

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS
APPLY MOTIVATION STRATEGIES TO INSPIRE TEACHERS IN THEIR SCHOOLS.

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List of Acronyms

INSET	In-service training
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SMC	School Management Committee
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGERS APPLY MOTIVATION STRATEGIES TO INSPIRE TEACHERS IN THEIR SCHOOLS.

1 Background

Motivation is a set of psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction and persistence of individual's behaviour towards attaining a goal (Greenberly, J. and Baron, R. A., 2003). In Malawian public schools it is a toll order for school managers who try to improve the motivation of teachers. This is due to the nature of Malawi's public service that does not accord them a means to improve the conditions prevailing on the ground in order to stimulate teachers under their charge (Mitchel, 1982).

There are numerous extenuating circumstances that contribute to the low morale of teachers in Malawi. These include the frequent changes in the curriculum. This happens due to the government's heavy reliance on donor aid. Unfortunately most of the donors attach conditions to their aid for the education sector which most of the time includes changes in the education system. Some of these changes include the revision or change of the curriculum (Fozzard, A. and Simwaka, C., 2002). These changes challenge the teachers' existing practices resulting in periods of temporary destabilization. The problem is made worse by lack of induction training for the teachers implementing the new curriculum (Kayuni, H and Tambulasi, R., 2007). This results in low motivation of teachers because they feel that the new curriculum is forced on them as their input is not taken on board in curriculum change issues. They also develop a feeling of inadequacy as their initial training might not have included the aspects required in the implementation of the new curriculum. This makes them feel unworthy and therefore they put less effort in their work (VSO, 2002).

The pressure that comes from the demand for more teachers in the schools results in the recruitment of untrained and unqualified teachers in order to attain the required staff levels in the schools (Obanya, 1995). The untrained teachers are mostly those who have failed to secure a job in their chosen profession and come to education as the last resort. This situation weakens the morale of those dedicated to the job because they feel that their effort is eroded by the presence of untrained and under qualified teachers in the system. This makes them to lose steam and display a *leisez faire* attitude towards work.

Research has shown that the status of the teaching profession has gone down along with the low salary and working conditions (Kayuni, H and Tambulasi, R., 2007) (VSO, 2002) (Kadzamira E. S., 2006). Poor salaries are a factor that is lowering teacher motivation in Malawi. Teachers are among the least paid civil servants in Malawi (Kayuni, H and Tambulasi, R., 2007). Salaries are a reflection of the beliefs for the worth of a job (Beardwell, I and Holden, L., 2001). Therefore the low salaries make the teaching profession to appear a second grade job. This makes the people in it to lose pride and consider themselves as second rate employees. This makes them to have low self-worth and develop a feeling that their job requires less effort. The problem is made worse by late payment of monthly salaries and in some cases teachers may go for several months without pay. This makes teachers lose interest in their job. The majority just stay there as a waiting place and move on to other jobs when opportunity arises.

Overcrowded/large classes are another factor that leads to low teacher motivation. Teachers are faced with overcrowded classes that are difficult to manage. This leads to teacher burn out and their effort is mostly directed to a few bright students in class; leaving the bulk of

the learners out of productive learning (VSO, 2002). The resultant outcomes are so poor that the end of year evaluation may not bring pride and joy to the teacher.

The head teacher's lack of training in leadership and management is a critical element that contributes to low motivation of teachers in schools. Most school managers are not properly trained in leadership and management skills. This means that their job performance is so poor that the teachers feel their effort is not well supported by those in authority (VSO, 2002).

Most teachers have lost their motivation and dedication to the teaching profession because of lack of proper support in time of need. They feel unsupported in time of trouble. The commonest example is the non-existence of a medical scheme to serve the teachers and their families when they fall sick (GoM, 2001). Since some people consider life as a give-and-take effort they feel they need to put their effort in other aspects of life, such as the spiritual world, leaving their profession as a second rate activity that requires little motivation.

There is inadequate career progression in the teaching profession. Many teachers have been serving on the same position for a very long time without promotion. The situation is like that because there are a few positions for headship or senior teacher. Therefore the majority foresee themselves spending their entire career in the classroom.

There are challenges that teachers are facing when they get opportunities to further their studies. These challenges range from lack of sponsorship from their employer, the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Education. Those who take it upon themselves to pay from their own pocket are forced to go on unpaid leave throughout the

duration of their studies. These elements lower the teacher's morale and thereby leading to low motivation.

Teacher accommodation is yet another factor that affects teacher motivation. There are very few teachers' houses around and as such not all teachers are accommodated in institutional houses. However those that seek private accommodation have to do with poor grade houses as their low salaries are not enough for them to afford decent houses. For those occupying institutional houses the condition is so poor that some teachers opt to rent private accommodation. The institutional houses are in a dilapidated condition that it is not comfortable to live in them. The process of allocating the available institutional houses is not clear in most schools leading to conflicts and hard feelings (VSO, 2002).

There are other factors that influence teachers' poor attitude towards their profession. These include: lack/poor communication between the school management and teachers, ill-treatment of teachers by ministry, division and district officials (VSO, 2002) and teachers being forced to teach subjects they were not trained to teach. These factors make teachers lose interest in their job. Despite the presence of these conditions in the system, teachers are seen working hard providing education to the youth of Malawi.

Unfortunately school managers do not have control over most of these conditions and therefore there is little they can do about them. However as school managers, they are still expected to come up with ways of motivating their members of staff. To what extent are secondary school managers applying motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools?

1.1 Critical Research Question

School managers of public secondary schools in Malawi are responsible for the achievement of goals of the education system in their schools. One of the ways of achieving this goal is through motivating their members of staff. It is a known fact that unmotivated teachers are not committed to their work and as a result their performance is below standard thereby affecting the quality of the education system (Kayuni, H and Tambulasi, R., 2007). Unmotivated teachers make the communities lose their confidence in education. This leads to an increase in school dropout rates and an increase in the number of out of school children. In the long run the literacy levels of the country go down thus affecting the development of the country (VSO, 2002). The research question is therefore that; to what extent are secondary school managers applying motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools?

1.2 Research Questions

- what were the major motivation killers that teachers faced in their schools?
- what strategies were the school managers using to motivate teachers in their school?
- what made the teachers work hard in schools where the school manager was not making an effort to motivate them?

1.3 Purpose Statement

The study aims at exploring the methods school managers employ to motivate teachers under their charge to work hard and achieve better results in their schools? The findings will help inspire other school managers into exploring ways of motivating teachers that would work better in their schools.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was to find out:

- the major motivation killers that teachers faced in their schools.
- strategies were the school managers using to motivate teachers in their school.
- factors that made teachers work hard in schools where the school manager was not making an effort to motivate them.

1.5 Rationale/Statement of Motivation

The research was conceived as a result of the researchers' interest in the topic of motivation. Random interactions with teachers from various schools, who discussed with the researcher on the topic, brought a stark contrast in how the teachers perceive the efforts their school managers put at motivating them. Despite facing similar challenges, some teachers felt that their school managers were making an effort towards motivating them. This influenced the researcher to find out what these school managers were doing in their schools that made teachers feel more motivated compared to teachers in other schools.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study aims at bringing forth the school level motivation strategies public school managers were using to motivate teachers in their school. Research has shown that public school teachers understand the situation they are in. Therefore some effort on the part of the school manager aimed at motivating them would go a long way in making them feel inspired to put more effort into their work than when nothing is done at all (VSO, 2002).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher motivation is the willingness, drive or desire to engage in good teaching (Michaelowa, 2002). It works better where there is availability of the conditions that promote commitment in teachers allowing them to enjoy teaching and fulfil their goals (Tanaka, 2010). Teachers are arguably the most important group of professionals for every nation's future. However it is disturbing to find that many of today's teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs (Beer, J. and Beer, J., 1992).

Public school teachers working in developing countries are poorly motivated. This comes about as a result of poor living and working conditions that leads to low morale and lack of job satisfaction (Bennell, 2004). A lot needs to be done for the teachers to feel actively motivated so that they can put their mind and effort to work.

Studies have shown that improvements in teacher motivation have benefits for student performance (Jordan, 1986). Conversely poor teacher motivation leads to poor student performance. However teacher motivation is a critically ignored factor in all levels of policy choices (Ndawi, 1997). Therefore there is a need to enhance teacher motivation in order to achieve superior student achievement.

2.0 Motivation Theories and their Application to Teachers

There are several theories of motivation that explain different aspects of motivation for employees. For the purposes of this paper I will consider the following theories that appear to be relevant to the situation in developing countries; Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Adams Social Comparison theory.

2.0.1 Maslow's Theory

There are several conditions that prevail in the working conditions of teachers in developing countries that directly relate to Maslow's theory. Maslow's theory proposes five types of needs in motivation; (i) physiological needs, (ii) safety needs, (iii) belonging needs, (iv) esteem needs and (v) self-actualization needs (Maslow A. H., 1954).

