



- Motivational strategies for teachers and the motivational profile of elementary students
- The effect of different evaluation approaches on students' commitment to learning and perseverance in the context of their transition from elementary to secondary school

MOTIVATION, SUPPORT AND EVALUATION: KEYS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

By virtue of the strategies they use to motivate students, the support they provide and the evaluation practices they favour, teachers have a profound impact on their students' perseverance and commitment to learning and, consequently, on their academic success. How effective are these strategies and practices? Two research teams studied the question from the point of view of students.¹ Thérèse Bouffard and her team at the psychology department at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) focused on the strategies used to motivate elementary school students. Roch Chouinard and his team at the faculty of education at Université de Montréal concentrated on the evaluation approach used by teachers at a pivotal point in students' development, i.e. Elementary 6 and Secondary I.²

Thérèse Bouffard et al., Les stratégies de motivation des enseignants et leurs relations avec le profil motivationnel d'élèves du primaire (Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal, 2005), http://www.fqrsc.gouv.qc.ca/recherche/pdf/RF-ThereseBouffard.pdf>. Study financed as part of the Research Program on Student Retention and Academic Success (MELS-FQRSC).

Roch Chouinard et al., L'effet de différentes approches évaluatives sur l'engagement et la persévérance scolaires dans le contexte du passage du primaire au secondaire (Montréal, Université de Montréal, 2005), https://www.fqrsc.gouv.qc.ca/recherche/pdf/RF-rchouinard.pdf>. Study financed as part of the Research Program on Student Retention and Academic Success (MELS-FQRSC).

THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF MOTIVATION

Professor Thérèse Bouffard and her team wanted to learn more about the role of teachers in the development of student motivation, which plays a crucial role in their commitment to learning, their performance at school and their academic success. Motivation can be broken down into a number of components, the most important for commitment to learning and academic success being a sense of personal effectiveness, the students' learning goals and the value they place on the different subjects.

The following are components of the student's motivational profile:

- His or her sense of personal effectiveness
 (also referred to as "perception of competency"),
 i.e. the student's assessment of his or her ability
 to successfully perform tasks and acquire learning
- His or her learning goals, i.e. the objectives targeted by the student in a given learning activity. These are usually broken down into three major categories:
 - 1. Mastery, i.e. a desire to assimilate learning content and acquire new knowledge and skills
 - 2. Performance, i.e. a concern for achieving high marks and being the best or one of the best in one's group
 - 3. Avoidance, i.e. a desire to limit one's efforts to the strict minimum in order to meet pass requirements
- Lastly, the value placed on the different subjects, a combination of the student's interest in the subjects, the importance he or she places on them and the usefulness he or she sees in them

In the study, a student's motivational profile is based on these three components.



In the sociocognitive approach adopted by Thérèse Bouffard's research team, the different characteristics of the student's motivational profile are mental constructs which are developed as students acquire learning experience, and modified or consolidated, depending on the result of each experience, by the causes to which the student attributes it and his or her interpretation of comments from credible social agents. In this respect, after a few years at school, despite the continued motivational role of a student's parents, teachers are key in the determination and consolidation of the components of his or her motivational profile.

Teachers may actively contribute to their students' motivation by providing support or commenting on the quality of their work and achievements. Therese Bouffard and her team decided to study the latter two aspects in order to learn more about the teacher's role in the development of motivation among elementary school students. The study was unique in that it focused on the students' view of teachers' interventions at this level.

A TOOL FOR DETERMINING TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWPOINTS

First, the researchers developed a questionnaire to determine teachers' assessment of the effectiveness of their strategies for developing and supporting student motivation. The questionnaire was then validated by 162 elementary school teachers in the Montréal and Trois-Rivières areas, as well as by 452 graduates of the UQAM education program who had completed their student teaching. The final questionnaire contained 41 items divided into eight categories: value placed on effort, promotion of autonomy and cognitive stimulation, promotion of cooperation among students and mastery of learning, use of a reward system, use of a punishment system, use of verbal congratulations, "positive" emulation, and "negative" emulation.

