

**FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHER MOTIVATION: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY
OF**

TWO

SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MASERU, LESOTHO

BY

MATHABO PHALATSI

53848357

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. A. Van Der Nest

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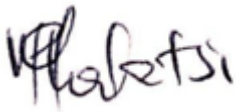
DECLARATION

NAME: MATHABO PHALATSI

STUDENT NUMBER: 53848357

DEGREE: MASTER OF EDUCATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation on ***Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation: A Qualitative Case Study of Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho*** is my own work and that all the sources used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.



27 FEBRUARY 2026

SIGNATURE

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Paballo Phalatsi, and my son, Moeketsi Phalatsi. Thank you for your love, support, and patience. You gave me strength and hope throughout this journey. This achievement is for you.

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ABSTRACT

Teacher motivation is a key factor influencing the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools. In Lesotho, concerns have been raised about declining teacher motivation, which may negatively affect learner performance and overall school effectiveness. This study investigated the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho, one located in a semi-urban area and the other in an urban setting. The study was guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which explain motivation in terms of psychological needs and environmental influences.

The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm and a qualitative multiple case study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two principals and two heads of department, as well as focus group discussions with fourteen teachers. Participants were selected through purposive sampling. Data were analysed using thematic analysis guided by Braun and Clarke's framework.

The findings revealed that teacher motivation is influenced by a combination of intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Intrinsic motivation was mainly driven by passion for teaching, autonomy in lesson delivery, and a sense of competence based on learner achievement. Extrinsic factors such as recognition from school leadership, access to teaching resources, and professional development opportunities also played an important role in strengthening motivation. In addition, a supportive social environment, including collegial relationships, learner interaction, and leadership support, contributed to higher levels of motivation.

However, several challenges were identified, including heavy workloads, limited teaching resources, delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies. These challenges

negatively affected teachers' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby reducing motivation in some cases. Despite these challenges, leadership support mechanisms such as feedback, mentoring, and recognition were found to partially enhance motivation, although they were not consistently applied.

The study concludes that teacher motivation in Maseru secondary schools is shaped by the interaction of personal, organisational, and environmental factors. It recommends that school leaders and education authorities strengthen teacher support systems by promoting autonomy, improving resource availability, recognising teacher efforts, managing workloads, and fostering a collaborative school culture. These measures are essential for improving teacher motivation, professional satisfaction, and learner outcomes.

KEY TERMS

Teacher motivation; Intrinsic motivation; Extrinsic motivation; Self-Determination Theory; Social Cognitive Theory

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPD- Continuous Professional Development

FGDs- Focus Group Discussions

MOET- Ministry of Education and Training

SCT- Social Cognitive Theory

SDT- Self-Determination Theory

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The quality of education in any country is closely linked to the motivation of its teachers. When teachers are motivated, they are more likely to create effective learning environments and support student success. Teacher motivation refers to the willingness, commitment, and enthusiasm that teachers show in carrying out their professional responsibilities and supporting learner achievement (Richardson & Watt, 2018). It influences how teachers plan lessons, deliver instruction, interact with learners, and view their professional roles.

Motivated teachers often demonstrate greater energy, creativity, and dedication in their work. They are more willing to adopt new teaching strategies, support diverse learner needs, and remain committed to improving learning outcomes (Han & Yin, 2016). In contrast, low motivation can reduce instructional quality and negatively affect student engagement and performance. Understanding teacher motivation is therefore essential for improving teaching quality and strengthening education systems. In contrast, unmotivated teachers are more likely to be absent from work, perform poorly, and leave the profession (Day & Gu, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

Research on teacher motivation has gained significant global interest; with international studies showing that teacher motivation is linked to better school performance and student achievement (Sypré et al., 2024; González-García et al., 2025). In my view, motivated teachers are more committed to their work and create positive learning environments that support student success. This suggests that strengthening teacher motivation should be a priority in efforts to improve educational quality. For example,

recent global reviews highlight that motivated teachers are more likely to use effective teaching practices that support student engagement (Sypré et al., 2024). Studies conducted after the COVID-19 pandemic also show that the crisis negatively affected teacher motivation in many countries, as teachers experienced higher workloads, stress, and challenges with remote teaching that reduced job satisfaction (González-García et al., 2025).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, motivating teachers remains difficult due to system-level problems such as lack of teaching materials, poor infrastructure, heavy workloads, and ongoing challenges from the pandemic, which further lowered morale and motivation (Teacher Task Force, 2023; UNESCO, 2025). Lesotho faces similar challenges; Secondary schools in the country struggle with shortages of qualified teachers, limited opportunities for professional training, ongoing curriculum changes, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of learning resources (Ministry of Education and Training [MOET], 2019). The *Education Sector Plan 2016–2026* highlights additional system-level issues, such as weak teacher supply and management systems, lack of continuous professional development policies, and imbalanced teacher distribution, especially in hard-to-reach areas (Government of Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training, 2016).

This national policy also identifies the need to improve teacher motivation and develop strategies to make the teaching profession more attractive and supportive. These problems affect teachers' daily work and influence how they feel about their jobs. When teachers work under pressure for long periods, their level of motivation can gradually decrease. Although teacher motivation is closely linked to effective teaching and learner success, there is limited research that focuses specifically on Lesotho, especially secondary schools in Maseru. In particular, there are few qualitative studies that capture teachers' lived motivational experiences in their daily school contexts. There is also limited evidence on how autonomy support from school leadership and resource constraints interact to influence teacher motivation in this setting.