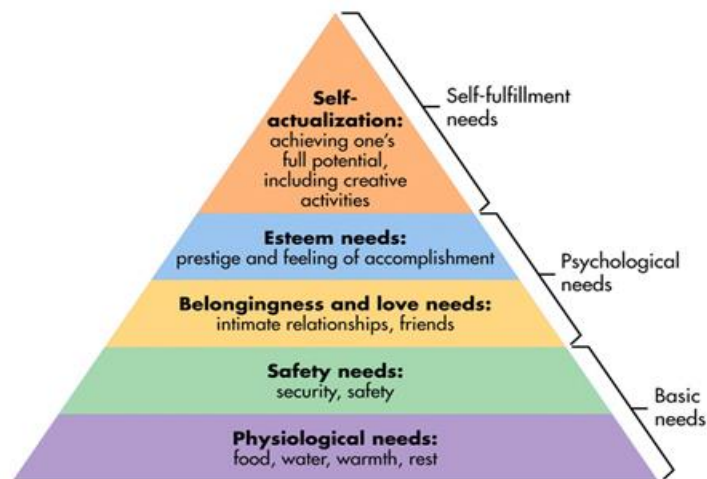


Diagram 1. Maslow Hierarchy of **Needs**

Most of the teachers in developing countries are stuck to the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This is mainly due to poor salaries that make it hard for them to satisfy their basic needs. Thus the teacher's minds are preoccupied with survival (food, accommodation and clothing) giving little room for developing new approaches to teaching and concentrating on student achievement. Until the situation improves to guarantee the availability of those needs the teachers will not move on to the next level of needs, thus giving no space in their psyche to think about and other higher order needs that may directly benefit their jobs.

2.0.2 Adams Social Comparison Theory

Adams Social Comparison theory also applies in a developing country context. Workers compare the inputs and outputs of their job and those of others. When they perceive their work to be over rewarded they tend to work harder to keep the job but if they see that they are under rewarded they may effect fewer inputs or outcomes or leave the work situation all together (Steers, R. and Porter, L. W., 1983).

Several studies have found that compared to people with similar qualifications, teachers get comparatively lower incomes than their counterparts with similar qualification and at the same pay grade in the civil service (Kadzamira E. C., 2003) (Bennel, P. and Ntagaramba, J., 2008). This makes teachers to withdraw their efforts because they feel that their efforts are not being properly rewarded.

Those that upgrade their qualifications face uncertain future. It takes a very long time for the salaries of teachers that have upgraded their qualifications to have their salaries adjusted to match their new qualifications. When they do get their salaries upgraded it takes ages for the arrears to be paid (The Daily Times , 2005). However civil servants in other government departments never face these challenges.

Teacher's low motivation is shown by the deteriorating standards of professional conduct. This is manifested in the rising cases of misbehaviour in and out of work. Absenteeism is a regular occurrence and there is low time on task that is also dropping by the day. The teachers have developed a go-slow system called "work-as-you-earn" that has heavy reliance on teacher centered practices (World Bank, 2004). The overall result is poor performance of learners and consequently the entire education system.

2.1 Categories of Factors that Influence Teacher Motivation

2.1.1 Workload Challenges.

There are challenges relating to the amount of duties teachers are expected to perform on daily basis or are part of their responsibility as required from time to time. These workload challenges include: large classes, double shifting and extracurricular activities.

These other extra activities add to the teacher workloads but are at times are not paid for. This is compounded by the fact that whenever there are other extra responsibilities (census data collection, election monitoring) which may have remuneration attached, the activities are given to other civil servants and teachers are not involved (Guajardo, 2011).

Extracurricular activities take most of the teacher's energy, time and resources. These mostly fall on holidays, weekends or after school hours. Activities in this category include monitoring learners on sports outings or educational visits, supervising study sessions, escorting sick learners to get medical attention and many others. These are mostly done during the time when the teacher was supposed to be free to rest and be with his/her family. If no adequate compensation is offered to the teacher he/she may feel low and lose the motivation to do his work adequately. The situation is worsened by the fact that other civil servants get allowances whenever they perform similar functions in other government departments.

Double shifting, that came as a solution to the increased demand for secondary education where the number of students outnumbers the available infrastructure and resources, has taken its toll on teachers. A study conducted by Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K. (2007) found that double shifting and its associated workload was cited as one of the reasons that

make teachers resistant to apply new (learner centered) methods (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007).

2.1.2 Remuneration and Incentives.

In most developing countries teacher's salaries are too low (the teachers' pay does not cover basic household survival needs and allow teachers enjoy a reasonable standard of living) and irregularly paid. This lack of a living wage undermines the fulfilment of basic needs teachers require before they can focus on improving their work (Maslow A. H., 1954). Teachers, who do not have enough money to live on, often resort to secondary employment/income generating activities. This undermines the teacher's motivation to perform in their primary job as they have divided attention (UNESCO, 2010).

Unlike salaries in other government sectors, in developing countries, teacher's salaries are described as low because there are virtually no alternative ways of getting extra money to supplement the salary (Kadzamira E. S., Teacher Motivation and Incentives in Malawi, 2006) (Moleni, C. and Ndalama, L., 2004). To counter this predicament, teachers organize the school time table in such a way that they have freedom to generate additional income by engaging in extra income generating activities (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). However these extra income generating activities distract the teachers from their main job and reduce the teacher's time on task at their primary workplaces (Guajardo, 2011).

2.1.3 Salary Administration.

Salary administration is poor in most developing countries. This is mostly evident in late or non-payment of salaries (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). It takes too long for

newly recruited teachers to be put on payroll or to effect salary changes when teachers have been promoted or have upgraded their qualifications. It takes too long for the ministry to pay the arrears and in most cases the payment is not done at all (The Daily Times , 2005).

In their study, Bennel and Akyeampong (2007) found out that salary structures in developing countries are often flat with small increments awarded on basis of seniority or experience and with little or no link to actual job performance (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). Most of the time an average of 10% increase is effected in an economy with inflation hovering above 30%. Teachers as well, as other civil servants, virtually see their purchasing power drain away and they fail to take care of their families even after a salary increment.

Overly tight fiscal management policies also make teachers feel neglected (Mpokosa, C. and Ndaruhutse, S. , 2008). It's not uncommon to find teachers going to loan sharks (unlicensed individuals who loan out money to those in need at exorbitant interest rates) whenever they have an emergency. This is because the financial system has no allocation for salary advances for emergencies. This coupled by the fact that their salaries are not high enough to make savings for a rainy day makes teachers vulnerable to debt.

2.1.4 Recognition and Prestige.

Social respect for teachers has fallen in countries Such as Malawi, Uganda, Egypt, Ethiopia and Mozambique just to mention a few (Guajardo, 2011). Most people including students have no respect for teachers. This is mainly linked to the income teachers get in relation to other jobs. It is not surprising to find teachers renting houses that belong to drivers, clerks, messengers, people who hold inferior qualifications compared to teachers but earn more

than the highly qualified teachers. It is not uncommon to find teachers being turned back from money lending institutions having been disqualified from accessing financial services (especially loans) because they are working as teachers. All these situations make teachers feel belittled and their work unappreciated.

2.1.5 Accountability.

The administrative element of the education system in most developing countries has been reduced in terms of staff levels and resources (Fozzard, A. and Simwaka, C., 2002). Due to the low staff levels little is being done administratively to make teachers accountable (Guajardo, 2011). For example Inspections are not regular as required. Most of the time teachers are inspected only when there is a situation that has captured the attention of the authorities or a crisis that needs to be resolved.

Most public education systems have decentralised administrative roles to the school head teachers. However the powers of the head teacher do not extend to disciplining teachers. The head has to refer all cases of indiscipline to higher authorities (Kadzamira, E. and Rose, P., 2001). The process takes very long and when the response comes the undisciplined teacher just gets a slap on the wrist.

2.1.6 Career Development.

Teachers have a strong sense of equality and become de-motivated when they see that other teachers receive what they perceive to be special treatment (Ramachandran, V. and Pal, M., 2005). Teachers prefer meritocratic promotion, deployment and pay, but instead politics and patronage networks usually dominate and thus undercut teacher motivation (VSO, 2005). It is not uncommon to see teachers who have relations at the ministry/district

headquarters or those with political connections get promoted while other hard working ones are passed over.

In Malawi eligibility for promotion is after 3 years of service but practically, teachers serve for 10 years or more at the same grade before they are considered for promotion (Malawi Government, 2007). However others serve their entire career at one pay grade. Since the criteria for promoting teachers is based primarily on qualifications and years of service, both good and bad teachers are promoted together. This undermines the motivation of the hard working and dedicated teachers who perceive the system to be equally rewarding hard work and failure (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). This situation gives teachers the assumption that no matter how small the effort applied may be, promotion will still come their way.

Most teachers see their work in the classroom as a stepping stone and a desire to move on to school administration or another profession. However the current system provides few opportunities for advancement either within or outside the classroom (Fanfani, 2004). Therefore in order to improve teacher motivation there is a need for a more attractive career structure that offers more opportunities for promotions and career advancement (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). There is need to develop proper promotion modalities in order to have promotions based on merit and the system should accommodate as many deserving candidates as possible (Selemani-Meke, 2013).

