Teacher Motivation in Low-Income Contexts: An Actionable Framework for Intervention

Emily Richardson
Teacher Motivation & Strategies- Teacher Motivation Working Group
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was made possible by the Teacher Motivation Working Group steering committee co-chairs who provided suggestions and feedback on the design of this study: Jarret Guajardo-Save the Children Education Specialist and Paul St. John Frisoli- IRC Technical Advisor.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the interviewees who graciously offered their time to share their insights and experiences with teacher motivation and related issues: Dr. Abhijit Banerjee, Dr. Alison Buckler, Dr. David Chapman, Dr. William Firestone, Dr. Mark Ginsburg and Dr. Richard Ingersoll.

Finally, a special thank you to Dr. Carolyn Riehl and Dr. Leslie Bartlett, Teachers College, Columbia University faculty for their detailed feedback on the literature review and research design template included in this report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIES</td>
<td>Comparative and International Education Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INEE</td>
<td>Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMWG</td>
<td>Teacher Motivation Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>Voluntary Service Overseas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teacher Motivation Working Group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Report</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIES 2014</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Methodology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological Considerations in the Study of Teacher Motivation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Motivation: Definitions and Theories</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends in Teacher Motivation in Low-Income Countries</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Levels of Teacher Motivation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Characteristics and Motivation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings and Analysis</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Literature Review</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Findings</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Priority Themes and Questions Developed- CIES 2014 Workshop</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Interview Guide</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Sample Research Design and Proposal</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality basic education for all children is one of the world’s major education objectives. Ministries of Education are designing, revising and implementing policies that ensure universal access to primary and secondary schools. Meanwhile, prominent international organizations are devising targets and goals to expand and improve education across the globe.

Crucial to these international objectives is training, recruiting and retaining good quality teachers. Teachers play a critical role in realizing the ambitious national and international education and poverty reduction goals. Yet, there is growing concern that teachers in low-income countries are increasingly de-motivated, which is reflected in deteriorating teacher performance and learning outcomes (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). Moreover, the teaching profession in many developing countries has become characterized by absenteeism, high attrition rates, constant turnover, which inevitably lead to teacher shortages (VSO, 2002).

Some studies assert that the commitment and motivation of teachers is one of the most important determinants of student learning outcomes (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Guajardo, 2011). Assessments of the Escuela Nueva model, a basic education program in South and Central America, as well as evaluations of education programs in Africa found that teacher attitudes was the dominant factor explaining teacher and school performance. In a variety of developing countries, high teacher motivation leads to improved educational outcomes.

However, there are mounting concerns that there are unacceptably high proportions of teachers in low-income countries who are poorly motivated, due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, indecent working conditions, poor incentives and inadequate controls and behavioral sanctions. Teachers’ material and psychological needs are not being met. And low teacher motivation leads to negative educational outcomes. In a study of teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa, researchers found that low motivation results in absenteeism, underutilization of class time, professional misconduct, reliance on traditional teaching practices, poor preparation, and teachers engaging in second income-generating activities that distract from teaching duties (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Consequently, the provision of quality education is at stake, and standards of professional conduct and performance are low, and falling, in many low-income countries (Bennell, 2004).

As numerous studies have shown, the quality of teachers is the most important factor affecting student learning (Hanushek, et al., 2004; Rivkin, 2004; McKinsey & Company, 2007). In recent education reforms worldwide, there has been an increasing emphasis on improving the quality of teachers, as this has been seen as a means to elevate the quality of the entire educational system (Akiba, 2013). Moreover, as teachers comprise the largest line item in education budgets, it is crucial to increase and sustain the quality of the teaching workforce and maximize the benefits of this major investment.

Recently, organizations have begun to come together and harness their resources in an effort to address the issue of declining teacher motivation in the developing world. One such initiative
is the Teacher Motivation Working Group, an exciting new consortium of key actors who are working together to increase our understanding of teacher motivation in low-income countries.

**The Teacher Motivation Working Group**

In 2013, during a workshop at the annual Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference held in New Orleans, researchers and practitioners from Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee, the Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and New York University presented their work and literature on teacher motivation issues in developing and emergency education contexts. During this workshop, the Teacher Motivation Working Group (TMWG) was born.

The TMWG is comprised of individuals across various sectors interested in advancing the understanding of teacher motivation in order to uncover the factors (both intrinsic and extrinsic) that have an impact on teachers providing quality instruction as a channel for improving student learning outcomes. Since CIES 2013, TMWG membership has grown to include interested individuals from FHI 360, Education Development Center, Chemonics, UNESCO, Asia Advisory, GPE, UNHCR, Childfund, RTI, INEE, USAID, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Teachers College-Columbia University, Stanford University, and teachers themselves from around the world. The TMWG Steering Committee has met on a monthly basis to identify next steps for productive collaboration. A webinar series was also launched in the fall of 2013, which allows members of the working group to share their research.

Recently, the TMWG partnered with the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA in order to create an evidence base that highlights teachers’ realities in a variety of challenging contexts. This group also strives to put research and evidence in the hand of policymakers and funders in order to promote teacher well-being and motivation in order to ensure quality instruction in the classroom. Based on its working definition of ‘teacher motivation’ as the internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in teaching to be continually interested and committed to making their best effort to help support student learning goals, TMWG’s core activities include:

1. Assemble research on the dynamics of teacher motivation around the world
2. Identify gaps in the research and guide an inter-organizational research agenda
3. Serve as a clearing house for lessons/recommendations for improving and sustaining teacher motivation as part of the effort to improve student learning outcomes

**Overview of the Report**

This study aims to provide an actionable framework for better understanding teacher motivation in low-income contexts. It includes a critical review of existing literature on priority areas and themes related to teacher motivation, containing research from a wide variety of contexts. In addition, this study includes the findings from six key informant interviews with eminent experts in the field of education who have worked on teacher development and reform projects. Finally, the study proposes a series of recommendations for piloting interventions and intervention add-ons to improve teacher motivation.
BACKGROUND

This section provides a brief overview of the background for this study. It reviews the Teacher Motivation Working Group’s recent activities, including its second CIES workshop in 2014 and its developing partnerships. In addition, this section summarizes the previous work that has aimed to provide a more critical understanding of teacher motivation in low-income contexts.

Comparative and International Education Society 2014
At CIES 2014 held in March in Toronto, the TMWG held its second workshop. During this half-day workshop, researchers, practitioners and graduate students from across the world came together to discuss the current status of teacher motivation. Through interactive dialogues, participants shared their experiences working with teachers in different contexts. Together, participants created a list of themes and paired these themes with questions to be used to guide future research and dialogue on understanding what motivates teachers and how to promote teacher motivation within the current programs and already limited resources of organizations, such as those in attendance.

Included in these themes were “leadership and coaching support”, “teacher voice”, “teacher motivation in emergency settings”, “relationship between teacher and student motivation” and “professional development and training for teachers.” See Appendix A for the full list of themes and questions that were developed during the CIES 2014 TMWG workshop.

Relatedly, a series of questions emerged from the identified themes. Of particular interest to this study, some of the questions included:

1. “How is the extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation dynamic grounded in specific cultural contexts?”
2. “What specific personal or contextual factors motivate or demotivate teachers?”
3. “How can we measure teacher motivation?”
4. “How can evaluation and teacher assessments be used as a motivator?”
5. “What can we do within pre-service and in-service professional development trainings to promote teacher motivation?”

Following a productive inaugural workshop at CIES 2014, the TMWG steering committee created a series of next steps to build upon the priority themes and questions identified during the workshop dialogue. One critical task to move forward and address the declining levels of teacher motivation in low-income countries is the creation of an actionable framework for enhancing our understanding of teacher motivation and how it varies from context to context. The next section provides an overview of the rationale and methodology for this study.
STUDY METHODOLOGY

Rationale for the Study
This study was initiated shortly after CIES 2014 to address the priority themes and questions identified during the TMWG workshop. Moreover, this study builds upon the plethora of research studies on teacher motivation, including, *Teacher Motivation: Theoretical Framework, Situation Analysis of Save the Children Country Offices, and Recommendation Strategies.*

Theoretical literature and empirical research on teacher motivation in low-income contexts is sparse. Nevertheless, there are certain trends that can provide insight into the key factors that enhance or hinder teacher motivation in low-income contexts. As such, this study aims to map the literature on teacher motivation across a variety of contexts in the developing world.

As quality teachers are vital to the provision of quality education and the enhancement of student learning outcomes, understanding teachers’ experiences, challenges, and their needs is imperative. “The fundamental importance of teachers’ role in ensuring the effectiveness of education must be recognized, understood and taken into account if international efforts to achieve development targets in education are to be successful” (VSO, 2002, p. 1). As the 2015 deadline approaches for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals, now is the time to harness our efforts and leverage real and meaningful support for teachers around the world.

With increasing teacher attrition, absenteeism and shortage rates, now more than ever we need to more effectively direct our efforts to motivate teachers. “Teachers’ motivations matter both in the short and longer-term, not only for their own well-being and career satisfaction, but also for how they relate to and interact with students, and their teaching effectiveness” (Richardson et al., 2014, p. xv). We know little about what motivates teachers at various points in their careers and in different teaching and learning contexts. What personal and contextual factors sustain teacher commitment, interest and enthusiasm? (Richardson et al., 2014).

In Summer 2014, the researcher (Save the Children Teacher Motivation & Strategies Intern), with the support of the Teacher Motivation Working Group, engaged in a qualitative study on teacher motivation in low-income countries. The researcher conducted a comprehensive literature review and subsequent interviews with prominent experts in the field of education. One goal of this study was to summarize the available research on teacher motivation in an effort to highlight the trends in teacher motivation across a variety of contexts. Secondly, the findings from this study were used to develop a set of actionable recommendations to be considered and adopted by stakeholders currently involved in research, teacher development projects and policy-level tasks on issues related to teacher motivation.

Research Design

---

1 Author Jarret Guajardo, Senior Specialist- Basic Education and Literacy Research, Save the Children, presented a framework of analysis that can be used to diagnose threats to teacher motivation in Save
This qualitative study first provides a critical review of literature on the contextual differences in teacher motivation across the globe. It seeks to map trends in the specific factors and levels of teacher motivation from context to context in addition to summarizing the methodologies and theories employed in the selected empirical research studies. As such, the literature reviewed in this study was selected to encompass a wide variety of contexts, countries and methodologies. The reviewed literature includes empirical qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and some Western countries.

Following a detailed review of teacher motivation literature, the researcher, in collaboration with the TMWG, compiled a list of eminent experts- researchers and practitioners- in the field of (international) education to interview for this study. The goal of the key informant interviews was to supplement the literature review and to obtain feedback, from key experts in the field of teacher education and researchers studying teacher motivation, on the priority themes and questions developed during the CIES 2014 TMWG workshop.

The participants were selected purposively, based on their research expertise and regional focus in order to incorporate a diverse range of topics and regions related to teacher motivation. Several of the participants were selected directly from the reference list of the literature review.

