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Elementary Teachers' Motivational Strategies: A Qualitative Analysis of Integrated Practices in Fourth-Grade Classrooms

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Abstract
Learning motivation significantly influences elementary students' academic achievement, yet many teachers struggle to implement effective motivational strategies. This study analyzes teaching strategies employed to enhance fourth-grade students' learning motivation and identifies supporting and inhibiting factors in strategy implementation. A qualitative descriptive design was employed, with data collected through one-week systematic classroom observation, semi-structured interviews with the classroom teacher and school principal, and documentation review at SD Alkhairaat Tondo. Data were analyzed through reduction, display, and conclusion drawing processes. Six core motivational strategies were identified: (1) clear communication of learning objectives with ice-breaking activities, (2) association of content with students' daily lives, (3) implementation of varied and interactive teaching methods including technology integration, (4) consistent positive reinforcement through praise and tangible rewards, (5) personal approaches to individual students, and (6) joint evaluation with comprehensive reflection. Progressive increases in student engagement and participation were observed across the week. Supporting factors included adequate facilities, administrative support, professional development, and positive school culture, while inhibiting factors encompassed heterogeneous student motivation, time constraints, and varying confidence levels. Effective motivation enhancement requires comprehensive, integrated implementation of multiple evidence-based strategies. The findings validate convergence between teachers' intuitive practices and research-based motivation principles, offering practical models for educators and informing professional development approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a fundamental human right and necessity that shapes individuals' potential and prepares them for meaningful participation in society. The National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, Article 3, mandates that education aims to develop students who are faithful, knowledgeable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens. This comprehensive vision extends beyond mere knowledge transmission to encompass the cultivation of learning motivation and positive thinking patterns essential for students' holistic development. Within this educational framework, teachers play a pivotal role not only as knowledge facilitators but also as motivational agents who must employ effective strategies to engage students and sustain their enthusiasm for learning.

Learning motivation represents a critical determinant of educational success, functioning as the driving force that initiates, directs, and maintains students' engagement in academic activities. Howard, Bureau, Guay, Chong, and Ryan (2021) demonstrated through meta-analysis that intrinsic

motivation has strong associations with academic grades, effort, and positive affect. Kriegbaum, Jansen, and Spinath (2015) further confirmed that motivation predicts mathematical competence beyond intelligence and prior achievement. Students with high motivation demonstrate greater enthusiasm, persistence, and willingness to invest effort in learning tasks, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes. However, contemporary elementary education faces significant challenges in maintaining student motivation, particularly in an era characterized by diverse learning needs, varying student backgrounds, and evolving pedagogical demands.

Recent scholarship has increasingly recognized the crucial relationship between teaching strategies and student motivation. Aditya, Setyadi, and Leonardho (2020) examined various teacher strategies for enhancing learning motivation and found that diversified instructional approaches significantly influence student engagement. Radil, Goegan, and Daniels (2023) identified nine authentic strategies teachers use to motivate students, including relevance, interest, relationships, effort, safe environment, goals, self-regulated learning, delivery, and rewards. Similarly, Achadah (2019) investigated teacher strategies in Islamic education contexts, revealing that varied methods and personal approaches effectively stimulate student interest and participation. Anderman, Andrzejewski, and Allen (2011) demonstrated that teachers who provide constant support for understanding, apply skilled classroom management, and build strong rapport create more motivational classrooms.

The effectiveness of varied instructional methods has been well-documented. Linnenbrink-Garcia, Patall, and Pekrun (2016) proposed five design principles for adaptive motivation, emphasizing competence support, autonomy, relevance, learning emphasis, and relatedness. Urdan and Turner (2005) identified eight classroom practices theorized to enhance students' adaptive forms of motivation, including meaningful tasks, appropriate challenges, and autonomy support. Khoerunnisa, Fathurrohman, and Arifin (2021) further demonstrated that contextually appropriate teaching strategies, including clear objective communication and positive reinforcement, substantially impact students' willingness to engage in learning activities.