2.1.7 Instructional Environment.

Teachers face unclear, constantly changing policies (Guajardo, 2011). In fact policy changes in the education system are so frequent to the extent that people feel there is no

policy at all. This is so because policies are changed even before people get familiar with them. Some commentators feel that the education sector is considered as the testing ground for policies before they are rolled out in the other sectors of the civil service (Kadzamira E. C., 2003).

With the growing numbers of students, teachers are increasingly confronted with increasing hours of work, larger class sizes, more classes to teach, and constantly changing curricula. These are the factors that are considered to be major de-motivators for teachers in developing countries (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). Most curricular changes are initiated by developing countries as conditions for receiving aid from foreign donors. Despite protests from teachers, governments still went ahead to implement them thereby frustrating most of their teachers. To add on to the teacher's misery, they are given low quality training (or no training at all) when asked to teach new subjects or use new methods of teaching (Ramachandran, V. and Pal, M., 2005).

2.1.8 Voice.

Teachers rarely have an opportunity for input into school management and ministry policy (Guajardo, 2011). Teachers often operate in very hierarchical and authoritarian systems with limited opportunities for participation and delegation of responsibility (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). Despite the pivotal nature of teacher's contribution to education, there is a tendency on the part of national and international policy-makers to by-pass teachers in decision-making and to neglect their needs when considering new policy directions (VSO., 2002). A clear example is the new policy of the Ministry of education to stop teachers from going for further studies (The Nation, 2013). The release of this circular frustrated most teachers mostly those who harboured the desire to upgrade their

qualifications. Going for further studies is the only sure way of improving teacher earnings in the absence of a clear promotion policy/schedule. Teachers were neither consulted on how to proceed with the no study leave policy nor given a warning/grace period in order to get their issues in order before the policy was implemented.

Teachers are often seen as passive implementers or technical inputs rather than partners in reform (Guajardo, 2011). Teacher's perspectives and needs are rarely considered in education policy making and project design. Contemporary reforms in education tend to ignore the role of teachers thereby challenging the teacher's existing practices thus leading to periods of temporary destabilization, increasing teacher's workload on top of not paying attention to teacher's identities (Day, 2002). Implementation of such policy changes forces teachers to leave the profession as they feel they are being overburdened with work with no preparation for it. This situation is more evident in Malawi with the implementation of the new primary education system locally known as Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform (PCAR) (Nyasatimes, 2013)

2.1.9 Learning Materials and Facilities.

Work and living conditions of teachers are poor. Most schools lack basic amenities such as piped water, electricity, staffrooms, toilets and few teaching and learning resources (Bennell, P. and Akyeampong, K., 2007). It is not uncommon to find a school where teachers have to sit on classroom veranda or under a tree to prepare for lessons and mark learner's work. The situation gets worse when the weather is cold/hot or when it rains.

A small number of textbooks and other learning materials are spread thin over many students and physical infrastructure may be poorly maintained (Michaelowa, 2002). It is

de-motivating to face the fact that the school syllabus in Malawi assumes that teachers have access to teaching and learning resources when in reality such materials are scarce (VSO, ND). The alternative is to use personal resources to procure the materials, a prospect that is not easy to implement in the face of low income.

Sanitary facilities, water and electricity are also important for teacher motivation (Ramachandran, V. and Pal, M., 2005). Female teachers are regularly absent in schools where running water is not available. Some lessons that require equipment that need electricity to function have to be cancelled or postponed until the facility (electricity) is available. Science lessons that require laboratory practical sessions are often cancelled due to lack of chemicals and other resources. In some situations instead of practical sessions, the teacher has to make do with theory. These conditions make teachers feel they are not maximising their potential.

There are few teachers' houses in the schools. Teachers who live away from school have to travel long distances spending the little money they earn as salaries on bus or bicycle fare (Selemani-Meke, 2013). The unreliable public transport system means that the teachers often arrive late for classes and are often tired and shaken to the extent that classes may need to be cancelled or be rescheduled in the afternoon after the normal school session.

Teacher's houses are not enough to accommodate most teachers. Only a third of all the required staff are provided with accommodation. However those who are lucky to occupy institutional houses have to make do with have poor living quarters (Guajardo, 2011). Most teachers' houses are in poor state that those who live in them have to personally make minor repairs in order to ensure a comfortable stay (Oluoch, 2006). Rehabilitating them to

standard condition would go a long way in motivating teachers to stop worrying about their safety and concentrate on improving their lesson delivery and learner performance.

2.1.10 The importance of Teacher Motivation in a School Environment

Teachers are the core of the school and without them the school would not function properly. This makes it imperative for the school manager to keep the teachers motivated so that they can deliver (Lynch, 2012). School managers can use motivation theories to reach out to their teachers. For example the Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be used by a school manager to reach out to teachers under his charge. He/she can satisfy the lower needs of the teachers in order to propel them to the next level in the hierarchy. Thus meeting the teachers basic needs will motivate them to move on to the next level in the hierarchy (Maslow A. H., 1954).

Secondly, the school manager can employ the social cognitive theory in order to reach out to their teachers so they can deliver on the job. Activities such as giving feedback and positive reinforcement to teachers under their charge can go a long way in motivating teachers to work and deliver on their jobs (Bandura, 1989).

Thirdly the school manager can employ the goal setting theory to work together with teachers in setting specific goals the school was to achieve at the end of the academic year (Locke, E. A. & Latham, G.P., 2013). This can go a long way in making sure that there is motivation among teachers because they would set the goals to be achieved according to what they can manage and will always be looking for a way to outdo their previous achievements.

2.1.11 Studies on School based Teacher Motivation

The majority of the studies on teacher motivation look at major issues affecting the education system. Issues such as poor allowances, salaries, availability of teaching and learning resources, condition of school infrastructure, promotions, accommodation for teachers and education administration have all been raised as promoters or killers of teacher motivation. Suggestions for improving these in order for teachers to feel motivated have been comprehensively discussed (Bishay, 1996) (Kadzamira E. S., 2006) (Ololube, 2006) (Selemani-Meke, 2013). However most of these have not looked at the impact of the school manager's motivation strategies on teacher motivation. A lot have been done to deal with the issues that were raised in the studies under discussion, however little has been done to assess the effectiveness of school based teacher motivation.

2.2 Conclusion

Teachers are critical in the smooth functioning of any education system. However the education system in Malawi and other developing countries has developed internal structures that work against teachers. The diagram below shows the relationship between the demotivating factors above and how they conspire to work against teacher motivation.

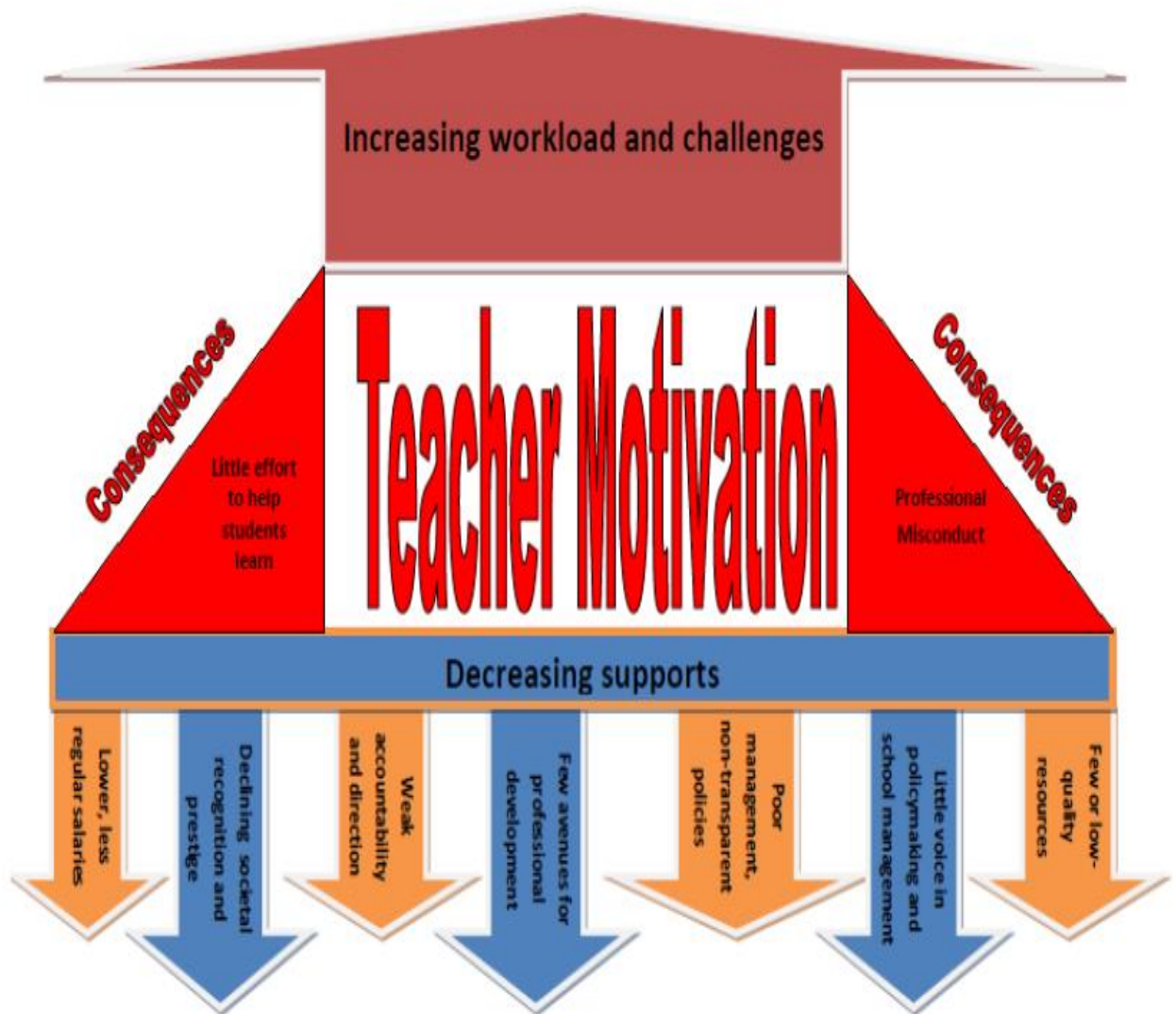


Diagram 2: The Relationship between Teacher Motivation and Increasing Challenges (Guajardo, 2011)

