

# French Canadian Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes towards Gifted Education

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## Introduction

- In Quebec (Canada), there is nearly no training available in any University about gifted education.
- In consequence, teachers in this French-speaking province, are deemed to have very little knowledge about gifted students' characteristics and needs.
- In other parts of the world, studies on teachers' attitudes towards gifted education showed mixed results. Some studies suggested positive or neutral attitudes, and other studies found negative ones<sup>2,3,6</sup>.
- Since studies on training in gifted education show a link between training, and teacher's attitude<sup>2,5</sup> it is particularly important to study teachers' attitudes towards gifted education given the situation in the province of Quebec.

## Objectives

- Describe Quebec secondary school teachers' attitudes towards gifted education.
- Investigate variations in teachers' attitudes depending on certain sociodemographic and personal variables' influence.

## Method

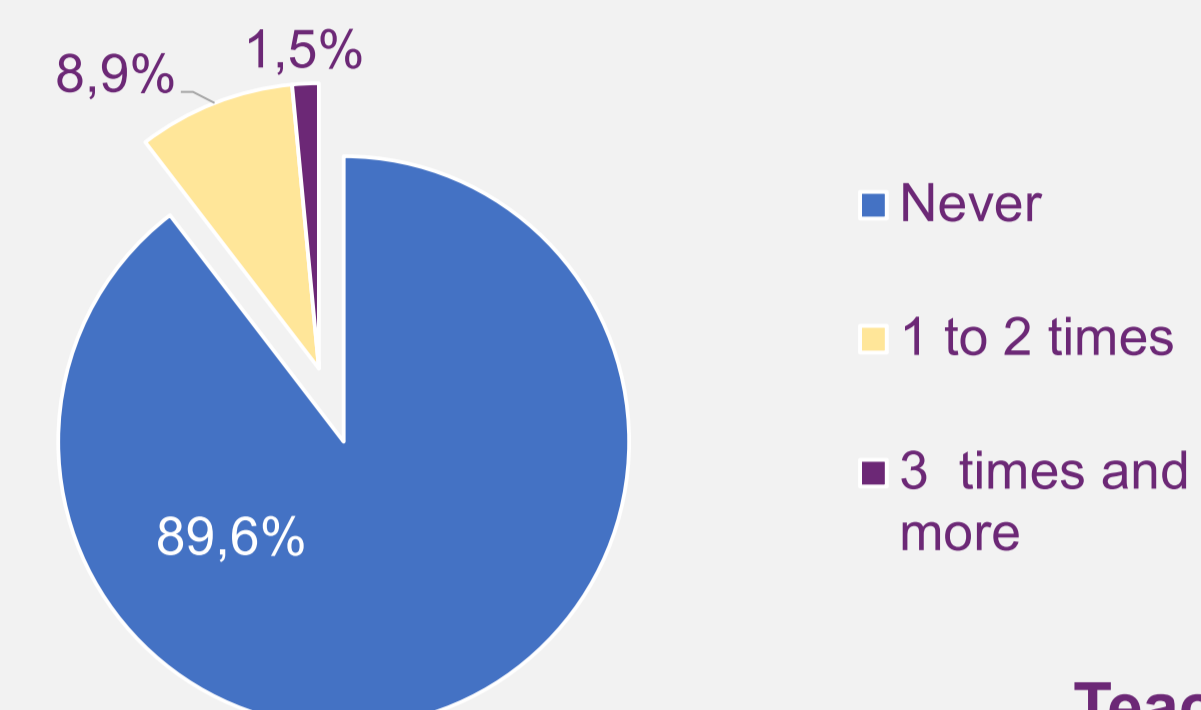
### Participants

- 776 French Canadian secondary school teachers (66 % females)
- Recruited by email and asked to complete online questionnaires
- 89,3 % of the sample received no training in gifted education in their initial training.

