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The Relationship Between Success-Oriented Situations and Learning Motivation: A Literature Review Based on Communication Theory

Sabila Abzhanova[1], Saule Nurgali[2*], Begmanova Bibizhan[3*],Tolebike Kulgildinova[4*],Seisenbiyeva Eleonora[5*], Bissenbayeva Zhanat[6*], Yergeshov Yerzhan[7*]

[1]PhD student of Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Dostyk ave.13, 050010, Almaty, Kazakhstan
[2]Candidate of pedagogical sciences, Abay Kazakh National Pedagogical university, Address: 050050 The Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty City
[3]Candidate of pedagogical sciences Kazakh National Women;s teacher training university
[4]Doctor of pedagogical sciences, Ablai khan Kazakh university of International relations and World languages
[5]Phd, Al farabi Kazakh National university, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1016-4087
[6]Phd, professor, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1016-4087
[7]Candidate of pedagogical sciences, Military Institute of Land Forces,https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4869-8182

* **Corresponding Author:**bislauka@mail.ru

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ABSTRACT

This literature review explores the relationship between success-oriented situations and learning motivation, with a particular focus on communication theory. Success-oriented situations are defined as contexts where students experience positive reinforcement and recognition, which can lead to increased motivation. Communication theory is applied to examine how various forms of communication—such as teacher feedback, peer interactions, and family support—can influence students' perceptions of success and, consequently, their learning motivation. The review synthesizes findings from educational research, highlighting the role of communication strategies in shaping motivational outcomes for primary school students. Key concepts such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, achievement motivation, and the role of social and pedagogical communication are explored. The paper concludes by identifying research gaps and suggesting directions for future studies that integrate communication theory with motivational strategies in educational settings.

Keywords: Success-Oriented Situations, Learning Motivation, Primary School Students, Educational Communication,cognitive interest

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is widely recognized as one of the most influential factors shaping students' learning experiences, particularly at the primary school level (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). During these early developmental years, children's motivation profoundly impacts not only their academic achievement but also their overall attitudes toward learning, personal development, and long-term educational trajectories (Wentzel & Miele, 2016). Numerous theories have attempted to explain how motivation operates, with intrinsic and extrinsic motivational frameworks—along with their interactions with the schooling environment—being especially relevant for understanding motivation in young learners (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Given that motivation influences a child's capacity to persist through difficulties, invest effort in academic tasks, and realize their potential, teachers, parents, and policymakers continually seek effective strategies to nurture it (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Motivation is a multi-layered concept that encompasses cognitive, emotional, and environmental components, all of which shape a student's willingness to engage in learning tasks and persevere when challenges arise (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). In primary education, its importance is heightened, as children are in a formative stage where their perspectives on learning and schooling are still developing (Stipek, 2002). When children form positive attitudes toward learning, they are more likely to adopt effective study strategies, develop genuine curiosity, and carry these dispositions throughout their academic journey. Conversely, low motivation may result

in disengagement, reduced academic performance, and long-term negative effects on a child's confidence and self-esteem (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, 2006).

One of the major challenges for educators is identifying approaches that meaningfully enhance motivation in young students. In recent years, growing attention has been given to the use of "success situations" as a motivational tool (Bandura, 1997). Success situations are moments in which students achieve academic success or receive positive reinforcement for their efforts, leading to an increased sense of competence and self-efficacy. Research suggests that such experiences can strengthen intrinsic motivation, encourage persistence, and help students approach difficult tasks with greater confidence (Zimmerman, 2000). The underlying principle is that when children experience success and receive recognition for it, they develop a stronger sense of accomplishment, which in turn promotes continued engagement and motivation (Dweck, 2006).

This introduction examines the concept of motivation, its significance within primary education, and the theoretical foundations supporting the use of success situations as a means of improving student motivation. It also discusses the various elements that influence motivation among young learners, the relationship between motivation and academic outcomes, and the implications for instructional practice. Through this discussion, we highlight the importance of creating a motivating classroom environment where success experiences can be intentionally incorporated to help children build positive associations with learning and academic progress.

