

## FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHER MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Kedar Prasad Sah

Department of English Education, TU, Thakur Ram Multiple Campus, Birgunj, Nepal  
Email: kedarpsah@gmail.com

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### Abstract

*This article focuses on the level of teacher motivation and the association between teacher motivation and language learning and teaching. It is concluded that teacher motivation is greatly influenced by a number of factors such as low salary, lack of professional exposure, lack of respect for teaching profession, inadequate teaching environment, unsupportive situation, teacher dissatisfaction and obscure situation. It is suggested that adequate salary is important along with other incentives to create motivation for effective performance of the teachers. The federal government as well as local government should address these issues related to teacher motivation.*

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### Key words

Teacher motivation; professional exposures; supportive environment; intrinsic factors; extrinsic factors

### Introduction

It is generally believed that motivation influences people's attitude and performance at work. Teacher motivation is directly linked to the instructors' desire to take part in the pedagogical process and interest in sharing their knowledge with the students. It determines their involvement or non-involvement in the teaching activities. Teachers put educational philosophy and objective into the knowledge they transfer to their students (Moloi & Bush, 2006).

Teachers are the main source of language

learning particularly in the context of Nepal where the classrooms have not been well equipped yet with modern technologies. Therefore, teacher motivation is of utmost importance in ensuring that the time spent in school is beneficial to students. Improving the motivation and incentives of teachers greatly improves the overall quality of education system.

A renewed research interest in teachers' motivation to teach and to remain teaching in the past decade has highlighted possible causes of the existing and potential teacher shortages as early teacher attrition, teaching

force ageing, imbalance of high demand with less reward, limited career opportunities, less job security and low prestige (Kocabas, 2009).

Improving the motivation and status of teachers generally improves teaching. Research suggests that students learn more in classroom with highly dedicated and motivated teachers. Raising the motivation and status of teachers as well as retaining high quality teachers is therefore vital to improving overall education. In situations where the home and school environments do not provide the atmosphere and features that spur and support the gratification of curiosity and inquisitiveness, students may attend school without being able to exploit opportunities available for learning to the maximum without teacher support. In many education systems, student learning suffers due to difficulties attracting high quality teachers, limited motivation for teachers to perform their jobs well and teacher attrition though well intentioned, some educational policies and programs actually undermine teacher motivation. Education planners therefore carefully consider the impact of their decisions on teachers and their motivation to teach. Exemplary teachers are highly motivated to teach all of their students as much as possible. However, a variety of intrinsic factors (such as loving the teaching profession, enjoying children and extrinsic factors such as salary, further education influence teachers' motivation levels.

In Nepal teachers roles have been considered very significant from past to present. There is direct relation between teacher motivation and students performance. The more the teachers are motivated the more we can achieve in and outside the classroom. However, the output in our context is not so satisfactory. There are a number of factors that affect teacher motivation in our context. The low salary, but for the society, irregular payment and delayed promotion are some of the major factors due to which our teachers are less motivated. Likewise the trainings, seminars are limited

for unlimited teachers. Very few of them get chance to participate in the programs for their professional development.

Extrinsically driven teacher motivation aims to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed to bringing out their best in their places of work (Ofoegbu, 2004). Monetary reward is a major means of increasing worker motivation. The poor pay is the bane of the teaching profession in many situations. Similarly overcrowded classrooms, poor supply of teaching and learning materials, not well furnished buildings and too many teaching conditions affects teachers' motivation. (UNESCO, 2006).