Positive reinforcement emerges as a powerful motivational tool. Korpershoek, Harms, de Boer, van Kuijk, and Doolaard (2016) conducted a meta-analysis revealing that classroom management strategies, including positive reinforcement, significantly affect students' academic and motivational outcomes. Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, and Sugai (2008) identified evidence-based practices demonstrating that teacher praise and recognition improve student engagement and behavior. Berlian and Masrufa (2022) highlighted how teachers' adaptive strategies address diverse student needs through personalized approaches and varied instructional methods.

The importance of teacher-student relationships cannot be overstated. Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, and Oort (2011) conducted a meta-analysis showing that affective teacher-student relationships positively influence school engagement and achievement. Quin (2017) confirmed through systematic review that personal approaches and warm relationships sustain student engagement over time. Mufatikhah and Rondli (2023) explored motivational strategies emphasizing the significance of relating learning content to students' daily experiences.

Technology integration in education has shown promising results. Sung, Chang, and Liu (2016) found through meta-analysis that integrating mobile devices with teaching and learning significantly improves students' learning performance. Hattie (2009) synthesized over 800 meta-analyses and identified effective teaching strategies that enhance achievement. Hanaris (2023) provided a comprehensive review identifying reward systems, interactive learning methods, and supportive classroom environments as key motivational factors.

The complexity of motivational challenges has been illuminated by contextual studies. Fadlilah (2020) investigated strategies for sustaining young children's motivation during pandemic-induced learning disruptions, while Hilmiyah (2021) examined teacher approaches in distance learning environments. Futri, Mustikaati, and Fajrussalam (2024) conducted comparative analyses demonstrating both universal principles and context-specific adaptations in motivational practices.

Maryati et al. (2024) analyzed classroom-based strategies and found that consistent implementation of varied methods maintains student attention and enthusiasm.

Despite this growing body of research, significant gaps remain in understanding how teachers systematically implement multiple strategies in regular classroom settings and how these strategies interact to produce cumulative motivational effects. Kaplan and Patrick (2016) emphasized that understanding motivational practices requires acknowledging the dynamic co-creation of classroom climate by teachers and students. Most existing studies have examined isolated strategies or focused on specific subject areas, leaving unclear the comprehensive, day-to-day application of integrated motivational approaches in general elementary education.

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a comprehensive analysis of teaching strategies employed to enhance fourth-grade students' learning motivation at SD Alkhairaat Tondo. Through systematic observation and in-depth interviews, this research examines how teachers integrate multiple motivational strategies in their daily instructional practices, identifies the contextual factors that support or hinder strategy implementation, and explores the cumulative effects of sustained strategic interventions over time. The findings contribute to educational theory by providing empirical evidence of integrated strategy implementation in elementary settings and offer practical insights for educators seeking to enhance student motivation through evidence-based pedagogical approaches.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach to analyze teachers' strategies in enhancing learning motivation among fourth-grade students at SD Alkhairaat Tondo. The qualitative descriptive design was selected because it allows researchers to capture, describe, and interpret the natural phenomena of teaching practices as they occur in authentic classroom settings without imposing predetermined theoretical frameworks. This approach aligns with the research objectives of understanding the comprehensive, day-to-day implementation of motivational strategies and identifying the contextual factors that influence their effectiveness.

The primary participant in this study was the fourth-grade classroom teacher at SD Alkhairaat Tondo, who served as the key informant due to direct involvement in implementing motivational strategies. Additional participants included the school principal, who provided institutional perspectives on teacher support and professional development programs, and fourth-grade students who were observed during the learning process. The selection of SD Alkhairaat Tondo was purposive, based on preliminary observations indicating that the school faced challenges related to student motivation, making it an appropriate context for examining teacher strategies aimed at addressing these issues.