The researcher contacted the 20 identified experts through email, phone or via LinkedIn, six experts responded with interest and agreed to be interviewed. The list of contacts included a diversity of experts in topics ranging from teacher professional development, teacher education, teacher induction and mentoring and the status of teaching as a profession, teacher evaluation, teacher incentives and job satisfaction among teachers in a variety of low-income contexts. The list of participants can be found in the Findings and Analysis section.

Interviews were conducted by phone or Skype and lasted between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours. The interview guide developed for this study can be found in Appendix B. Semi-structured interviews were used in order to provide initial structure to the calls, but allow for the researcher to probe further into participants’ responses. The researcher typed detailed notes for each interview, which were then organized and coded for themes and constructed categories.

There were limitations in this study. First, the timeframe for the study- Summer 2014- proved to be an inopportune time for most of the potential interviewees as many were engaged in research and professional commitments abroad. Moreover, the sample size is small. However, another handful of the identified contacts agreed to participate at a later date (Fall 2014). Lastly, as the researcher was required to phone or Skype with the participants, there were technological interferences and challenges. One of the Skype calls repeatedly disconnected, so the researcher completed the interview via Skype (written) chat.
The next section highlights the findings from the literature review. The literature is organized by several sub-topics. Following the literature review, the researcher provides a matrix in order to present a visual summative review of the key contextual variances from the empirical research studies.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Given the importance of teacher motivation for student learning outcomes, this literature review examines the latest research on teacher motivation around the globe. It explores the various theories and highlights the main factors that influence teacher motivation. Furthermore, it provides an overview of the trends in teacher motivation and job satisfaction across a diversity of countries.

Methodological Considerations in the Study of Teacher Motivation

While there is ample research on student motivation, until recently there was hardly any systematic, theory-driven research on motivational and incentive issues among teachers in low-income countries. Obtaining robust quality information on overall levels and trends in teacher motivation is a challenge, considering the highly subjective nature of job satisfaction; it also depends on how such data is collected (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). In addition, evaluating teacher motivation is a challenge as there is no universal definition of what is considered to be teacher motivation (Guajardo, 2011).

Terms, such as “commitment”, “satisfaction”, “morale” and “attitudes” are used interchangeably, further muddling measurements of motivation in teachers. Some studies assert that teacher absenteeism, misconduct and attrition are reflections of low motivation (Alcazar et al., 2006; Bennell, 2004). Other studies rely on interview data and report on teachers’ responses to direct questions regarding their motivation (Bennell, 2004; Guajardo, 2011; Hasan & Hynds, 2014). Moreover, measuring the determinants and consequences of teacher motivation is complicated as such psychological processes are not directly observable (Bennell, 2004). Nonetheless, a number of researchers and international organizations have sought to ascertain the main determinants of teacher motivation and assess to what extent teachers are motivated in various cultures and contexts.

Although research is limited, this literature review includes a diverse sample of academic articles, program evaluations, non-governmental organization reports and theoretical pieces on teacher attitudes and related issues across a variety of countries in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asia as well as the Middle East. Most of these studies are narrow in scope, and there were few studies aside from this sampling that address teacher motivation issues in the developing world. Nevertheless, in recent years, teacher motivation across the globe has received increasing attention. Before delving into the current teacher motivation issues and debates in the developing world, it is necessary to highlight some of the key methodological considerations in the study of teacher motivation.

The overwhelming majority of the current literature on teacher motivation, particularly in low-income contexts is qualitative in nature. All but two pieces (Bennell, 2004; Firestone, 2014) in this literature review are empirical, but mostly rely on ethnographic data from a small sample. A handful of studies are complemented by data on teacher pay, analyses of teacher-related policies, and small-scale surveys (Alcazar et al., 2006). Although large-scale statistical data collection is vital for informing stakeholders of teacher-related issues and policy, and for

11
facilitating dialogue between and within countries, there are significant socio-cultural constraints in such data. Some authors (Bennell, 2004; Buckler, 2011) contend that relying on statistical data alone is problematic as it often fails to reflect the differences between cultures and contexts, even within a specific country. While comprehensive and standardized data does allow for rapid, cross-national comparison and data-sharing within and across Ministries and between countries, oftentimes “rural-urban disparities are masked in in national level databases” and it “struggles to capture a sense of educational quality” (Buckler, 2011, p. 245).

On the other hand, small-scale ethnographic studies of teachers cannot provide answers for policymakers that can be applied universally across a country or region. “What they can do, however, is provide insights into how policy, and the data collection that informs it, might be better designed to meet the needs of teachers” (Buckler, 2011, p. 249). Almost all of the studies are based on semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and classroom observations of teachers. However, to date there are few studies on the experiences of beginning teachers (Thomas et al., 2014). The majority of the studies that seek to understand teachers’ experiences are based on teachers with more classroom experience.

These studies seek to hear from teachers and school leaders, parents, and community members in order to reach a better understanding of personal, environmental, and social contexts in which teachers work and the multitude of factors that influence their occupational motivation (Buckler, 2011; Marai, 2002; Mooij, 2008). In his study on teacher motivation and demotivation in primary school teachers in India, Mooij (2008) found that teachers were extremely eager to share their problems and experiences in focus group discussions. Teachers were honest, open and even appreciative of the opportunity to express their opinions. Hasan and Hynd (2014), in their research on the motivational influences for indigenous teachers in the Islands of the Maldives argue that motivation is inseparable from culture. Moreover, the motivational influences to teach and continue to teach depend on a complex array of personal, social, cultural, economic and geographical conditions.

The majority of studies on teacher motivation in low-income contexts therefore strive to talk with teachers about their experiences and concerns, their wants and needs. Numerable studies (Sargent & Hannum, 2005; Wang & Fwu, 2002; Kadzamira, 2006; Guajardo, 2011) found that teachers felt unheard- that they did not have a voice in school management and decision-making. As such, through their qualitative approaches to studying teacher motivation, these studies suggest that “teachers’ voices can enrich existing knowledge about what it is like to teach and learn in different environments [which] could play a key role in informing teacher education policy” (Buckler, 2011, p. 244).

**Teacher Motivation: Definitions and Theories**

At present, there is not universally agreed upon definition of what constitutes “teacher motivation”, at least in the developing world (Guajardo, 2011; Hasan & Hynd, 2014). Whether a universal definition should be developed or not has been a topic of debate in the field of international education development (VSO, 2002). Moreover, the absence of an agreed-upon theoretical and analytical framework means that “what constitutes intrinsic, altruistic, extrinsic,
or other categories of motivation have been variously operationalized, resulting in a lack of definitional precision and inconsistencies across studies, making problematic the comparison of findings from one study to another” (Richardson et al., 2014, p. 3). This study supports this notion as it views teacher motivation as a context-specific concept. As such, this study does not utilize a particular definition of motivation as it seeks to understand how different stakeholders make meaning of the term “motivation.”

Nevertheless, a number of researchers, for the purpose of their studies, have developed a working definition. In their study on the factors that determine the overall motivation levels of teachers and their job satisfaction in India, Ramacharandran et al. (2005) found that teachers had a very nuanced understanding of motivation- they expressed that “motivation” is a dynamic feeling and it can change from time to time. Similarly, Hasan and Hynd (2014) found that teachers in the Islands of the Maldives found the concept difficult. There was a lack of clarity and consensus, not only in definition, but also in understanding what “motivation” includes. However, for argument purposes, Hasan and Hynd (2014) approached their study from the perspective that “a motive has an important component, the drive, which is usually an internal process, but may be highly influenced by external environmental or other conditions to reach or achieve a reward” (p. 19).

Bennell (2004), in his larger-scale study of teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia adopted a more general definition of “work motivation” as the “psychological processes that influence individual behavior with respect to attainment of workplace goals and tasks” (p. iii). He further argued that motivation is complicated by the numerous organization and environmental obstacles that can affect goal attainment. Guajardo (2011), in his study of the Save the Children country office staff perceptions of teacher motivation across a number of countries, accepted a general and more comprehensive definition of “teacher motivation” as the “willingness, drive or desire to engage in good teaching which is acted upon. Job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and personal achievement are dynamic components of teacher motivation that both drive and are driven by teacher motivation” (p. 6). The Teacher Motivation Working Group’s defines ‘teacher motivation’ as “the internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in teaching to be continually interested and committed to making their best effort to help support student learning goals.” As demonstrated, there is a range of definitions currently embraced in studies of teacher motivation in low-income contexts.

Similar to the availability of effective and acceptable definitions, theoretical literature on teacher motivation in low-income contexts is likewise scarce. A number of researchers employ relevant psychological theories such as Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, which proposes that individuals must fulfill their lower-order needs- basic needs, such as water, housing and safety- before being motivated to fulfill higher-order needs for self-actualization or professional goal attainment. After such basic, or extrinsic needs are fulfilled and environmental factors are adequately met, more intrinsic, or internal factors, motivate teacher effort, performance and professional conduct (Bennell, 2004; Guajardo, 2011). Relatedly, in his study on teacher motivation in Malawi, Kadzamira (2006) argues that teachers were demotivated to improve
their behavior and enhance their teaching practices because their basic minimum needs, for food, housing and transportation were not met. Moreover, in a study on accountability policies among teachers in Indonesia, Broekman (2013) found that money was an ineffective extrinsic motivator in isolation of other working conditions.

Several other authors examined teacher motivation within a general extrinsic and intrinsic motivation framework. The economics-based theory of extrinsic motivation assumes that people respond to external incentives, such as money, in order to be motivated to fulfill their job responsibilities. The more psychology-based theory of intrinsic motivation assumes that people are rewarded by the feedback they receive from their work. Intrinsically motivated individuals have both autonomy and self-efficacy and enjoy doing their work without any additional incentive (Firestone, 2014; Alcazar et al., 2006). These teachers enter the profession as they view teaching as a worthwhile and important job and an enriching personal experience (Razzaque, 2013; Topkaya, 2012). Additional studies (Razzaque, 2013; Topkaya, 2012) add a third category of motivation: “altruism”. Teachers with altruistic motives enter and stay in the profession based on their desire to help children grow and succeed.

One last theory of motivation employed in studies of teacher motivation in developing countries is the principal-agent theory. This framework assumes that public school teachers are agents with responsibilities for the delivery of education services. Incentives can induce teachers to put forth efforts to provide good services and restrain from opportunistic behaviors, such as absenteeism (Alcazar et al., 2006). For example, public school teachers in Peru appear to have few incentives to avoid absenteeism and other minor misconduct as the education system is plagued by corruption, through political connections and bribery. Hence, agency theory can be used to study the effects of various incentives and accountability mechanisms on teacher motivation in many developing countries. Thus, there are a variety of conceptual frameworks and theories on occupational motivation on which these empirical studies are based. The next section highlights the general trends in the overall levels of and the factors that influence teacher motivation in low-income countries.