Motivation, as a psychological construct, refers to the internal or external forces that guide behavior, particularly those directed toward achieving specific goals (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In school contexts, motivation drives students to take part in learning activities, persist despite difficulties, and strive for academic success (Schunk et al., 2008). Scholars typically distinguish between two primary types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsic motivation is characterized by a student's internal desire to engage in an activity because they find it enjoyable, interesting, or personally meaningful (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A learner driven by intrinsic motivation participates in tasks for the inherent satisfaction they provide, rather than for external rewards or pressure. For instance, a child who reads a book out of fascination with the story or a desire to learn new information demonstrates intrinsic motivation. Students motivated intrinsically often show higher levels of persistence, creativity, and self-regulation in their academic pursuits (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991).

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, arises from external factors such as rewards, grades, praise, or the avoidance of negative consequences (Lepper, Henderlong, & Iyengar, 2005). Students who are extrinsically motivated may engage in tasks because they expect to receive a tangible benefit or to avoid punishment. While extrinsic motivation can be effective in promoting short-term behavior change, research has shown that it is often less sustainable than intrinsic motivation and may diminish over time if not accompanied by intrinsic interest in the activity (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999).

In the primary school context, both types of motivation are important, but intrinsic motivation is generally considered more conducive to long-term academic engagement and success (Gottfried, 1990). According to Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985), intrinsic motivation is most likely to flourish in environments that support three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the sense of control over one's own actions, competence is the feeling of mastery or proficiency in a task, and relatedness is the feeling of connection to others. In educational settings, teachers can create environments that support these needs, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation in their students (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

One of the most effective ways to foster intrinsic motivation in primary school students is by creating success situations—experiences where students experience success, accomplishment, and positive reinforcement (Bandura, 1997). Success situations not only help students feel competent but also build their sense of self-efficacy, which is a belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks or challenges (Zimmerman, 2000). When children experience success, especially in challenging situations, they are more likely to believe in their ability to learn and overcome obstacles, which can contribute to increased motivation (Dweck, 2006).

RESEARCH METHODS

This section outlines the research design, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures used in this study to examine the effectiveness of success situations in enhancing the learning motivation of primary school students. The primary aim of this research is to explore how structured success experiences can impact student motivation, focusing on the relationship between academic achievement, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation.

A mixed-methods approach was employed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the effects of success situations on students' learning motivation. Mixed-methods research is particularly effective in educational studies as it enables researchers to validate findings across different data sources, thus enhancing the reliability and depth of the results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach is well-suited for motivation research, where subjective experiences (captured qualitatively) and

measurable outcomes (captured quantitatively) are both critical for understanding the phenomenon (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

The quantitative component involved administering pre- and post-intervention surveys measuring students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels, based on established scales such as the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (Ryan & Connell, 1989). This allowed for the statistical analysis of changes in motivation before and after exposure to structured success situations. Quantitative methods are valuable for identifying patterns and testing hypotheses about relationships between motivation, self-efficacy, and academic achievement (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008).

Complementing this, qualitative data were collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student focus groups. These methods were chosen to provide deeper insights into how students perceive success situations and how these perceptions influence their motivation. Qualitative methods are essential for capturing the context-dependent, dynamic nature of motivation and self-beliefs in young learners (Maxwell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Participants in this study included primary school students aged 8 to 11 years, selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity in academic performance and socio-emotional development. Purposive sampling is often used in educational research to target specific populations that are most likely to provide relevant and meaningful data (Patton, 2015). Teachers involved in the implementation of the intervention were also included as key informants, providing contextual information about instructional practices and student engagement.

The research design involves pre- and post-intervention measurements of student motivation to assess any changes over time. The intervention, which includes the creation of success situations in the classroom, was implemented over a period of six weeks. Throughout this period, students in the experimental group were provided with opportunities for success through various academic activities, including praise, rewards, recognition of achievements, and feedback. The control group continued with their regular classroom activities without a structured focus on success-oriented experiences.

The participants in this study were 120 primary school students, aged 9 to 11 years, from a local primary school. The sample was selected through purposive sampling, ensuring that the participants were representative of the age group and academic abilities typically found in primary education. The students were divided into two groups: the experimental group (n=60) and the control group (n=60). The students in both groups were from the same class level and had similar baseline academic performance, ensuring that any differences in motivation could be attributed to the intervention rather than pre-existing differences in ability or academic background.

