Teacher Motivation: Does It Matter to Primary School Teachers in Their Practice?

Louis Jinot Belle* and Khulputea Savitree Horil

1 Academic Affairs Division, Open University of Mauritius, Mauritius.
2 Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Mauritius.

Authors’ contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author HKS designed the study, performed the statistical analysis and wrote the protocol. Author BLJ wrote the first draft of the manuscript, managed the analyses of the study. Both authors managed the literature searches, as well as read and approved the final manuscript.

ABSTRACT

Motivation is a fundamental concept of professionalism and efficacy for teachers. The present study investigated the motivational factors that affect the performance of primary school teachers in Mauritius. Governments have in the past come up with major educational reforms, but many shortcomings of the education system have influenced teacher motivation. The empirical data was analysed by using mixed methods with a semi-structured questionnaire and interviews from practising teachers to allow the researcher to draw valid conclusions. The purposive and convenient sampling was used for the case study research design. The findings indicated that the motivation of teachers was influenced by several aspects of their job. Teachers were not motivated due to excessive parental involvement, a lack of discipline of pupils inside and outside the classroom, unwilling learners and poor working conditions. However, most of them were more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated. It was also found that the Ministry of Education had a significant influence on their motivation, especially in the context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education reform. The researcher recommended that teaching materials and further teacher training should be provided to teachers and the management staff should be trained in using effective leadership and management of schools.

*Corresponding author: Email: l.belle@open.ac.mu;
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1. INTRODUCTION

It is imperative that a culture of achievement is created in the education system. There should be a meaningful and process-oriented change in it in order to achieve it. According to the Ministry of Education of Mauritius, this requires teachers to be very devoted, accountable and professional in an attempt to create a conducive teaching and learning environment based on the learning outcomes to be achieved by learners [1]. Though the government provides free education and technological facilities to all primary school pupils, yet 20% of them fail the primary education examinations [2]. The Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) was replaced by the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC), in order to change the philosophy of education from the instrumental perspective to the holistic perspective of education. In the 2018/2019 annual budget, the Prime Minister earmarked 183 million rupees for the purchase of equipment for the early digital learning programme to facilitate the use of tablets in the lower primary classes of the 274 primary schools of the country. Much effort has been made by the government to come up with policies to increase the academic performance of primary school pupils. However, despite these financial efforts, the pass rate at the PSAC examinations in 2019 dropped from 75.19% to 73.86%, compared to 2018 [2]. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources (2008), these public funds must be transformed into positive academic results from the pupils. However, Belle [3] stipulated that a failure of an average of 30 to 40 per cent at the primary level examinations may be ascribed to the teachers’ level of motivation. Besides, Seebaluck and Seegum [4] stated that when teachers are motivated and satisfied with high morale in their profession, the pupils will achieve better academically.

With several years of teaching in primary schools, the researchers often ask questions about how teachers in government primary schools cope with the demands of the job. They have observed teachers with varying levels of motivation due to job-related factors. Much research has been done within teaching and teacher training areas. The focus of research is more on pupil motivation and they do not consider the fact that teachers play a vital role in the academic success of primary school children [5]. The latter wanted to have an insight into the teachers’ points of view on factors that influence their motivation. Furthermore, the researchers had always been intrigued about the extensive researches done in public secondary schools but very few about Mauritian primary schools. Indeed, [4] ascertained that though many studies have been carried out on teacher motivation worldwide, there is hardly any study carried out on the topic in the Mauritian context of primary education. Finally, the researchers aimed at finding out whether motivation is important for the performance of teachers in the primary education.

Motivation is defined as “the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something” [6]. Barnes [7] added that it is the “degree of energy and commitment with which a person performs his/her task”. There are three types of motivation: extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and amotivation. When a teacher is intrinsically motivated he/she appears curious and feels the pleasure in doing a particular activity [8,9]. Besides, Van den Berghe et al. [10] added that such a teacher shows behaviours that are simply curiosity, willingness or for his/her personal interests. On the other hand, a teacher is extrinsically motivated when he/she does an activity not for the sake of doing it but rather for its outcomes such as public praise and extrinsic rewards [11]. Other factors such as the physical infrastructure of the school, educational policies and reforms, the workload, conditions of work including security at work, the facilities offered to teach and fringe benefits were found to be factors that motivate public secondary school teachers in the Flacq district of Mauritius [3]. Amotivation occurs when the individual does not give any importance to a particular activity nor does he/she looks forward to the expected outcomes [12]. Amotivation also refers to a lack of motivation or the intention to act professionally [13]. In fact, it occurs when teachers think they are unprofessional or their teaching behaviours are insignificant.