**Trends in Teacher Motivation in Low-Income Contexts**

This review of empirical studies on teacher motivation in low-income countries indicates that teacher motivation, in general, is low and/or decreasing. While rates vary according to country, a large contingent of public school teachers are unsatisfied with their jobs and unmotivated to improve or stay in the profession. There are a number of factors that influence teacher motivation. In most countries around the world, teachers represent a largely heterogeneous workforce (Richardson et al., 2014). The available literature suggests that there are disparities in levels of teacher motivation by country, region, gender, teaching experience, and culture. This section explores some of the general trends and the conditions that impact teacher motivation in the developing world.
**Overall Levels of Teacher Motivation**

There is very little robust evidence on teacher motivation in low-income countries. A key finding in many of the studies is that it is difficult to make broad generalizations about teacher motivation. This finding is further confounded by the fact that there are different measures and understandings of what constitutes teacher motivation. As mentioned earlier, some studies suggest that teacher absenteeism, misbehavior and attrition reflect low teacher motivation, whereas other studies are based on data from interviews and focus group discussions, in which teachers are asked directly about their motivation. Nonetheless, there are some general trends in the levels of teacher motivation across the developing world.

In a cross-national study on teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa, teachers’ reported motivation levels varied. In a study conducted in Sierra Leone by ActionAid, a major non-governmental organization, over 80 percent of primary school teachers that were interviewed said that they did not want to be teachers. In another study in which teachers and school managers were directly asked about teacher motivation, reported levels of morale were high. Only 13 percent of teacher respondents reported that they did not enjoy teaching. Yet, somewhat contradictory, the same study found that one-third of respondents reported that they did not intend to stay in the profession (Bennell, 2004). In a study conducted in Tanzania, which drew upon 149 teacher questionnaires among a small sample (10) of primary schools and interviews with 55 key stakeholders, job satisfaction and motivation levels were not as critically low as predicted. Only two out of ten head teachers specifically reported issues of teacher motivation in their schools (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005).

In contrast, in a study of 11 Save the Children country offices, staff reported that the majority of permanent public school teachers with whom they worked in both Africa and Latin America were “somewhat unmotivated” while the majority of teachers with whom they worked in Asian countries were mixed between “somewhat motivated” or “somewhat unmotivated” (Guajardo, 2011). Similarly, a study conducted across Zambia, Papua New Guinea and Malawi found that teachers’ motivation is both fragile and declining. Teachers reported having low self-esteem in their roles and felt they were not respected by the community (VSO, 2002). In Taiwan, on the other hand, 44 graduates of teacher education programs were interviewed and results showed that while some were less enthusiastic than others, all respondents were intrinsically motivated to enter the profession (Wang & Fwu, 2002).

There were also some notable differences between contexts within a country. In Alcazar et al.’s (2006) study on teacher absenteeism in Peru, which the researchers considered to be a reflection of low teacher motivation, data showed that absenteeism was concentrated in notably poor and rural communities. Teachers at public schools in high-poverty districts were absent twice as often as other public school teachers, and for teachers at remote public schools, absence rates were two and a half times those of other public school teachers.

In contrast, in Bennell and Mukyanuzi’s (2005) study on the teacher motivation crisis in Tanzania, there were lower levels of motivation in urban schools. One-third of urban primary school teachers said they would not make the same career choice again. Over 80 percent of
rural teachers, on the other hand, reported that they would decide to become teachers if they had the choice again. One explanation for this difference is the teacher’s support network. Locally-based teachers were more likely to have extended family nearby and social networks, as well as a greater commitment to their community. Urban teachers are usually not from the immediate localities and have a difficult time in their posting in Tanzania. Similarly, in a study on job satisfaction and motivation in rural northwest China, there were striking differences in teacher motivation between the various communities. Interestingly, teachers in more economically developed communities were less satisfied. One explanation for this finding was that satisfied teachers were living in villages with significantly fewer residents who were also working in village enterprises. Teachers in villages felt more engaged and involved with their work (Sargent & Hannum, 2005).

Finally, there were disparities in teacher motivation between different types of schools and schooling levels within countries. In Tanzania, secondary school teachers were considerably less satisfied and motivated than primary school teachers. Nearly half of the teachers interviewed reported that they were ready to leave teaching (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). In Malawi, on the other hand, interview data showed that secondary school teachers tended to be better motivated than primary school teachers. In this context, teachers’ living conditions, which are notably better for secondary schools, was a key factor (Kadzamira, 2006). Also, in this study, teacher job satisfaction and motivation was reportedly higher in private schools, in comparison to government schools. Smaller class sizes, closer supervision by management and proprietors, and to some extent the availability of resources in private schools were all important factors in explaining this disparity (Kadzamira, 2006). Thus, these are some of the broad trends in teacher motivation in the developing world.

**Figure 1: Trends in Teacher Motivation**
**Teacher Characteristics and Motivation**

A number of studies highlighted differences between male and female teachers’ reported motivation, while others found no statistically significant variation. Bennell’s (2004) study on teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia found that motivational patterns were different among men and women in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)- member countries. Men were more concerned with extrinsic rewards- pay- whereas women focused on intrinsic rewards- the satisfaction of teaching children. Similarly, in a study of pre-service English teachers in Turkey, female teachers reported altruistic and intrinsic motivations for entering the profession, in comparison to male teachers (Topkaya & Uztosun, 2012). In contrast, Razzaque’s (2013) study of pre-service teachers’ motivations for joining teaching in Pakistan found that male prospective teachers appeared to have chosen teaching for intrinsic and social contribution reasons, more than female teachers. Female teachers indicated that they chose teaching more for personal utility factors, such as time for family and job security.

Several studies, on the other hand, found no major motivational differences between male and female teachers. Bennell and Mukyanuzi’s (2005) study in Tanzania found that there were no significant differences between genders with respect to teachers’ personal statements concerning motivation. Likewise, Ramachandran et al. (2005) found that there was no correlation between gender and motivation levels among public school teachers in India. Alcazar et al., (2006) also found that male and female teachers had similar responses during interviews. Their absence rates were comparable, as well.

In addition, there are differences in motivation between teachers of different ages and levels of experience. In Tanzania, younger teachers were less satisfied with their jobs, particularly younger teachers in rural schools (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). In a qualitative study of 35 beginning teachers in southern Zambia, researchers found that the lack of mentoring and support for new teachers, combined with their deployment to rural schools adversely impacted their job satisfaction (Thomas, et al., 2014). In Malawi, there are clear motivational differences between qualified and under-qualified teachers at government schools- salaries being a key factor (Kadzamira, 2006). Motivation levels among teachers in rural northwest China were similar. Older teachers reported that they were more satisfied with their careers than younger teachers. Also, teachers who were not certified were less satisfied (Sargent & Hannum, 2005. One recurring explanation for these disparities is that older teachers with longer tenure feel a greater connection to their communities, enhancing their non-pecuniary motivations. Moreover, older teachers often have a greater sense of job security, particularly in public school systems (Alcazar et al., 2006).
Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation in Low-Income Countries

Literature on the factors that influence teacher motivation is somewhat extensive and consistent. The majority of empirical studies on teacher motivation in developing countries, across varying contexts and cultures, found similar factors that positively and negatively impact a teacher’s motivation. Guajardo (2011) argues that these factors can be organized into following categories: workload and challenges, including learning materials and facilities; remuneration and incentives; recognition, voice, and prestige; accountability and institutional environment, and career development. This section examines the literature in relation to these categories, combining certain categories that are interrelated.

Firstly, workload and school-level challenges can negatively impact teachers’ motivation. In many countries, teachers are increasingly being asked to take on more responsibilities, including HIV/AIDS education, counseling and community development (Bennell, 2004). In Malawi, teachers’ workload was cited as the most important factor influencing motivation. In some countries, teachers perform an even greater range of activities, including giving immunizations, taking census data, and distributing food (Guajardo, 2011). In India, oftentimes teachers are recruited to assist with political campaigns and elections (Mooij, 2008). Within the school setting, teachers are often forced into multi-grade teaching. As a result of the rapid promotion of universal primary enrollment, teachers also often have increasing hours of work, larger class sizes, more subjects and a constantly changing curricula- all of which are cited as de-motivators among teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (Bennell, 2004; Hasan & Hynds, 2014). In a study conducted in Indonesia, when asked about the factors that would influence their motivation positively, 49 percent of teachers stated that they would work harder if school conditions improved (Broekman, 2013).

Housing is likewise an issue for nearly all teachers in low-income contexts (Bennell, 2004; Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005; Kadzmira, 2006; VSO, 2002). Teachers in Zambia, Papua New Guinea and Malawi reported poor housing as a daily source of irritation and ill feeling. Housing
stocks were reported to be small and have fallen into disrepair, leaving teachers with the choice of living far from the school, in poor conditions or paying high rents for private housing. Teachers reported living with leaky roofs, bad sanitation and broken windows (VSO, 2002). Moreover, teachers are often posted in remote schools, far from their families with little support in terms of transportation and even health insurance (Guajardo, 2011). From the perspective of teacher motivation, remote posts are less attractive to teachers. Alcazar et al.’s (2006) study in Peru found that one of the main reasons for teachers dissatisfaction with their assigned post was that teachers had to live separately from their immediate relatives. In Tanzania, nearly half of all teacher respondents rated their working conditions as “very poor” or “poor” and nearly one-third of the female respondents reported living away from their spouses (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005).

Second, remuneration can either motivate or demotivate teachers in developing countries. In Tanzania, 85 percent of teacher respondents in urban areas reported that their pay is “very poor” or “poor” (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). Low teacher salaries can demotivate teachers who earn poor wages are often unable to eat properly before coming to school. In addition, low salaries can demotivate pre-service teachers. While evidence on whether increasing salaries as a motivational incentive is mixed, data across the globe shows that teachers are motivated when they are paid on time, when retrieving their pay is easy and sometimes through performance or bonus-pay schemes (Guajardo, 2011). In India, irregularly salaries are a major source of low motivation (Ramachandran et al., 2005). Similarly, salary discrepancies between teachers, as a result of bribery, led to demotivation among teachers in Indonesia (Marai, 2002). In Malawi, teacher pay levels are low and have declined in real terms since the 1980s. Teacher pay is not adequate and does not even meet teachers’ basic needs for food, housing, clothing and transport (Kadzamira, 2006). Thus, pecuniary incentives are important in enhancing teacher motivation.

A number of organizations and governments, too, have attempted to use monetary incentives to motivate teachers. For example, in Rajasthan, India where teacher absenteeism averaged 44 percent, an intervention provided a bonus to teachers based on the number of days they attended school. This particular intervention successfully reduced teacher absenteeism to 21 percent in less than three years and student test scores in treatment schools were 0.17 standard deviations higher than in the control schools. However, a similar program in Kenya that distributed the funds to principals to use to reward the attendance of teachers found that there was no impact on teachers’ attendance. Thus, incentives such as pay-for-attendance are most effective when they are executed by external stakeholders (Murnane & Ganimian, 2014).

