

## **Teachers' Perceptions of Self-regulated Learning and Motivation**

### **Les Perceptions des Enseignants sur l'Apprentissage Auto-régulé et la Motivation**

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## Résumé

Cet article se penche sur les évaluations des enseignants concernant les compétences d'apprentissage auto-régulé (AAR) de leurs élèves à l'aide de l'enquête sur la Perception des Enseignants de l'Apprentissage Auto-régulé des Élèves (PEAARÉ). L'objectif consiste à analyser les déterminants des évaluations, à étudier la perception de la relation entre la compétence en AAR et la réussite académique, ainsi qu'à explorer les préférences des enseignants en ce qui concerne l'enseignement aux divers profils d'apprenants. Un échantillon aléatoire de 30 professeurs universitaires de langues issus de diverses universités publiques et privées a participé à cette étude. Les résultats mettent en évidence trois thèmes majeurs : la reconnaissance par les enseignants de l'importance de l'AAR pour l'apprentissage autonome, leur faible accent sur leur propre rôle dans l'enseignement des techniques d'AAR, et les défis tels que les attentes des élèves, la difficulté d'enseigner à des apprenants auto-régulés hétérogènes, le manque de formation et les contraintes du programme. Ces résultats soulignent le besoin de développement professionnel afin d'améliorer la compréhension et la mise en œuvre des stratégies d'AAR par les enseignants, favorisant ainsi une promotion plus efficace de l'apprentissage auto-régulé.

**Mots clés :** Apprentissage autorégulé ; Performance académique ; TPSRL ; Apprentissage autonome ; Perceptions des enseignants

## Abstract

Through the Teacher Perception of Student Self-Regulated Learning (TPSRL) survey, the present paper aims to investigate teachers' assessments of their students' self-regulated learning (SRL) skills, examining factors influencing these evaluations, the perceived correlation between SRL competence and academic performance, and teachers' preferences for instructing different types of learners. Designed to address the inherent limitations of self-reported surveys, the TPSRL survey employs a multi-method, multi-source empirical approach. A total of 30 randomly sampled university language professors belonging to different public and private universities participated in this study. Findings reveal three key themes: teachers' overall recognition of SRL's importance for autonomous learning; limited emphasis on their role in teaching SRL techniques; and challenges such as students' expectations for prescriptive materials, the difficulty of instructing heterogeneous self-regulated learners, lack of training, and curriculum constraints. These insights underline the need for professional development to enhance teachers' understanding and implementation of SRL strategies across diverse classroom contexts, ensuring a more effective promotion of self-regulated learning.

**Keywords :** Self-Regulated Learning; Academic Performance; TPSRL; Autonomous learning; Teachers' Perceptions

## Introduction

Numerous theories and methodologies in the field of second and foreign language instruction have shaped the landscape of teaching and learning, assigning distinct roles to students within the educational process. Historically, behaviorists and early educational psychologists perceived learners as passive entities, reliant on the instructor, who bore full responsibility for the educational journey (Schunk, 2012). These instructors not only established learning objectives but also selected tasks and study materials while maintaining control over the classroom environment.

A transformative shift occurred with the emergence of cognitive theory in the early 1960s, marking a significant stance within the field of educational psychology. Learners ceased to be seen as passive recipients of knowledge and instead were entrusted with greater responsibility for their learning objectives, progress, and academic achievements (Schunk, 2012). This shift towards learner autonomy led to the concept of autonomous learning, as introduced by early Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) researchers such as Paris and Paris (2001). SRL emphasizes individual autonomy and control, where the learner actively monitors, directs, and regulates their actions to achieve goals related to information acquisition, expertise expansion, and self-improvement (Shahid et al., 2022).

According to Andriani et al. (2018), learner autonomy refers to an individual's capacity to assume control of their own learning. In their study, autonomous learning was considered not just a pedagogical approach but also a means of grasping the authentic essence of education. Researchers embarked on defining this "active constructive process" further (Pintrich, 2003, pp. 2). One of the initial and most prominent SRL definitions posited that it comprised learner-initiated actions, encompassing goal setting, aligning effort with established goals, self-monitoring, and regulating behavior and social interactions (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). Panadero (2017) asserts that SRL comprises various aspects of learning, including cognition, metacognition, motivation, emotion, and behavior.