An overview of the theories of motivation would provide the reader with insights into the factors that may affect the teacher’s motivation in primary schools. The Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory of Motivation classifies the human needs in a hierarchy which is the driving force that urges individuals to join an organisation, stay in it and contribute towards the organisational...
goals. The needs at each level of the hierarchy need to be satisfied to some extent prior to satisfying the needs at the next level. They are the biological and physiological needs (water, food, shelter, rest, clothes and warmth); safety and security needs (job security, safety and health facilities and a guaranteed teaching salary [14]); belongingness and social needs (love, acceptance, interaction, friendship, and socialisation, good interpersonal relationships between colleagues and administration [15]); esteem and ego needs (self-respect and respect for others, prestige, recognition, success, appreciation, job-title, status and approval from others); and self-actualisation needs (realising one’s potential and worth). Besides, Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory characterises motivational factors into motivators or satisfiers and hygiene or dissatisfiers. The former are factors that drive the individual to do his/her task well. Such factors are recognition, praise, reward, the work itself, feedback, and opportunities for professional growth and achievement. On the other hand, dissatisfiers are the extrinsic elements of the job, namely job security, status, salary, working conditions, interpersonal relationships and organisational policies, practices and procedures. The Porter and Lawler’s Expectancy Theory propounded that, prior to providing his/her efforts into teaching, he/she must evaluate the value of the rewards (valence), the probability that the efforts provided will achieve results (expectancy), and that the effort provided will achieve the performance required (instrumentality). It is likely that the higher the three variables of the Expectancy theory are, the higher the level of the teacher motivation will be in primary schools. Moreover, Adam’s Equity Theory of Motivation focuses on the concept of fairness as perceived by the individual. It examines the propensity of the latter to compare the fairness of what the work requires him/her to perform (input) with what he/she earns in exchange of the efforts provided (output). So, the individual expects equity between his input and output as well as in relation to his/her colleagues. These theories of motivation contribute towards a better understanding of the primary school teacher’s behaviour and attitudes towards his/her role in achieving the core mission of the school – effective teaching and learning.

An empirical review of the literature on the study of teacher motivation would deepen the knowledge of the findings from previous studies. It critically analyses the factors that influence teacher motivation. When teachers get the opportunity for lifelong learning to develop their professional competencies, they tend to be more motivated [16]. Indeed, Naas [17] stated that teachers develop a sense of proficiency when they are involved in professional development or training. Due to rapid technological changes, all teachers are lifelong learners of innovative skills and knowledge. A lifelong learner is a person who benefits from formal and informal learning opportunities throughout his/her life [18]. The four pillars of lifelong learning of Delor’s (1996), namely learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and with others, and learning to be, constitute the motivational drive of teachers. Smit, Cronje and Brevis [19] asserted that as a teacher gains professional experience as lifelong learners, their motivation to learn is internal or intrinsic motivation.

The working conditions of teachers impact on the quality of teaching [20]. Indeed, the motivation, capacity and work conditions of teachers are linked to their performance [21]. In the study carried out in Mauritius, Belle [3] found that poor physical working conditions, like ramshackle classrooms, lack of furniture and broken windows and non-standard teaching resources like a lack of textbooks, overhead projectors, audio-visual aids and computers are all de-motivating factors. Since teachers must have challenges and opportunities to implement innovative strategies and methods in their lessons, they must be provided with job autonomy and teaching aids to ensure effective instruction. Belle [22] pointed out that good classroom conditions are sine qua non for motivating teachers to ensure teaching and learning.