Moreover, motivation psychologist Edward Deci in his numerable studies on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation has found that extrinsic incentives, particularly financial incentives can reduce intrinsic motivation. When money is used as an external reward for some activity, such as performance pay, the subject- in this case the teacher- will likely lose intrinsic motivation for teaching (Deci, 1971). Studies of incentive programs for teachers in developing countries further highlight the importance of using caution in designing monetary incentives. “The potential for strategic, dysfunctional behavior may become greater the higher the stakes, the
longer the program is in operation, and the less capable teachers and students are of earning rewards simply by working hard” (Murnane & Ganimian, 2014, p. 35). Teachers have been known to “teach to the test” when performance pay is available. Or in some instances, teachers come to expect the extra pay and unless the program is sustainable and carefully executed, teachers will likely lose motivation.

A third factor affecting teacher motivation is recognition. Recognition and prestige can be powerful incentives to motivate teachers. Teachers want to be viewed as professionals and be involved in decision-making (Guajardo, 2011). In India, teachers are desperate for appreciation from their superiors. During focus group discussions, teachers were eager to show off their achievements as they rarely receive any recognition for progress in student outcomes (Mooij, 2008). Razzaque (2013) also noted that the lack of prestige and career development opportunities in the profession had a detrimental effect on the motivations and perceptions of pre-service teachers. Giving teachers a voice in instructional methods and school-based decisions can have a tremendously positive impact on teacher motivation in developing countries (World Bank, 2003).

Fourth, a lack of accountability can demotivate teachers (Guajardo, 2011). In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, teachers do not feel accountable to school management, parents or even the wider community. Often, too, teachers pay bribes to secure employment and desired postings, which undoubtedly impacts job commitment and overall motivation (Bennell, 2004). Similarly, hiring decisions in Peru, and throughout Latin America, are substantially influenced by connections and bribery. Public school teachers have few incentives to avoid absenteeism and misconduct, in practice (Alcazar et al., 2006). In the Maldives, interview data findings showed that engendering community spirit was essential for teachers to remain on a particular island. Relationships with parents and the community were vital to their motivation to stay in the profession. When teachers were more motivated, living with their families or near their extended relatives, they were more likely to work longer hours, planning and offering remedial classes (Hasan & Hynds, 2014).

Lastly, providing teachers with career development opportunities- either professional development courses and workshops or promotion opportunities also motivate teachers to enter and remain in the profession and to improve their practices (Guajardo, 2011; World Bank, 2003). In Sub-Saharan Africa, teachers reported that they were unmotivated to teach in rural schools as they were concerned they would not have the same opportunities for training and professional development as their urban counterparts (Buckler, 2011). In Tanzania, teachers complained of limited professional development opportunities in both rural and urban districts (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). In the Maldives, teachers faced hardships when they were not prepared for large class sizes or even the language of instruction (Hasan & Hynds, 2014). Furthermore, teachers are more motivated when they have a clear career path with promotion opportunities (Firestone, 2014). In Malawi, at present, there is no direct career path for teachers. Their pay is inadequate and they under-trained for the job (Kadzamira, 2006). Professional development and capacity building can help build teachers’ knowledge and competence, which leads to greater intrinsic motivation (Firestone, 2014).
Conclusion
Thus, these are some of the key factors that influence teachers’ motivation in developing countries. While teachers work in very different contexts both within and between countries, the issues they face are similar. There is a plethora of factors that motivate teachers. As discussed earlier, some teachers are intrinsically motivated by their love for children and teaching, whereas other teachers are motivated by the job security and salary benefits. Most teachers, though, are motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors (World Bank, 2003). Creating conditions and incentives that provide teachers with their basic necessities and the materials they need to be effective teachers is crucial.

In addition, as demonstrated in this review, empirical research on the levels of teacher motivation in the developing world is extremely limited. Thus, there is need for more research on the specific factors in specific contexts that enhance or hinder teachers’ motivation. As existing evidence shows, many of the factors that have the greatest impact on teacher motivation are non-pecuniary. Teachers want a place to live, respect within their schools and communities, adequate teaching and learning materials for their students, to be deployed to schools that are not too far from their families and career and professional development that encourages them to thrive within the profession. Policymakers must therefore determine to what extent teachers are motivated within their countries and explore feasible and cost-effective incentives that can enhance teacher motivation. Motivated teachers are significantly more likely to enter and remain in the teaching profession and provide a quality education for students. As we approach 2015, and the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All targets expire, understanding and addressing the teacher motivation crisis in low-income contexts is essential.
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The literature review highlights numerable factors that affect teacher motivation in low-income countries. It is evident that many of these factors are context-specific. What motivates teachers in rural Uganda may not be the same as what motivates rural teachers in Nepal. Moreover, within a country there are wide variances in which factors motivate or demotivate teachers. Figure 1 summarizes the factors that contribute to a teacher’s motivation, as discussed in the literature review.

Figure 3: Summary of the Factors that can Motivate Teachers in Low-Income Countries

Addressing teacher motivation requires a tailored, context-specific intervention. In addition, the role of school leadership and evaluation will be discussed further in the remaining sections of this report.

In August and September 2014, six interviews were conducted with researchers, academics, and practitioners in the field of education, each with a particular expertise related to teacher
motivation. The goal of the interviews was to supplement the findings from the literature review and begin to address the important themes and questions that emerged during the Teacher Motivation Working Group’s workshop at CIES 2014. This section highlights the key findings from these interviews. Table 1 presents the list of participants and their affiliations and research interests.

### Table 1: Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Affiliation</th>
<th>Area of Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abhijit Banerjee</td>
<td>Co-founder, J-PAL, MIT</td>
<td>Teacher incentives and teacher job satisfaction in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Alison Buckler</td>
<td>Research Associate, TESS-India</td>
<td>Teacher education through school-based support and online education for teachers and teacher educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. David Chapman</td>
<td>Birkmaier Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Minnesota</td>
<td>Quality of teacher work-life and teacher incentives in the Middle East, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. William Firestone</td>
<td>Distinguished Professor, GSE, Rutgers University</td>
<td>Effects of leadership, professional development, student testing and teacher evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Mark Ginsburg</td>
<td>Technical Advisor- Teacher Professional Development, FHI360</td>
<td>Education research, monitoring &amp; evaluation, and teacher professional development in developing countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Richard Ingersoll</td>
<td>Professor of Education and Sociology/Board of Overseers-Chair of Education, GSE, University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Teacher supply and demand, turnover, retention, status of teaching as a profession, teacher induction and mentoring in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Interview Findings

The findings from the interviews are organized by themes, which in this study were the interview questions. Participants’ responses are compared and contrasted for each question.

#### The Importance of Teacher Motivation

Participants unanimously agreed that teacher motivation is a serious issue in both developed and developing nations. Teachers’ motivation has a direct impact on student learning outcomes. Dr. David Chapman stated, “if teachers aren’t motivated, even if they are trained well, they won’t do a good job. And that affects student outcomes. Teacher motivation mediates everything else.” By the same token, Dr. Ingersoll contended that teaching is hard work and a teacher’s motivation is a huge factor in how much students learn.

During an interview with Dr. Alison Buckler, she agreed that teacher motivation is a very important factor. “If they [teachers] are motivated, they are more likely to seek out other
resources to impact student outcomes.” Dr. Mark Ginsburg discussed the relationship between teacher motivation and student learning as reciprocal: student learning is a major source of motivation for teachers. “If they can see that their actions affect student learning they may be more motivated. They need to see evidence.”

**Defining “Teacher Motivation”**
Participants were asked if they employ a particular definition of “teacher motivation” in their work. Each interviewee found this question particularly difficult and was unable to provide a simple, straight-forward and specific definition. “Incentive(s)” was a common theme in the responses for this question. In addition, the majority of the respondents agreed that it is a broad topic with many issues and sub-topics to take into consideration. The literature review likewise highlighted the challenge in defining “teacher motivation.”

**Personal and Contextual Factors that Affect Teacher Motivation**
This question elicited a variety of responses. Several respondents suggested that school and/or working conditions were a central factor in the motivation of teachers. Dr. Alison Buckler, who has worked with teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa, discussed the interfering responsibilities that teachers have. In Nigeria she witnessed many teachers prioritizing punctuality, neatness and organization, but they had not participated in professional development to update their skills in many years.

Dr. Mark Ginsburg also mentioned the impact that working conditions and professional development can have on teachers’ motivations. Support from administration and the community can help teachers learn and grow and develop their skills. He also cautioned the use of extrinsic incentives, such as bonus pay. For short periods of time, they can motivate teachers, but they usually only work for a limited time as teachers come to expect such incentives and learn to do the least amount of work possible to earn the reward. Relatedly, Dr. William Firestone suggested that professional development is the best incentive to foster greater intrinsic motivation in teachers.

Similarly, Dr. Richard Ingersoll, a sociologist by training, stressed that the way schools are organized and managed has the biggest effect on teacher motivation. “How a school is set up and managed can shape the quality of teachers. You can take an excellent teacher and make him poor and take a poor teacher and make him excellent.” He further attested that a teacher shortage is a misdiagnosis. There are in fact enough teachers, but many are lost as a result of poor working conditions. Correspondingly, Dr. David Chapman responded that too often teachers are left on their own- “nobody cares about what happens to teachers.” Teachers can be committed but are often demoralized by their setting, their working conditions.

Dr. Banerjee, on the other hand, argued that the syllabus and curricula hinders teacher motivation. Oftentimes, curricula are unrealistic and are not designed for the enormous disadvantages that students have in low-income countries. Dr. Banerjee suggests that teachers should have the freedom to teach children how they want to and in so doing they will likely be more motivated to ensure that children can read and write.
Finally, participants mentioned the impact that policies have on teacher motivation. Dr. Chapman commented that deployment policies are negatively affecting new teachers’ motivation. New teachers are given the least favorable assignments in remote rural villages or in multi-grade classrooms when they are the teachers that need the most support and guidance. These teachers are then left to navigate teaching in a more challenging setting with less support and are much more likely to feel demotivated, which leads to burnout and attrition.

**Measuring Teacher Performance as a Means of Motivation**

Participants were asked to offer suggestions on how we can measure or evaluate teacher performance in a way that motivates them. Dr. Ginsburg commented that evidence can be a source of pride or it can be demoralizing. He suggested that constructive criticism and positive feedback from peers- other teachers- would be a good source of motivation for teachers. Moreover, allowing teachers to share their expertise and observe and encourage their peers is an empowering exercise. Dr. Firestone similarly highlighted the need for teaching teachers how to measure and assess student learning. Teachers can learn to look at student results diagnostically in order to see what their students are learning (and not learning).