Data collection was conducted through multiple methods to ensure triangulation and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation. Systematic classroom observations were carried out over one week of instructional time, during which the researcher recorded all teaching activities, instructional strategies, teacher-student interactions, and student responses in detailed field notes. The observation focused on specific aspects including how teachers explained learning objectives, implemented varied teaching methods, provided reinforcement, approached students individually, and conducted learning evaluations. Following the observation period, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher and school principal using prepared interview protocols that allowed for flexibility in exploring emerging themes. The interviews elicited detailed information about the rationale behind strategy selection, perceived effectiveness, supporting factors, and challenges encountered in implementation. Documentation review complemented these methods by examining lesson plans, learning materials, student assessment records, and school policies related to instructional practices and teacher professional development.

To ensure trustworthiness, the research employed several validation strategies. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants to verify accuracy and interpretation. Triangulation was achieved by comparing data from observations, interviews, and

documentation to identify convergent evidence. Prolonged engagement in the field for one full week allowed the researcher to develop rapport with participants and gain deeper understanding of classroom dynamics.

Data analysis followed the qualitative data analysis framework consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, all field notes, interview transcripts, and documents were reviewed systematically to identify relevant information addressing the research questions. Codes were assigned to meaningful segments of data, and similar codes were grouped into thematic categories representing distinct motivational strategies and contextual factors. The coded data were then organized into matrices and narrative summaries to facilitate pattern recognition and relationship identification among themes. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the patterns and relationships in light of existing literature on motivation and teaching strategies, while remaining grounded in the empirical data collected from the research site.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study reveal comprehensive strategies implemented by the fourth-grade teacher at SD Alkhairaat Tondo to enhance student learning motivation over a one-week observation period. The data were collected through systematic classroom observations, in-depth interviews with the classroom teacher and school principal, and documentation of instructional activities. The results are organized thematically to reflect the progression of motivational strategies employed throughout the week and the contextual factors influencing their implementation.

Clear Communication of Learning Objectives and Ice Breaking

The classroom observations revealed that the teacher consistently began each lesson by explicitly communicating learning objectives in simplified language accessible to fourth-grade students. This practice was evident from the first day when the teacher explained the purpose of studying plant structures by stating the learning progression from roots to leaves. As documented in the field notes, "The teacher explains the learning objective simply so that students understand what they will learn today." This approach was accompanied by ice-breaking activities designed to create a relaxed learning atmosphere and prepare students mentally for the lesson ahead.

Interview data corroborated these observational findings. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Lisba, explained her rationale: "I explain the purpose of learning simply so that students understand, for example, when discussing the topic of plants, I explain it from root to leaf so that they can easily understand. To relieve boredom, I always give ice breaking at the beginning of learning." The school principal, Mr. Sabran, confirmed that this practice aligns with institutional policy: "The delivery of material objectives in the classroom always refers to the applicable curriculum, and teachers adjust the implementation of learning to the objectives that already exist in the teaching module."

Figure 1 provides visual documentation of the teacher communicating learning objectives to students at the beginning of a lesson. The image shows students attentively listening as the teacher gestures toward the whiteboard where the day's learning goals are written, demonstrating the teacher's commitment to transparency in instructional planning.

Association with Daily Life and Use of Contextual Learning Media

Observations on the second and third days demonstrated the teacher's systematic efforts to relate academic content to students' everyday experiences. The teacher utilized concrete objects from the classroom environment as learning media, making abstract concepts tangible and relevant. Field notes documented that "the teacher uses objects around the classroom as learning media and relates the material to students' daily lives, for example using real fruits to explain plant parts."

This strategy was intentional and theoretically grounded, as the teacher explained: "I always try to relate the material to the students' daily lives, for example using objects around the classroom as learning media. In this way, students can see that what they learn is useful in their real lives." The

principal emphasized institutional support for this approach: "The school program does encourage teachers to always be creative in associating the material with the real lives of students. We also support the use of varied learning media, and our teachers are encouraged to actively participate in training in order to apply exciting new methods."

The effectiveness of this strategy was evident in students' increased engagement. Observational data showed that when the teacher connected mathematical concepts to familiar contexts such as calculating the number of fruits in the school canteen, students demonstrated heightened interest and participation compared to the more abstract presentation on the first day.