The researchers observed that:

- assessments by teachers differed little from those by student teachers
- respondents believed that students who like school the most have the least amount of difficulty and vice versa
- almost all of the respondents believed that strategies are more effective in motivating students who like school than students who do not

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE REWARDS, PUNISHMENTS AND OTHER MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES?

In a second study, the researchers used the questionnaire to compare teachers' and students' assessments of the effectiveness of different motivational strategies. They also examined the relationship between students' assessments of the strategies, their perception of the support received from their teacher, the components of their motivational profile and their academic performance. In addition, they wanted to determine whether girls and boys react differently to teachers' interventions and, if so, which type of strategy works better with each group.

The researchers administered the questionnaire on motivational strategies to 471 Elementary 2 students, 483 Elementary 4 students and 554 Elementary 6 students in 29 schools in the greater Montréal area, as well as to the teachers of the same 94 classes. The teachers were asked to indicate the effectiveness of each strategy described in improving the motivation of, on the one hand, students who like school and, on the other, students who do not. They were also asked to assess their ability to motivate both types of students.

The students filled out another questionnaire on the three components of their motivational profile for two subjects: half of them answered with respect to French, language of instruction, and the other half, with respect to mathematics. They were also asked to share their perception of the support they received from their teacher and his or her ability to make the subject interesting. In addition, they were asked to assess their level of difficulty in school and to indicate whether or not they liked school.

THE LEAST MOTIVATED STUDENTS RECEIVE THE LEAST AMOUNT OF SUPPORT

Analysis of the results reveals that:

- as students progress (from Elementary 2 to Elementary 6), more of them say they have difficulty and fewer of them say they like school
- not all students are equally motivated when they start school: some Elementary 2 students already say they do not like school
- at every grade level, there are more boys than girls who say they do not like school; however, the difference between the two groups narrows considerably over the years
- students who say they like school say they receive more support from their teacher than those who say they do not like school

Faced with the last of these results, the researchers wondered whether the students' attitudes might have an impact on most of their assessments, including their perception of the amount of support received from the teacher.



But they did consider another possibility: the students who said they did not like school may indeed receive less support from their teacher.

According to the researchers, this second hypothesis could be an example of reciprocal determinism:

- the less the student likes school, the less support he or she receives
- the less support the student receives, the less he or she likes school

Teachers' answers regarding their ability to motivate students tend to validate this hypothesis. Although they all say they are more or less or perfectly capable of motivating students who like school, many of them admit that they have difficulty with students who do not like school. This proportion increases as students move from Elementary 2 through Elementary 6.

The different motivational strategies

The eight categories of motivational strategies studied are as follows:

- 1. Stress the importance of students' efforts.
- 2. Foster autonomy and cognitive stimulation.
- 3. Promote cooperation among students and mastery of learning.
- 4. Use a reward system.
- 5. Use a punishment system.
- 6. Verbally congratulate students for the quality of their participation.
- 7. Use a student's work as a model to be followed (positive emulation).
- 8. Use a student's work as a model to be avoided (negative emulation).

The researchers observed that:

- the number of years of teaching experience has no impact on the choice of strategy
- there is little difference in the strategies used by teachers of different grade levels
- teachers see little difference between strategies deemed effective with students who like school and those deemed effective with students who do not
- students usually agree with teachers on the effectiveness of the different strategies
- teachers are less likely to use positive emulation, negative emulation and punishment
- teachers actually consider negative emulation harmful
- teachers believe that positive emulation and punishment have little effect on the motivation of students who like school, and that they are harmful for students who do not
- students who do not like school also find positive emulation and punishment more harmful than students who like school
- students of all ages generally agree on the effectiveness of the different strategies
- boys and girls generally agree on the effectiveness of the different strategies, except in the case of congratulations, which are deemed more effective by girls in Elementary 4 and Elementary 6
- generally speaking, students who say they like school consider all of the strategies more effective than those who say they do not

Both teachers and students are relatively unenthusiastic about strategies that focus on effort. For many students, the concept of effort is unclear and the need to make a greater effort to succeed can even be seen as a sign of a lack of intelligence. According to the researchers, this same assessment on the part of teachers is worrisome in the context of the education reform where, in theory, the focus is on the learning process and related factors. Students need to recognize the importance of their efforts.