In contrast, Dr. Chapman argued that measuring teachers’ performance does not motivate them at all. Instead teachers should be monitored. Dr. Buckler suggested that we consider how we define “quality teaching” as it does matter how teachers achieve higher student outcomes. There is likewise a need for a more transparent framework for evaluating and promoting teachers. Dr. Ingersoll suggested that we need a combination of a formative assessment and a summative assessment- one that helps teachers improve, yet holds them accountable. He did recall that merit pay initiatives have largely failed, as measuring teacher performance in a motivating way is “a hard nut to crack.”

**Measuring Teacher Motivation in Low-Income Contexts**

This question was also difficult for participants to answer. Dr. Ingersoll highlighted the Western-developed tools, such as the FIT-Choice Model\(^2\) to be adapted to measure teacher motivation in lower-income contexts. He also suggested that how much money teachers spend out of pocket on teaching materials is a good indicator of teacher commitment.

Dr. Ginsburg offered teacher satisfaction and attendance as indicators of motivation. However, teacher motivation “is more than attending and showing up.” There is need for a multi-dimensional measure, a composite measure. We can capture more aspects of motivation and determine how motivated teachers are to prepare lessons, engage in delivering those lessons, participating in self-assessments and providing feedback to students on their progress.

---

\(^2\) The ‘FIT-Choice’ project is a large-scale longitudinal program of research, which investigates motivations for selecting teaching as a career, teaching self-efficacy and experiences of beginning teachers.
Dr. Chapman, on the other hand, argued that more research on teacher motivation is not the answer. There is a massive amount of literature and work done on teacher motivation already and it is highly likely that we will not find anything new. He commented that research is too often the response in lieu of doing something. Relatedly, Dr. Buckler responded that the problem with many studies is that they ask teachers what demotivates them, a question for which we already have a lot of evidence. There is need for new studies that add to our understanding of teachers’ experiences and the context within which they are working. She suggested more ethnographies on teachers’ experiences in diverse contexts.

**What Can We Do to Enhance Teacher Motivation?**

Participants were finally asked, based on their experience, what NGOs and international organizations can do, in their teacher training programs and existing systems in low-income contexts, to enhance teacher motivation.

Dr. Buckler suggested that we improve teacher recruitment policies. Requiring an interview is one solution. Also, role models are essential. “It sounds a bit simplistic, but especially for teachers working in rural schools, glimpses into “what’s possible” seems to make a big difference in terms of what they imagine is possible for them in their work.” She also stressed again that there is enough literature on what demotivates teachers, on what aspects of the profession teachers do not like. Yet, asking teachers what they like about teaching can be very motivating. She argued, however, that teacher motivation should not be looked at in isolation because teachers do not work in isolation. However, Dr. Firestone suggested that we address teachers’ working conditions. With large classes and a heavy workload, we need to provide teachers with preparation time.

Dr. Chapman, on the other hand, is increasingly skeptical. He said that it would be most useful to solve the underlying program- salaries and conditions of service- in order to give teachers what they actually need. The low-cost incentives that organizations have introduced to enhance teacher motivation are not working. “We keep coming up with the same answer.” In a similar vein, Dr. Ginsburg suggested that too often NGOs are wasting time by creating an economy of workshops, rather than trying to change teacher policies. NGOs are working in parallel to the system. Overall, there is need for a systemic and longer-term approach, rather than quick-fixes and workshops. We need to focus on the policies and the system of incentives instead of focusing on individual teachers. We should focus on collectivities, such as cluster schools and refrain from treating the individual teacher as a solo actor.

The next section provides a series of actionable recommendations, drawn from the literature review and empirical study findings and the key informant interviews conducted during this study.
RECOMMENDATIONS

This section draws upon the CIES 2014 Teacher Motivation Working Group workshop outputs, a critical and thorough review of literature on teacher motivation in low-income contexts and the results of several key informant interviews conducted this summer and provides a series of actionable recommendations. These recommendations propose low-cost pilot interventions, intervention add-ons to improve teacher motivation and a draft research design to be used to further investigate teachers’ experiences and views on their occupational motivation.

**Recommendation 1: Ensure that teachers have a “voice”**

The number one most important activity that we can do to improve teacher motivation is to capture teachers’ voices. “Policymakers and donors at both national and international levels must dissect the assumedly homogenous monolith of ‘teachers’ in order to better understand the ways in which ‘Learning for All’ is inhibited by the challenges faced by [beginning] teachers” (Thomas et al., 2014, p. 45). Teachers’ insights can and should suggest what strategies we employ to support teachers to enhance student learning.

While it was difficult for this study’s experts to define “teacher motivation”, the definition we need most is how teachers perceive “motivation” in their work. Determining how teachers make meaning of “motivation” is crucial in devising interventions aimed at improving their motivation in the classroom. In addition, to capture a measure of teacher motivation in low-income countries, we need to first ascertain how teachers define the term. Similarly, teachers should be a part of the process in defining standards of what “quality” education is and how it can be achieved.

Moreover, Khan (2007) in her study of teacher job satisfaction in Pakistan points out that teachers want and need to be a part of the education process. They desire to be involved in school-level conversations and decisions regarding curriculum, evaluations, etc. Considering that teachers are the ones inside the classrooms, working directly with students, they have insight that policymakers and even principals do not often have. Involving them in education planning is crucial to improving both teacher motivation and the delivery of quality education.

**Action Items:**

1.1. **Work with school administration and local education officials to ensure that teachers are represented in school-level and district-level meetings**

1.2. **Establish a forum for teachers to come together and share their frustrations and concerns**

1.3. **Work directly with teachers in establishing a definition of “motivation” and “quality” in education**

Appendix C includes a draft research design that could be adapted to a particular country/context to work with teachers in establishing a definition of “motivation.”
**Recommendation 2: Ensure that teachers’ basic needs are met**

In many of the low-income countries highlighted in this study, teachers’ basic needs are not being met. Teachers do not have adequate housing and in some cases, teachers are coming to school hungry as well. In order for teachers to deliver quality instruction, as with any professional in any occupation, their basic needs must be met.

In a number of countries, teachers receive their salaries irregularly. At times, they have to travel far distances just to pick up their paycheck. Several of the experts interviewed during this study have witnessed firsthand how much happier teachers are when they are paid on time. In addition, when teachers are deployed to remote schools, away from their families, they are going to require housing. In several of the empirical studies reviewed in this study, teachers complained that their housing was inadequate. Plumbing was broken, the roof was leaking and electricity was inconsistent.

For teachers to take their work seriously, they must be taken seriously as professionals. As such, there are minimum basic needs that teachers should be entitled to. Thomas et al. (2014) stresses that access to housing should be a requirement for teachers. They likewise attest that addressing teachers’ needs is more cost-effective than regularly training and hiring new teachers.

> The capital costs of constructing new housing blocks for teachers are ultimately much cheaper than the recurring costs of constantly training new teachers. Teacher attrition in Zambia is a significant problem that is likely acerbated by the challenging contexts (p. 43)

Thus, we need to determine how to create a more hospitable environment for teachers to live and teach in, within the constraints of our resources. One simple and relatively cheap strategy is to, once per month or even semester, visit teachers’ homes and repair any broken appliances. Similarly, mobilizing the community to assist in addressing teachers’ home problems is a feasible way to ensure that teachers’ basic needs are met and a mechanism for engaging the community in supporting teachers. Demonstrating that teachers’ complaints have been heard can mobilize teachers to be more committed to their schools and work harder.

In addition, Guajardo (2011) recommends the provision of housing and amenities for teachers deployed to remote areas. Providing teachers in hard-to-reach and hard-to-staff schools with quality housing, running water and electricity (when possible) is “probably the most cost-effective way of attracting and retaining teachers” in these schools (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Moreover, teachers should be provided with health insurance, subsidized food and other related benefits in contexts where their salaries are insufficient. Finally, mobilizing the community to help build houses for teaching staff is also an effective strategy to share the costs associated with ensuring teachers’ basic needs are met.
Action Items:
1. Ascertain which of teachers’ needs are not being met
2. Work with local education departments to ensure that teachers are consistently paid on time
3. Check-in regularly with teachers regarding any complaints they have related to housing, etc.
4. Offer housing incentives or related benefits to teachers in hard-to-staff areas

Recommendation 3: Provide quality support for beginning teachers
As highlighted in the literature review, there are few studies of beginning teachers’ experiences in low-income countries. Fresh recruits face the biggest challenges. They often receive the least desirable postings, in hard-to-reach schools, with few resources and amenities. Additionally, they are assigned heavy workloads as soon as the start teaching. Multi-grade schools are likewise a reality and quite common in rural areas. Yet, oftentimes, pre-service teacher education and even professional development do not equip new teachers with the appropriate skills for teaching in large classes with children from varying academic grades.

New teachers need the most support. “Different kinds of school contexts may hinder rather than support the realization of teachers’ motivations, and if initial motivations cannot be met, this may fuel disappointment, emotional exhaustion, and eventual burnout” (Richardson et al., 2014, p. 15). A teacher’s first two years are critical in his/her teaching profession. Attrition rates are highest among beginning teachers, around the world (Ingersoll, 2012). Thus, it is imperative to ensure that beginning teachers have the support they need to develop and thrive in the teaching profession.

As such, beginning teachers can benefit tremendously from formal induction and mentoring programs. Coaching new teachers as they navigate the curriculum and classroom realities can help a teacher build confidence in teaching. Moreover, informal systems of collaborative, peer-oriented mentorship can help to improve the quality of teaching. One program in South Africa introduced a similar program, coupled with peer feedback and evaluation and mentors sharing their teaching strategies. This strategy led to an increase participation in professional development among new teachers (Thomas, et al., 2014). Tailoring professional development to the classroom realities can boost teachers’ confidence as they can learn how to better handle the various challenges that come with multi-grade teaching or teaching with few materials and learning resources. Investing in strategies that support beginning teachers can lead to increased levels of motivation and job satisfaction, more effective classroom instruction and even higher retention rates for the profession as a whole, saving education departments and institutions a large amount of time and money (Thomas et al., 2014).

In addition, Thomas et al. (2014) suggests creating adequate time for beginning teachers to prepare their lessons. Teachers can often feel over-burdened by full workloads (Guajardo, 2011) and other school-related responsibilities. Providing teachers with planning time and an opportunity for collaborative reflection and feedback not only improves the socialization process in schools, but it also increases teachers’ satisfaction and confidence. Engaging veteran
teachers in coaching and/or mentoring is also a source of career development for them and a source of support for new teachers. However, it is important to ensure that veteran teachers are recognized in some way for these extra responsibilities.

**Action Items:**

1. Develop low-cost quality induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers
2. Involve veteran teachers in coaching and mentoring strategies
3. Offer professional development tailored to new teachers’ specific needs
4. Provide new teachers with adequate planning time in their school-day schedules and help these teachers improve their planning by giving feedback on lesson plans

**Recommendation 4: Improve and expand teacher professional development programs**

The majority of teachers want to do better. They want to improve their skills and learn new teaching methods. In Buckler’s 2011 study of teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa, she found that teachers who were deployed to rural schools were concerned they would not have access to professional development opportunities like their urban counterparts. Similarly, the study of beginning teachers in Zambia (Thomas et al., 2014) found that teachers desired more education to improve their skills.