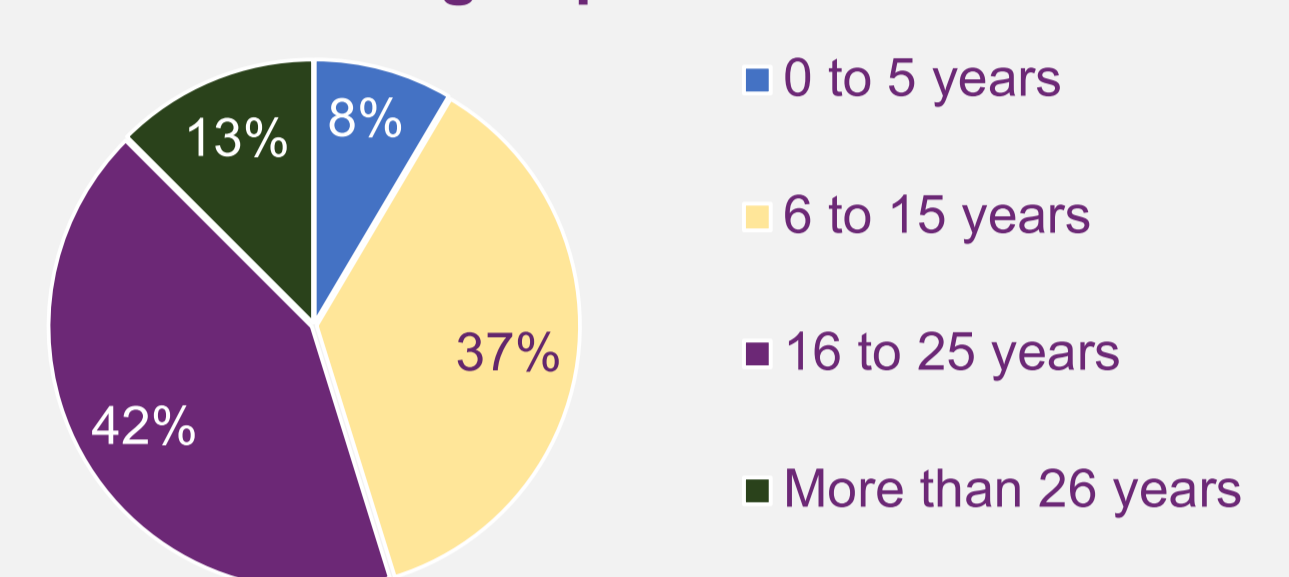
### Questionnaires:

- Sociodemographic inventory
- French adaptation of:
  - Teachers' Attitude toward the Gifted and the Gifted Education<sup>1,2</sup>: 17 items ( $\alpha = 0,796$ ) 3 subscales: **Support** (7 items,  $\alpha = 0,740$ ), **Elitism** (6 items,  $\alpha = 0,700$ ), **Acceleration** (4 items,  $\alpha = 0,524$ )
  - Self-Perceptions of Giftedness<sup>2</sup>: 4 items ( $\alpha = 0,938$ )
  - Contact with Gifted Persons<sup>3</sup>: 4 items ( $\alpha = 0,824$ )
  - Teacher Self Efficacy<sup>3,4</sup>: 7 items ( $\alpha = 0,840$ ).