The education system is too big for the national level motivation strategies to have an effect at individual teacher level; school level motivation can offer a viable alternative. Studies have shown that a school manager can improve teacher's morale in his school through his influence on teacher motivation (VSO., 2002). The government has done its part to reach out to teachers with wholesale motivation strategies (Bennel, P. and Ntagaramba, J., 2008).

It is now up to individual school managers to play their role as leaders at school level. This means that the responsibility of motivating teachers beyond the wholesale motivation strategies implemented by the central government lies with the school managers at each individual school. To what extent are the school managers applying motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools?

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0.1 Research Design

The study was a qualitative research which follows a phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen because phenomenological research provided an opportunity to look into the talents/skills of people involved in the motivation process and how they shaped the phenomenon being studied (Sauro, 2015). It also considered the fact that the researcher was a teacher and therefore could not be separated from the presuppositions of the study (Hammersley, 2000). Thirdly Phenomenological approach was flexible by allowing the researcher to use a combination of methods of gathering data (Kruger, 1988). Compared to other research approaches, phenomenological approach was found suitable for the research study (Groenewald, 2004).

There was a lot of literature on teacher motivation in Malawi (Kadzamira E. S., 2006) (Selemani-Meke, 2013). These concentrated on factors that lower teacher motivation in Malawian schools and what the Malawian Government as well as its development partners could do in order to improve the situation. A small gap was identified in the area of school based teacher motivation where an assessment needed to be made to evaluate the motivation strategies employed by school managers to inspire teachers in their school.

Document analysis was also done in order to enrich the data that was collected. These documents included research studies, media publications, journals, online sources and books on the topic. This was done to link the findings of the study with other works that have been carried out in the same field of study as well as discover common patterns.

3.0.2 Research Paradigm

The study will be guided by the transformative paradigm. The transformative paradigm offers a way of addressing injustices in society. It recognises that reality is shaped by social, political, cultural and economic situations that are prevailing in a society. However it concentrates on finding ways to empower those that are powerless so that they can make the most out of their situation (Kelly, L., Burton, S. and Reagan, L., 1994).

In the case of the phenomenon under study, the teachers are “virtually” oppressed by a system that is uncompromising, well established and therefore hard to change overnight. However its oppressive effect can be minimised by the little that is being done by the few school managers in an effort to motivate teachers. If the findings are used, they can go a long way in improving the motivation of teachers in schools where these practices are currently not being implemented. Thus a little transformation/change will occur and a feeling of change will sweep across the system thus improving the motivation of teachers.

Secondly the paradigm encourages an interaction of the researcher and the respondents. This will enable the researcher to unearth the unexplained assumptions the participants have and how these influence their (school managers) actions towards the motivation of the teachers under their charge (Mertens, 2005).

3.0.3 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by transformational leadership theory. The transformational leadership is a style that is exemplified by charisma and shared vision between leaders and followers. The power of transformational leaders comes from their ability to stimulate and inspire others to produce exceptional work (Burns, 2010). Transformational leaders invest in the

development and welfare of their subordinates by taking into account individual needs and desires of their subordinates. This requires the leader to be creative and develop new ways of approaching problems (Lai, 2011).

This leadership characteristic is relevant for this study as it tries to unearth the alternative ways which can be used to improve the motivation of subordinates. The current situation pushes school managers into a tight corner with little possibility of maneuvering. If they could learn from their colleagues and apply their critical intellect they may come up with ways of motivating their teachers. However they need to know the available methods their colleagues are using so they can start from there and come up with ways that are relevant to their school situation.

The aim is to acquire information that will assist the school managers to transform their schools into areas where the teachers are motivated and perform to their utmost abilities.

3.0.4 Research Site, Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The research was conducted in Mzuzu City. The site was chosen because the City has a lot of schools in close proximity and share common characteristics such as teachers' levels of job satisfaction, location and type of schools, availability of and housing conditions, opportunities for further training, workload, student behaviour as well as school quality factors such as availability of teaching and learning resources and relationship with the community (Kadzamira E. S., 2006).

These conditions made it possible for teachers in the schools to share similar experiences that made the assessment of the school manager's performance on teacher motivation much easier by minimizing environmental factors that might have affected the results.

The targeted respondents were secondary school teachers and head teachers (herein referred to as teacher respondents and school managers respectively). The teachers were chosen because they were the targets of the motivation strategies the school managers were implementing. Thus they were considered to be better judges of their school managers' efforts.

The purposive sample was chosen for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to identify participants that were best suited to respond to the questions used to examine the phenomenon being studied (Fraenkel, J. R. and Wallen, N. E., 2003). This study was looking to the extent secondary school managers were applying motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools within Mzuzu City. These included teachers of both; conventional and Community Day Secondary Schools. Malawi has six types of secondary schools. There are grant aided boarding and day schools which are mostly owned and run by Christian missions. Government owned boarding-secondary and day secondary schools, mostly referred to as conventional secondary schools. Community Day Secondary Schools also form the third category of Secondary schools in Malawi. They are owned by either the government or a community of interest. Most of the Community Day Secondary Schools were formally study centers for the Malawi College of Distance Education. Community Day Secondary Schools take on learners that did not qualify for selection into either grant aided or government conventional secondary schools. The last category of secondary schools in Malawi is made up of private secondary schools.

3.0.5 Data Collection Methods and Tools

The first set of data was collected through a semi structured question guide. It was designed to capture trends in the phenomena being studied. The respondents to this interview guide were teachers. The emerging trends were followed up with an interview that targeted school managers so that an in-depth understanding of the emergent phenomena could be obtained.

The interview guides were pilot tested on campus at Mzuzu University on mature entry students. This cohort of students was mostly made up of experienced teachers and school managers that were undergoing an upgrading course to acquire their bachelor of education degree. The pilot test was also aimed at sharpening the researchers interviewing skills at the same time removing the bugs that would affect the quality of the interview guide.

3.0.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected using the interviews was analysed by firstly reading through the notes and answers generated during data collection in order to get a feeling of what was being said. This was aimed at identifying key themes and issues in each text. The stories that emerged were later aggregated and organized with the aid of an analysis map that pointed and connected points emerging from the text (Hycner, 1985).

The Findings according to the emerging topics were probed further in order to draw out the key issues discussed by respondents. Efforts were made in order to avoid bias and distortion of facts provided by respondents. All the relevant responses were collected while those that fell outside the study parameters were highlighted before being discarded. Some quotes from the respondents were included in the text in order to illustrate points. This was

done in such a way that did not compromise the confidentiality of the respondents (Lester, 1999).

Reference points were developed to establish a foundation on which the analysis was to be built. This established the status on which assessment of the level of motivation activities that the study explored. Thus the common elements that are available in all schools were established as a base and the extra efforts that went beyond the common elements were explored further to give an understanding of the extra activities that the school managers were doing to motivate their teachers.

Descriptive statistical procedures were used to come up with the statistical elements that were needed to back up the trends emerging in the data. The statistics were used to flag the frequency of particular themes to give a statistical feel of how the phenomena unfolded in the study.

This method of data analysis method was used to exhaust all the available themes in the data collected and came up with a thorough analysis of the phenomena. The descriptive statistics offered the much needed support for easy understanding of the emergent phenomena that the data produced. These two analysis methods supported each other to bring clarity to the interpretation of the data and consequently the phenomenon under study.

3.0.7 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations are the restrictive or weaknesses that are unavoidable in a research study (Ndengu, 2012).

Seniority of the school managers in relation to the student researcher was a problem. The participants felt that the researcher was inferior to them and therefore decided not to accord the researcher a greater opportunity for interaction. In this study, only 5 out of the seven school managers the researcher approached responded favourably.

3.0.8 Validity, Reliability and Objectivity

Validity is the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences the researcher make based on the data collected. Reliability refers to consistency of these inferences over time, location and circumstances (Fraenkel, J. R. and Wallen, N. E., 2003). The research ensured validity by using a variety of instruments such as a Questionnaire, interviews and document analysis. Triangulation was used to check the validity of the findings. The phenomenon that emerged was discussed and the circumstances surrounding the situation were analysed to unearth the true meaning of the responses.