Results from a large-scale feasibility study conducted in Punjab and Sindh provinces of Pakistan found that of the 1,400 practicing teachers surveyed, 88 percent expressed the desire to participate in bridging/upgrading programs to improve their qualifications (Higher Education Commission, 2013). Furthermore, a forthcoming study that assessed a two-year teacher professional development program for government pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers in Chile found that the program had moderate to large positive impacts on observed emotional and instructional support as well as on classroom organization (Murnane & Ganimian, 2014).

Teachers want more professional development. They want to learn to teach better and use innovative strategies in their classrooms. Teacher professional development workshops, conferences and courses can simultaneously lead to skills improvement and higher intrinsic motivation. To make teacher professional development programs more cost-effective, we can consider using what resources we already have. For instance, involving quality veteran teachers in leading workshops, while paying them a modest stipend or even recognizing their assistance through an award plaque or certificate are affordable options. Veteran teachers can share their ideas and insights into teaching and beginning teachers can express their frustrations and learn to cope with the challenges of teaching in their specific contexts.

Professional development programs, however, should be tailored to the specific context in which teachers are working. For instance, rural beginning teachers in Zambia were overwhelmed with the challenges of teaching in a multi-grade over-sized classroom in a school with few resources. Training should be provided to incorporate the realities of the classroom...
and provide teachers with feasible strategies to address these challenges. Moreover, as mentioned above, rural teachers may not have the same access to professional development opportunities as their urban colleagues. Thus, NGOs and local organizations can explore how to ensure that rural teachers have access to such opportunities. Trainings can “go on the road” and travel to these villages. Alternatively, small scholarships for travel to urban professional development workshops can also enhance rural teachers’ access to professional development.

In addition, NGOs and local organizations can explore alternative ways of delivering professional development. Cluster schools and teacher-learning circles (Frisoli, 2013) and even online professional development programs are expanding in developing countries. Before introducing a different method of delivering professional development, however, NGOs and local education bodies need to ascertain the feasibility, practicality and demand for these options. If a particular communities technological infrastructure is inefficient, online teacher portals may not be the best approach to providing teachers with training opportunities. Moreover, teacher-learning circles, in many cases, may require teachers to travel. This can be an issue for female teachers in certain cultures and all teachers in particular contexts, such as conflict-affected communities.

Another important factor to consider when designing and implementing teacher professional development trainings is how to recognize participation. If teachers are going to engage in a monthly professional development program, they will either desire or even require a certificate of completion. Recognizing teachers’ efforts in these programs is crucial to sustaining demand for these programs and encouraging teachers to participate and continue to improve their skills.

**Action Items:**

1. **Ensure that teachers in hard-to-reach areas have access to professional development opportunities**
2. **Explore and test alternative mechanisms for delivering teacher professional development (cluster schools, teacher-learning circles, etc.)**
3. **Adjust existing professional development programs so that are tailored to teachers’ specific needs within a particular context and its classroom realities**
4. **Ensure that teachers are recognized for participation and completion of professional development programs**

**Recommendation 5: Provide the right incentives to enhance teachers’ motivation**

The effects of extrinsic incentives on teacher motivation are mixed. While some initiatives, such as bonus pay for increased attendance have proven to impact teacher motivation, attendance and student outcomes in the short-term, others have resulted in teachers teaching to the test and becoming preoccupied with student test results (Murnane & Ganimian, 2014). Moreover, teachers can come to expect such incentives, which can reduce their intrinsic motivation to teach better. Likewise, providing teachers with bonus salaries, as studies show, does not correlate with higher student outcomes (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007). However, as mentioned
above, ensuring that teachers are paid on time and easing their access to payments can have a significant impact on their motivation. Nevertheless, we need to determine which low-cost incentives can improve teachers’ intrinsic motivation.

Teacher motivation is, on the other hand, influenced by a lack of respect and prestige. In Pakistan, for example, teaching is widely considered as the “last resort career.” Not surprisingly, this occupational reputation can adversely affect teachers’ motivation. As such, one area where NGOs and local organizations can have a major impact is to engage in advocacy and related activities to recognize the importance of teachers in an effort to boost the prestige of the teaching profession. Deci (1971) found that although monetary external incentives led to worsened intrinsic motivation in his subjects, positive verbal feedback, on the other hand, can increase one’s intrinsic motivation. Specifically, Deci (1971) states:

*If a person is engaged in some activity for reasons of intrinsic motivation, and if he begins to receive external rewards in the form of verbal reinforcement and positive feedback for performing the activity, the degree to which he is intrinsically motivated to perform the activity is enhanced* (p. 108).

Thus, organizations can work with local education bodies to develop ways to recognize teachers’ hard work and achievements. For instance, “Teacher of the Year” campaigns and “World Teachers’ Day” prizes are worth exploring, as are wider public education campaigns to reinforce the importance of teachers in society. Highlighting teachers’ achievements in student learning outcomes in local newspapers, on the radio and/or local television stations can also boost teachers’ self-esteem and attitudes. Organizing forums for teachers to come together and share their best practices and lessons learned can also give teachers the opportunity to “show off” their work and be recognized for their hard work. Additionally, non-monetary merit-based awards, such as school resources or scholarships for further training/professional development can improve teacher motivation and lead to skills improvement and teamwork (Guajardo, 2011). These types of incentives are also extremely cost-effective strategies to recognize teachers’ hard work and vital contribution to education.

**Action Items:**

5.1. Create teacher recognition campaigns, such as “Teacher of the Year”

5.2. Provide teachers with positive verbal feedback and praise for their accomplishments

5.3. Offer merit-based (non-monetary) awards, such as scholarships for training or extra teaching materials

5.4. Work with local education bodies to conduct campaigns to stress the importance of teachers in society

5.5. Create forums for teachers to “show-off” their ideas and best practices
CONCLUSION

Concerns are mounting as there are unacceptably high proportions of teachers in low-income countries that are poorly motivated, due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, indecent working conditions, poor incentives and inadequate controls and behavioral sanctions. Teachers’ needs are not being met. Consequently, the provision of quality education is at stake, standards of professional conduct and performance are low, and falling, in many low-income countries (Bennell, 2004).

Crafting strategies to improve teacher motivation requires looking at the issue as a whole, as a compilation of several inter-related factors. But first and foremost it requires hearing from teachers what their challenges and needs may be. Giving teachers a voice and hearing their concerns should be first action. Subsequently, any interventions must be tailored to teachers’ needs.
REFERENCES


**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Priority Themes and Questions Developed in the CIES 2014 TMWG Workshop**

**PROMPT:**
*Exploring the themes and sub-themes on teacher motivation (group work) [40 minutes]*

Based on this summary, the audience will break into groups and a TMWG steering committee member will facilitate a discussion within each group to identify themes and sub-themes of teacher motivation drawn from the evidence and frameworks earlier presented as well as in the work of audience members. The groups will come back together for a whole-group discussion of themes and sub-themes. The goal of this session is to ‘map out’ teacher motivation by breaking the concept down into its most important components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intrinsic versus extrinsic</td>
<td>• So what can we do in front of these complexities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What demotivates teachers</td>
<td>• What is the balance between extrinsic &amp; intrinsic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coaching &amp; leadership report</td>
<td>• How do we balance accountability &amp; learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistency</td>
<td>• What can we do in pre-service and in-service teacher PD trainings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Doing versus thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations for teachers &amp; support of teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consequences/rewards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership at school versus financial incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers PD &amp; training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Group 2** | |
| • Extrinsic versus intrinsic | • How can we simplify discourse on motivation? |
| • Self-efficacy | • How do we connect academic and practical discourse? |
| • Teacher voice | • How does system structure influence feedback (teacher voice) |
| • Salary | • How is the extrinsic v. intrinsic dynamic grounded in specific cultural contexts? |
| • Recognition | • What is meaningful recognition by teachers? Unintended consequences? |
| • Demands on/expectations of teachers | • How can we apply western-oriented research to developing-country classrooms? |

| **Group 3** | |
| • How to keep teachers motivated in varying contexts (emergencies) | • What are the critical/strategic frameworks and how do they apply in emergency contexts? |
| • Professional development (pre-service and in-service) | • Are there frameworks more appropriate than others depending on context? |
| • Sustained teacher motivation | • What tools would you use to assess and |
| Increase intrinsic/extrinsic motivation? | What is the relationship between improved competency and increased teacher motivation? (measures, tools of competency?)
| How do you measure teacher motivation? | What parts of the system need to be in place to allow for sustained teacher motivation? | Are there phases/stages in which the system can be improved? | What are the best recommendations to motivate teachers? |

**Group 4**

- Participation/voice
- Linking the worlds of research and practice
- Assessment of teachers and evaluations
- How can we put teachers at the center of our programming? (voice)
- Are there current examples? (voice)
- How to we work w/in whole systems? (voice)
- Disconnect between research world and practice (linking worlds of research and practice)
- How can students be involved in supporting teacher motivation? (assessment + eval)
- How can evaluation be used as a motivator (and not be demotivating?) (assessment + eval)
- How can student assessments be motivating? (assessment + eval)

**Group 5**

- Teacher development
- Political context of the ‘teaching’ profession
- Situation teacher motivation
- Situation teacher motivation or ‘initiating’ it?
- Psychology sociopolitical aspect
- School-based vs. out of school
- Teacher motivation is decontextualized
- Meaning: development of instructional skills vs. personal growth
- Attentiveness/diagnostic skills
  - Role model
- Motivating teachers within delimitations rather than focus on or considering those restrictions
- Need to look at more than teacher-student relation. There are other relations, interactions, and impacts by others working in the school system
- How do we motivate people to enter the teaching profession in the first place
Appendix B: Interview Guide

Guide for Interviews with Experts on Teacher Motivation and Related Topics
Save the Children
Teacher Motivation and Strategies
Summer 2014

Purpose: To supplement the literature review; to obtain feedback from key experts in the field of teacher education and those researchers studying teacher motivation

Structure: Semi-structured phone/Skype interviews; in-person interviews when possible; questions will be based on specific participant’s expertise/area of research

Participants: List of 17 experts I developed in June

Time Frame: August 2014 (will reach out to participants in the next few days)

Interview Protocol:

Introduction
- Myself
- Purpose of the interview/ an overview of our goals

Introduction to TMWG (will summarize/shorten)
- The Teacher Motivation Working Group (TMWG) is comprised of individuals across various sectors interested in advancing the understanding of teacher motivation in order to uncover the factors (both intrinsic and extrinsic) that have an impact on teachers providing quality instruction as a channel for improving student learning outcomes.
- The TMWG was conceived of during a workshop that was held at the annual 2013 Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in New Orleans. Since CIES, TMWG membership has grown to include interested individuals from FHI 360, Education Development Center, Chemonics, UNESCO, Asia Advisory, GPE, UNHCR, Childfund, RTI, INEE, USAID, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Columbia Teachers College, and Stanford University, among others.
- We meet on a monthly basis to identify next steps for productive collaboration. A webinar series was also launched last fall, which allows members of the working group to share research they have conducted.
- The TMWG partners the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA in order to create an evidence base that highlights teachers’ realities in a variety of challenging contexts. We strive to put research and evidence in the hand of policy makers and funders in order to promote teacher well-being and motivation in order to ensure quality instruction in the classroom.
Interview Questions

1. In your work, do you employ a particular definition of “teacher motivation”?

2. Based on your experience working with teachers (or on teacher-related projects) in low-income contexts, what personal and contextual factors enhance and hinder teacher commitment, interest and enthusiasm?
   a. What do you see as the largest challenges for teachers in the contexts within which you work(ed)?