Tangible rewards, such as stickers, certificates, or small prizes, were given to students for achieving certain academic milestones or demonstrating improvement in specific areas. These rewards were used sparingly and were always accompanied by verbal praise to reinforce the connection between effort and success.

Teachers provided individualized feedback to students, highlighting their progress and areas for improvement. This feedback was designed to help students feel a sense of competence and build their self-efficacy.

The experimental group was given opportunities to showcase their academic accomplishments. This could include having their work displayed in the classroom, sharing their achievements with peers, or being publicly acknowledged during class activities. These recognition moments were designed to celebrate both individual and group success.

The control group, by contrast, continued with the regular curriculum and teaching methods, with no specific focus on success situations. Teachers provided standard feedback and reinforcement in line with regular classroom practices but did not emphasize achievement in the same way as in the experimental group.

To assess the effectiveness of success situations on students' learning motivation, multiple data collection methods were employed, including surveys, observations, and interviews.

A pre- and post-intervention motivation survey was used to measure changes in students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The survey was adapted from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) developed by Ryan (1982), a widely used tool to assess motivation in educational contexts. The survey consisted of 20 questions designed to measure students' motivation across several dimensions, including:

Questions focused on the students' enjoyment, interest, and personal satisfaction with learning activities.

Questions assessed students' motivation driven by rewards, recognition, and external factors.

Questions explored students' beliefs about their ability to succeed and their sense of competence in completing tasks.

The survey used a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Pre-intervention surveys were administered at the beginning of the study, and post-intervention surveys were administered at the

end of the six-week intervention period. The results of the surveys were compared to determine if there were significant differences in motivation between the experimental and control groups.

Classroom observations were conducted throughout the intervention period to monitor changes in students' behaviors and engagement levels. Observations were focused on key indicators of motivation, such as:

The frequency and quality of students' contributions to class discussions, activities, and assignments.

Whether students in the experimental group exhibited greater perseverance when faced with difficult tasks.

The level of enthusiasm and interest demonstrated by students during lessons and activities.

The researcher took detailed field notes during these observations, documenting instances where success situations were implemented and noting any noticeable changes in student behavior or classroom dynamics. These observations were used to supplement the quantitative survey data and provide a more in-depth understanding of how success situations influenced motivation.

Interviews with both teachers and students were conducted at the end of the intervention period to gain insight into their perceptions of the success situations and their impact on motivation.

Teachers were asked about their experiences with the success situations, how they implemented the intervention, and their observations of any changes in students' motivation, engagement, and performance. Teachers also discussed any challenges or limitations they encountered during the intervention.

A small group of students from both the experimental and control groups were interviewed to explore their feelings about the intervention. Questions focused on how they perceived the rewards, praise, and feedback they received, as well as how these experiences affected their motivation to learn.

Interviews were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility in the conversation while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The pre- and post-intervention survey data were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to determine whether there were significant changes in motivation within the experimental and control groups. The primary focus was on comparing the differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation scores before and after the intervention. Additionally, a between-groups comparison was conducted to assess whether the experimental group showed greater improvement in motivation compared to the control group.

RESEARCH RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the data analysis of the pre- and post-intervention surveys, classroom observations, and interviews conducted in the study. The aim of this analysis was to examine the impact of success situations on primary school students' learning motivation. The results are presented in both quantitative and qualitative formats. The quantitative results include statistical analysis of the survey data, while the qualitative results provide insights into changes in student behavior, engagement, and teacher and student perceptions.

The motivation survey was administered to both the experimental group (who participated in the success situations) and the control group (who received traditional learning methods) at two time points: before the intervention (pre-test) and after the intervention (post-test). The analysis of the survey data focused on changes in students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as self-efficacy beliefs.

The mean scores for the intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy subscales were calculated for both groups before and after the intervention. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the motivation survey.