This comprehensive conceptual framework plays a crucial role in influencing both student learning and academic motivation. Another group of researchers emphasized additional strategies, notably the three metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring, and regulation (Greene et al., 2024). Recognizing the integral role of motivation in SRL, a third group of SRL researchers accentuated the importance of integrating motivation within the framework of Self-Regulated Learning (Rheinberg et al., 2000). EL ISSI (2020) concluded that promoting motivation and monitoring of students could be a way to increase their performance.

In light of the empirical assertion that teachers play a primary role in fostering and motivating SRL within the classroom, the perceptions and practices of educators hold immense value in understanding the challenges and barriers to supporting SRL in formal education settings. The present paper delves into the SRL perceptions of university language professors, guided by the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent do teachers possess a comprehensive understanding of SRL and its implications in the teaching/learning process, and how does this understanding impact their teaching methods and preferences for autonomous learning among students?
- (2) What specific strategies and approaches do teachers employ to promote SRL among their students, and how do these strategies align with the lifelong benefits of SRL beyond the classroom, considering the challenges they face in implementing SRL in diverse student groups and within the constraints of curriculum expectations?

## **1. Methods**

### **1.1 Research Design**

To achieve the objective of this study, which is to emphasize and gain insight into educators' viewpoints on Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), an adapted version of the Teachers' Perception of SRL (TPSRL) survey, originally developed by Mikroyannidis et al. (2014), was used. The survey was then administered to a group of English and French language lecturers and instructors in Morocco, representing various universities in the country. Many researchers have developed questionnaires in the past with the aim of, directly or indirectly, exploring teachers' perspectives of SRL. However, many of these surveys differ in their primary emphasis when compared to the TPSRL. For instance, Lombaerts et al. (2009) developed the 'Self-Regulated Learning Teacher Belief Scale,' which comprises a 15-item questionnaire designed to assess educators' perspectives on the practice of self-regulated learning. Meanwhile, Kramarski and Michalsky (2009) explored teachers' metaphorical comprehension of student-centered and teacher-centered instruction. In 2012, Diagnath-van Ewijk and van der Werf delved into teachers' opinions and knowledge regarding strategies to enhance learners' self-regulated learning skills.

### **1.2 Instrument**

In this study, the adapted TPSRL version aimed to investigate various factors that could influence how teachers assess their students' self-regulated learning (SRL) abilities. This included understanding teachers' perspectives on the relationship between students' SRL

competence and their performance in the classroom, as well as their preferences for teaching different types of learners (those who are highly self-regulated versus those who are less self-regulated). The selection of these questions was guided by the potential impact of SRL on the balance between student autonomy and teacher guidance within the educational setting. The TPSRL was designed while taking into consideration the intrinsic limitation of all self-reported surveys; the reliability of the subjects' subjective responses, basing it on a multi-method and method source empirical with the hope of alleviating the issue. The table below includes the survey questions as well as the rationale for each question. It should be noted here that the subjects participating in this study were only presented with the questions, some of which were shortened forms of the original questions.

Question	Rationale
<b>Q1 What is the name of your institution?</b>	The purpose of these five introductory questions was to establish a contextual framework for understanding the viewpoints of the teachers. By delving into variables such as the subject they taught, the class size, and the type of classes they conducted, the aim was to uncover potential associations between these variables and the teachers' perceptions regarding the influence of self-regulated learning (SRL) on the learning process.
<b>Q2 Which department do you work in?</b>	
<b>Q3 What are the subjects you mainly teach?</b>	
<b>Q4 What kind of classes do you mostly teach?</b> Face to face Online	
<b>Q5 How many students do you normally teach per subject each academic year?</b>	
<b>Q6 Thinking about a typical student group of yours, what levels of Self-regulated learning can you estimate that they have?</b>	This question seeks to provide a broad overview of the distribution of self-regulated learning (SRL) competence among students. It is important to note that this assessment primarily relies on teachers' subjective estimations. However, it's essential to acknowledge that empirically verifying the accuracy of these teacher estimations through correlation with directly measured students' SRL competence is a topic slated for investigation in a forthcoming study.

