



The Impact of Formative Assessment on Students' Motivation and Behavior in a Private School in Karachi: A Case Study

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ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History:		<i>Formative assessment is an ongoing process that strengthens both teaching and learning. It shifts the focus from simply measuring performance to actively supporting student growth and development. Perceptions of behaviour, motivation, and feedback are closely connected with formative assessment because they form the continuous loop needed for self-regulated learning. Formative assessment provides the structure through which positive behaviour is reinforced, motivation is sustained, and meaningful feedback is delivered. This qualitative case study examines the impact of formative assessment practices on students' motivation and behaviours in a private primary school in Karachi. The population includes primary-level students and their teachers in a setting where formative assessment is regularly used. A purposive sampling method was applied to select participants who have direct experience with feedback-based teaching practices and can provide relevant insights into behavioural and motivational changes. Data were collected through structured interviews and classroom observations to explore how feedback-driven strategies shape learners' engagement, concentration, confidence, and willingness to participate. The findings show that formative assessment supports improved behavioural patterns, including increased concentration, active participation, responsible learning habits, and a stronger drive for achievement. Teachers also reported that formative strategies encourage deeper thinking, reduce shyness, and help students take control of their own learning progress. Overall, the study concludes that formative assessment plays a significant role in strengthening student motivation and promoting positive classroom behaviours, contributing to a more engaged and productive learning environment.</i>
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Introduction

Formative assessment is renowned as a continuing learning support method where teachers provide feedback to guide development and increase active participation. It aids move classroom focus from test presentation to sensitive learning and student engagement. Research specifies that continuous feedback allows students to understand their growth, thereby ornamental their motivation and self-confidence by contributing in classroom activities. When learning goals are rich, students continue extra attentive and responsive during lessons.

Formative assessment reassures accountable behavior and self-regulation. Students learn to trail their own progress and fix faults without dreading failure. This cultivates positive classroom behaviors like teamwork, concentration, and willpower. In Pakistan, schoolroom assessment rests mostly exam-focused. Many students trust on rote memorization and terror making errors. Exploration shows that performing formative strategies can boost engagement and behavior in private schools if teachers receive proper training.

Additionally, formative assessment improves the linking between teaching and learning by heartening active student rendezvous. When students obtain fast, prolific response and have balances to replicate on their progress, they start to take more answerability for their knowledge.

Rationale of the Study

The persistence of this research is to discourse the impact of formative assessment on students' motivation and behaviors, emphasizing the robust challenges in the learning and assessment procedure by concentrating in cooperation on students and teachers. For students, the learning aims to develop contribution in class happenings, serving them become additional engaged and active beginners. It also follows to lessen the fear of failure, generating a sympathetic environment for them. Furthermore, the study targets to boost intrinsic motivation, heartening students to take inventiveness and mature a sincere attentiveness in learning. For educators, the study plans sequence and sustenance to recover assessment achieves, permitting them to deliver more genuine and communicative criticism that cultivates student development.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

To examine the effects of formative assessment on students' motivation and behavior.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the impact of formative practices on the enhancement of students' classroom behavior.
2. To explore the role of feedback on students' motivation.
3. To identify teacher challenges in using formative assessment.

Research Questions

1. To what amount does formative assessment impact student behavior?
2. How does feedback improve motivation?
3. What are the challenges faced by teachers in implementing formative assessment?

Significance of the Study

This study encirclements status for several noteworthy details, which advantage teachers to recover student contribution in class activities. It inspires, motivates and shapes confidence in learners. It leads the schools in purifying assessment practices.

Scope of the Study

This study emphases on examining the influence of formative assessment practices on students' motivation and behaviors in a private primary school. It concealments classroom annotations, teachers' and students' views, and study of students' and teachers' views of formative assessment. The scope is partial to a single school setting, providing an detailed case study.

Limitations of the Study

The investigation is limited to a solitary private primary school, so verdicts may not characterize all institutes.

- Records founded on teacher practices and student answers, which may include bias.
- Time confines avert long-term following of accomplishment.

Review of the Related Literature

Formative assessment is widely documented as an instructional approach that supports students throughout the learning process rather than only evaluating them at the end. By giving students repeated opportunities to check their understanding, adjust their strategies, and reflect on their progress, it promotes consistent engagement and helps develop positive learning habits (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Unlike summative assessments, which mainly measure final outcomes, formative practices strengthen thinking while learning is still in progress.

