



Teacher Support and Motivation Factors in Ethiopian Schools

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Background

- A large body of literature considers teacher motivation as a critical factor for student learning outcomes.
- In East Africa, for instance, Anderson (2001) proclaims that teacher motivation was a key factor in teacher training programmes and underlines the importance of teacher motivation for student learning outcomes.

Background...

- A formative work done on 12 Asian and sub-Saharan African countries by Akyeampong and Bennell(2007) identified the commitment of teachers as one of the most important determinants of learning outcomes
- Empirical studies conducted on teacher motivation in sub-Saharan African steadily reported on the low morale and declining levels of motivation among teachers(Michaelowa 2002) resulting in lower quality of education.

Background...

- In view of the central role that teacher motivation plays in influencing quality education, research on teacher motivation in Africa that is linked to policy and practice would be vital.
- The aims of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education depend, to a very large extent, on the availability of properly trained and motivated teachers.
- Additionally, the educational quality imperative cannot be met without quality teachers (Sinyolo, 2007, 16).

Background...

- The centrality of teachers in achieving developmental goals has also been recognized by the African Union (AU)
- In the AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) and Agenda 2063, it was articulated that in order to achieve their visions the primary requirement is *a well-motivated and qualified teacher who is mandated with the provision of skills, knowledge and orientation of its citizens for the Africa we want* (AU, 2016).

Objectives

- **Identify key and common TSMFs and issues in Ethiopia**
 - **What are the key factors and issues impacting teacher motivation in Ethiopia?**
 - Literature: a lot has already been done to identify teacher motivation factors in various countries
 - This study is not the first one in this area, but it goes beyond identifying the factors and issues
 - Propose intervention strategies for dealing with the motivation factors and issues

Research Methods

- A sequential mixed methods research design has been employed covering both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- Seven set of tools were designed to undertake this study:
 - (a) questionnaires for pre-service teachers and in-service teachers,
 - (b) Structured interviews for in-service teachers, school heads and governing bodies, and NGOs,
 - (c) focus group discussion guidelines, and
 - (d) observation protocol for case study schools.

The Education Context

- Over the past decades, Ethiopia has embarked on massive expansion of schools
- Aim: providing access and achieving the MDGs and the EFA
- More than 23 million students in primary education
- Such massive expansion necessitated large scale recruitment and employment of teachers
- Potentially lead to the deterioration in
 - the quality of teacher training
 - recruitment of less qualified and unqualified teachers
- Studies: massive and ambitious move to expand education has contributed to the unintended consequence of lowering “the status and lowering of teachers”
- Some even discussing a looming teacher motivation crises across Africa (Crehan, 2016:4)

The Education Context ...

- Quality of primary education - a major concern
- EGRA 2010 & 2018 Reports: students remain illiterate after staying in schools for two or three years
- The same studies have revealed that
 - Low level of teacher preparation contributed to such poor results
 - Teacher preparation is generally inadequate and teachers are not well-equipped in their training as teachers
- Whether such disturbing results in learning outcomes have direct linkages to teacher motivation crises have not been discussed

The Education Context

- Teacher education in Ethiopia is divided into three stages:
 - Initial teacher education (a pre-service course before entering the classroom as a fully responsible teacher)
 - Induction (the process of providing training and support during the first few years of teaching or the first year in a particular school) and
 - Teacher development or continuing professional development (CPD) (an in-service process for practicing teachers).
- The second stage of training, i.e. induction of beginning teachers, is virtually absent.

Analytical framework

- Motivation has been defined in the literature in numerous ways
- In the context of the teaching profession, it can be defined as the “willingness, drive or desire to engage in good teaching” (Michaelowa 2002:5)
- Motivation is generally viewed as the **energy** or **drive** that moves people to do something by nature
- Motivation has to do with the 'direction' and 'magnitude' of human behavior that "**specifies the reason why people decide to do something and how long they are willing to sustain the effort and how hard they are going to pursue it**” (Dornyel and Ushioda, 2000)

Analytical framework...