<p><b>Q7 How challenging is it for you to teach a group of students with differing levels of Self-regulation?</b> (on a 5-point Likert scale)</p>	<p>This question explores the extent to which teachers correlate the difficulty of their job to the students' level of self-regulation.</p>
<p><b>Q8 Which type of students do you prefer to teach?</b> Students with high SRL levels Students with low SRL levels</p>	<p>This question is closely linked to the previous one, as it explores a related aspect. If teachers express difficulty in instructing students with low self-regulated learning (SRL) skills, they might lean towards a preference for teaching students who exhibit high SRL competence.</p>
<p><b>Q9 Please express your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly disagree).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with a high level of SRL can perform better in general than those with low levels of SRL.</li> <li>• Students with a high level of SRL can achieve their learning goals more efficiently than those with low SRL competence.</li> <li>• Students with a high level of SRL can achieve their learning goals more effectively than those with low SRL competence.</li> <li>• Students with a high level of SRL can achieve their learning goals more satisfactorily than those with low SRL competence.</li> </ul>	<p>These statements are designed to assess how teachers perceive the performance of students with varying levels of self-regulated learning (SRL) competence. They aim to assess the teacher's observations of how students with different SRL levels approach and attain their learning objectives. The effectiveness, such as task completion time, represents the pragmatic aspect of goal achievement, while the sense of satisfaction, including feelings of pride and confidence, reflects the hedonic aspect. Fulfilling both these aspects of learning goals is considered important for students, regardless of their degree of self-regulation.</p>
<p><b>Q10 Do you promote SRL and autonomous learning in your classes? why? How?</b></p>	<p>This question is intended to evaluate the teacher's actions regarding the encouragement of self-regulated learning (SRL) in real-world teaching scenarios. It aims to explore the factors influencing their decision to implement or not implement SRL strategies, along with the approaches they employ for this purpose.</p>
<p><b>Q11 Do you think you should promote more SRL and autonomous learning in your classes? why?</b></p>	<p>This question assesses the alignment between the behaviors evaluated in the preceding question and the teachers' attitudes or their intentions with respect to those behaviors.</p>

**Table 1.** Rationale of TPSRL questions

A brief definition of SRL and its valuable impact in the classroom was provided along with the survey with the intention of communicating the context of the survey to the respondents. The

survey was distributed as a google form via personal emails. The next section examines the surveyed community of educators.

## 2. Participants

The participants in this research study constitute a cohort of 30 individuals who are active in the academic sphere. They are part of the English and French language departments, engaging in the teaching of an array of subjects. The subjects they cover range from fundamental topics such as general English, grammar, and reading comprehension to more specialized domains including research methodology, linguistics, and business English. These dedicated educators adhere to a 100% face-to-face instructional approach, prioritizing direct interaction in the learning process. Over the course of an academic year, they interact with varying class sizes, with student numbers fluctuating between as few as 30 and exceeding 200, indicating a diverse teaching environment within the study. Table 2 provides an overview of the participants based on their responses to the first five background information questions of the survey.