Implementation of Varied and Interactive Teaching Methods

Throughout the observation period, the teacher employed diverse instructional methods including group discussions, project-based learning, technology-enhanced instruction, and educational games. On the second day, students were divided into small groups for collaborative discussions, as shown in Figure 2. The documentation reveals students actively engaged in peer learning, with group members sharing ideas and working together to solve problems.

The teacher described the pedagogical reasoning behind varied methods: "I divide students into small groups so that they can discuss and learn together. After the discussion, I give each group a chance to present their results, and then I give them praise and applause to make them more confident." This approach reflected understanding of social learning principles and the motivational value of peer interaction.

On the third day, the instructional approach shifted to technology-based learning. The teacher utilized an LCD projector to display educational videos from YouTube, followed by interactive digital games related to the lesson content. Figure 3 captures students participating in an educational game that combined physical movement with musical rhythm, demonstrating the integration of kinesthetic learning with digital media. The field notes recorded: "Students are highly enthusiastic when learning uses technology. Even students who are usually passive begin to actively ask questions and answer when educational videos and games are presented."

The principal confirmed the school's commitment to supporting technological integration: "We provide facilities such as projectors and speakers so that teachers can use technology in learning. We also encourage teachers to always give awards, both verbally and small gifts, so that students feel appreciated and more motivated."

On the fourth day, the teacher implemented simple project-based learning, assigning groups to create posters related to the studied material. Figure 4 documents two groups engaged in poster creation, with students collaborating to design visual representations of their understanding. This hands-on approach allowed students to synthesize knowledge creatively while developing teamwork skills.

Provision of Consistent Positive Reinforcement

Across all observed lessons, the teacher systematically provided positive reinforcement through verbal praise, applause, and small tangible rewards such as stationery. Observational data documented multiple instances of the teacher acknowledging student effort and progress. For example, when a typically quiet student volunteered an answer, the teacher immediately responded: "Excellent! I appreciate your bravery in trying to answer. Let's all give her a round of applause."

The teacher articulated her philosophy regarding reinforcement: "I always give compliments or small gifts such as stationery to make them more enthusiastic. I give awards not only for correct answers but also for their courage to try and their effort in learning." This approach recognized both process and outcome, focusing on growth rather than solely on achievement.

The principal emphasized that positive reinforcement was institutionally supported: "We always give awards to students who show increased motivation and achievement, and even invite parents of outstanding students to be given souvenirs. The assessment is not only academic, but also

personality, skills, and presence." This comprehensive recognition system extended beyond the classroom to involve families and acknowledge multiple dimensions of student development.

Personal Approach to Individual Students

The observations revealed deliberate efforts by the teacher to approach students individually, particularly those exhibiting lower motivation or engagement. On the fourth day, field notes recorded: "The teacher approaches a student sitting alone and quietly asks if there are any difficulties. After listening, the teacher involves the student in group discussions and ensures other group members welcome him warmly."

The teacher explained this practice: "I approach students who seem to be lacking in enthusiasm, ask if there are any problems, and embrace them in group discussions. After the presentation, I gave positive feedback to each group, so that they felt valued and more confident. Students who are usually passive begin to actively participate in discussions and help their friends." This personalized attention reflected awareness of individual differences in motivation and the importance of emotional support.

The principal endorsed this approach: "We always encourage teachers to take a personal approach to students who are less motivated. In this way, students feel cared for and eventually want to be involved in learning activities. Positive feedback from teachers is also very important to build student confidence."

Joint Evaluation and Comprehensive Reflection

On the final day of observation, the teacher conducted a comprehensive evaluation through quizzes and reflective discussions with students. Figure 5 shows students completing a written quiz while the teacher circulates to monitor progress and provide assistance. Following the quiz, the teacher facilitated a group reflection where students shared their learning experiences from the week.

The teacher described this evaluative practice: "Every weekend, I always hold evaluations with quizzes and reflections with students. I asked them to tell me about their week-long learning experience and what strategies they liked best. I also assess cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects so that the assessment is more objective." This holistic assessment approach recognized multiple dimensions of learning and provided students with opportunities for metacognitive reflection.