- According to Sinclair (2008, p. 37), motivation is "what attracts individuals to teaching, how long they remain in their initial teacher education courses and subsequently the teaching profession, and the extent to which they engage with their courses and the teaching profession".
- Postic et al. (1990) recognize motivation as having two dimensions - **intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.**
- Intrinsic motivations are essentially linked to **personal variables**, such as personal history, attachment to certain values and previously experienced relationships within the school environment, relationships to teachers who embody this function and the attraction that the profession can exercise to an individual.

Analytical framework...

- Intrinsic motivation is rooted in a person's love for a discipline and it may come from the love of children, and the desire to help children grow and mature. So, the teacher who is intrinsically motivated may undertake the task for their own sake, for the satisfaction it provides or for the feeling of accomplishment and self-actualization (Ofoegbu, 2004).
- Whereas extrinsic motivation refers to the importance and status given to the teaching profession, such as material reward, social acceptance, status accorded to the teaching profession and job security.

Analytical framework ...

- A range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that impact on teacher motivation has been classified in the literature into four categories: (a) contextual factors, (b) systemic or policy factors, (c) school level challenges and (d) teacher level challenges
- The cross-national comparative study made by Bennell and Akyeampong (2017) made case studies of 12 African and Asian countries
 - Identified the commitment of teachers as one of the most important determinants of learning outcomes
 - Strongly emphasized the importance of teacher motivation for student learning outcome

Analytical framework ...

- Context refers to the broader policy environment under which the educational system is operating. The pursuit of the goal of universal primary education (UPE), for instance, is a case in point.
- Other contextual factors include school location and environment, culture, socio-economic considerations, such as the underlying ideology and instability and post-crises situations.
- Systemic or policy factors that affect teacher motivation are recruitment practices, representation and voice, salaries and wages, professional development and upgrading, career progression as well as appraisal and evaluation of teachers.

Analytical framework ...

- School level factors that influence teacher motivation are governance and school management, leadership and accountability.
- Teacher level factors that impinge on teacher motivation include: (a) recognition, autonomy and empowerment, (b) workload, (c) capacities to deal with classroom challenges and (d) job satisfaction and emotional well-being of teachers.
- These components are taken as a framework of analysis in identifying the key and common factors, patterns and issues that are impacting on teacher motivation.

Analytical framework ...

Limitations of existing strategies:

- The issues that trigger low teacher morale and declining motivation have been treated in isolation; they have not been treated in a holistic way
- Nor the linkages between low teacher motivation and student's learning outcomes have been fully investigated
- Potential remedies and support frameworks for addressing the teacher motivation crisis have been absent from national educational plan

Findings: Major Demotivating Factors

- The study identified a range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that impacted on the motivation of teachers and the teaching profession at large.
- Further emphasized that rather than looking into factors and patterns in isolation, there is a need to have a holistic approach in addressing the teacher motivation crisis at all levels.
- Accordingly, the key factors impacting on teachers' motivation are classified into four broad categories:
 - (1) The overall context of education,
 - (2) Systemic and policy level practices,
 - (3) School level challenges and
 - (4) Teacher level challenges.

Major Demotivating Factors

(a) The politicization of the teaching profession

- The single most critical factor for low teacher motivation happens to be the politicization of the teaching profession that constrains teachers' ability to deliver education.
- Political interference in all types of management decisions is particularly rampant and contributed to a weak accountability culture.
- This type of contextual and systemic barrier largely emanates from lack of separation between the political ideology and professionalism, and hence conceived as the major demotivating factor.

Major Demotivating Factors...

- The existence of weak and dysfunctional teacher unions and lack of voice and decision-making authority over school policy or classroom activities are all related to the political ideology that limits the ability of teachers to exercise their educational function.
- Such level of political interference is tantamount to the **de-professionalization of the teaching profession.**

Major Demotivating Factors...

(b) Wages and remunerations

- A key factor undermining teacher morale and motivation at the systemic or policy level is the low wages teachers are earning coupled with the declining status of teachers.
- Due to the undervalued status of the teaching profession by society, teaching is regarded as employment of the last resort by most graduates.
- Lack of decent housing is also identified as a major factor contributing to poor motivation.

Major Demotivating Factors...