Other researchers were asked to review the data to check if the findings really reflected what the researcher found out. Personal thoughts, observations and participant reactions were also included in the analysis to find out the deeper meaning of the respondent's responses.

Efforts were made to reduce the element of bias and personal opinion in the analysis of the data. Firstly, the data collected was given to other researchers to review and compared the outcome. The inconsistencies pointed towards the researchers' bias thereby flagging the areas that were at fault. Secondly, the study was done in a city where the conditions were somehow similar reducing the effect of other external factors on the subject being studied.

The study was looking at ways school managers employ to enhance teacher motivation in their schools, any effort from outside their jurisdiction will not be considered. The ones that will be included will only be those that require the head teacher to enact them.

It is expected that the methods presented above will assist in the maintenance of reliability and objectivity in the research.

3.0.9 Ethical Considerations

The research is for academic purposes; however the respondents were individuals with private concerns and a conscience. Their participation was voluntary and the researcher will obtain consent from them to use the information they provided.

Letters of approval to conduct research and identification were obtained from the University to ease the job of obtaining consent from the relevant authorities for the data to be collected. This was mainly from the Education Division Manager and the secondary school head teachers.

The respondent's confidentiality was ensured. The respondents remained anonymous and no names, locations and contact details were disclosed to any third party without the consent of the participant. Efforts were made to reassure the respondents that the study was for academic purposes and their responses were to be handled with as much confidentiality as possible and that the respondents were not to be harmed in any way.

The respondents were given an opportunity to withdraw from the study in an event where they felt uncomfortable to continue being part of the study. They were also allowed to modify or withdraw the part of or the entire contribution if they might decide to do so later on.

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data that was collected during the data collection phase of the study. The analysis placed the findings into the following groups; Attitude towards work, extra responsibilities, challenges and what management was doing to deal with them, incentives that the school management put in place to motivate teachers, How teachers rated school based incentives, and what incentives the teachers would like to have at their school in order to feel motivated.

The groups that looked at attitude towards work and extra responsibilities were used to assess the attitude of the respondents, especially teachers, towards their work. This assisted in setting the mood of the data collection phase by introducing the attitude of the respondent into the interview. It was believed that teachers with a negative attitude towards their work tend to have negative feelings about everything else about their job (Khongola, 2007).

The challenges and what management is doing to deal with them assisted in finding out the nature of the relationship between the possible factors that may erode the teachers' morale and what the school management was doing to alleviate the situation. The theme on incentives that the school management put in place to motivate teachers was placed in the study to offer an in-depth understanding of the initiatives the school management was implementing to motivate teachers and how effective were they in achieving their objective.

Thirdly, expectations were introduced to unearth the deviation between what the teachers expected from their management and what they were actually getting. This was aimed at showing the closeness between the school management and the teachers. In most cases these two populations often were far from each other despite living and working in the same institution (Lutta-Mukebi, 1982).

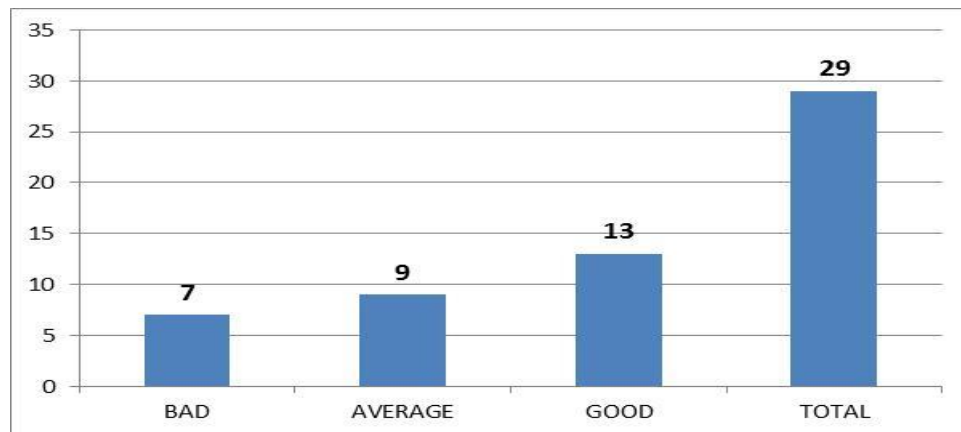
The last group explored the factors that may explain the hardworking spirit of some teachers which did not depend on incentives from the school management. This was intended at assessing whether there was another element that was lacking that need to be explored in order to find out what else could be done to make teachers feel motivated (Wilson, 2013).

The challenge that was encountered during this phase was the provision of responses that were outside the scope of the research. The aim of the study was to find the extent to which school managers apply motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools. However, teacher respondent 24 felt unmotivated because he had served for a long time at the same pay grade without promotion despite improving his qualifications. On the other hand, teacher respondent 22 cited her heavy domestic responsibilities which she said made it difficult for her to deliver at work. These responses were not included in the analysis because they were beyond the power of the school manager and therefore not part of the study.

4.2 Teacher's Responses

4.2.1 Conditions of Service

Table 1 below shows the perception of teacher respondents towards conditions at their school. There is a variance in perceptions with 13 teacher respondents stating that they were good, 9 had an average feeling and 7 teacher respondents felt that the current conditions of service were not good and there was more that had to be done for them to feel comfortable. This meant that the majority of the respondents were contented with their conditions of service and these were not a factor that was eroding teacher motivation.

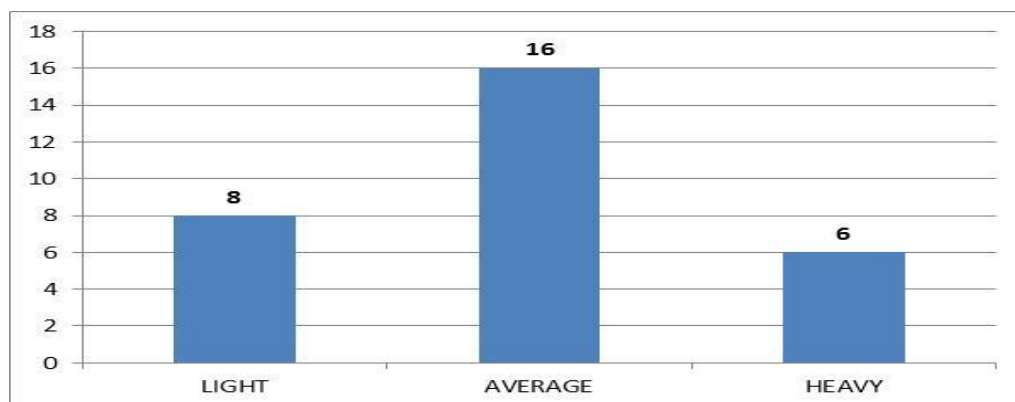


Graph 1: Relationship between Attitude towards Conditions at their school.

4.2.2 Workload

The second area addressed the issue of workloads. As discussed earlier, most of the respondents did not have workload as an issue. This was reflected in the results. Out of 30 respondents on the teaching side, 8 stated that their workload was light, 16 respondents felt

they had an average workload and 6 felt their workload was heavy. This meant that workload was not a major factor that was eroding teacher motivation.



Graph 2. Teachers' attitude towards workload.

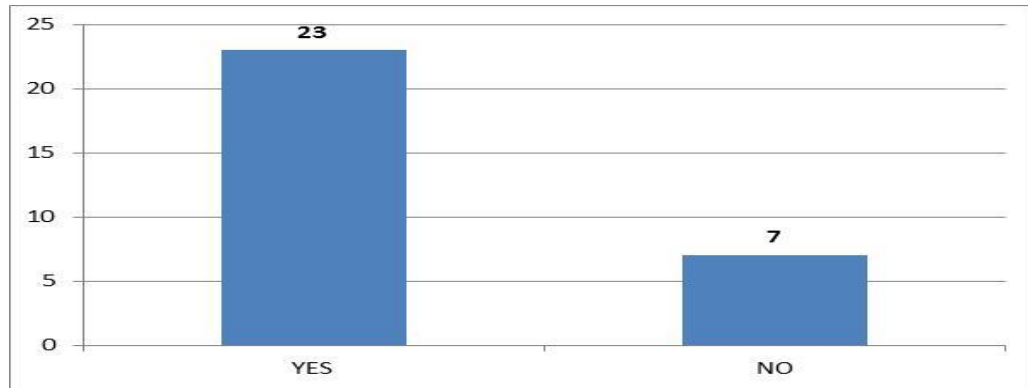
4.2.3 Extra Responsibilities

On the issue of extra responsibilities, 28 teacher respondents stated that they were holding at least one extra responsibility in the school. This meant that the extracurricular responsibilities were not a burden to the respondents. However, the interest in the extra responsibilities was dependent on the rewards associated with the extracurricular activity in question. Thus the more rewarding the position, the happier the person holding the post.

4.2.4 Challenges that Teachers Felt Were Reducing Their Motivation at Work

4.2.4.1 Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources

When discussing the availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to teacher motivation, 23 out of 30 respondents stated the unavailability of teaching and learning resources affected their motivation at work.