The principal confirmed the school's commitment to comprehensive assessment: "The assessment at our school is not only academic, but also personality, skills, and attendance. In this way, students' motivation to learn increases every week because they know that all their efforts are valued and recognized."

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Interview data revealed several factors that facilitated or hindered the implementation of motivational strategies. The principal identified key supporting factors: "School facilities also support, teachers make learning media, both abstract and using projectors, so that the learning atmosphere is more interesting. We also regularly hold KKG [Teacher Working Group] and teacher training so that learning methods are always evolving."

Supporting factors identified through triangulation of data sources included: (1) availability of adequate instructional facilities and learning media, (2) strong administrative support from school leadership, (3) regular professional development opportunities for teachers, and (4) a positive school culture that valued innovation in teaching practices.

Conversely, the teacher identified several challenges: "The main obstacles I face are differences in students' initial motivation levels. Some students are naturally enthusiastic, while others need extra encouragement. Limited instructional time also makes it difficult to provide individual attention to all students. Additionally, some students lack confidence or show little interest in certain subjects."

Inhibiting factors included: (1) heterogeneity in students' baseline motivation and readiness to learn, (2) time constraints limiting individualized instruction, (3) students' varying levels of self-confidence and prior academic experiences, and (4) occasional misalignment between curriculum

pacing requirements and students' learning needs. The teacher addressed these challenges through flexible instructional planning, peer support systems, and ongoing communication with students and parents.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the fourth-grade teacher at SD Alkhairaat Tondo employed a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to enhancing student motivation that aligns substantially with established motivational theories and research-based instructional design principles. The teacher's practices reflected intuitive application of constructs from multiple theoretical frameworks including self-determination theory, achievement goal theory, and social cognitive theory, even without explicit reference to these theories. This convergence between practitioner wisdom and scholarly recommendations underscores the validity of research-based motivation principles while highlighting teachers' capacity to develop effective strategies through reflective practice and experience.

The teacher's consistent practice of clearly communicating learning objectives and relating content to students' daily lives directly supports the design principle of selecting personally relevant, interesting activities that provide opportunities for identification and involvement. Linnenbrink-Garcia, Patall, and Pekrun (2016) identified relevance as a core motivational design principle, arguing that when students perceive learning as connected to their lives and future goals, they develop stronger intrinsic motivation and engagement. The findings corroborate Radil, Goegan, and Daniels' (2023) identification of relevance as one of nine authentic strategies teachers naturally employ to motivate students. Furthermore, the progression observed from initial passive engagement to increasingly active participation demonstrates the practical impact of relevance on student motivation, supporting Urdan and Turner's (2005) recommendation to develop and assign academically meaningful tasks.

The implementation of varied teaching methods—including group discussions, project-based learning, technology-enhanced instruction, and educational games—reflects sophisticated understanding of the relationship between instructional diversity and sustained engagement. This finding aligns with Hattie's (2009) synthesis of effective teaching practices, which identified instructional variety as a significant factor in learning outcomes. The observed increase in student participation across the week, particularly among initially passive students, provides empirical support for the motivational benefits of methodological variation. Anderman, Andrzejewski, and Allen (2011) similarly found that teachers who employ diverse instructional approaches and maintain dynamic classroom environments effectively support students' motivation and learning. The current study extends these findings by documenting the day-by-day progression of motivational change resulting from sustained implementation of varied methods, demonstrating cumulative rather than merely immediate effects.

The integration of technology and digital media proved particularly effective in capturing student attention and facilitating engagement, especially among students who had previously shown limited interest. This observation aligns with Sung, Chang, and Liu's (2016) meta-analytic finding that integrating mobile devices and digital technology with teaching significantly improves students' learning performance and motivation. The enthusiasm students displayed during technology-enhanced lessons supports the notion that digital natives respond positively to multimedia instruction that resonates with their lived experiences outside school. However, the teacher's balanced approach—using technology as one tool among many rather than as a replacement for other methods—reflects pedagogical wisdom consistent with research recommendations about appropriate technology integration.