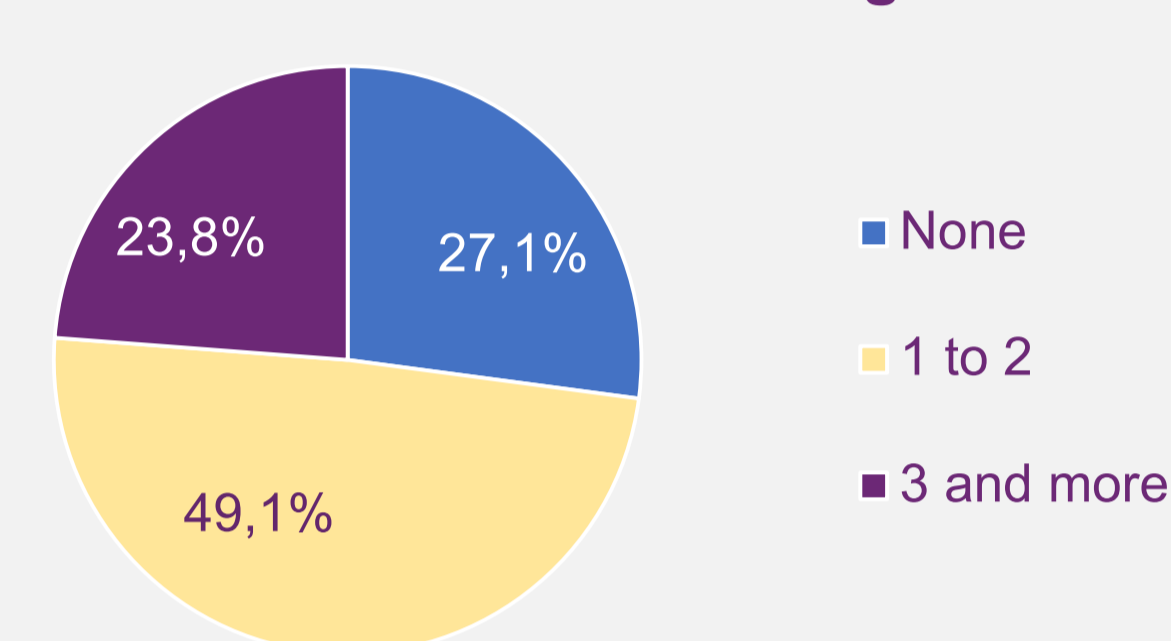
### Implication in Intervention Planning