Formative Assessment on Students' Behavior and Motivation

Positive classroom behaviours—such as collaboration, concentration, and participation—are strengthened when feedback is timely and meaningful. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), students become more engaged when they understand how to improve their responses and are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Formative assessment helps build a classroom environment in which mistakes are seen as learning opportunities rather than failures, reducing disruptive behaviour and lowering fear of judgment.

Motivation plays a key role in determining students' willingness to learn, and formative assessment is a major contributor to increasing learner motivation (Saeed & Riasati, 2022). When students understand learning goals clearly and receive feedback that supports improvement, their intrinsic motivation becomes stronger (Lee & Yin, 2023). This shift reduces dependence on teacher approval and helps students develop confidence in their own learning strategies.

Motivation and behaviour are closely linked outcomes of formative assessment. Motivated students tend to show better behaviours, while positive behaviours help sustain motivation (Lee & Yin, 2023). This cycle strengthens when feedback builds confidence and encourages students to set goals and monitor their progress (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). As a result, behavioural changes such as improved concentration, active responding, and responsibility emerge gradually as motivation increases. However, research also suggests that the impact of formative assessment depends strongly on how feedback is delivered, teacher training, and teachers' perceptions. Not all outcomes are consistent, and effectiveness varies across classroom contexts.

Teachers' Role in Enhancing Incentive

Teachers play a vital role in shaping how students experience feedback and classroom assessment. When feedback is delivered clearly, positively, and with the intention of helping students improve, learners are more likely to participate actively, take academic risks, and feel supported during learning tasks (Panadero & Alqassab, 2021). Therefore, professional development in formative strategies is essential for creating supportive learning environments (Irshad, 2025). Encouraging students' efforts and guiding them constructively helps reduce anxiety, build confidence, and promote cooperative and focused behaviour.

Feedback is central to how formative assessment influences behavioural development. When feedback highlights effort rather than only correctness, students are more likely to persist and behave positively during activities (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Through continuous feedback cycles, students gradually develop productive habits such as collaboration, attention, and willingness to participate.

Engagement increases when students are involved in monitoring their own learning progress. Formative assessment approaches like self-assessment and peer evaluation allow students to take greater control over their behaviour and learning decisions (Panadero & Alqassab, 2021). This sense of autonomy aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which suggests that motivation grows when learners feel ownership of their tasks. As a result, classroom behaviour becomes more positive and less dependent on teacher direction (Lee & Yin, 2023).

In many classroom settings, fear of making mistakes leads to silence or withdrawal from participation. Formative assessment reduces this anxiety by normalizing errors as opportunities for improvement (Saeed & Riasati, 2022). Supportive feedback reassures students that progress matters more than perfection, encouraging them to ask questions and participate without hesitation. This shift toward a safe emotional climate contributes to behavioural improvement as students take more initiative and show resilience when facing challenges.

Theoretical Framework

Three learning theories support this study:

Self-Determination Theory (SDT):

Developed by **Deci and Ryan (1985)**, SDT proposes that students become more motivated when their needs for **autonomy, competence, and relatedness** are supported. Formative assessment strengthens these needs by offering feedback that builds competence, encourages independence in learning tasks, and promotes positive teacher–student interactions. Therefore, formative feedback enhances intrinsic motivation and leads to more responsible and engaged classroom behavior (Panadero & Alqassab, 2021; Lee & Yin, 2023).

Self-Regulated Learning Theory (SRL):

Proposed by Zimmerman (1989), SRL Theory states that students learn more effectively when they monitor their progress, set goals, and adjust their learning strategies. Formative assessment directly supports these self-regulatory processes by making students aware of their strengths and weaknesses and guiding them to modify their efforts where needed (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Panadero & Alqassab, 2021). Through continuous feedback, students develop higher self-efficacy, persistence, and improved learning habits.

Conceptual Framework

The study suggests that formative assessment touches student motivation and behaviors straight and circuitously finished feedback excellence, self-efficacy, and engagement. The framework recommends that formative assessment (independent variable) influences students' motivation and behavior (dependent variables) both directly and indirectly complete educator response excellence, self-efficacy, and student appointment/self-regulation (mediating variables).

Formative Assessment (IV)

↓ **Direct Effect**

Student Motivation & Behavior (DV)

Indirect/Mediated Effect Path:

Formative Assessment (IV) → **Teacher Feedback Quality** →

Self-Efficacy → **Engagement/Self-Regulation** →

Student Motivation & Behavior (DV)

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a qualitative case study design to explore how formative assessment shapes students' motivation in a Cambridge private school. The design made it possible to examine real classroom practices and teacher experiences in depth, within their natural teaching environment.