Graph 3: Number of teachers attesting to the fact that availability of teaching and learning resources was a major de-motivating factor.

They stated that they were ready to deliver more than their best. However, the unavailability of teaching and learning resources was a setback. 2 teacher respondents who were science teachers deplored being forced to resort to lecture method in practical science lessons. Teacher respondent 9 and 15 stated that: “lack of laboratory materials made [science] practical lessons to be taught theoretically.”

Apart from laboratory equipment, there was an indication of a serious lack of text books for learners to study during their free time. Teacher respondent 9 explained that: “one of the challenges they faced was limited participation of students in class because they did not have access to a library therefore there was no preparation in advance.”

4.2.4.2 Student Discipline

4 teacher respondents explained that they were enthusiastic about their work. However, their good efforts were undermined by poor student discipline. On the overall, they felt that if school managers put some effort into improving the level of student discipline at the school, they would feel motivated to work hard.

4.2.4.3 Quality of the Learners

Some of the schools that were targeted by the study were Community Day Secondary Schools. These schools usually accommodate a crop of students which was left out of Conventional Secondary schools. Teacher respondent 28 who teaches at such a school felt that the “poor crop of students” the school had was a challenge. She explained that it required almost double the effort to make the learners to go through a topic compared to their counterparts in Conventional Secondary schools. This challenge come on the background of the fact that Community Day Secondary Schools were poorly resourced compared to conventional secondary schools (Kadzamira E. S., 2006).

4.2.4.4 State of School Infrastructure

Teacher respondent 18 felt that the school management was not making serious effort to maintain school infrastructure. Most school infrastructure was in a state of disrepair. Class rooms, laboratories, offices and staff houses were in dilapidated state. This made the teachers feel neglected.

4.2.4.5 Teacher’s Perception of Management’s Efforts to Minimize Challenges

28 out of 30 teacher respondents felt that the school manager was making an effort to minimize the challenges the teachers were facing. However teacher respondent 15 stated that “the school manager tries to provide some teaching and learning resources but they did not reach the requirements.” Teacher respondent 9 declared: “every year the school bought some lab equipment from the budget money but still this is not enough.” There was a consensus that even though the school managers were providing the needed teaching and learning resources, the resources provided were not covering the shortage.

Even though the situation looked gloomy teacher respondent 6 showed some appreciation to what the school management was making in an effort to make teaching and learning available. She cited an example of a time when “the school manager requested donations of teaching and learning materials from organizations such as World Vision”. In another school “The school manager encouraged teachers to improvise where necessary and with the little funds available the school management should prioritize urgent problems.” When the situation came to the worst, “the school management borrowed the teaching and learning resources from nearby schools.” All these show that the respondents appreciated the effort the school management was doing in order to alleviate the problem of shortage of teaching and learning resources.

The establishment of a discipline committee a school was an indication of the school management’s attempt to maintain discipline at the school. One respondent explained that: “On discipline, the misbehaved students were brought before the discipline committee.” A functional discipline committee was an indication of an effort in instilling discipline at the school.

Some schools employed a radical method of dealing with high workloads. Teacher respondent 21 explained that his school manager went to the extent of “finding volunteer teachers to assist teaching in order to ease the work load of the available teachers.” Although the approach compromises the quality of education, as most of the volunteers were not qualified teachers, the school manager showed commitment in making sure that the burden the teachers were facing was reduced.

Teacher respondent 29 explained that their school manager engaged the parents, guardians and the surrounding community in initiatives that aimed at “erecting additional classes.” “The school management was trying to increase the amount of development funds and mobilizing well-wishers.” Using this approach allowed one school managed to construct a teacher’s house to ease infrastructural challenges the school was facing.

4.2.5 Evaluation of School Manager’s Efforts from the Teacher’s Perspective

17 respondents felt that the incentives provided by the school manager were encouraging them to work hard. They appreciated what their school managers were doing. The remaining 13 respondents were not so optimistic. Since the study aimed at assessing the impact of school manager’s motivational strategies on teachers, a simple majority showed that there was some motivation taking place. However more needed to be done to reach out to the other half that felt unmotivated by the prevailing strategies.

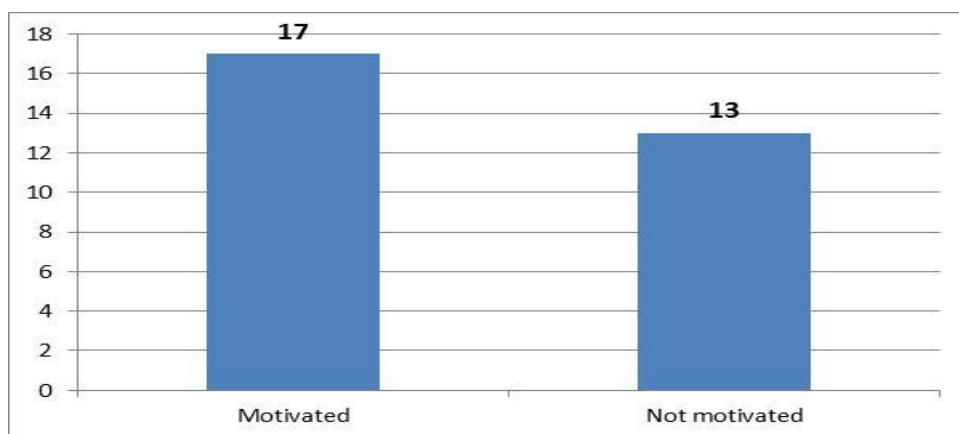


Chart 3: Number of teachers attesting to the fact that they felt motivated by the school manager’s efforts at motivating them

4.2.6 What Makes Teachers Work Hard Despite Facing Numerous Challenges?

The study also wanted to gather data on what makes teachers work hard despite facing numerous challenges. The analysis revealed that some respondents were motivated by money. 4 teacher respondents (30, 3, 4, and 9) indicated that: “teachers work hard to make students pass with credits and distinctions so that at the end of the academic year, they should be rewarded by the school administration.” During the study period most schools offered MK1, 000 (US\$1.50) for every distinction scored at Malawi School Certificate of Education Examination and a MK500 (US\$0.50) for an “A” grade at Junior Certificate Examination.

Other teacher respondents felt encouraged by extrinsic motivation. Teacher respondent 14 stated that in their school as a “requirement to teach in the open [night] school, one should be a hard worker at the day school.” The scenario was such that the school had more teachers than the staff requirement at the night school. This meant that they could not just accommodate everybody. In order to ensure merit in the process of identifying who to teach in the night school, they employed a system of engaging only those who did well in the day school in the previous academic year. Despite its intention to promote merit in relation to how teachers for the night school were selected, the process succeeded in motivating teachers in the day school, making them deliver their best in order to buy themselves a place in the night school.

In some cases social pressure motivated teachers to perform at their best. Respondents personally felt the need to put more effort into their work in order to avoid social backlash. Teacher respondent 22 stated that teachers work hard so that at the end of the academic year, they should not be laughed at for failing students.” Social accountability was actively

being harnessed in this case. Many teachers do not think beyond what they do in class. However if this principle was adopted by the school managers by involving the communities around the school, it would make teachers much more responsible in relation to what they deliver on the job.

Teacher respondent 18 indicated that teachers put more effort in their work as a means to an end. One respondent stated that he was making all the effort in the hope that one day his effort will be recognized by someone senior in the education system and be rewarded with a promotion. Other teachers were motivated by the desire to rise above the rest and “want to make names for themselves and the school as well.”

Teacher respondent 1 stated that he was placed more effort into his work because of the satisfaction he got when his students excel. The success of his students gave him the impetus to work hard.

Teacher respondent 7 stated that she worked hard because she had a desire to assist those in need irrespective of the returns she got from such work. Teacher respondent 17 stated that teachers work hard because they were aiming high or had passion for the job. Some were just committed to teaching because they felt that they were there to help learners. The other group stated that it was compelled to work hard because they were supposedly part of a team which was contributing to the collective cause being pursued by the school as an institution.

The available facilities at the school also increased the effort among teachers. A case in point was the availability of staff houses for the majority of the teachers at the school.

Teachers worked hard in order to avoid being transferred out of the school with available staff houses to schools where staff houses were not available.

Negative reinforcement was also a factor in the respondents' motivation. Teacher respondent 4 explained that fear of the supervisors such as heads of department, the deputy head teacher as well as the head teacher who closely supervised teachers and reminded them of their duties and responsibilities every time they seemed to relax.

4.2.7 Teacher's evaluation of Incentives School Managers Were Providing to Staff

The teachers' perception of the school manager's efforts to motivate them was mixed. There were 10 teacher respondents that appreciated what the school managers were doing and on the other hand there were 7 teacher respondents who saw no value in what the school managers were doing. 13 teacher respondents appreciated the effort the school manager was making to motivate them but still that more had to be done in order for them to be positively moved by the school manager's efforts.