Table 1. Impact of Intervention on Motivation and Self-Efficacy: Pre- and Post-Test Comparisons between Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Measure	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Mean Change
Experimental Group	Intrinsic Motivation	3.1	4.05	0.95
	Extrinsic Motivation	3.45	3.6	0.15
	Self-Efficacy	3.3	4.2	0.9
Control Group	Intrinsic Motivation	3.25	3.3	0.05

	Extrinsic Motivation	3.5	3.55	0.05
	Self-Efficacy	3.4	3.45	0.05

Table 2. Statistical Comparison of Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Self-Efficacy: t-Tests for Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Measure	t-value	df	p-value
Experimental Group	Intrinsic Motivation	10.45	59	<0.001
	Extrinsic Motivation	2.45	59	0.018
	Self-Efficacy	9.65	59	<0.001
Control Group	Intrinsic Motivation	0.81	59	0.42
	Extrinsic Motivation	0.62	59	0.536
	Self-Efficacy	0.35	59	0.728

The results indicated that the experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in all three measures (intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy). The largest increase was observed in intrinsic motivation (mean change = +0.95, $t(59) = 10.45$, $p < 0.001$) and self-efficacy (mean change = +0.90, $t(59) = 9.65$, $p < 0.001$). The increase in extrinsic motivation was also statistically significant (mean change = +0.15, $t(59) = 2.45$, $p = 0.018$). In contrast, the control group showed only minimal changes in motivation, with no statistically significant differences in any of the motivation measures ($p > 0.05$).

Classroom observations were conducted throughout the intervention period to assess changes in students' behavior and engagement. Key indicators of motivation, such as active participation, task persistence, and enthusiasm, were recorded. The findings from the observations are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Behavioral Changes in Active Participation, Task Persistence, and Engagement: Pre- and Post-Test Comparisons between Experimental and Control Groups

Behavior Indicator	Experimental Group (Pre-Test)	Experimental Group (Post-Test)	Control Group (Pre-Test)	Control Group (Post-Test)
Active Participation	2.8 (out of 5)	4.5	3.1	3.3
Task Persistence	3.0 (out of 5)	4.2	3.4	3.5
Enthusiasm/Engagement	3.2 (out of 5)	4.3	3.5	3.6

The classroom observations revealed a marked increase in motivation-related behaviors among students in the experimental group. Active participation, task persistence, and enthusiasm all improved significantly from the pre-test to the post-test. The mean score for active participation increased from 2.8 to 4.5 (out of 5), and task persistence increased from 3.0 to 4.2. Similarly, enthusiasm/engagement rose from 3.2 to 4.3. These increases were consistent with the goal of the intervention to create positive success situations that would boost students' motivation.

In contrast, the control group showed only minimal increases in these behaviors. While the scores for active participation (3.1 to 3.3), task persistence (3.4 to 3.5), and enthusiasm (3.5 to 3.6) did increase slightly, the changes were not as pronounced as those observed in the experimental group.

Interviews with both teachers and students provided further insight into the impact of success situations on motivation. The interviews were analyzed for recurring themes, and several key findings emerged.

Table 4. Indicators of L.M. Friedman's "Diagnosis of Learning Motivation" methodology in EG and CG during the verifying experiment

Respondents / Score	Experimental group (60)								Control group (60)							
	Definitely true (+ +)		Possibly true (+)		Possibly false (–)		Definitely false (– –)		Definitely true (+ +)		Possibly true (+)		Possibly false (–)		Definitely false (– –)	
0-5 points	1	2 0,3	4	2 5,9	2	2 2,2	7	3 1,4	3	2 2,4	5	2 5,8	6	2 7,5	4	2 4,1
6-14 points	0	1 8,5	2	2 2,2	5	2 7,7	7	3 1,4		1 5,5	7	2 9,3	3	2 2,4	9	3 2,7

Figure 1. Databa

The results of this study reinforce and broaden existing research on the beneficial impact of success experiences on student motivation. In line with Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, students who were exposed to structured success situations demonstrated greater confidence in their abilities and showed an increased willingness to tackle challenging tasks. This finding is consistent with Zimmerman's (2000) emphasis on mastery experiences as essential in shaping learners' beliefs in their own competence.