Population and Sample

The population included upper-primary students and subject teachers working in a Cambridge private school. The sample consisted of two classrooms from Grades 4 and 5, each having around 12–15 students. In addition, six subject teachers who regularly used formative assessment strategies took part in interviews. These teachers taught core subjects such as English, Mathematics, and Science.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select both teachers and classrooms. Participants were chosen because they actively engaged with formative assessment in their daily teaching, which made them relevant and suitable for answering the research questions.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through two methods: classroom observation and teacher interviews.

1. Classroom Observation: Non-participatory observations were conducted in Grade 4 and 5 classrooms. The focus was on how teachers used formative assessment strategies such as questioning, feedback, monitoring, and guiding students during tasks.
2. Teacher Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were carried out with six subject teachers. The interviews explored their experiences with formative assessment, the strategies they used, challenges they encountered, and how they believed these practices influenced students' motivation.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed through thematic analysis. Observation notes and interview transcripts were read repeatedly to build familiarity. Line-by-line coding was used to identify meaningful patterns, which were then grouped to form five major themes and their sub-themes:

1. Autonomy Support: Choice in tasks, freedom in work, encouragement for independent thinking
2. Instructional Strategies: Clear explanations, examples, structured routines
3. Student Engagement: Participation, attention, task response, collaboration
4. Teacher–Student Interactions: Feedback, emotional tone, supportiveness
5. Self-Regulated Learning: Goal-setting, persistence, help-seeking, monitoring progress

The interpretation of these themes was guided by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan) and Self-Regulation Theory (Bandura). These theories provided a framework to understand how autonomy, competence, relatedness, and self-management behaviours emerged from the classroom data.

Reliability and Validity

Several steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Observations were conducted across multiple sessions to avoid capturing isolated behaviours. Interview questions were aligned with the study's purpose to maintain consistency. Triangulation was achieved by comparing data from observations and interviews. Themes were checked against raw data to ensure they reflected actual classroom practices. These strategies helped strengthen the credibility and reliability of the analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Permission was obtained from the school, and all participating teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time. Student privacy was protected by avoiding names and personal identifiers, and all data were kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Research Investigation and Outcomes

The composed data from interviews and classroom observations were examined using thematic examination, which involves categorizing, assessing, and reportage designs or themes within qualitative data (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Open coding from the attained data was done at the primary stage, and themes and sub-themes were developed. Five major themes appeared from

the analysis of the present data set; behavioral impact of formative assessment on students, role of feedback in enhancing student motivation, teacher encounters in implementing formative assessment, effective strategies for implementing formative assessment, and perceived benefits of formative assessment.

Theme 1: Behavioral Impact of Formative Assessment on Students

Formative assessment has a deep behavioral influence on students by instable their focus from performance (results) to wisdom and growth. It is not fair about gaging information but about actively attractive students in the learning process and indorsing positive academic behaviors. Four sub-themes developed from this chief subject: Preventive assessment in development alertness, Feedback as a basis of motivation for impact, Ornamental period on task, and Goal-orientation and self-regulation through development awareness.

Sub theme (a): Anticipatory Assessment in Fostering Attentiveness

The evidences showed that pupils paid more politeness and continued betrothed when they predictable to be requested questions or unhurried during lessons. Meaningful that the teacher might ask deep questions heartened them to eavesdrop sagely and reason about the report being trained. Therefore, imagining questions not only recovers attention but also generates a more vigorous and responsive classroom environment. As one of the teachers commented:

“Formative assessment makes my students more attentive because they know I might ask reflective questions about the topic.”

Sub theme (b): Feedback as a Basis of Motivation for Contribution

The data exposed that both over-all and specific feedback help students participate more and improve their learning. Response that c their effort assistances students feel that their learning is appreciated, decreases fear of creation errors, and increases sureness. This sources a hopeful cycle where contribution leads to credit, which inspires students to contribute even more, making a reassuring classroom setting. As two of the educators remarked:

“When I give oral response and short written reflections in Urdu lessons, students listen more carefully and try to improve their pronunciation and writing. They participate more in reading and poetry recitation activities.”