4.2.8 Things Teachers Expected to See Happening in Their School to Feel Motivated

The things respondents indicated as what they would like to see happening at their school in order for them to feel motivated included:

The provision of teaching and learning resources. Each and every teacher respondent expressed the desire for the school manager to try to make available adequate quantities of teaching and learning materials. Apart from quantities, timing was another factor that was considered. There was a tendency for school managers to make teaching and learning resources at a time when they could not make an impact. A good example that teacher

respondent 9 gave was the provision of laboratory consumables a few weeks before national examinations. There simply wasn't enough time to go through 2 years of laboratory activities to prepare students for national examinations.

Teacher respondent 20 indicated lack of complete devolution of power by the school managers as a factor that was eroding the motivation. 28 out of the 30 teacher respondents were holding an extra responsibility apart from teaching. 19 of these respondents felt that their positions were just on paper. They never had real the freedom to make decisions at their level without the consent of the school manager.

Teacher respondent 11 wanted their school to allow children or wards of teachers to be incorporated into the day school. Entry into Malawi Public School was by selection based on performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. While teacher respondent 3 requested for orientation trainings on duties and responsibilities for all teachers who were entrusted with responsibilities as well as allowances for teachers that supervise learners in boarding school after working hours since they work beyond their normal hours.

4.3 School Manager's Efforts to Minimise the Impact of Challenges that Lowered Teacher Motivation

The head teachers of the targeted schools were also engaged in order to assess whether they were making an effort to motivate their members of staff or not. The school m managers' experience in a managerial position ranged from six months to 19 years.

4.3.1 School Manager's Motivational Strategies

The head teachers stated that the motivational strategies they use comprised of financial awards to teachers who produce distinctions in national examinations (Malawi School Certificate of Education and Junior Certificate of Education examination),

School manager 2 extended the provision of monetary incentives to members of staff by recognising individual effort through the attachment of a small allowance to those who offered to invigilate end of term examinations. This was extended to script marking where teachers who completed marking school exam papers as well as those who processed school reports in time were financially rewarded for their effort.

Provision of teaching and learning resources was another way that school managers considered a form of motivation. School managers stated that they were aware of the teacher's frustrations with the lack of adequate teaching and learning resources. Therefore it was felt that making the resources available would accord the teachers an opportunity to deliver their lessons effectively thereby making them feel motivated.

There was also close supervision of teachers. It was felt among the school managers fraternity that close supervision can be an extrinsic motivation that would push the teachers to deliver under the current circumstances.

Apart from the regular strategies listed above, other school manager 2 experimented with a system of allowing teachers to be at the school only when they have classes or work to do. He only required the teachers to be on campus whenever they had classes or other responsibilities to attend to. The arrangement added flexibility to the teaching staff in the school by affording them an opportunity to attend to other things that might benefit their

families or careers. The result of this initiative was in offering teachers an opportunity to deal with their personal issues thereby leaving them fresh and ready to deliver on their job.

School Manager 2 also introduced the practice of lending a listening ear to the members of staff whenever they presented their personal and professional problems. The arrangement allowed teachers to clear their conscience and went to class with a free mind to teach and assist learners without their problems affecting their classroom performance.

School manager 5 practiced being sensitive to the plight of teachers and made efforts to alleviate their suffering. He provided soft loans to teachers in need of financial assistance utilizing night school funds. A night school is a parallel school that utilizes the school infrastructure and resources catering for out of school adults that want to improve their secondary school grades.

School managers 4 and 5 were awarding certificates of merit and verbal appraisal to star performers among the teaching staff. The aim was to acknowledge the good work a particular teacher had done as well as making the other teachers aware of the fact that management was watching and their extra effort was being recognised.

School manager 4 was delegating teachers to represent the school at meetings or events taking outside the school. She felt that this initiative gives the teachers the feeling of ownership and since teachers felt that they owned the school, they worked hard to improve its image.

4.3.2 Results of Motivation Strategies from the School Manager's Perspective

The school managers stated that the motivation strategies they were implementing have resulted in improvements in student performance and discipline as well as a reduction in the number of challenges the school was facing.

They reported that the teachers were displaying more commitment to activities in the school and were enthusiastically applying effort to work with minimal supervision. For example, School manager 3 stated that teachers in his school were arranging make-up and remedial classes to catch up on a backlog of work or in order to assist slow learners their own. Others displayed an improvement in their conduct by meeting deadlines, coming early to work and the cases of teacher absenteeism and excuses from not wanting to perform their duties even complaints had gone down.

4.3.3 Challenges School Managers Were Facing

School manager 1 disclosed that most teachers responded favorably to initiatives that had financial rewards. This placed the school managers in a tough spot because the school budget did not include such monetary awards. On the other hand, inflation which was at 23.8% during the time of the study was eroding the value of the financial awards being offered to teachers thereby requiring a revision upwards in order to maintain their relevance.

School manager 3 expressed frustration with the attitude of some teachers who maintained their lazy attitude despite the efforts made in trying to motivate them. He complained that no matter what the school manager did, the teachers still found a way to be lazy and uncooperative.

4.4 Conclusion

The motivation strategies the school managers were bearing fruit. There was great potential for teacher motivation in the school managers' efforts. The only thing that school managers needed to do was to make the strategies fit the context of their individual school environment.

Secondly most popular strategy that was being used to motivate teachers was the provision of cash for the best grades in the national exams. However inflation which was above 24% at the time of the study was eroding the value of the cash offer. On the other hand the school budget was not covering this budget line. There was a need to for school managers to explore other methods of motivating teachers that did not require money as the center of the strategy.

Lastly, there was need to explore whether the methods being employed by the school managers were acceptable according to the Ministry of Education policies. To what extent could the school managers employ these motivation strategies without going against the Ministry of Education policies and regulations?

5 DISCUSSION

The chapter discusses the research findings. The contentious issues that emerged from the analysis were discussed in line with the research questions that were set to reveal the issues affecting teacher motivation.

5.1 Major Hard Conditions Teachers Faced in The Course of Their Work

5.1.1 Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources

A good school manager needs to be aware of his teacher's needs. In order for teachers to start looking at improving their performance and the schools image there is need for them to satisfy the basic needs first (Maslow A. H., 1954). One of the challenges that emerged from the data was the availability of teaching and learning resources. 23 of the 30 respondents in all the 7 schools in the study stated that unavailability of teaching and learning resources was a challenge that was seriously eroding their motivation at work. This means that the teachers were stuck in their attempt at sourcing teaching and learning materials rather than looking forward to improving student performance. By deduction, making the relevant teaching and learning resources available would liberate teachers and allow them to start focussing on ways to improve students' performance as well as the overall outlook of the school.

Although shortage of teaching and learning resources was common in almost all the schools, the responses that the school managers gave mostly mentioned the provision of stationery as a solution to the teaching and learning resource challenge. There was little or no mention of other resources such as; laboratory equipment and consumables, library stocks and other subject specific visual or practical teaching and learning resources. This

meant that there was a gap between what the school managers referred to as the available teaching and learning resources and what the teachers expected to have. While it may be that there were centrally controlled programs that supported the provision of specialised teaching and learning resources, there was still room for the school managers to manoeuvre in order to satisfy their school specific needs (Airtel, 2015). In essence, the school managers needed to go beyond the conventional means of acquiring teaching and learning resources needed in their school. At the same time they needed to engage their teachers in order to establish what was required at their school. The gap in the expectations and provisions was an indication of the existence of a gap between teachers and school managers. In order for things to go smoothly in the school, school managers and teachers needed to sit together and evaluate the school needs and come up with common school requirements (Locke, E. A. & Latham, G.P., 2013).

One of the ways of making sure that the school had enough teaching and learning resources required the school managers to go out of their comfort zone. Most school managers expected the central government to provide all the requirements their school needed. School managers who were ready to enter the road less travelled and engaged other partners on the education system and beyond had well-resourced schools compared to those that did nothing.

5.1.2 Student Discipline

The issue of student discipline was also raised as a motivation killer among teachers. Much as it may be the responsibility of the school manager to maintain discipline, the responsibility was actually shared. The fact that most school managers made sure that there was a functional discipline committee at the school was an indication that there was an

effort to make sure every teacher was taking up his/her responsibility to maintain discipline.

The discipline committee in a school was made up of teachers who were discipline committee members and the class teacher for the student that had broken school rules was co-opted into the committee whenever disciplinary hearings were being conducted. A higher frequency of the class teacher's presence in the disciplinary hearings was an indicator that he/she was not doing enough to maintain student discipline in his/her class and something had to be done to improve the situation.

However, the school managers needed to make sure the committee was functional and was supporting the committee by implementing the recommendations it made. This relied on the element of shared goals (Locke, E. A. & Latham, G.P., 2013). Any show of division between the school managers and the committee members and indeed the entire teacher population on the discipline front led to the collapse of the system. In a study conducted by S.A. Roberts (2013) in Argentina, it was observed that teachers avoided schools that were having students with discipline issues. This led to low motivation among teachers, who eventually requested to be transferred away from schools with poor student discipline to those that where students discipline was better (Robert, 2013).

5.1.3 State of School Infrastructure

The issue of the state of the school infrastructure also had a bearing on teacher motivation. The image of rundown infrastructure gave a bad impression of the school as well as the teachers working in them. Secondly, it showed disregard of the welfare of the people working at the school. Well maintained infrastructure, though old, was viewed as a source

of motivation to both teachers and students because it satisfied the basic needs of both the teachers and the students thereby leaving them to focus on the education achievements they needed to make (Maslow A. , 1943).

