

It is fairly obvious that strong country pressure for knowledge acquisition shifts the distribution of achievement to the right, while the distribution of attitude is shifted to the left, since high demands unavoidably put pupils under stress. The reverse holds for weak country pressure. At the international level, the pressure variable produces a negative correlation between achievement and attitude, as presented in Figure 1. Within countries, the variability of pressure for knowledge acquisition is restricted, hence pupils may maintain psychological coherence between achievement and attitude.

The concept of pressure for knowledge acquisition as a culturally specific feature of primary school education in a country helps to explain the pattern of findings reported above. The concept, however, needs independent substantiation through international research.

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