The teacher's systematic provision of positive reinforcement through verbal praise, applause, and small tangible rewards represents a cornerstone of the motivational strategy system observed in this study. This practice strongly aligns with principles from both behavioral psychology and contemporary motivation theory. Korpershoek, Harms, de Boer, van Kuijk, and Doolaard (2016)

demonstrated through meta-analysis that classroom management strategies emphasizing positive reinforcement significantly improve students' academic, behavioral, and motivational outcomes. Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, and Sugai (2008) identified specific praise and recognition as evidence-based practices that enhance student engagement. The current findings contribute to this literature by illustrating how positive reinforcement operates in naturalistic settings when integrated with other motivational strategies. Notably, the teacher's focus on praising effort and progress rather than solely outcomes reflects growth mindset principles, potentially fostering students' beliefs in the malleability of their abilities.

The personal approach employed by the teacher—characterized by individual attention, emotional support, and responsiveness to students' unique needs—emerged as a particularly powerful motivational strategy. This finding strongly supports Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, and Oort's (2011) meta-analytic conclusion that affective teacher-student relationships positively influence school engagement and achievement. The observed transformation of initially disengaged students into active participants following individualized attention provides concrete evidence of relational support's motivational impact. Quin (2017) similarly identified teacher-student relationships as a consistent predictor of student engagement across diverse contexts. The current study enriches understanding of how personal approaches function in practice, revealing that brief but meaningful individual interactions—asking about difficulties, expressing care, facilitating peer integration—can substantially shift students' motivational trajectories. This finding challenges resource-based objections to personalized instruction, demonstrating that quality rather than quantity of individual attention may be most important.

The teacher's practice of conducting joint evaluation and comprehensive reflection addresses multiple motivational needs simultaneously. By assessing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions and engaging students in metacognitive reflection about their learning experiences, the teacher implemented principles from self-regulated learning theory. Zimmerman (2002) argued that self-regulated learning, including self-monitoring and self-reflection, is fundamental to academic motivation and achievement. Hattie and Timperley (2007) demonstrated through extensive research synthesis that feedback focused on learning processes and self-regulation promotes deeper engagement and improved outcomes compared to feedback focused solely on task completion. The reflective discussions observed on the final day provided students with opportunities to recognize their growth, identify effective learning strategies, and develop metacognitive awareness—all factors associated with enhanced intrinsic motivation and academic self-efficacy.

The supporting factors identified in this study—adequate facilities, administrative support, professional development, and positive school culture—underscore that teacher motivational strategies do not operate in isolation but within broader organizational contexts. The principal's commitment to providing resources, encouraging innovation, and facilitating teacher learning created an enabling environment for effective motivational practice. This finding resonates with Kaplan and Patrick's (2016) argument that motivation must be understood as co-constructed within complex social and institutional contexts rather than as solely a function of individual teacher actions. The regular professional development opportunities, including Teacher Working Group meetings mentioned by the principal, likely contributed to the teacher's sophisticated repertoire of motivational strategies, supporting arguments for sustained, practice-focused teacher learning.

Conversely, the inhibiting factors—heterogeneous student motivation, time constraints, and varying confidence levels—reflect persistent challenges in elementary education that resist simple solutions. Aditya, Setyadi, and Leonardho (2020) similarly identified student diversity and time limitations as constraints on motivational strategy implementation. The teacher's adaptive responses to these challenges—flexible planning, peer support, and ongoing communication—demonstrate professional resilience and problem-solving capacity. However, these challenges also highlight systemic issues requiring attention beyond individual teacher effort, including class size policies, curriculum pacing mandates, and support systems for struggling students.