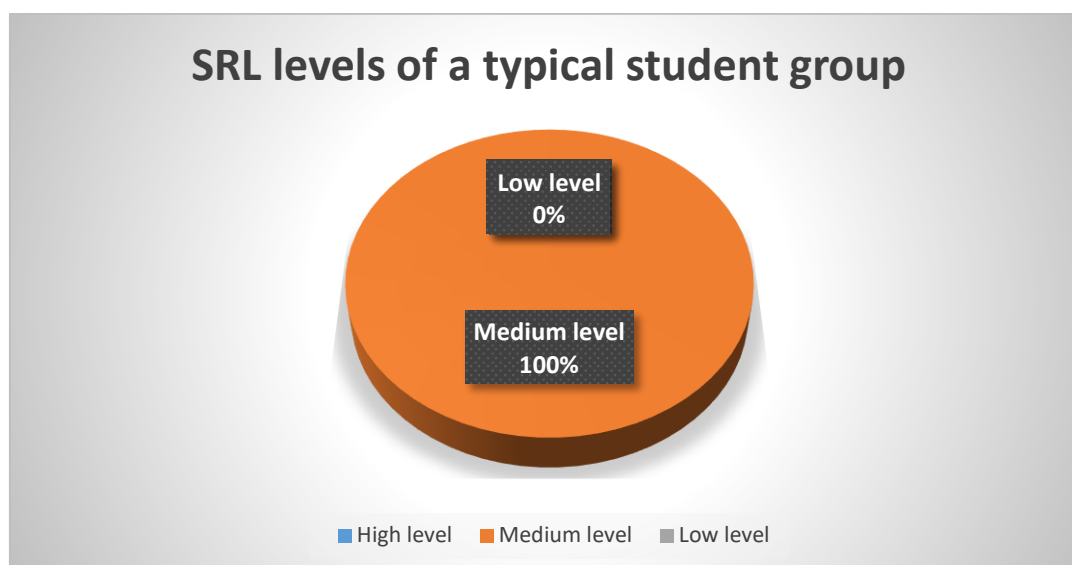
Departments	Subjects taught	Mode of instruction	Total students taught annually.
English, French	A wide variety of subjects ranging from General English/French, Grammar, ESP, Writing, Reading comprehension to Research methodology, Linguistics and Business English,	100 % face-to-face	The numbers varied between 30 and over 200.

**Table 2.** Sample population

## 3. Analysis of the responses:

### 3.1 Thinking about a typical student group of yours, what levels of Self-regulated learning can you estimate that they have?

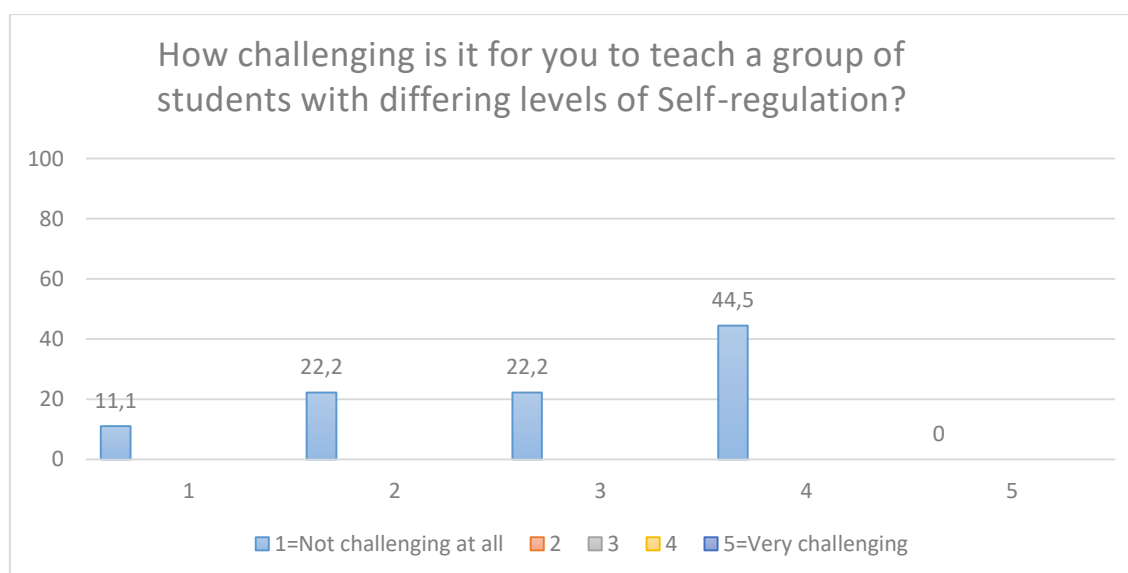
Q6 of the TPSRL survey requested the respondents to estimate the levels of self-regulation of a typical student group that they teach. As shown in figure 2, surprisingly all the respondents perceived their students to have medium SRL levels.