### Teaching Experiences



### Number of Gifted Students Taught to

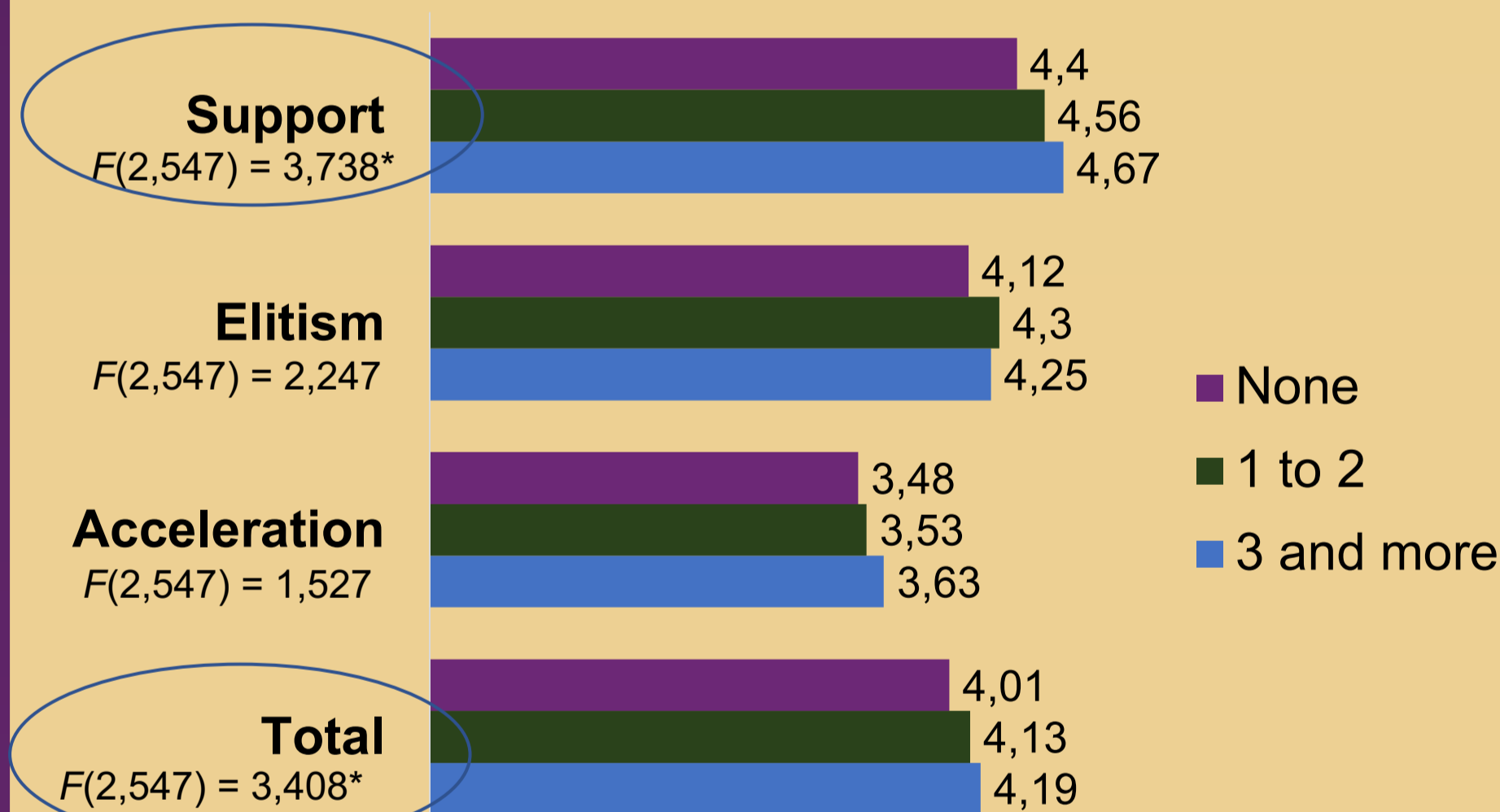