## Results and discussion

The factors affecting teacher motivation in language teaching and learning are based on observation and interaction with stakeholders of various schools located in Bara and Parsa districts. The results and discussion have been presented under the following heads:

### *Teacher salary in our places*

In many countries some teachers do not earn enough to live above the poverty line. This low salary influences the motivation of teachers, who often turn to private tutoring or other part time work to supplement their income which can negatively affect classroom performance. It was observed that the teachers of these districts are less motivated towards teaching. The cases are same with private or government aided teachers. For most, this profession is just a time pass as there are no attractive incentives in this profession. Time and again it is heard that teachers have not received their wages for many months and it is not sure when they are going to receive. This not only creates problems to his /her family but also we can see its impact in the classroom. Furthermore, he becomes butt for the whole society. Now the government has given authority to local body for the payment of their salary. The teachers claim they are not

comfortable with novice representative since their understanding do not match. There are back dues. The situation has turned very embarrassing due to complex payment system at the local level.

### ***Professional exposures***

Another factor that affects teacher motivation is training exposure. Trainings provided to teachers are of short period and not for the majority in Nepal. The government has allocated a considerable amount of budget for updating the professional skills of fresher and school teachers but in practice the result is disappointing because it has just become ritual.

The trainings here in Nepal are not exclusive. It seems as if the trainers and trainees attend them for mere formality. Whatever they are taught, they rarely use since they do not get support from the administration. Monitoring system is very fragile because the system has shifted the authority of DEO more or less to local authority.

### ***Status of teaching profession***

Ideally teaching is a high profile profession and it has spiritual values of imparting life values to learners. In past this profession commanded much respect when teaching was regarded just as mission and there was the conception of Gurukul. However; with the passage of time, there is a drastic and frustrating change in the total concept of teaching and learning. Now everything is judged on income level and because this profession is low paid and the perception of the society to teachers has changed. So there has been a gradual decline in motivation of teachers.

In some countries teaching is considered a last option for graduates who need work or do not perform well on national exams. In Nepal, it is also not considered so prestigious job. It is therefore helpful to increase the status of the teaching profession and the perceived value

of teachers by investing in improving the conditions and realities of the profession.

### ***Teaching environment***

The professional condition of teaching also influences teacher motivation and attrition. Heavy workloads, large class sizes, and noisy environment can significantly demoralize teachers. With the new trend in teaching learning, there is need to reduce the classroom size as well as the classroom should also be equipped with modern technologies. Now the education without technology is almost outdated. Unfortunately, it is not possible right now to cut the size of the students and equip every classroom with modern teaching aids due to various factors for instance ;the poor infrastructure of school building, lack of policies ,lack of coordination between state and federal government.

### ***Supportive condition***

A supportive environment as well as positive relationship within the community can reduce the pressure and improve teachers' motivation and effectiveness. People in the community have to remain conscious so that they can realize that their own schools and colleges are working in their interest as they are educating their children. It was observed that a sense of collective enterprise regarding their concern and contributions to institutions need to be developed.

### ***Teacher satisfaction***

Most of the teachers are not motivated to this profession as their family necessities are not fulfilled. In Nepal, this is one of the major factors for changing teaching profession. Sincerely speaking, the income level of school teachers does not meet the basic necessities of the teachers and their families; they live in financial stress and scarcity which causes less motivation in classroom.

### **Obscure situation**

The present constitution of Nepal has entrusted the basic and secondary education to the local government. However, it is observed that the newly elected local bodies are not fully familiar with their rights and duties regarding implementation and monitoring of school education. Therefore this situation has created a serious misunderstanding among teachers, local elected bodies and government officers. This confused situation is greatly responsible for teacher motivation.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that teacher motivation is greatly influenced by a number of factors such as low salary, lack of professional exposure, lack of respect for teaching profession, inadequate teaching environment, unsupportive situation, teacher dissatisfaction and obscure situation. It is suggested that adequate salary is important along with other incentives to create motivation for effective performance of the teachers. Unfortunately, several issues related to teacher motivation have been underestimated by federal as well as local government. Nonetheless, to

improve teaching and learning of English in the country, a lot needs to be done to create a supportive environment that will motivate both teachers and learners to work towards achieving desired outcome; bearing in the mind that the English language is foundation to learning and performing well in all other school subjects.

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