Parent involvement is another motivating factor for educators. There are fewer behavioural problems and lower drop-out rates when parents are partners to teachers [23]. Besides, educators are more motivated when they have maximum parental support in schools [24]. This leads to better pupil performance and higher motivation in educational achievements [25]. According to Grolnick and Slowiacnek [26], when parents’ supportive and positive involvement occurs, pupils develop a sense of connectedness to the school as they feel more valued. As a matter of fact, parent involvement generates its powerful relations which allow the pupils to be more academically successful, and teachers develop a feeling of success, achievement and self-worth. Therefore, teachers become more motivated to teach such learners.

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Teacher empowerment is the genesis of motivation for teachers. It occurs when teachers voluntarily accept request to participate in the planning, organising and implementing processes [22]. This argument is in line with other motivation theorists such as McGregor and Herzberg. Belle [22] stated that when teachers are given the opportunities to get involved in decision-making, they have higher morale, as they are always looking for such opportunities. Mujis and Harris [27] ascertained that such empowerment boosts the self-esteem and work satisfaction of teachers. Consequently, they demonstrate higher levels of performance following a higher level of motivation and retention in the job. In contrast, when teachers are not empowered to voice their professional views and are not involved in making decisions on matters of their concern, they develop low morale [28,3].

Curriculum and educational reforms also influence teacher motivation. Mauritius started with tremendous reforms in the education system, particularly for the primary school education, in 2017, with the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education project. However, no mention is made in terms of teacher motivation in the programme. Callikan [29] stated that the extra coaching that teachers need desperately to be provided by the ministry and the extra resources that they need to find to adapt their teaching methods do not motivate them to be effective in their practice. Canales and Maldonado [30] acknowledged that “educators’ professional development is accepted as the primary factor affecting teacher motivation and, hence, school development and students’ success”. According to the Education and Human Resources Strategy Plan 2008 – 2020 [1], any reform in education needs ‘meaningful, process-oriented change within the education system, which in turn requires a level of professionalism and devotion to teaching that is exemplified in respect for each and every student’s learning capacity’. This is because the implementation of any curriculum is based on the teachers who implement it, and the relevance of the intended reforms to them greatly influences their level of motivation [31].

It is obvious from the foregoing sections that teacher motivation is an important theme that needs to be examined in the context of the educational reforms that are currently taking place in Mauritius. This current study examines whether teacher motivation matters in primary schools in Mauritius and what are the factors that influence it in this specific context. The main research question of the study is:

What are the factors that influence the motivation of primary school teachers in Mauritius?

2. METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted to collect data for this study was the case study due to time constraints and cost involvement. The mixed-method was used because it includes both qualitative and quantitative methods to get the required data that influence the motivational factors of teachers in this research. Qualitative data was collected to triangulate the quantitative data obtained from the study [32].

The study was carried out in two government primary schools. For ethical considerations, the schools were named, School X and School Y. The study population included only teachers, who are the key informants about what factors may influence their level of motivation, based on their daily experiences and social context. The sample was 34 primary school teachers, with 17 teachers from each school. Only those teachers who taught in the different grades that obtained above 75 % in the 2018 PSAC examinations in these two schools were selected for the study. 82% of them were female and 18% were male; 14 teachers possessed a Teachers’ Diploma (Primary), 18 had a Diploma in Education Management and 2 had other qualifications. The age distribution and the length of teaching experience are shown in the diagrams below.

Fig. 1. Age distribution
The non-probability sampling was used because it prevails in the phenomenological qualitative paradigm and focuses on particular cases and in-depth analysis of the specific context. Purposive and convenience sampling was used to collect data about teacher motivation from the selected teachers.

Two instruments of data collection were used, namely the self-administered questionnaire and focus group interviews. The questionnaire had three sections: the bio-data; questions related to the motivational factors; and open-ended questions on other motivational factors and the extent to which the Ministry of Education may influence teacher motivation. The second part of the questionnaire was based on the YES or NO response from the respondents. The focus group interview (FGI) was done with the teachers to have insights into the extent to which motivation matters to them. Six teachers were involved in each FGI. One FGI was carried in each school.

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using the SPSS and qualitative data were transcribed verbatim. The qualitative data analysis was done using the thematic content analysis. Both types of data were used for triangulation purpose in an attempt to make the findings reliable and trustworthy. However, it should be noted that since the study used a small sample, its findings on teacher motivation may not be generalised. They simply give insights into the problem of teacher motivation in the selected government primary schools.