## Results

### 1. Differences in Attitudes Observed According to:

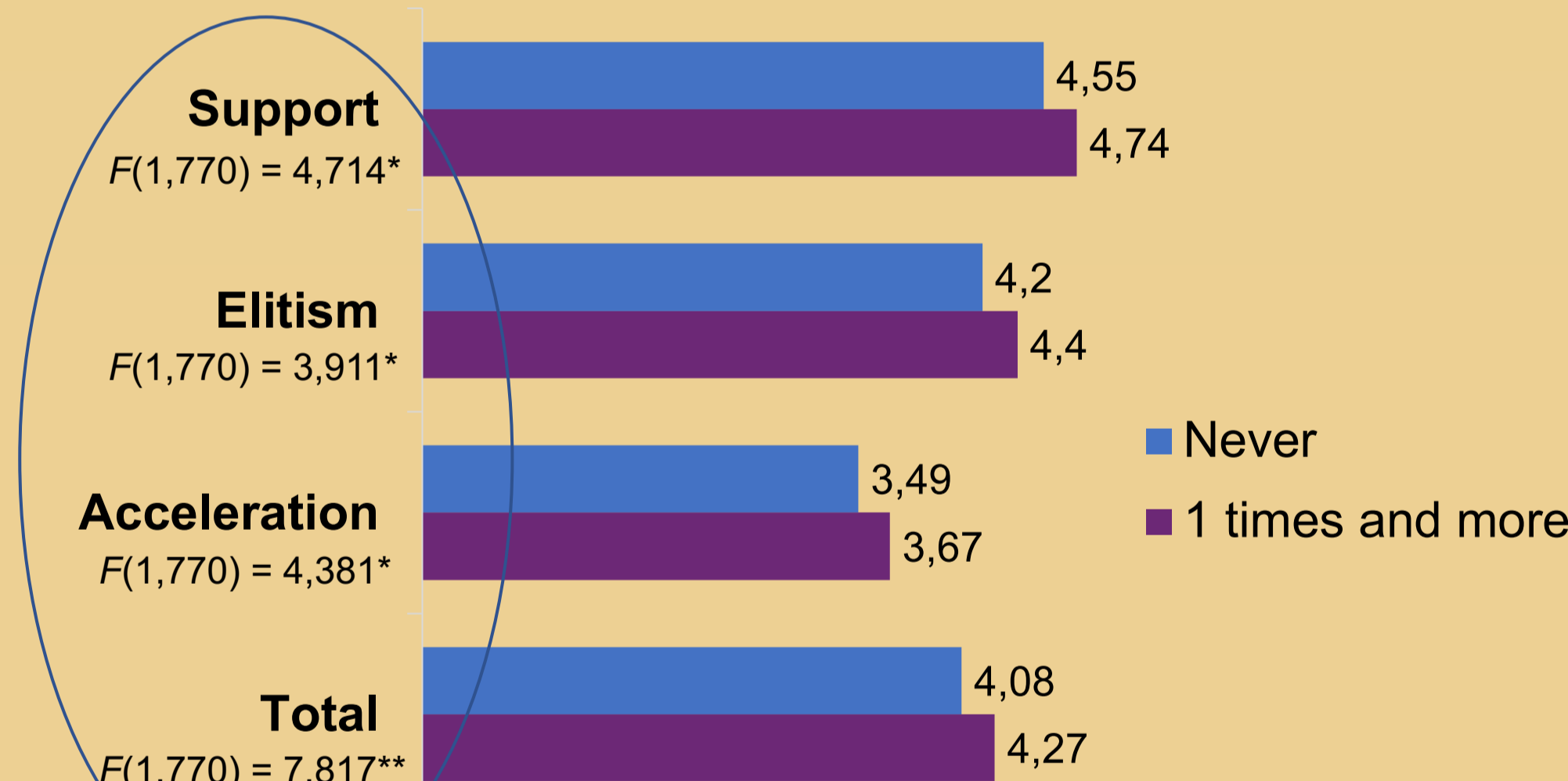
#### Number of Gifted Students Taught to