THE COMPONENTS OF MOTIVATION

Among other things, the study was intended to verify the relationship between students' assessments of the motivational strategies used by their teachers and the components of their motivation. The researchers observed that:

- in every subject, students' sense of personal effectiveness, their learning goals and the value they place on the subject are all less marked among older students
- mastery and performance are more important to younger students and girls; for all students, mastery and performance are more important in mathematics than in French, language of instruction
- the value placed on the subject is less marked among older students; boys place more value on mathematics than on French, language of instruction, while girls place as much value on the one as the other

QUALITY STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS: A PRIORITY

The main objective of the study was to verify how students' assessment of the strategies used and their perception of the support they receive from their teacher related to their motivational profile. The researchers observed that, at every grade level, among both students who like school and students who do not, a positive perception of the support received by the teacher is the most important factor in their sense of personal effectiveness and their commitment to learning. This strongly suggests that students' perception of the quality of their relationship with their teacher is more important to them than their assessment of the effectiveness of the motivational strategies used. Students' sense of personal effectiveness is a powerful predictor of performance, regardless of grade level and of whether or not they like school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers make recommendations to help teachers improve student motivation, highlighting two specific points. The first involves the students' perception of their teacher's support. This is more than just their perception of whether they can get help. According to the researchers, it can also be interpreted as an implicit recognition of the student himself or herself, of his or her value in the teacher's eyes and of the teacher's faith in his or her ability to learn.



The second point concerns the impact of a sense of personal effectiveness on students' progress and performance. The results of this study, and those of studies conducted in the past twenty years by the same research team, suggest that this is a dimension of the student that develops slowly, is very unstable and is particularly fragile during periods of transition. Thus the researchers question the impact of having three cycles instead of two in elementary school; while this organizational model is undoubtedly justified, more transitions mean that students must call their abilities into question that much more often. While students develop a sense of personal effectiveness based on past performance, they also rely on feedback. It is important that teachers be aware of their role in the process.

Lastly, the researchers point out that motivating students with the greatest need for motivation requires special competencies. In this respect, they lament the virtual absence of teacher training courses focusing on student motivation and its relationship with affectivity and the quality of learning.

DO GIRLS AND BOYS AGREE?

TABLE 1

	ELEMENTARY 2	ELEMENTARY 4	ELEMENTARY 6			
Extent to which boys and girls find school easy						
Boys	2.93 (1.13)	2.73 (0.95)	2.77 (0.90)			
Girls	3.05 (1.05)	2.85 (0.90)	2.74 (0.82)			

Extent to which boys and girls like school

Boys	2.96	2.45	2.37		
	(1.17)	(1.10)	(0.98)		
Girls	3.33	2.92	2.61		
	(1.02)	(1.01)	(0.93)		

Note: Average scores out of a maximum of 4 (standard deviation)

Girls and boys made a similar assessment of their level of difficulty at school. However, more girls than boys said they liked school.

At every grade level, the proportion of girls who say they like school is significantly higher than the proportion of boys. However, between both genders, this proportion decreases as the students grow older. While it is higher than 30% in Elementary 2, the proportion of boys who say they do not like school reaches 47% in Elementary 4 and more than 50% in Elementary 6. Among girls, it goes from 18% in Elementary 2 to 33% in Elementary 4 and 42% in Elementary 6.