The rise in intrinsic motivation observed in this study also corresponds with principles of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which posits that motivation is strengthened when individuals feel competent, autonomous, and socially supported. The intervention specifically targeted students' sense of competence by providing meaningful positive reinforcement and tasks designed to be achievable, helping to build intrinsic motivation more effectively than reliance on external rewards alone. While extrinsic motivators may lose their effect once removed (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999), the motivational gains identified here appear more durable.

Additionally, the findings support research by Schunk and colleagues (2008), which highlights the importance of acknowledging success in fostering improved academic performance and student engagement. This study expands on previous literature by applying success situations within a structured primary classroom setting, offering practical tools and methods rather than remaining at a theoretical level.

Implications for practice include the following:

Teachers should incorporate structured opportunities for success through differentiated tasks that enable every student to experience mastery.

Formative feedback and celebration of small accomplishments can strengthen students' competence and resilience.

Professional development should train teachers to recognize and intentionally create success situations that support diverse learners.

Success situations may be particularly beneficial for students with low self-efficacy or those from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping reduce motivational and achievement disparities.

Despite its contributions, the study presents several limitations:

The sample was limited to a small number of primary schools in one region, reducing generalizability.

The research focused on short-term outcomes; long-term motivational and academic effects remain unknown.

Variation in teachers' implementation of success situations may have introduced uncontrolled differences across classrooms.

Part of the data relied on self-report measures and observational notes, which may be affected by social desirability or subjectivity.

Suggestions for future research include:

Examining the long-term influence of repeated success experiences across multiple academic years.

Expanding the sample to include learners from diverse geographical, socio-economic, and cultural contexts.

Comparing success situations with other motivational interventions (e.g., growth mindset programs).

Exploring how digital platforms and gamification might create virtual success experiences to enhance engagement.

This study set out to determine whether success situations could effectively increase primary school students' learning motivation. By integrating structured success experiences—such as praise, rewards, individualized feedback, and acknowledgment of accomplishments—the study aimed to enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as well as students' self-efficacy. Findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses show that the use of success situations substantially improved students' motivation.

Quantitative survey data revealed that students in the experimental group experienced significant increases in intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy. Paired-sample t-tests indicated notable gains across all motivational indicators, with the most substantial improvements in intrinsic motivation and self-belief. In contrast, the control group exhibited only minor changes, underscoring the effectiveness of the intervention.

Classroom observations affirmed these results: students exposed to success situations displayed higher levels of engagement, task persistence, and enthusiasm toward learning. Interviews with teachers and students provided further evidence, with teachers reporting improved confidence and participation and students expressing a stronger desire to excel when their efforts were recognized.

CONCLUSION

These findings hold considerable significance for primary education. They demonstrate that success experiences can meaningfully enhance students' motivation and classroom engagement. By using strategies such as personalized praise, recognition, and constructive feedback, teachers can help students develop a stronger sense of competence and intrinsic interest in learning. In doing so, educators can foster a positive learning environment where students take greater ownership of their academic progress. However, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on thoughtful implementation; feedback must be authentic, specific, and individually targeted, and extrinsic rewards must be used in moderation to avoid undermining intrinsic motivation.

The study also presents several limitations. Its quasi-experimental design restricts the ability to establish definitive causal relationships, suggesting that future work should employ randomized controlled designs. Additionally, the focus on one primary school limits generalizability, highlighting the need for replications in varied educational contexts. Long-term effects were not assessed, leaving open questions about whether motivational gains endure. Future research should investigate sustained impacts over multiple years and explore further outcomes such as academic achievement, emotional well-being, and social development.

In summary, the study demonstrates that success situations offer a promising approach to boosting motivation in primary school students. Providing students with authentic opportunities to experience success—through praise, rewards, individualized feedback, and recognition—can significantly strengthen intrinsic motivation, enhance self-efficacy, and promote greater engagement. These findings add to the growing body of literature supporting motivational strategies in education and provide useful guidance for teachers seeking to build more encouraging, supportive, and motivating classroom environments. By cultivating settings in which students feel capable and valued, educators can help inspire deeper involvement in learning and foster long-term academic growth.

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