Significant differences are observed for the number of gifted students taught to: those who had taught 3 or more students scored higher than those who had taught none, on two attitudes scales: **Support** and **Total score**.



#### Number of Times Involved in an Intervention Plan

Significant differences are observed for the number of times teachers were involved in an intervention plans for gifted students. Teachers who participated in 1 or more intervention plans scored significantly higher on all attitudes scales, compared to those who have never been involved.

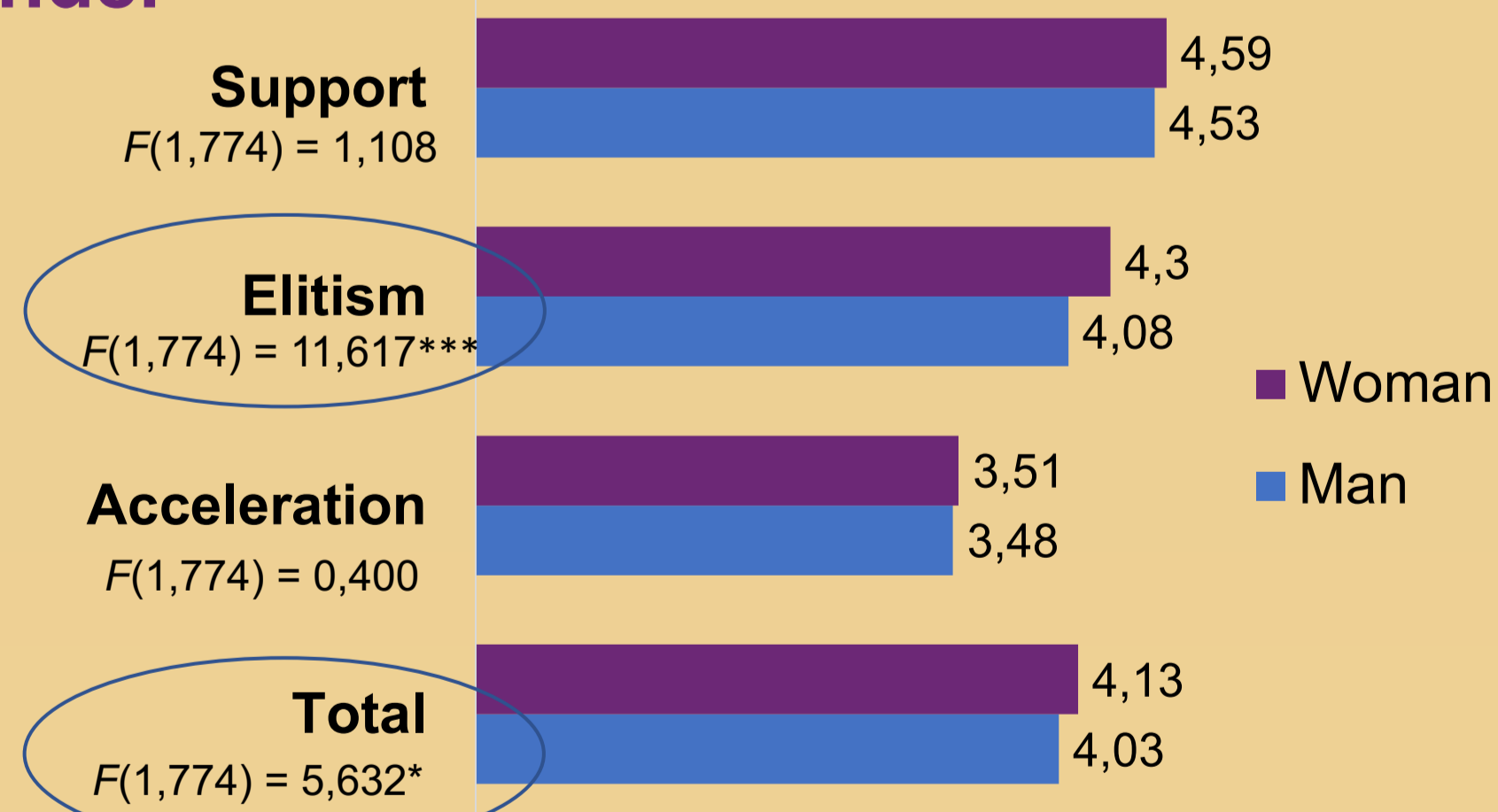


### 2. Correlations between Attitudes Scales and Personal Characteristics

	Self-Efficacy	Self-perception	Contact with Gifted Persons
SUPPORT	0,20***	0,09*	0,16***
ELITISM	0,09*	0,03	0,08*
ACCELERATION	0,15***	0,02	0,09*
TOTAL	0,19***	0,06	0,15***

### Gender

Significant differences are observed for gender. Women have higher scores on two attitudes scales: **Elitism** and **Total score**.



### NO DIFFERENCE in Attitude According to:

Age, length of teaching experience, initial or in-service training in giftedness, adaptation or regular group, teaching level, teaching subject, status of the school (private vs public), and school socio-economic status.

\* $p < 0,05$ , \*\*  $p < 0,01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0,001$

## Discussion and conclusion

- Despite Quebec teachers' lack of training about gifted education, they show a similar pattern of attitude (relatively positive, except for acceleration) that teachers with better training on this subject<sup>2,3,6</sup>.
- Contact with gifted persons and students seems to be linked to a positive attitude toward the importance of supporting gifted students in school, like found in previous studies<sup>3</sup>.
- Women have slightly better attitudes toward giftedness than men, especially they don't see the acknowledgment of giftedness as a mark of elitism as much as men do.
- Being involved in intervention planning supports better attitudes toward giftedness, for all subscales. This could be explained by the fact that through discussions with more thoroughly trained professionals, like psychologists, teachers have the opportunity of learning about giftedness when collaborating around intervention planning.
- Unlike previous studies<sup>2,5</sup>, no difference was found according to training (initial and in-service) on attitudes toward giftedness. It may be explained by the fact that very few teachers had received such training (89,3% had none), and for those who had, the training was mostly superficial.
- Self-efficacy of teachers is the most related variable with attitudes toward giftedness, which argues in favor of supporting teachers to build their self-efficacy.

## References

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