AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF STUDENT AND TEACHER PERCEPTIONS ON
STUDENT MOTIVATION AND THE TEACHER–STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Student motivation is a strong contributing factor to student success in the classroom and is significantly impacted by the teacher–student relationship. To further the understanding of these concepts, this study utilized interviews, the Motivational Development Inventory (MDI), and the Teacher–Student Relationship Scale (TSRS) to explore the relationship between student motivation and the teacher–student relationship in elementary-aged children. Through a dependent $t$ test, this study analyzed the relationship between student and teacher perceptions of student motivation as measured by the MDI, in which a statistically significant relationship was found at motivation Levels 1 and 3. Another dependent $t$ test studied the relationship between student and teacher perceptions of the teacher–student relationship as measured by the TSRS and found no significant relationship. Finally, a Spearman rank-order test was conducted between student motivation and the teacher–student relationship, and the only correlation that was found was between motivation Levels 3 and 4. The present study provides several suggestions for educators to improve education practices for elementary teachers interested in the subject of this study. The research also includes implications for future research to expand the scope of this exploratory study.