Sub theme (c): Enhancing Time on Task

The data presented that formative assessment assistances make the finest use of class time by care students actively difficult. Exact communicating activities, Group debates, and quick barriers helped them stay busy and have less period to get distracted. This method not only saves learners concentrating but also guarantees that classroom time is used proficiently, letting students to endure fruitful and continuously intricate in the learning process. As one of the educators observed:

“When I custom short, communicating actions like exit permits or group images, students stay betrothed and have less time to get unfocussed. They feel involved, which decreases off-task behavior.”

Sub theme (d): Goal-Orientation and Self-Regulation through Progress Awareness

The data exposed that formative assessment aids students appreciate their own learning and alter their labors. Full feedback and follow-up questions motivated students to put more energy into understanding each concept, as their thinking and reasoning were being evaluated. By receiving

clear feedback on their progress, students change from inertly getting information to actively checking and regulating their own erudition, setting goals, and adjusting their efforts to improve outcomes. As one of the teachers observed:

“Certainly. Formative assessments like problem-solving turnpikes keep students busy and goal-oriented. Since they’re regularly conscious of their growth, they’re less likely to be troublesome or off-task.”

Theme 2: Role of Response in Ornamental Student Motivation

Actual feedback is one of the most influential gears an educator has to enhance student motivation, flowing the learner's care from just building a grade (extrinsic motivation) to a request for mastery and progress (intrinsic motivation). Three sub-themes arose from this main theme: Immediate and emotional verbal response, written response for skill development, and possession. Self-assessment practices nurture responsibility.

Sub theme (a): Immediate and Affective Verbal Response

The data exposed that Instant verbal response keeps students involved in lessons and improvements their self-confidence. When teachers identify students’ pains and deliver quick leadership, learners feel appreciated and are more eager to share ideas and contribute. This method also inspires them to take risks and learn through discussion. One of the teachers added:

“I find oral response most effective as it allows prompt discussion. When I tribute good points or gently precise misunderstandings, students feel valued and are motivated to share more ideas.”

Sub theme (b): Transcribed Feedback for Skill Growth and Tenure

The data exposed that written response helps beginners prudently review their work and focus on improving specific skills. Students are motivated to make these improvements when feedback acmes both their fortes and areas for change. This method, often named the “sandwich” method, delivers an enduring best that students can mention to and ensures that guidance is constructive without discouraging them. As one of the educators mentioned:

“Written feedback works best for my Urdu teachings. They prudently read my commentaries and try to progress their script and language, particularly when I acme their strengths alongside corrections.”

Sub theme (c): Self-Assessment Practices Nurture Accountability

The data visible that Self-assessment aids pupils copy on their own doings, which gives them a healthier kind of their learning and where they need to recover. This procedure makes students feel more answerable for their own progress and inspires them to work firmer to solve future problems correctly. By examining their separate work, students grow self-awareness and take control of their learning, which gains self-regulation and cheers a strong talent to refining and achieving success. As one of the teachers detected:

“Self-assessment moves my students the most. When they counterfeit on their own faults, they feel more responsible for their learning and show willpower to solve alike problems right next time.”

Theme 3: Teacher Encounters in Understanding Formative Assessment

While formative assessment is very dear for its effect on learning, its effective application in the classroom grants some major practical and theoretical challenges for teachers. Two sub-themes

emerged from this main theme: Time and workload restrictions, and Essential for universal and professional growth support.

Sub theme (a): Time and Workload Restraints

The data bare that Instructors face vital encounters due to incomplete time and altering levels of student assignation. These forces are compounded by student-related matters, such as a terror of making faults that discourages active participation and a lack of urgency toward feedback, both of which slow down the general learning process. As one of the teachers added:

“The main encounter is time management. With a heavy curriculum, it’s difficult to give full feedback to every pupil while also implementation the required lessons.”

Exterior factors such as imperfect time, heavy assignment, and exam-related pressure fail the success of feedback practices. These limits often compel teachers to cut or shorten their comments, falling the depth and specificity that richer, more reflective feedback requires. Moreover, the need to prioritize exam preparation forces teachers to change time away from formative feedback, limiting opportunities to support students’ incessant learning and development. As one of the teachers remarked:

“Time and workload often bound how full my feedback can be. I occasionally give brief commentaries instead of full likenesses. More development time and administrative support would help me give richer feedback.”

Sub theme (b): Need for Universal and Professional Expansion Support

The data exposed that Teachers spoken a clear need for sturdier administrative support and applied tools to improve their formative assessment practices. They recognized the importance of augmented planning time, better administrative assistance, and smaller class sizes to make individualized feedback more feasible. As two of the educators said:

“Examination weight decreases the time I can spend on formative feedback. I would rise lesser class sizes or numerical tools to help me manage feedback more efficiently.”