Students' perception of their teacher's ability to make the subject interesting reveals only one difference in terms of subject: in Elementary 6, the proportion of students who say that their teacher does not make the subject interesting is higher among those surveyed with respect to French, language of instruction (39.1%) than with respect to mathematics (27.2%). Analysis by gender indicated no difference between girls and boys.

TABLE 2

	ELEMENTARY 2		ELEMENTARY 4		ELEMENTARY 6	
	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS
Sense of person	nal effectiver	ness				
Boys	3.01 (0.66)	3.12 (0.63)	2.89 (0.64)	3.29 (0.56)	2.72 (0.66)	3.20 (0.52)
Girls	3.21 (0.58)	3.04 (0.59)	2.96 (0.58)	3.02 (0.63)	2.81 (0.58)	2.93 (0.57)





TABLE 2 (cont.)

	ELEMENTARY 2		ELEMENTARY 4		ELEMENTARY 6	
	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS	FRENCH	MATHEMATICS
Mastery goals						
Boys	3.40	3.51	3.37	3.55	3.26	3.49
	(0.67)	(0.65)	(0.59)	(0.65)	(0.59)	(0.43)
Girls	3.63	3.68	3.56	3.62	3.43	3.56
	(0.51)	(0.46)	(0.48)	(0.52)	(0.47)	(0.39)
Performance go	als					
Boys	3.43	3.44	3.14	3.35	2.94	3.10
	(0.63)	(0.66)	(0.59)	(0.53)	(0.61)	(0.55)
Girls	3.40	3.47	3.17	3.24	2.96	2.96
	(0.68)	(0.54)	(0.57)	(0.56)	(0.50)	(0.48)
Teacher's ability	, to motivat	e students				
Boys	3.14	3.21	2.82	3.23	2.72	3.05
	(0.99)	(0.99)	(0.99)	(0.92)	(0.97)	(0.93)
Girls	3.31	3.37	3.08	3.05	2.78	2.80
	(0.98)	(0.93)	(0.95)	(0.97)	(0.99)	(0.89)
Value placed or	n the subjec	t				
Boys	3.23	3.26	2.95	3.40	2.75	3.25
	(0.68)	(0.71)	(0.63)	(0.60)	(0.59)	(0.49)
Girls	3.46	3.37	3.21	3.27	3.01	3.08
	(0.54)	(0.61)	(0.58)	(0.62)	(0.53)	(0.51)

Note: Average scores out of a maximum of 4 (standard deviation)

Overall, both girls and boys say they feel more competent in mathematics than in French, language of instruction.

Concerning learning goals:

- more girls than boys say they aim at mastery; more students of both genders say they aim at mastery in mathematics than in French, language of instruction
- the number of students who aim at performance decreases as the students grow older; more students aim at performance in mathematics than in French, language of instruction; there is no significant difference between boys and girls in this respect

More boys recognize their teacher's ability to motivate them in mathematics than in French, language of instruction, while girls make no such distinction.

Boys place significantly more value on mathematics than on French, language of instruction, while girls make no such distinction. Like the learning goals, the value placed on each subject decreases as the students grow older, regardless of gender.

The differences between girls and boys with respect to their assessment of the motivational strategies used by teachers are insignificant. However, congratulations are always deemed more effective by girls than by boys, except among Elementary 2 female students who like school.

THE IMPACT OF EVALUATION PRACTICES

Professor Roch Chouinard's research team studied the impact of evaluation practices on motivation, social adaptation in the classroom and students' use of reading-to-learn strategies, in the context of the transition from elementary to secondary school. The team was made up of Roch Chouinard, François Bowen, Sylvie C. Cartier, Nadia Desbiens and Michel Laurier, all professors at Université de Montréal.

The current education reform is giving rise to new evaluation practices: more personalized and differentiated evaluation, increased participation of students and parents in the evaluation process, less normative approaches based on criteria associated with the programs of study, less importance on tests and increased use of student productions (evaluation in an authentic context).