**Figure 1.** Students' presumed SRL levels

### 3.2 How challenging is it for you to teach a group of students with differing levels of Self-regulation?

Q7 invited the participants to specify how challenging they find it to teach students with differing levels of self-regulation on a 5 point Likert scale (1= Not challenging at all and 5= very challenging). Figure 3 illustrates the teachers' responses to this question.

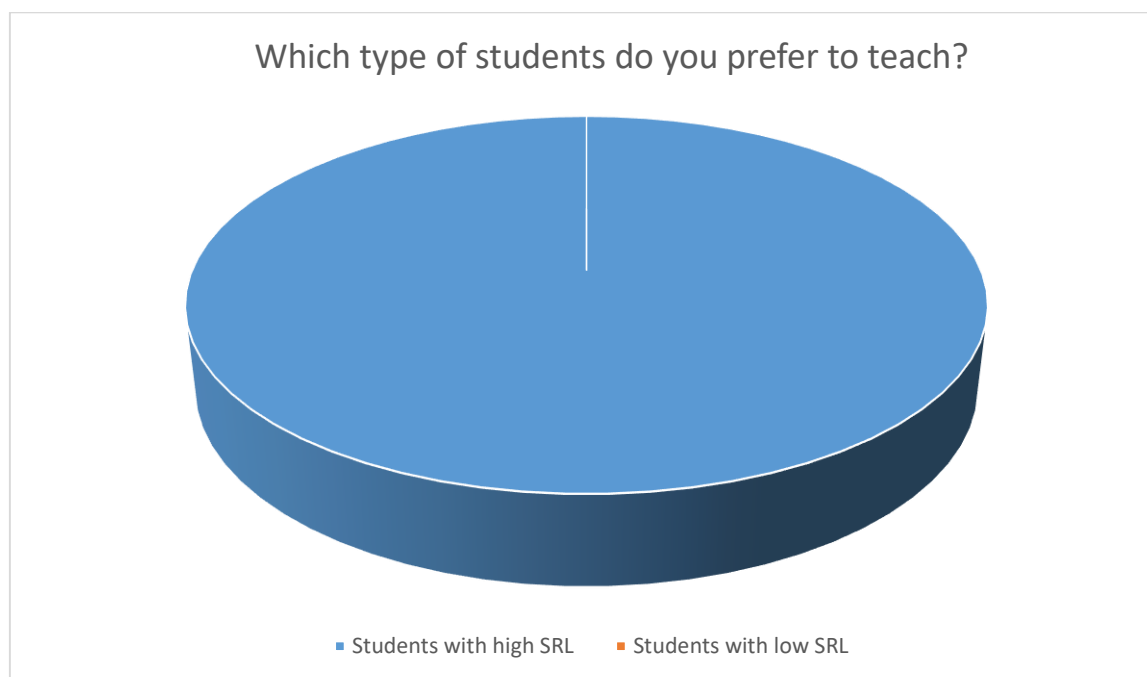


**Figure 2.** Challenges in Teaching Students with Varied Levels of Self-Regulation



### 3.3 Which type of students do you prefer to teach?

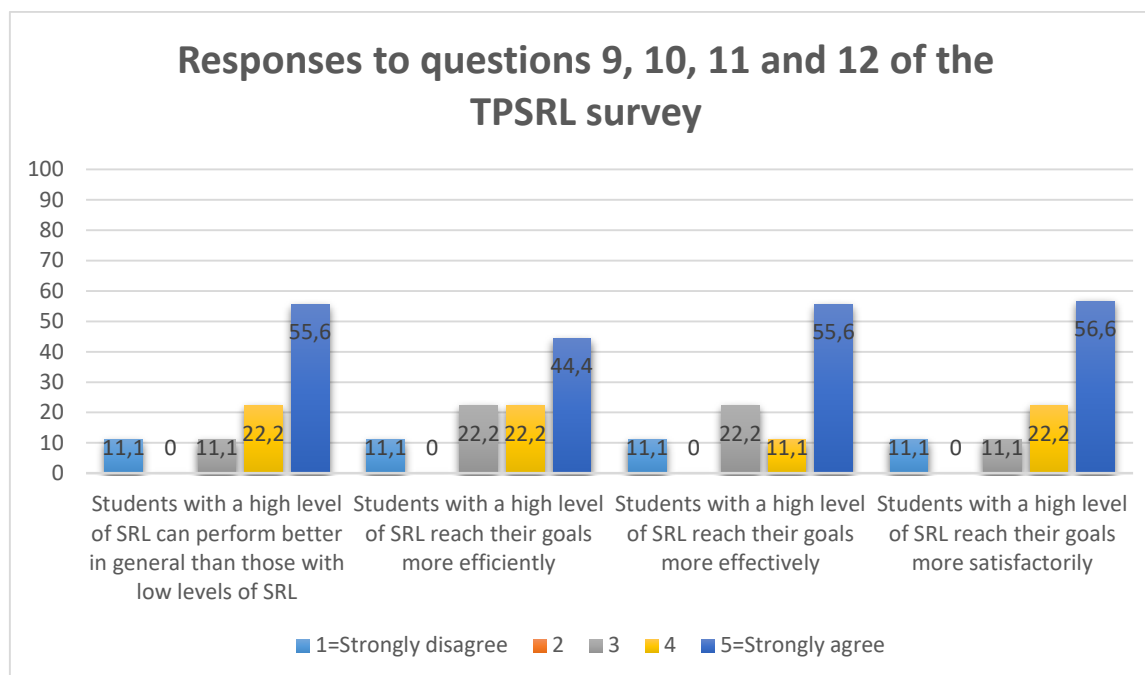
Question 7 asked the respondents whether they prefer to teach students with high or low levels of Self-Regulation. Unsurprisingly, all the respondents showed a marked preference for highly Self- Regulated students (figure 4).



**Figure 3.** Teacher Preferences: Ideal Student Profiles

### 3.4 On a scale of 1 to 5, express you level of agreement with the following statements: **Students with a high level of SRL can perform better in general than those with low levels of SRL and reach their goals more efficiently/effectively/satisfactorily than those with low SRL levels.**

In questions 9, 10, 11 and 12 the participants were asked to express their level of agreement with the aforementioned statements on a 5 point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree). The overwhelming majority of the respondents agreed that students with high SRL levels can perform better and reach their goals more efficiently (in less time), more effectively (with fewer obstacles/mistakes) and more satisfactorily (with pleasure and less discomfort) than students with low SRL levels (figure 5).



