



## RESEARCH BRIEF

# THE MOTIVATION EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES

During the Fall 2020 semester, 283 post-secondary students' with and without learning disabilities (LD) completed our survey regarding their school experiences. Thank you to all of our participants, and thank you to SSHRC for funding our research! Some preliminary results are presented here.

**SELF DETERMINATION THEORY** is a leading motivation theory and identifies three psychological needs that act as precursors for intrinsic motivation:

- ✓ **Autonomy:** feeling that you can exert control over a task  
e.g., I feel that my decisions reflect what I really want.
- ✓ **Competence:** feeling capable about the task  
e.g., I feel confident that I can do things well
- ✓ **Relatedness:** feeling connected or a having sense of belonging  
e.g., I feel that the people I care about also care about me.

Compared to their peers, students with learning disabilities experience **LESS satisfaction** with **ALL** three psychological needs



Another Important Theory is **EXPECTANCY-VALUE THEORY** that examines students' motivation towards a task. This theory includes

- ✓ **Expectancy** (Can I do the task?)
- ✓ **Value** (Do I want to do the task?)
- ✓ **Cost** (Why don't I want to do the task? For example, too much time or effort required.)

Compared to their peers, students with LD rate themselves:

- **LOWER** on expectancy items.
- **LOWER** on value items.
- **HIGHER** on cost items.

Students with LD when compared to their peers also...

...feel **LESS self-efficacy**...

...experience **MORE burnout**...

... and receive **LOWER grades**.

However, students with LD report similar levels of **academic satisfaction**.  
(e.g., I'm happy with the amount I learn in my classes)