A pilot study was carried out with teachers prior to the actual data collection process in order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. Also, expert validation for the questionnaire was sought for content validity. The questionnaire was finalised based on the pilot study. Using Cronbach’s Alpha, the reliability coefficient was 0.73. This ensured the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Permission was sought and obtained from the Ministry of Education to conduct the study in the government primary schools and the researcher got access to the research setting through the gatekeeper who was the Head Master. A consent form with all the information about the study was given to the respondents and participants who duly gave their approval. The informants were given the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity; that the collected data would be used only for the purpose of this study, and that once the study is completed the data will be discarded, to ensure the privacy of data, following the prevailing Data Protection Act, 2017, in Mauritius.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the survey in Schools X and Y, the teachers provided many motivators and hygienic conditions that affect their professional performance. Various themes emerged from the transcriptions through the thematic content analysis. These themes related to the factors influencing teacher motivations are presented and discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.1 Parent Involvement

From empirical results obtained on parental involvement, 82% of the respondents agreed that parent involvement is a factor that influences their motivation, only 41% agreed that parent involvement is collaborative, positive and supportive. Participant B in Focus Group one (FG1) succinctly pointed out that:

“I share positive relationships with parents and we work collaboratively because the parents support me with teaching materials for the different subjects. For example, for the Mathematics lessons, they bring abacus and measuring scale”.
This finding is supported by Perie and Baker [24] who found that parental support boosts the motivation of teachers in schools. However, some participants pointed out that parent involvement was often like parent interference in their teaching. For instance, Participant D from FG2 complained:

“Parents often rush to the school to enquire about petty things that have nothing to do with the education of the child.”

In the same vein, Participant A of FG2 added:

“If there is too much interference from parents then they become troublesome parents”. Moreover, other participants showed their frustration by associating words like “non-supportive, conflicts and trouble” to parents.

It is obvious that excessive parental involvement, which is more like interference in their profession, demotivates these primary school teachers.

3.2 Working Conditions

The working conditions of educators can significantly influence the teaching quality [20]. Though 41% of participants agreed that the working conditions in their schools make them happy, as supported by Participant F of FG1: “There is a nice team spirit and all of us participate school functions”; yet 59% of the participants agreed that the working conditions at their respective school are below their expectations. In contrast, with Participant F, Participant C of FG1 eagerly complained about the deteriorating working conditions of her school:

“I do not have a proper locker or cupboard in the classroom to keep my teaching materials”. To further explain the statement of the latter, Participant B of FG2 added:

“There is no staff room and not enough toilets for us available though I may understand that the existing toilets are being renovated”.

The findings are consistent with those obtained in a study on secondary school teacher motivation in Mauritius by Belle [3] who found that inadequate working conditions of teachers negatively impact on their self-confidence and sense of professionalism.

3.3 Learners’ Attitudes

(53%) of the participants agreed that the inappropriate behaviour of learners affects the teaching and learning processes. This is quite significant because it represents the level of difficulties that they face in their daily work life with their pupils. The attitudes of the pupils to their learning have an effect on educator motivation. Participant C of FG2 reported:

“Learners show a lack of interest. They are sluggish. They like doing exercises on tablets but when they are required to write, they show laziness to write in their copybook”.

In the same line, Participant E of FG2 unhesitatingly stated:

“There is a high rate of absenteeism among my pupils and they are regularly not punctual”.

Based on the theory of Maslow and from the empirical study, it is obvious that the pupils of the participants did not meet the needs of belongingness to the school. Only when this is met that the pupils will be able to move to the next two levels of needs such as esteem and ego needs and self-actualisation needs in order to have educational achievements. Indeed, the teachers gave much importance to the attitudes of their pupils as succinctly stated by Participant D of FG1:

“For me, the pupils’ performance is very important and I am very happy and I feel satisfied when I get good responses from my pupils”.

3.4 Pupil Discipline

When the relationships are unhealthy between parents and the child, the teacher and the child are likely to have detrimental relationships, and the child displays a lack of discipline at school [33]. From the empirical results, 47% of the respondents agreed that pupils were indiscipline at school while only (24%) considered having disciplined ones in their classes and the other 29% agreed that other factors than disciplined learners affect their motivation.