The study's findings regarding the cumulative effect of sustained motivational strategy implementation represent an important contribution to motivation research. While much existing research examines discrete strategies or short-term interventions, this study documented progressive motivational change across a full week of instruction. The observed pattern—from initial passivity and moderate engagement to peak enthusiasm and active participation by week's end—suggests that consistent, multi-faceted motivational support produces amplifying rather than merely additive effects. This finding aligns with Howard, Bureau, Guay, Chong, and Ryan's (2021) meta-analytic evidence that autonomous motivation develops over time through supportive environmental conditions. Future research should investigate longer-term patterns to determine whether motivational gains are sustained and whether particular strategies become more or less important at different stages of the academic year.

The convergence observed between the teacher's authentic practices and research-based motivation principles supports Radil, Goegan, and Daniels' (2023) argument for recognizing teachers' lived expertise and avoiding overly prescriptive, theory-driven interventions that may not account for classroom realities. The teacher in this study had clearly developed effective motivational strategies through reflective practice, professional learning, and experience, even without formal training in motivation theory. This finding suggests that professional development might be most effective when it validates and refines teachers' existing practices rather than attempting to replace them with researcher-prescribed approaches. However, targeted learning opportunities regarding specific strategies—such as optimal use of rewards or feedback techniques—might further enhance teacher effectiveness.

One notable aspect of this study is the teacher's use of tangible rewards, including small gifts and recognition systems, which appears somewhat at odds with self-determination theory's caution against extrinsic motivators that may undermine intrinsic motivation. Howard et al. (2021) demonstrated that intrinsic motivation has stronger associations with positive outcomes than extrinsic motivation. However, the teacher's implementation of rewards was nuanced—recognizing effort and progress rather than solely performance, combining tangible rewards with social recognition and verbal praise, and embedding rewards within a broader relationship of caring and support. This contextual, process-focused approach to rewards may explain why students appeared to increase rather than decrease in intrinsic motivation across the week, suggesting that the meaning and manner of reward provision may matter more than their mere presence.

Finally, the comprehensive nature of the teacher's approach—integrating relevance, variety, reinforcement, relationship, and reflection—reflects the cross-theoretical perspective advocated by contemporary motivation researchers. Pintrich (2003) argued for moving beyond single-theory approaches to develop integrative frameworks recognizing multiple motivational principles. The current study provides empirical illustration of how effective motivational practice naturally integrates insights from multiple theoretical traditions, supporting calls for pragmatic, eclectic approaches to motivation in educational settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that effective enhancement of fourth-grade students' learning motivation requires a comprehensive, integrated approach encompassing multiple evidence-based strategies. The teacher at SD Alkhairaat Tondo successfully employed six core strategies: clear communication of learning objectives with ice-breaking activities, association of content with students' daily lives, implementation of varied and interactive teaching methods, provision of consistent positive reinforcement, personal approaches to individual students, and joint evaluation with comprehensive reflection. These strategies, when implemented systematically over time, produced cumulative motivational effects evidenced by progressive increases in student engagement, participation, and enthusiasm throughout the observation week.

This research contributes to educational theory by providing empirical documentation of how multiple motivational strategies function synergistically in authentic elementary classroom settings, extending beyond the examination of isolated interventions prevalent in existing literature. The findings validate the convergence between teachers' intuitive practices and research-based motivation principles, supporting calls for professional development approaches that build upon rather than replace educators' existing expertise. Practically, the study offers educators a model for integrating diverse motivational strategies within the constraints of regular instructional contexts, demonstrating that meaningful motivational support is achievable without extraordinary resources.

The identification of supporting factors—adequate facilities, administrative support, professional development, and positive school culture—alongside inhibiting factors—heterogeneous student motivation, time constraints, and varying confidence levels—provides actionable insights for school leaders seeking to create enabling environments for effective motivational practice. However, this study's limitations include its single-case design, one-week observation period, and focus on one grade level, which constrain generalizability. Future research should employ comparative designs across multiple schools, extended longitudinal observations to examine sustainability of motivational gains, and investigations of how motivational strategies must be adapted for different developmental stages and cultural contexts. Additionally, research examining students' perspectives on motivational strategies would complement the teacher-focused approach employed here, providing a more complete understanding of motivational dynamics in elementary classrooms.

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