These new practices are currently being implemented at the elementary level. Thus, when they make the transition from elementary to secondary school, students are faced with a variety of different evaluation practices. This is a critical transition, since it occurs at a time when the child is experiencing major physiological and psychological changes. Decreased motivation among students in certain subjects could be the result of any number of secondary school characteristics, including a larger school, a more authoritarian approach to classroom management, less stable groups, less frequent and less personal contact with teachers, and the greater importance placed on evaluation of learning and normative performance.

Research studies have shown that teachers' attitudes and evaluation practices have a significant impact on student motivation and that students' perception of evaluation methods and objectives is what counts. This being said, Roch Chouinard's team observed that, while the new evaluation practices are based on solid theory, their actual efficiency and the conditions for their effectiveness remain to be seen. The researchers therefore developed a study to better understand the effect of evaluation practices on students making the transition from elementary to secondary school.



Methodology

The researchers administered a questionnaire on evaluation practices to 167 teachers (106 Elementary 6 teachers and 61 Secondary I French, language of instruction, and mathematics teachers) in French-language public schools in the greater Montréal area, then grouped them together by level of education and evaluation approach.

They also asked these teachers' 3 659 students (1 860 Elementary 6 students and 1 799 Secondary I students) to fill out a questionnaire in order to compare their responses by gender and teacher's evaluation approach for the following variables: motivation to learn, social adaptation in the classroom, reading-to-learn learning strategies and performance in French, language of instruction, and mathematics.

Lastly, they compared the evaluation practices of elementary and secondary school teachers.

Teachers' evaluation approaches

The researchers established a typology of evaluation approaches among elementary and secondary school teachers. Apparently, there are two types of teachers: those who use a single-method evaluation approach and those who use a multi-method approach.

Teachers who use a *single-method approach* usually:

 administer tests and examinations to evaluate their students. This is the traditional evaluation approach. Although this is the most used approach at both levels of education, according to the researchers, it is far more common in secondary school.

Teachers who use a *multi-method approach*:

- are more likely to personalize their evaluations
- have students participate more actively in the process
- are more likely to base their students' report cards on individual productions

This approach is closer to the one proposed in the education reform and is more common in elementary school than in secondary school, perhaps because the education reform has been implemented at that level.

IMPACT OF THE EVALUATION APPROACH ON STUDENT MOTIVATION

The study conducted by Professor Roch Chouinard's research team shows that the evaluation approach used by teachers has a significant impact on students' motivation to learn, especially in secondary school.

At the end of elementary school

- In a multi-method approach, students feel that they receive more encouragement from their teacher.
- Students experience less anxiety with respect to evaluation.
- The impact on students' perceptions of control (associated with their belief that their actions can help them obtain the desired results) and the usefulness of learning content appear to be positive among girls and negative among boys.
- In a single-method approach, students tend to aim higher in terms of performance.

At the beginning of secondary school

- Students experience more anxiety than they did in elementary school.
- Students experience more anxiety in a multi-method approach.
- · Boys experience more anxiety than girls.

The study shows that girls benefit more than boys from a multi-method evaluation approach:

 More girls than boys say they receive encouragement from their teacher; girls have a more positive perception of their competencies and control of the situation; they are more likely to aim for mastery and performance; and they tend to find the learning content more interesting and useful. The researchers attribute these results, at first glance surprising, to the fact that secondary school teachers rarely use a multi-method evaluation approach. Also, because of the small number of teachers who participated in the study and who use such an approach, other, unverified factors may have influenced the results.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND THE QUALITY OF TEACHER-STUDENT AND PEER RELATIONS

In elementary school

The researchers observed that, at the end of elementary school, the evaluation approach used by the teacher has little impact on the school climate and the quality of relationships between students and their teacher and among the students themselves, except for the fact that students whose teachers use a single-method evaluation approach scored higher on their perception of the quality of these relationships. According to the researchers, since a single-method approach makes it possible to establish very clear reference points for success, failure and progress, it is easier for teachers to encourage their students and give positive feedback, especially since the group stays together and spends most of the day with the same teacher.