School managers blamed lack of maintenance on insufficient resources that left no funds for maintenance works. Just like the issue of teaching and learning resources, maintenance of infrastructure could be dealt with by an approach that involved all stakeholders rather than just waiting for support from the central government alone. There were cases where stakeholder involvement made resources available for maintenance and general improvement of school infrastructure (Nkhota Kota Secondary School Alumni Association, 2015).

5.2 School Manager's Efforts to Minimise the Impact of the Challenges that Lowered Teacher Motivation

5.2.1 Teacher's Evaluation of the School Manager's Efforts

13 Teacher respondents stated that their school managers were doing something in order to motivate them. The activities that were the school managers were doing included: monetary awards to teachers whose students performed exceptionally in national examinations, paying allowances to teachers as a reward for offering their services school activities that fell outside normal working hours or as a reward for completing some tasks such as marking examination scripts on time. Payment of money in exchange for some services or completing a task on time acted as an incentive that made teachers do their work with enthusiasm (Bandura, 1989). Others experimented with the provision of non-monetary incentives such as offering teachers some flexibility and only require them to be on campus

when they had classes to attend to. Offering a listening ear to teachers' personal problems and offer them comfort.

Although the most popular motivation strategy involved money, other teacher respondents expressed satisfaction with the use of non-monetary incentives. Other teacher respondents felt that they were in the teaching profession as calling not just the need to have a job and make money. Therefore a good school manager needed to recognise that there were those that needed to earn money (existence needs), those that wanted to have a personal challenge and a sense of achievement (relatedness needs), those yearning to get a promotion (growth needs) (Maslow A. , 2015). Thus the teachers expected to be subjected to different forms of motivation depending on their needs. It was therefore imperative for the school manager to identify what motivation strategy was working for each and every teacher. In the final analysis, the school manager needed to work on both financial and non-financial motivation strategies in order for each and every teacher in his/her school to feel motivated.

5.2.2 Evaluation of the Impact of School Managers' Efforts from the Teachers' Perspective

The motivation strategies initiated by various school managers in the study area were not reaching out to all members of staff in the same way. There were 17 teacher respondents who appreciated the school managers' efforts and were responding to them in a favourable way and at the same time there were 13 teacher respondents who still felt that more was needed to be done in order for them to feel motivated.

The first category of these teachers appreciated the fact that the school manager was trying to provide what they needed. The second category felt that the strategies implemented,

though good, were just falling short of their expectations. Even the managers acknowledged the fact that the resources available were not enough and with a little more, they could have done better.

The third category was made up of those whose lack of motivation had nothing to do with the lack of effort the part of the school manager. For example; low and delayed salaries, delayed promotions after improving qualifications, and personal problems were advanced as reasons for lack of motivation. Although these were clearly beyond the terms of reference of the School Manager, the teachers in question failed to appreciate the effort the school manager was making to motivate them.

The fourth group was the one the school managers referred to as “lazy”. This was a group of teachers that was neither interested nor motivated to work. Any effort to motivate them was fruitless. Therefore the school managers did not count on them to improve their performance despite being bombarded with all the available means of motivation.

There were other issues that erode teachers’ motivation remained unresolved by the responses that were the school managers provided. One such issue was transparency on how finances were managed at the school. School managers were not forthcoming with the information on this front. This could be as a result of fears associated with the “Cash gate scandal” the 2013 massive looting of public funds in Malawi (BBC, 2014). So in an effort order to prevent respondents from withdrawing from the study, the issue of financial transparency was not pursued although it had been raised by teacher respondent 24 as one of the factors that affected teachers’ morale at work.

5.3 Factors that Made Teachers Apply Extra Effort despite Facing Numerous Challenges

On another note there were other teachers that stated that their motivation stemmed from other sources other than the school manager's efforts. The first category in this group was made up of teachers that were interested in gaining recognition. They stated that they applied more effort in order to secure a teaching post in the open school. An open school is a parallel school that offers classes to people, mostly adults that would like to upgrade their secondary school grades in order to secure a place in an institution of higher learning or promotions at work. These schools utilize teachers from the main school. Since these open schools required fewer teachers than the number of teachers in the main school, performance in the regular school was used as a method of recruiting teachers to teach in the open school. Selecting star performers acted as a source of extrinsic motivation to the teachers.

The second group in the seeking recognition category was made up of those that were hoping that one day their efforts will be recognised by someone and they will be rewarded with a promotion. They felt that their reward was not in the immediate glory of making students pass but rather in the fact that their success in the classroom will thrust them into the limelight where they will be considered for a promotion.

The second category was made up of teachers who responded to social pressure. They were afraid of being accused by parents and guardians of failing children. The shame that was associated with being accused of this great atrocity motivated teachers in this category to apply more effort to their work. These were mostly those teachers who had integrated themselves into the community surrounding the community and felt that they were part and

parcel of the social fabric. Therefore they shared in everything that affected individual members of the community.

The third category was interested in the satisfaction they would have gotten when their students excel. They are committed to teaching knowing that they were there to help others learn. This was the group that claimed that it was in the teaching profession as a calling. They were there to help other people get a better life and they derived satisfaction in seeing their students excel to great academic heights.

All the school managers needed to do was to integrate these motivation drivers into the other motivation strategies they were implementing at their schools. Not all people are motivated by the same things. A blend of strategies would go a long way in reaching out to all the teachers thus improving the general motivation of teachers in Malawi's public secondary schools.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was looking at the extent secondary school managers were applying motivation strategies to inspire teachers in their schools. It was revealed that 17 out of the 30 teachers that were interviewed felt motivated by the motivational strategies that the school managers were implementing. However, 4 of the 5 school managers that were interviewed stated that they were offering money as their main motivation strategy. Only one school manager experimented with non-monetary incentives to reach out to teachers.

Teachers responded well to monetary incentives. However inflation, which was at 23.7% during the time of the study, was eroding the value of the existing monetary incentives (Malawi Government, 2015). There was a requirement to increase the amounts paid out in order to maintain relevance of the strategy. The situation made the monetary incentives unsustainable especially in the wake shrinking government subvention. It was therefore imperative for the school managers to look for other ways of motivating teachers that did not require money as the central driving force.

Different teachers respond differently to different incentives. Not all teachers were responding favourably to monetary incentives. Other teachers required motivation strategies that belonged to higher order requirements such as a need to overcome a challenge in order to feel a sense of achievement (relatedness needs), or yearning to get promotion (growth needs). Therefore these motivational drivers needed to be promoted along with those that were related to money (existence needs), in order to reach out to all teachers and sustain higher levels of teacher motivation.

Provision of teaching and learning resources needs to be improved. There was a consensus among teacher respondents that the resources provided by school managers were not enough to cover the shortage. The provision the needed teaching and learning resources needs to have a set minimum that school managers should adhere to.

Close supervision, although a form of negative reinforcement can also go a long way in motivating teachers. Teachers responded to this kind of motivation either out of fear or pressure from supervisors such as heads of department, the deputy head teacher as well as the head teacher. A well balanced and consistent supervisory system that gave proper feedback could go a long way in motivating teachers to put more effort into their work.

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8 APPENDIX 1. Teacher's Questionnaire

Age Category

Please tick the box that best describes you

21- 30

31- 40

41- 50

51 & above

- How do you rate your professional work as a teacher in terms of your general working conditions?
- How heavy is your teaching work load?
- Do you have extra responsibilities apart from your teaching load?

Please tick one that is appropriate

YES

NO

- If “YES” what are these extra responsibilities?
- What are the major challenges that teachers at your schools face in the course of their work?
- What is the school management doing to minimise the impact of the challenges mentioned in 5 above?
- In your opinion, what makes teachers at your school work hard?
- Does the school management provide any incentives to encourage/reward the hard working spirit of teachers at your school?

Please tick one that is appropriate

YES

NO

- If “YES” to question 8 above, Please mention examples of the incentives being provided?
- How do you rate the incentives being provided by your school management mentioned in question 9 above?
- Do the incentives provided in question 9 above motivate you to work hard at your school?

Please tick one that is appropriate

YES

NO

- If “NO” to question 11 above, what kind of incentives would you prefer to receive from the school management in order for you to feel motivated?
- Are there any motivation issues that you would love to see being implemented in your school so you would feel motivated?

9 APPENDIX 2. Head Teacher's Questionnaire

- 1) How long have you been serving as a school head teacher?
- 2) What type of motivation do you as a school manager provide to teachers in your school?
- 3) What is the impact of these motivation strategies (in 2 above) on teacher performance in your school?
- 4) What frustrates teachers most in your school?
- 5) What are you as the school manager doing to alleviate the problems mentioned in 9 above?
- 6) Are you satisfied with the current methods of motivating teaching staff in your school?
- 7) Please share with us best school generated motivation practices that you have experienced/implemented in your life as a professional teacher/school manager that you would like to see replicated in other schools

10 APPENDIX 3. Letter of Consent and Approval

11 APPENDIX 4