**Figure 4:** Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Academic Performance

### 3.5 Do you encourage SRL or independent learning in courses that you teach? Why? How?

All the participants indicated that they do promote SRL in their classes in the forms of autonomous learning, self-assessment and decision-making. Most of the teachers justified their firm belief in the importance of encouraging SRL in the classroom saying:

*“Yes, I do it in the form of implementing some E-learning platforms as part of the syllabus such as Dropbox, Moodle, and Google Classroom, in which I share books and coursebooks that are relevant to what they are currently studying. Adopting such a strategy stems from my firm belief that the amount of time allocated to each subject matter is not enough to achieve the specified learning objectives. Thus, SRL will bridge that gap.”*

*“Yes, I do. Because it helps students learn efficiently and effectively. Also it helps students find the strategies suitable for them to learn better independently.”*

*“Yes I do, because it allows me to teach in a more flexible way i.e. with SR Learners you can assign different tasks to different students”*

*“Yes, SRL enhances students’ engagement and use of skill building strategies.”*

### **3.6 Do you think you should promote more SRL and autonomous learning in your classes? why?**

All the teachers insisted on the need to promote more SRL and autonomous learning in their classes in the quest of better academic results:

*“Yes, to achieve better academic attainment and equip them with necessary tools to function appropriately in real life situations.”*

*“Yes, students need to develop these strategies, regulate their learning and become autonomous”.*

*“Yes, I do. Because it is difficult to encourage autonomy and learning should be relevant to real life contexts and needs to be applicable to such contexts.”*

One of the respondents, even insisted on the importance of training in SRL skills in order to promote SRL properly in the classroom:

*“Yes, I think as teachers we need training on SRL in order to be able to promote it properly in the class.”*