The researchers did, however, observe differences based on gender. Girls, for example, are more sensitive to a climate that fosters a sense of belonging and quality teacher-student and peer relations, while boys are more sensitive to fairness.



READING-TO-LEARN STRATEGIES

Reading-to-learn strategies focus on assimilating learning content rather than understanding a text or appreciating literature. In such a context, students must not only understand a text, they must also be able to draw information from it, information they will then translate into knowledge.³

Reading-to-learn strategies were measured according to nine variables grouped together in three categories:

- Activity requirements: interpretation, general criteria and specific criteria
- Self-regulation strategies: planning, control, adjustment and peripheral engagement
- Cognitive strategies: reading and encoding or recall

In elementary school

According to the researchers, at the end of elementary school, whether teachers opt for a single- or multi-method evaluation approach has little effect on reading-to-learn. This could be because other academic activities, i.e. learning and teaching activities, have more of an impact. The researchers propose another hypothesis: requirements related to the evaluation activities—the same in either approach—may have more of an impact than the approach itself.

However, the researchers observed that a single-method approach yielded better results for two variables: in this approach, students appear to use more planning and encoding or recall strategies. This could be because the tests and examinations used explicitly require students to retain the information they read, while this requirement is not as explicit in a multi-method approach.

In secondary school

At the beginning of secondary school, the impact of the evaluation approach used also differs by gender. In a multi-method approach, girls and boys have the same sense of fairness. However, in a single-method approach, boys say they feel a greater sense of fairness on average than do the girls in their classes. This may be because the teacher can then give clearer and more precise expectations and criteria for success or failure.

Peer relations are better when the teacher uses a single-method approach. However, regardless of the evaluation approach, girls have better relations with their classmates than do boys. According to the researchers, this supports their hypothesis that boys are more sensitive than girls to the rules and fairness of the different evaluation methods.

While in secondary school girls and boys have a similar appreciation of their relationship with teachers who use a single-method evaluation approach, girls have a more positive perception of the quality of their relationship with teachers who use a multi-method approach. The researchers suggest that girls' more marked ability to adapt to teachers' requirements renders them more capable of meeting the expectations of teachers who use a multi-method approach. Thus, they receive positive feedback, which gives them a positive perception of their relationship. All of this adds to their sense of competency. In other words, conclude the researchers, a multi-method approach in secondary school appears particularly advantageous for girls, but not necessarily for boys.

^{3.} S. Cartier and J. Tardif, "De la lecture pour comprendre à la lecture pour apprendre: aider les élèves qui ont des difficultés à apprendre par la lecture," *Vie pédagogique*, vol. 115 (April-May 2000): 44-49.

In secondary school

Results obtained at the beginning of secondary school show that evaluation activities have a considerable impact on students' reading-to-learn profile, and the multi-method approach yields better results in every case. According to the researchers, the different requirements of the two approaches are responsible for their different effects: many secondary school teachers consider themselves first and foremost content specialists. This suggests that the evaluation activities prepared by teachers who favour a single-method approach take into account only knowledge and competencies related to their specialty. They probably do not evaluate their students' learning strategies and progress. It can be assumed that teachers who favour a multi-method approach are more sensitive to the students' learning process and that this is reflected in their evaluation practices.

Indeed, the results show that, in a multi-method evaluation approach, students are more likely to recognize a set of requirements associated with the activity (e.g. read the text, understand it and draw knowledge from it), to refer to specific criteria during self-evaluation, and to use planning, control and adjustment strategies, as well as encoding or recall strategies. In a word, the students are more fully involved in reading to learn.