Theme 4: Effective Strategies for Implementing Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a constant process used by teachers to monitor students’ learning and deliver instant, actionable feedback to both students and teachers. Its central drive is to guide teaching and recover learning during the unit or lesson, not just amount it at the end. Two sub-themes arose from this main theme: Verbal feedback as a sureness builder and Questioning techniques for dangerous thinking and reducing affecting barriers.

Sub theme (a): Oral Feedback as a Certainty Builder

The data exposed that the reliable use of verbal feedback during classroom deliberations plays a major role in improving students’ self-assurance and indorsing their active engagement in learning activities. When teachers provide immediate and positive verbal responses such as admitting correct answers, rising effort, or hopeful further thought, pupils feel that their aids are appreciated. This sense of credit boosts their confidence, decreases hesitation, and cheers them to participate more often. As one of the teachers commented:

“I frequently use oral feedback during class debates. I’ve seen that students become more confident and contribute more vigorously when they know their efforts are documented.”

Sub theme (b): Inquisitive Methods for Critical Thinking and Sinking Affecting Boundaries

The data noticeable that organized inquisitive plays a vital role in touching students beyond humble recall to deeper analytical engagement and critical reasoning. Focused and well-sequenced enquiries encourage learners to interpret, evaluate, and manufacture information rather than reproduce learnt content, thereby ornamental their volume for reflection and defense of ideas. As two of the teachers responded:

“I use inquisitive techniques to check sympathetic. Over time, students have ongoing thinking more critically and are less scared to share their opinions.”

Theme 5: Perceived Interests of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is widely perceived by both students and teachers as a highly real practice since it shifts the emphasis from merely grading to continuous development and learning mastery. Two sub-themes arose from this main theme: Positive response used as a learning tool and Gentle and liberal alteration.

Sub theme (a): Positive Feedback Used as a Learning Instrument

The data exposed that Students reply positively to constructive feedback when it is brought considerably and framed as a tool for knowledge. Understanding that response ropes somewhat than assesses them upsurgers their engagement, prompting labors to recover their work and pay more actively. Gentle, clearly explained alterations, such as those in syntax or articulation, are well conventional and lead to noticeable development. As one of the teachers observed:

“Most pupils respond definitely to constructive feedback. They typically try to recover their answers and contribute more in debates once they understand that feedback helps them, not criticizes them.”

Sub theme (b): Mild and Progressive Alteration

The data shows that response meetings help students take more switch of their own learning. After receiving response, pupils start set their individual learning goals and come to class healthier ready, often with better notes or instances. They check their own work, ask enquiries, and take answerability for fixing their faults, showing a more active and independent approach to learning. As one of the teachers remarked:

“Yes, many students begin rechecking their work and inviting thoughtful questions after response. They take control of finding their own faults, which shows real growth.”

Result And Recommendations

Formative assessment practices meaningfully increased students' concentration, contribution, and on-task behavior. Verbal and written response boosted confidence, reduced information anxiety, and heartened greater classroom appointment. Students developed stronger self-regulation and goal-oriented behavior through progress awareness and self-assessment. Teachers reported enhanced critical thinking and reduced fear of mistakes when using structured interrogative techniques. Challenges such as limited time, workload pressure, and exam-oriented systems restricted the full application of formative strategies.

Based on the answers of the research, recommendations are being placed out:

- ❖ Provide unvarying professional growth to train educators in efficient and effective formative assessment plans.

- ❖ Decrease teacher workload by regulating syllabus pacing or contribution administrative support to allow period for meaningful feedback.
- ❖ Administrators should study policies so that formative assessment donates more evocatively to classroom learning by complementary summative and formative assessment, plummeting rote memorization.
- ❖ Include digital tools to rationalize assessment and decrease time pressure.
- ❖ Inspire self-assessment and peer-assessment actions to indorse student accountability, autonomy, and self-regulation.
- ❖ Create a kind classroom situation where errors are treated as learning chances to reduce fear and figure confidence.
- ❖ Device collaborative preparation time for teachers to discuss assessment methods, share strategies, and improve consistency.
- ❖ Accept lesser class sizes where likely to make individualized feedback more manageable and effective.
- ❖ Reinforce message between school administration and educators to ensure formative assessment is valued together with exam preparation.

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