## **4. Discussion**

The main objective of the TPSRL survey was to explore factors that might impact teachers' evaluation of their students' SRL skills, how their SRL skills correlate with the students' achievement as well as which type of students they prefer to teach. When analyzing the results of the TPSRL survey, three themes arose:

### **4.1 General SRL perceptions of teachers**

The most striking remark is that all the participants that replied were conscious of the importance of SRL and autonomous learning to them and to their students. The majority of the teachers alluded to their acceptance of students being responsible for their own learning stating that SRL can help increase the students' ability to learn independently which will have a positive impact on their academic performance. SRL was also perceived by some teachers to help students learn faster. Yet, while most respondents referred to the multi-dimensional importance of SRL skills, none of them pointed to the teachers' moral duty of teaching SRL techniques to students. Still, the question remains whether most of the participants really have proper understanding of SRL and its implications in the teaching/learning process. Also, although all the teachers favor SRL and its benefits, do

they really like their students to act autonomously? This gives the impression that teachers appreciate SRL only within the limits of their course.

#### **4.2 Promoting SRL**

Not all the respondents highlighted the strategies they use to motivate and support their students to become self-regulated. In fact, only one teacher referred to directing the students to online resources in the form of databases and e-libraries. Moreover, all the respondents related SRL only to the classroom and academic performance of the students with no reference to its life-long effects nor its importance outside the classroom. It is worth mentioning that the fact that teachers did not provide examples of how they promote SRL, although it is an integral phase of SRL implementation in teaching (Fruhmann et al., 2010), is indicative of their superficial knowledge of the concept and lack of training in this regard. This in turn could have a negative impact on SRL promotion especially that It is recognized that teacher beliefs, their knowledge, and their previous experiences in both learning and teaching play a role in shaping their practices for promoting SRL (Peeters et al., 2016).

#### **4.3 Challenges faced while encouraging SRL**

The survey revealed several challenges the teachers face while encouraging SRL. References to the challenges were mainly implicit, yet of great importance. The first and foremost challenge was the students' expectations. Some of the respondents pointed to the students' expectations of being provided with precisely defined materials by their teachers that can enable them to reach the course objectives that were set solely by the teacher. These findings are in line with Hadwin et al. (2019), who suggest that students' expectations may serve as potential barriers to their self-regulation. While all the respondents showed preference towards teaching highly self-Regulated students, they all find it somehow challenging to teach a group of students with differing levels of self-regulation. This issue can be correlated to another challenge that emerged in the analysis of the survey; namely, the lack of continuing training and professional development. Another challenge that could be read between the lines when some of the teachers point toward the higher priority of teaching the subject matter over teaching SRL is the restrictive nature of the curriculum with regard to the content and method used in the course.

#### **Conclusion**

The Teacher Perception of Student Self-Regulated Learning survey offers valuable insights into the recognition of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and its potential benefits by teachers.

However, it underlines the need for a deeper comprehension of their role in promoting SRL and the ethical considerations surrounding it. While teachers express a degree of acceptance of autonomous student behavior, it remains uncertain to what extent they embrace this approach beyond their specific courses. The varied strategies employed to promote SRL and the prevailing classroom-centric focus indicate the importance of further research to standardize practices and understand the lifelong implications of SRL. Teachers contend with challenges tied to student expectations and diverse SRL levels, emphasizing the necessity for continuous training and personalized SRL promotion strategies.

#### Future Implications

Subsequent research endeavors should prioritize comprehensive teacher training, ethical considerations in SRL promotion, the factors influencing teacher receptivity to fostering autonomy, and the assessment of the effectiveness of diverse SRL promotion strategies. This study lays a fundamental groundwork for these essential discussions, highlighting the pivotal role of SRL in shaping the future of education.

#### Limitations

The survey responses are derived from self-reporting by teachers, potentially introducing response bias and constraining the depth of insights. Furthermore, this study was conducted within a specific group of teachers and may not fully represent the broader teaching community. Future research should aim for larger and more diverse samples to enhance generalizability. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, this study provides a critical foundation for discussions and potential improvements, emphasizing the centrality of SRL in shaping the future of education.

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