The more marked effects of the multi-method approach are a result of instructional practices related to self-evaluation, such as asking students to evaluate their own work based on specific criteria and using a descriptive scale of competency levels.

Lastly, the researchers observed differences between boys and girls, none of which, however, can be attributed to the evaluation approach used. More boys than girls mention peripheral engagement (not directly related to the activity), while more girls than boys say they use reading strategies. To understand these results, say the researchers, it will be necessary to formulate other hypotheses concerning academic background and the different interests of girls and boys.

PERFORMANCE IN MATHEMATICS AND FRENCH, LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

The researchers examined the relationships between the different evaluation approaches and student performance in mathematics and French, language of instruction. They observed only one significant result: secondary school students obtain better results in a single-method approach than in a multimethod approach. Their results also indicate that:

- a greater diversity of evaluation methods, increased student participation in the process and more personalized evaluation practices are not associated with improved student performance
- at the end of elementary school, girls have better results in French, language of instruction, than boys, but the reverse is true in mathematics
- at the beginning of secondary school, while there is still a difference between girls' and boys' performance in French, language of instruction, the same is no longer true for mathematics

THE EVALUATION PRACTICES OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Professor Roch Chouinard's study shows that the evaluation practices of elementary and secondary school teachers differ on a number of points. Secondary school teachers favour traditional practices, while elementary school teachers have adopted a variety of less traditional ones. These differences may be due to the fact that the education reform has been implemented at the elementary level.

However, at the critical transition point between elementary and secondary school, students are inevitably confronted with new evaluation practices. Research studies have shown that a growing number of students experience problems with their perseverance and commitment to learning in every year of elementary and secondary school, and that this is related to an increased reliance on normative performance.

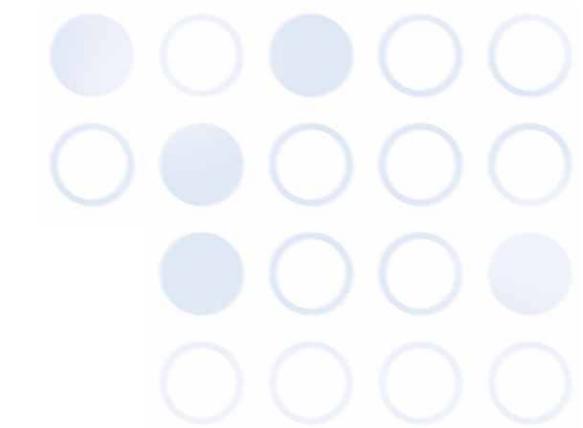
The new practices are based on solid theory. However, their actual efficiency and the conditions for their effectiveness remain to be seen. For example, self-evaluation, a complex mechanism, could cause confusion among students and foster the adoption of undesirable behaviours. Also, the differences between the genders observed in this study call for a more in-depth examination.

BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS

Teachers and education consultants will find the research studies conducted by the Université du Ouébec à Montréal and Université de Montréal teams useful in many respects. First, they provide new knowledge that will help them understand different aspects of the complex issue of motivation. Also, they demonstrate the important role of teachers in student motivation, in both their relations with students and their evaluation practices. In both cases, the researchers suggest that the current education reform could have a significant impact.

The studies conducted by Thérèse Bouffard and her colleagues show that teachers can have a considerable impact on their students, especially on their sense of personal effectiveness and, in particular, in their transition from one cycle to the next, when this feeling is likely to be unstable and fragile (the education reform has introduced an additional transition at the elementary level). Roch Chouinard and his team suggest that the differences between evaluation practices at the elementary and secondary levels may be due to the education reform that has been implemented at the elementary level.

Both studies contribute significantly to our understanding of the impact of student motivation and evaluation on academic success. The researchers make two recommendations: that student motivation be dealt with more extensively in teacher training and that new studies attempt to bring to light certain aspects of the new evaluation practices, as well as the different reactions of girls and boys to their teachers' learning strategies and evaluation practices.



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