

DOES MOTIVATION MATTER? ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED QUALITY OF TEACHING AND STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to fill a vital gap in the literature by looking at students' motivation and perceptions of teaching quality. We report the findings from a survey of student perceptions of quality teaching and its interaction with various motivational orientations that students exhibit in higher education.

The proposed hypotheses and conceptual model were tested using regression and correlation analyses, as well as analysis of variance from a survey of 271 undergraduate students in programs at two different universities. The findings document the explanatory role of various motivations in students' perceptions of teaching quality: correlation analysis found intrinsic motivation to be positively correlated with the perceived teaching quality, while extrinsic motivation was found to be moderately correlated, suggesting that motivational orientation dimensions are influential in students' assessments of their teaching experience in school. Intrinsic motivation with its possible states and factor loadings showed strong positive impact on the teaching quality and students' evaluation, even after accounting for the reputation (general opinion) of the educational institution (or program). Thus, we cannot ignore the value-added nature of various motivational orientations and their influence upon

the perceptions of students. Surprisingly few differences in perception based on gender, age, and country of birth (ethnicity) were found. Young students (less than 25 years old) and Canadian- and American-born students exhibited significant negative reactions (difference) to perceived teaching quality; in contrast, female students exhibited positive reactions towards it.

On the other hand, our results show that if instructors and administrators want to improve student perceptions of teaching quality, they cannot ignore the fact that students' motivational orientations and their general opinion (reputation) of the educational institution (or program) play influential roles in creating positive perceptions. A viable strategy to enhance and further motivate students extrinsically and intrinsically in their learning will significantly enhance their perceptions (Deci et al., 2001; Ames and Archer, 1988). Ideally, the results presented here will assist researchers, professors, and higher-education administrators by capitalizing on students' existing intrinsic motivation and understanding the relationship between student perceptions of teaching quality and their degree of motivation to further expand and implement a better quality-assurance educational system (Maureen, 1999).