3. To what extent do you see teacher motivation impacting student outcomes?

4. How can we measure teacher performance in a way that motivates them?

5. Based on your experience, if you were conducting a larger-scale research project aimed at measuring teacher motivation across low-income contexts, how would you measure “teacher motivation”?
   a. What factors/issues should be taken into consideration in the development of a teacher motivation measurement instrument?
   b. Do you think Western-developed tools, such as the FIT-Choice Model, could be adapted to measure teacher motivation on lower-income contexts?

6. Based on your experience, what can NGOs and international organizations do, in their teacher training programs in low-income contexts, to support teacher motivation?
   a. What can we do now, within our existing system, to enhance/promote teacher motivation?

7. What are some lessons you have learned in your work on ________________?

8. As I briefly mentioned at the beginning of the call, the TMWG hosts a monthly webinar series in which researchers and practitioners present on an issue related to teacher motivation. Webinars last roughly 1 hour. I can share with you a list of previous webinars that we’ve had.
   a. Would you be interested in presenting a short webinar on your work?
   b. (If yes) Is there a particular month/day of the week that works best for you?

Thank you for your time.
Appendix C: Sample Research Design and Proposal

Teacher Motivation in [Country/Context] Research Proposal

This research proposal can be adapted to a specific country and/or context. It serves as a general guide for conducting qualitative research that can add to our existing body of knowledge on teacher motivation. It is merely a guide and does not take into account specific countries and/or contexts. The specific research design, however, does provide an example— in this case, secondary school teachers in Central Uganda— in order to contextualize the specific site and sample selection, instruments and analyses.

Research Design Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching research questions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do [country/context] teachers define “motivation”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to [country/context] teachers, what in-school factors motivate teachers to teach to the best of their abilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to Ugandan teachers, what outside-of-school factors motivate teachers to teach to the best of their abilities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constructivist, interpretivist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual framework: (key concepts and/or literatures)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic, etc.); incentives and disincentives; policy, school and teacher-level issues and factors that affect motivation; teacher attitudes about teaching; teaching conditions and teacher experiences in rural and urban [country/context]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Site and Sampling Strategies briefly described:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location: 4-5 primary or secondary schools in each of the 4 districts/catchment areas of study; 2 urban districts and 2 rural districts (if possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Districts were selected using purposive convenience sampling. Schools within the districts were selected using purposive random sampling within a typical case sample.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Research Techniques: (list them all)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis: Critically examine the policies that affect teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher policies: education, salary, recruitment, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher issues in country/context: attrition, retirement, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall educational issues and conditions in country/context (attrition, retention, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The document analysis will serve as one method of triangulating the findings from the interviews.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews with each participant teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews with each head teacher at focal schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Validity/Trustworthiness:

In order to ensure the validity of the findings, I will apply the following strategies:

- Random sampling of teachers in the typical case sample of districts
- Development of familiarity with the site prior to conducting data collection
- Member check
- Iterative questions during interviews
- Triangulation of findings
- Acknowledgement of research limitations

### Significance:

Teachers play a critical role in realizing the ambitious national and international education and poverty reduction goals. Yet, there is growing concern that teachers in low-income countries are increasingly demotivated, which is reflected in deteriorating teacher performance and learning outcomes (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). Moreover, the teaching profession in developing countries has become characterized by absenteeism, high attrition rates, constant turnover, which inevitably lead to teacher shortages (VSO, 2002). Low teacher motivation leads to negative educational outcomes. In a study of teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa, researchers found that low motivation results in absenteeism, underutilization of class time, professional misconduct, reliance on traditional teaching practices, poor preparation, and teachers engaging in second income-generating activities that distract from teaching duties (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Consequently, the provision of quality education is at stake, standards of professional conduct and performance are low, and falling, in many low-income countries (Bennell, 2004). There has also been little systematic research on motivational and incentive issues among teachers in low-income countries. As such, this study of teacher motivation in [country/context] is both timely necessary in order to address the abovementioned issues affecting the teaching workforce in low-income countries. The findings from this study will be used to develop specific actionable recommendations to address the teacher motivation situation in the country/context studied. Seeking direct input from teachers is crucial to devise strategies aimed at improving their motivation.

### Limitations/constraints:

This study is relatively small scale, so the generalizability of findings is limited. Language could be a limitation so utilizing a translator may be necessary.

### Statement of the Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>best of their abilities?</th>
<th>2.3. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Conducting interviews with teachers and head teachers is the best method to directly answer each of the 3 research questions as I will be speaking with the primary data source: teachers (and head teachers). Interviews with students will serve as additional method of triangulating the findings from the other interviews.</em>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. According to [country/context] teachers, what outside-of-school factors motivate teachers to teach to the best of their abilities?</td>
<td>3. Focus groups:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1. Focus groups with a mixture of participant teachers across the school sites at the end of the data collection process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Focus group discussions will serve as an additional data source, as well as means of triangulating my findings from the interviews. I will talk to teachers in groups, asking them the same questions in order to determine to what extent they are answering similarly or differently from their one-on-one interview.</em>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The provision of basic education for all children is one of the world’s major education objectives. Ministries of Education are designing, revising and implementing policies that ensure universal access to primary and secondary schools. Meanwhile, prominent international organizations are devising targets and goals to expand and improve education across the globe. Crucial to these international objectives is training, recruiting and retaining good quality teachers. Teachers play a critical role in realizing the ambitious national and international education and poverty reduction goals. “The fundamental importance of teachers’ role in ensuring the effectiveness of education must be recognized, understood and taken into account if international efforts to achieve development targets in education are to be successful” (VSO, 2002, p. 1).

A plethora of studies assert that the commitment and motivation of teachers is one of the most important determinants of student learning outcomes (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Guajardo, 2011). Assessments of the Escuela Nueva model, a basic education program in South and Central America, as well as evaluations of education programs in Sub-Saharan Africa found that teacher attitude was the dominant factor explaining teacher and school performance. In a variety of developing countries, high teacher motivation leads to improved educational outcomes.

Yet, there is growing concern that teachers in low-income countries, like Uganda, are increasingly demotivated, which is reflected in deteriorating teacher performance and learning outcomes (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). Moreover, the teaching profession in developing countries has become characterized by absenteeism, high attrition rates, constant turnover, which inevitably lead to teacher shortages (VSO, 2002). There are unacceptably high proportions of teachers in low-income countries that are poorly motivated, due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, indecent working conditions, poor incentives and inadequate controls and behavioral sanctions. Teachers’ material and psychological needs are not being met. In a cross-national study on teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa, teachers’ reported motivation levels varied. In a study conducted in Sierra Leone by ActionAid, a major non-governmental organization, over 80 percent of primary school teachers that were interviewed said that they did not want to be teachers. In another study in which teachers and school managers were directly asked about teacher motivation, reported levels of morale were high. Only 13 percent of teachers reported that they did not enjoy teaching. Yet, somewhat contradictory, the same study found that one-third of respondents reported that they did not intend to stay in the profession (Bennell, 2004). Thus, there are inconsistencies and disparities in the sparsely available data on teacher motivation in low-income countries.

Low teacher motivation leads to negative educational outcomes. In a study of teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa, researchers found that low motivation results in absenteeism, underutilization of class time, professional misconduct, reliance on traditional teaching practices, poor preparation, and teachers engaging in second income-generating activities that distract from teaching duties (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Teacher absenteeism is rife in Uganda’s public school system. The teacher absenteeism rate, 35 percent in Uganda is the highest in the world. Moreover, while rates vary across the country, teacher attrition is also a widespread issue (Patrinos, 2013). Consequently, the provision of quality education is at stake, standards of professional conduct and performance are low, and falling, in Uganda and many low-income countries (Bennell, 2004).

As numerous studies have shown, the quality of teachers is the most important factor affecting student learning (Hanushek, et al., 2004; Rivkin, 2004; McKinsey & Company, 2007). In recent education reforms worldwide, there has been an increasing emphasis on improving the quality of teachers, as this has been seen as a means to elevate the quality of the entire educational system (Akiba, 2013). Moreover, as
teachers comprise the largest line item in education budgets, it is crucial to increase and sustain the quality of the teaching workforce and maximize the benefits of this major investment. Given the importance of teacher motivation for student learning outcomes, I am interested in learning how teachers view and define motivation and what are the key factors- incentives and disincentives- that motivate or de-motivate them to put forth their best efforts to provide their students with a quality learning experience. Considering the high rates of [teacher absenteeism, attrition, and a severe teacher shortage, this research study will focus on [primary/secondary] teacher motivation in [country/context]. This study asks: How do [country/context] teachers define “motivation”? According to [country/context] teachers, what in-school factors motivate teachers to teach to the best of their abilities? According to [country/context] teachers, what outside-of-school factors motivate teachers to teach to the best of their abilities?

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework
There has been little systematic research on motivational and incentive issues among teachers in low-income countries. Obtaining robust quality information on overall levels and trends in teacher motivation is a challenge, considering the highly subjective nature of job satisfaction; it also depends on how such data is collected (Bennell & Mukyanuzzi, 2005). In addition, evaluating teacher motivation is a challenge as there is no universal definition of what is considered to be teacher motivation. Terms, such as “commitment”, “satisfaction”, “morale” and “attitudes” are used interchangeably, further muddling measurements of motivation in teachers. Some studies assert that teacher absenteeism, misconduct and attrition are reflections of low motivation (Alcazar et al., 2006; Bennell, 2004). Other studies rely on interview data and report on teachers’ responses to direct questions regarding their motivation (Bennell, 2004; Guajardo, 2011; Hasan & Hynds, 2014). Moreover, measuring the determinants and consequences of teacher motivation is complicated as such psychological processes are not directly observable (Bennell, 2004).