(c) Recruitment policies

- Due to the teacher deficit prevailing in the country, recruitment of teachers is being made from the lower achieving ranks of students who take up the teaching profession as a last resort to be employed.
- In addition, many untrained teachers have joined the profession to fill the gap with the shortage of teachers.
- Such practices brought up diverse categories of teachers with different educational backgrounds to the school environment.

Major Demotivating Factors...

(d) Professional development and upgrading

- The study reported that many teachers deplore the lack of opportunities for self-improvement.
- The criteria for promotion in positions of responsibilities are certainly defined, but are not respected, and this is very often raised as one of the factors contributing to the low morale and motivation of teachers.
- Teachers have also criticized the political and social patronage prevailing in connection to promotions – an important factor in demotivating teachers.

Major Demotivating Factors...

(e) Management of educational systems

- At the school level, teacher motivation depends critically on effective management.
- Teacher management is most critical at the school level where the performances of teachers are crucially influenced by the quality of feedback they receive from school administration and supervisors.
- Absence of mentorship programmes for the novice teachers joining the profession and lack of accurate and helpful feedback to the in-service teachers are among the prominent demotivating factors.
- Decentralization of educational delivery service to direct service providers with the aim of delegating more decision-making powers has been cited as a sign of effective management.

Major Demotivating Factors...

(f) The psycho-social environment of teachers

- A demotivating factor identified at the teachers' level is the huge impact that working and living conditions have on teacher morale and motivation and thus their classroom performances.
- The key factors are related to poor learning conditions, such as excessive work load (number of students and working hours), lack of teaching aids and extra-curricular activities without proper compensation.
- Even those intrinsically motivated teachers would be demotivated when school facilities are poorly organized and teachers have limited access to teaching and learning materials.

Major Demotivating Factors...

- Poor living conditions (poverty, distance from family, lack of access to credit facilities, insecure school environment caused by recurrent socio-political crises) have also greatly impacted the morale and motivation of teachers.
- Any teacher retention policy should be based on strategies that ensure the well-being of teachers by way of providing non-wage incentives, such as social care, housing, security and access to credit facilities as well as exemption from tuition fees for their children.
- These efforts need to be augmented by recognition and empowerment of teachers.
- Studies suggest that the empowerment of teachers usually results in heightened motivation and a preparedness to commit to school level activities(Tsang & Liu, 2016).

Conclusions

- Teacher motivation is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by internal and external contextual factors.
- Resolving the crisis will require a comprehensive understanding of the causes of the teacher motivation crisis and its symptoms at all levels.
- A design of any teacher motivation framework therefore must take into account the broader national context of the education system, the underlying political ideology as well as the cultural and social values of the communities in question.
- There is also a need to strike a proper balance between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

Conclusions...

- One cannot talk about intrinsic motivation and higher-level needs without the basic physical needs related to food, shelter and security being met first (UNESCO, 2006). |
- As rightly noted by Brandt (2014), in his study made in DR Congo, if teachers are impoverished and try to cope with their most basic needs through secondary employment activities or moonlighting, then the quality of education will not be their primary or sole concern.

Key policy recommendations/proposals

- **Separation between the political ideology and professionalism**
 - **ensure strict boundary**
 - **maintain close collaboration**
- **Wages and new forms of remuneration**
 - **underpaid**
 - **consideration of performance-based pay scale**
- **Professional rewards – create official annual forums**

Key policy recommendations/proposals

- **Timely information and communication**
 - Information and communication policy
- **Functional Teachers Unions**
- **Recruitment policies and deployment practices**
 - Put in place objective criteria and a rigorous recruitment and deployment policy as well as implementation strategies based on established norms and principles.

Key policy recommendations/proposals

Personality tests

- Introduce a mandatory personality test for all candidates who aspire to join the teaching profession to discourage candidates who do not have a calling for teaching.

Professionalizing the teaching profession

- Establish a licensing body with a mandate to certify teachers in order to strengthen teacher professional and career development.

Key policy recommendations/proposals...

- **Instituting teacher mentorship**
- **School leadership and management**
- **Accurate, timely and helpful feedback**
- **Developing teacher policy**