found students’ listings to predict end-of-year school marks in a number of high-stake school subjects. It would suggest that motivation may indeed be a relevant framework to study educational processes within Rwandan schools. We conclude that additional motivational research in Rwanda is warranted.

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