Despite the worsening of the problem of a lack of discipline among primary school children, teachers have the professional responsibility to cater to “each and every student’s learning
capacity." [34]. So, teachers must encourage active parental participation in schools so that they may bring a positive sense of efficacy into the low self-esteem pupils. It is only then that the latter manifest more discipline [35].

In a study carried out in Mauritius on learner indiscipline, Belle [36] found that the learner's attitudes to learning and the school were one of the factors that reduce the teacher's motivation to effectively manage their class, which is one of their roles as an educator [37]. The current findings are consistent with the study on learner indiscipline.

Pupil discipline is a public health problem that is becoming a major school problem. The primary school head has an important role to play in the effective management of this indiscipline. It is only when the latter takes a holistic approach to discipline, which is preventive, proactive and positive that pupils will develop self-discipline, and thus teachers will develop a “feel good factor” in doing their core teaching task.

3.5 The Influence of Ministry of Education, Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research (MOEHRTESR) on Teacher Motivation

The Table 1 shows the data obtained from the participants, based on the open-ended question:

List three ways how the MOEHRTESR can help in enhancing your motivation as a teacher?

The suggestions are as follows:

Table 1. The influence of the MOEHRTESR on teacher motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions/Proposals</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Size</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Conditions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Resources</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Allocation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data (2019)

The purpose of the above question was to gather information about what MOEHRTESR should do to boost the motivation of primary school teachers. The findings were from the teachers’ perspectives. 65% of the participants considered it important that the MOEHRTESR should provide them with appropriate professional development and training and teaching resources. The Table 1 showed that they were the two most important factors that would motivate them. The teachers should be trained to be able to meet with the new challenges of the implementation of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education in terms of using tablets and other innovative pedagogies to help the pupils master the 21st-century learning skills. This is consistent with the study of Naas [17] which pointed out that teachers develop a sense of proficiency and efficacy when they are provided with professional development opportunities. With reference to teaching resources, the teachers valued much the availability of appropriate educational kit in terms of recent videos, short movies and interactive games that would facilitate their teaching.

By referring to the working conditions, the teachers referred to a conducive classroom environment, adequate physical infrastructures and the opportunities to have their hard work recognised by all the school stakeholders as important. Boru [21] stated that teacher motivation is linked with teacher performance, which is influenced by the teachers’ capacity to teach and their working conditions. Besides, 35% of the participants considered that they must receive an increase in their salary in order for them to be motivated to meet the new challenges of the reforms. They also linked salary to professional promotion which they considered as an incentive for them to work to the best of their capabilities.

Other ways to enhance teacher motivation within the context of the new educational reforms are reducing the actual class size which is around 35 pupils/class. In the current study, 18% of the participants reported that the teacher-pupil ratio must be 1:20 or fewer than this, in order to motivate them to deliver quality education (one of the Sustainable Development Goals). 12% of the respondents considered that a fair allocation of classes would provide opportunities for all teachers to teach from grade one to grade 6.

3.6 Teaching as a Profession

From the data collected from the teachers, it also became obvious that they are intrinsically
motivated. This is important because all of the above findings are related to extrinsic motivational factors. It was also found that despite the lack of extrinsic motivational factors, primary school teachers are so much intrinsically motivated that they are very resilient to stay in the profession.

94% of the participants were still willing to work as a teacher, with only 6% considered that they would choose another job if they were given the possibility. Hence, most of the participants had the same perspectives of their job as the Latina teachers who refer to teaching as a “noble profession.” Participant B of FG2 succinctly illustrated this sense of professionalism:

“Teaching is a noble profession whereby we can mould heart and heads of children.”

Also, 23% of them expressed their love and passion for the teaching profession. This strong feeling and commitment is shown in the following statement by Participant E of FG1:

“I like teaching because I like to share, impart knowledge and mould pupils’ personality. This job also helps in promoting constant learning in a specific field”.