Similar to the availability of effective and acceptable definitions, theoretical literature on teacher motivation in the developing world is likewise scarce. A number of researchers employ relevant psychological theories such as Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, which proposes that individuals must fulfill their lower-order needs- basic needs, such as water, housing and safety- before being motivated to fulfill higher-order needs for self-actualization or professional goal attainment. After such basic, or extrinsic needs are fulfilled and environmental factors are adequately met, more intrinsic, or internal factors motivate teacher effort, performance and professional conduct (Bennell, 2004; Guajardo, 2011). Relatedly, in his study on teacher motivation in Malawi, Kadzamira (2006) argues that teachers were demotivated to improve their teaching practices because their basic minimum needs, for food, housing and transportation were not met. Moreover, in a study on accountability policies among teachers in Indonesia, Broekman (2013) found that money was an ineffective extrinsic motivator in isolation of other working conditions.

Several other authors examined teacher motivation within a general extrinsic and intrinsic motivation framework. The economics-based theory of extrinsic motivation assumes that people respond to external incentives, such as money, in order to be motivated to fulfill their job responsibilities. The more psychology-based theory of intrinsic motivation assumes that people are rewarded by the feedback they receive from their work. Intrinsically motivated people have both autonomy and self-efficacy and enjoy doing their work without any additional incentive (Firestone, 2014; Alcazar, et al.,2006). These teachers

---

3 There is ample research on teacher motivation in developed countries (Firestone, 2014; Hausman & Goldring, 2001; Richardson, et al., 2013)
enter the profession as they view teaching as a worthwhile and important job and an enriching personal experience (Razzaque, 2013; Topkaya, 2012). Additional studies (Razzaque, 2013; Topkaya, 2012) add a third category of motivation: “altruism”. Teachers with altruistic motives enter and stay in the profession based on their desire to help children grow and succeed.

One last theory of motivation employed in studies of teacher motivation in developing countries is the principal-agent theory. This framework assumes that public school teachers are agents with responsibilities for the delivery of education services. Incentives can induce teachers to put forth efforts to provide good services and restrain from opportunistic behaviors, such as absenteeism (Alcazar et al., 2006). Public school teachers in Peru appear to have few incentives to avoid absenteeism and other minor misconduct as the education system is plagued by corruption, through political connections and bribery. Hence, agency theory can be used to study the effects of various incentives and accountability mechanisms on teacher motivation in developing countries. Thus, there are a variety of conceptual frameworks and theories on occupational motivation on which these empirical studies are based. This study posits that when teachers’ basic needs are met, certain incentives can serve to enhance or hinder teachers’ motivation. Moreover, it will seek to ascertain which theory or theories best explains teacher motivation in the context of Uganda.

Recognizing the various theories of motivation, this research project asks: How do (Ugandan) teachers define “motivation”? One of the key aims of this project is to develop a working definition of teacher motivation that can be later used to devise a tool that can measure teacher motivation in low-income contexts. This project focuses on [primary/secondary] school teachers in [country/context] for several reasons. First, there has been little research, other than small-scale ethnographic studies, conducted in [country/context] on teacher motivation. As such, this study aims to add to education and teacher policy research in [region] specifically and in low-income country context more generally. Likewise, the empirical findings can be compared to the findings from subsequent phases of the same project. Secondly, this research project will contribute empirical data on an understudied topic within teacher motivation: how teachers themselves define “motivation” and the incentives and disincentives that enhance or hinder their motivation.

Methods, Instruments and Analysis
This section provides an example for possible site and participant selection, instruments and analyses. Specifically, this section will use secondary school teachers in Central Uganda as the focal context.

Site: The research project will be conducted in four districts in Central Uganda, selected for their convenience, location and language medium. There are two urban districts: Wakiso and Mubende and two rural districts: Butumbala and Lyantonde. Four or five secondary schools in each of the four districts will be selected using purposive convenience sampling (Maxwell, 2013), based on location to the capital city, Kampala, and where the researcher has contacts established. The schools within the districts were selected using purposive random sampling within a typical case sample of government secondary schools in Uganda in order to include participants-teachers-who are representative of the population (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). The secondary schools in Uganda are English-medium so language will not be an issue for the researcher.

Participants: In this research project, four or five secondary school purposively selected teachers in each of the public/government schools randomly selected in each of the districts will be asked to participate. They will then be observed and interviewed, both individually and as part of a focus group with other teachers in their district. At each school, participants will comprise teachers of a variety of subjects in
order to ensure varied data and validity (Maxwell, 2013) of the findings by reducing the possibility that studying only teachers of a certain subject is not adequately representative of the teaching workforce in Uganda. In addition, one or two head teachers at each of the school sites will be interviewed in greater depth as means of diversifying the data sources (Maxwell, 2013) and provide or more complete picture of teacher motivation in Uganda.

**Techniques:** This research project builds upon the techniques and lessons learned from other related ethnographic studies in the region (Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005; Kadzamira, 2006), and will rely on the following sources of data: 1). Document analysis of the policies that affect teachers in Uganda as well as current issues in education, such as teacher attrition, retention, etc.; 2). Semi-structured interviews with secondary school teachers and head teachers, as well as students, at the selected school sites; 4). Focus groups with a mixture of teachers within each of the district sites, documented through voice recordings and videos, if allowed. Each technique is discussed in greater detail below. The timeline for this study is discussed within each technique. A summary of the timeline is located in Appendix C1.

1. **Document Analysis:** Before initiating the field research, I will critically examine the relevant policies that affect Ugandan teachers. Such policies include pre-service education requirements, teacher training requirements, teacher recruitment and teacher salary policies. In addition, I will explore the teacher issues currently occurring in Uganda, such as teacher attrition and transfer frequency. Lastly, I will situate the policy analysis in a more general overarching review of the current educational issues and conditions in Uganda, and if possible, those conditions in the selected districts. The document analysis is an important component in this project as it will serve as a reference and means of triangulating the findings from the observations, interviews and focus group discussions, and enhancing the trustworthiness (LeCompte & Schensul, 1993) of the results.

2. **Interviews:** I will conduct interviews with 4-5 secondary school teachers and 1-2 head teachers, in addition to 10-15 students at each of the school sites between August and December 2014. Both sets of interviews will be semi-structured and held on-site in an empty classroom or office. With the consent of the participant, I will use a voice recorder to document the interview and jot down occasional notes or striking observations. During the interviews, I will ask the participants to comment on their experiences teaching or overseeing teachers and then proceed to questions regarding their understanding of the term “motivation” and the factors they view as enhancing or inhibiting their motivation. Conducting semi-structured interviews is the best technique to obtain direct responses to each of this study’s three research questions as I will be speaking with the primary data sources: teachers and head teachers.

3. **Focus groups:** Near the end of the project (December 2014) I will randomly assign participant teachers to one of four focus groups in each district. Each focus group will comprise a mixture of teachers from across the district. I will limit focus group discussions to one hour so as not to take too much of participants’ time and allow them to travel back to their village. During the focus group, I will ask participants to talk openly about motivation, the related issues they observe in their schools and how they perceive teacher motivation could be measured. This technique will serve as an additional data source, as well as a means of triangulating my findings from the interviews. I will talk to teachers in groups, asking them the some of the same interview questions in order to determine to what extent they are answering similarly or differently from their one-on-one interview.

**Data Analysis:** During the data collection process, I will regularly examine the data collected thus far and frequently develop etic and emic memos (Maxwell, 2013; Corbin, 2008) that will document my emerging ideas regarding the findings. After each observation, I will write up detailed field notes and brief memos
that reflect on the findings. Upon completion of the data collection (December 2014-February 2015), I will adopt an iterative approach to the data analysis. I will analyze the data with categorizing and contextualizing strategies. After transcribing the interviews and focus group discussions, I will then openly code these and the observation notes, and then categorize the themes. I will search for discrepant data and identify emic and etic categories (Maxwell, 2013).

**Validity:** In order to ensure the validity of the findings, I will apply the following strategies suggested by Maxwell (2013) and LeCompte and Schensul (1993): triangulation, rich data collection, member checks and comparison. I will employ a variety of methods in collection data: document analysis, observations, interviews and focus group discussions. By obtaining rich data from a variety of sources, I will be able to capture details and provide a deeper analysis of my findings. While interviews are the primary data collection technique, each of the other techniques will be used to supplement, confirm or discern discrepancies in the data. Upon collecting data, particularly after the observations, interviews and focus group discussions, I will check in with participants to ensure that I accurately represented their accounts. In addition, as I will be collecting data across four districts, I will be able to compare the findings and further determine if there are any flaws in the study.

**Reflexivity:** The topic of teacher motivation is one that can be critiqued as it is a highly subjective subject and is vulnerable to varied interpretation based on the researcher’s conceptual framework, research questions, techniques and analysis. Nonetheless, I will remain cognizant of my role as a researcher who is temporarily acting as a member of these communities. Likewise, throughout the project’s duration, I will regularly reflect and document my methodological issues and new developments in the answering of my research questions. Furthermore, I have built in validity checks at each phase of the project, as discussed in the previous section.

**Limitations:** This research project is limited in scope as a result of finite funding and a restricted timeframe. Nevertheless, based on the success of the project, it is possible to expand it in scope at a later time. However, the main limitation in this study is the lack of generalizability of the findings. As this project is relatively small and concentrated in one region across four districts of Uganda, the extent to which the findings portray the experiences and accounts of Ugandan teachers is an issue. However, at the end of this study, it is possible to extend the project to another region in the country and collect additional data to be compared to the first set of findings. Secondly, language is another concern as the researcher is only elementarily proficient in Swahili. However, it should not be a major challenge as English is an official language throughout the country.

**Conclusion**
There is mounting concern that teachers in low-income countries are increasingly de-motivated, illustrated by the worsening teacher performance and learning outcomes. As such, it is imperative to determine the extent of teacher motivation, how teachers themselves view and define motivation and the factors that enhance or inhibit their motivation. Given the importance of teacher motivation for student learning outcomes, and considering the high rates of teacher absenteeism, attrition, and a severe teacher shortage (TISSA, 2013), as well as the fact that no research has yet been conducted on the motivation of teachers Uganda, this research aims to add to education and teacher policy research in Sub-Saharan Africa specifically and in low-income country context more generally as well as spotlight a growing a significant issue in education through the developing world

**Appendix C1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Research Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1 2014</td>
<td>Kampala, Uganda</td>
<td>Document analysis; select school sites; recruit 64 or more teachers and 16 or more head teachers to participate in study confirm interview schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15th-25th</td>
<td>School sites</td>
<td>Conduct first set of observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26-28th</td>
<td>Kampala</td>
<td>Write memos on observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1-October 1st</td>
<td>School sites</td>
<td>Conduct interviews with teachers and head teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 5-15th</td>
<td>School sites</td>
<td>Conduct second set of observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20-November 20th</td>
<td>School sites</td>
<td>Conduct interviews with teachers and head teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 25-December 10th</td>
<td>School sites</td>
<td>Conduct final set of observations, Conduct focus group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 15-February 15th</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Data analysis, Write at least 1 article/report, Develop proposal for 2nd phase of study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References