The Mauritian primary teachers are motivated by several factors similar to teachers in other countries. Foreman [39] found that German elementary teachers showed much love and passion for the nurturing aspects of the teaching profession.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that there are various factors that influence the motivation of primary school teachers. They are demotivated by excessive parent involvement which they consider as parental interference in their teaching job; their pupils’ lack of discipline in terms of absenteeism; their lack of school connectedness; their unwillingness to participate in active learning; and inadequate physical working conditions. However, despite these factors, teachers show much resilience in their professionalism. They have much commitment and passion for their job and they like doing this noble profession. This implies that the intrinsic motivation of teachers outweighs the extrinsic motivation. Yet, their level of motivation is influenced also by the changes that the Ministry of Education, Human Resources, Scientific Research and Tertiary Education, which is their employer, brought to the education system. In the context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education reform, an increase in their salary would boost their desire to make the reform successful in its implementation. The provision for professional development and training that would facilitate them in delivering the lessons with innovative pedagogies would motivate them. Indeed, this would help raise the interests of their pupils in their teaching and thus they will have greater job satisfaction. To help their pupils learn the 21st-century skills that the new reform intends to be inculcated to children, they would be more motivated if they are provided with the necessary teaching resources. Another major influence of the Ministry is a reduction in class size. Teachers are likely to be motivated when they teach in a class of a maximum of twenty pupils.

The findings of this study revealed that teacher motivation matters for the teachers working in primary schools in Mauritius. Their motivation is influenced by a variety of factors that are beyond their intrinsic motivation. But, their intrinsic motivation is so strong that it keeps them teaching with their heart and passion. The external motivational factors matter but they are not as important as intrinsic motivation.

The Ministry of Education, Human Resources, Scientific Research and Tertiary Education must come up with policies in terms of salary increase, in-service training to increase their professional confidence and expertise to align their practice to the requirements of the new educational reforms, and provide them with the necessary teaching materials, resources, technological media and methods. These are the expectations of the teachers and such provisions would enhance their level of motivation to be more dedicated to their profession in the interests of the learners and the nation, as a whole. From this perspective, UNESCO [40] recommends that the site-based professional teacher development, which is done at the school level, but in a sustainable manner; not as it is done in Mauritius with one-off training to inform teachers about the implementation of a particular national reform. School-based issues related to the reform are discussed and solutions to emerging problems are taken in a collegial manner with the teacher community of a particular school cluster or education zone [41].
It has become obvious that the MOEHRSRTE., under the aegis of the government must work in close collaboration with all the other stakeholders in the education section, namely the Catholic Education Authority (Le Service Diocesain de l’Education Catholique), the Mauritius Institute of Education and the Open University of Mauritius, should develop holistic approach to creating a positive image of the teaching profession by reviewing the working conditions of primary school teachers in Mauritius. It is high time that the Teacher Council, as per the Nine Year Basic Continuous Education reform be set up so that a synergy may be develop among all the primary school teachers and the stakeholders in the section to look into innovative ways to boost up their morale. This is important as teacher motivation does have a negative impact of school effectiveness and student academic performance.

It is of utmost importance that the school management develops an effective teacher-parent partnership framework which allows teachers and the parents to work collaboratively. The teachers feel that they are recognised for their professionalism and parents are given the opportunities to actively participate in the school activities as well as in the school’s decision process on matters related to their children’s education. Positive feedback from parents increases the teachers’ feelings of competence in their profession [42]. From the same perspective, a whole-school pupil motivation structure needs to be set up, so that the pupil’s voice and choice are attended to in a positive manner by the school stakeholders. This structure may be part of the learner discipline management cycle, which involves the school head, teachers, social workers, educational psychologists, a public health officer, parents and the school superintendent [36]. Learner empowerment through their participation in school management bodies, organization of school activities and assessment procedures may promote learner leadership that would make learners positive change agents in cases of unwilling learners. This may lead to a more effective culture of learning and teaching in primary schools in Mauritius.

It is also recommended that the school sets up a culture of achievement among the pupils, the teachers and parents. Excessive parent interference in the day-to-day running of the school activities, the negative attitudes of pupils to schooling, and pupil indiscipline are indeed constraints on teacher motivation. Yet, when all the stakeholders of the school community develop a community of practice with the aim of collaborative partnerships to promote the school’s core mission of effective teaching and learning, positive and healthy relationships are maintained and a synergy of aiming to achieve success in education may be attained. Motivation is a psychological problem that may be resolved when the individual gets the moral support to achieve the goals of the person in his/her profession.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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