In addition, there is little case-based research comparing different secondary schools within Maseru to understand how motivation may vary across schools. Many existing studies mainly discuss general education challenges without clearly explaining what motivates or discourages teachers at the local level. Research shows that both personal factors, such as interest in teaching and self-confidence, and external factors, such as leadership support, salary, and working conditions, work together to influence teacher motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Collie, 2021). However, how these factors interact in Lesotho secondary schools remains underexplored.

This study responds to this gap by examining both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors among teachers in two selected secondary schools in Maseru. By focusing on teachers' real experiences, the study aims to provide local evidence that can help school leaders and education planners design better support systems and improve the quality of teaching and learning in Lesotho. A focused case study is useful because it allows the researcher to understand how motivation is shaped by personal meaning, leadership practices, and structural constraints within specific school contexts (Yin, 2018). Research also shows that both intrinsic factors such as personal interest and sense of purpose, and extrinsic factors, such as leadership support and working conditions influence teachers' motivation and well-being (Collie, 2021).

1.2 Background

Teacher motivation has been widely studied across the world, especially in relation to teacher retention, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. Research shows that motivation is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors include autonomy and a sense of competence. Teacher motivation plays a critical role in education quality. While supportive policies and school environments create

opportunities to strengthen motivation, challenges such as workload pressure, limited resources, and weak institutional support continue to affect teachers' daily experiences and personal passion for teaching. Extrinsic factors include leadership support, recognition, working conditions, and the overall school climate (Collie, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021). When these factors are supportive, teachers are more committed to their work and more likely to remain in the profession.

International studies from countries such as Finland and Australia show similar patterns. In Finland, strong professional trust, autonomy, and supportive working conditions contribute to high teacher motivation and retention (Toropova et al., 2021). In Australia, research shows that supportive leadership and positive school climate improve teacher job satisfaction and commitment (Collie, 2021). These findings suggest that both personal meaning in teaching and supportive school environments are important for sustaining teacher motivation.

Global policy reports also highlight the importance of teacher motivation. UNESCO emphasises that motivated and supported teachers are essential for improving education quality worldwide. Recent global reports note that heavy workloads, stress, and limited support systems remain major challenges affecting teacher motivation, especially in developing contexts (UNESCO, 2023). These policy discussions show that strengthening leadership support, improving working conditions, and investing in teacher development are key strategies for improving motivation and education outcomes.

In Lesotho's secondary schools, national policy documents and education reports highlight conditions that both support and constrain teacher motivation. Sector reports indicate persistent challenges such as large class sizes, shortages of teaching and learning materials, limited opportunities for continuous professional development, and uneven distribution of qualified teachers (Government of Lesotho Ministry of Education

and Training, 2016; Ministry of Education and Training [MOET], 2019). These system-level constraints can increase workload and stress, which may weaken sustained teacher motivation. At the same time, policies emphasise the importance of strengthening teacher support, professional growth, and working conditions to improve motivation and education quality. Teachers often demonstrate strong intrinsic commitment to learners and their communities, but this motivation may be dampened by challenges such as resource shortages, insufficient recognition, workload imbalances and limited support systems (Mokuku & Tsie, 2018). Understanding these dynamics requires context-sensitive research grounded in teachers' lived experiences.

In addition, teachers' motivation is also influenced by relationships with school leaders, colleagues, learners and parents. Supportive leadership and positive school culture can strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and confidence, while poor communication and lack of support can weaken their motivation (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Teachers who feel respected and involved in decision-making are more likely to remain committed to their work (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Therefore, studying teacher motivation in Lesotho is important not only for keeping teachers in the profession, but also for improving teaching quality and learner achievement. Local research can help education leaders to design policies and support systems that respond to the real needs of teachers in their working environment (Mokuku & Tsie, 2018). National reviews and expenditure studies also show that education in Lesotho faces challenges, such as teacher shortages, large class sizes, and limited infrastructure, which put pressure on teachers and affect the learning environment (World Bank, 2024). Understanding these conditions and how they influence motivation can inspire more effective planning and support for teachers.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework guides a study by explaining the key concepts, assumptions, and relationships, helping researchers interpret data and evaluate findings (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Unlike a theory, which explains a phenomenon, a framework provides a structured scheme or “holding structure” to organise and interpret evidence (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). It must align with the study’s paradigm and purpose, guiding practice and future research.

This study on teacher motivation in Lesotho uses Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000) explains motivation through intrinsic factors (autonomy, competence, relatedness) and extrinsic factors (rewards, recognition, work conditions), and has been widely applied in education to understand teacher engagement and retention (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Collie, 2021). SCT (Bandura, 1986) emphasises self-efficacy and the interaction of personal, behavioural, and environmental factors, showing how teachers’ confidence and social context influence motivation (Zimmerman, 2018). Together, these theories provide a lens to understand how personal needs, environmental conditions, and beliefs shape teacher motivation.

1.4 Rationale for the Study

The rationale for this study is shaped by three key considerations as outlined in the subsequent sections.

1.4.1 Practical Significance

The practical significance of this study lies in its potential to improve teacher motivation and, in turn, the quality of teaching and learning in Lesotho's secondary schools. By examining both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the findings can guide school principals, heads of departments (HODs), district education officials, and units within the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in making evidence-based decisions. These may include designing effective recognition and reward systems, creating targeted continuous professional development (CPD) programmes, improving working conditions, and implementing leadership practices that support and engage teachers. Ultimately, the study provides actionable insights to strengthen teacher support mechanisms and enhance student outcomes.

1.4.2 Theoretical Significance

Although teacher motivation has been widely studied globally, there is limited research examining it in the specific cultural, organisational, and socio-economic context of Lesotho. Existing studies using Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) rarely focus on secondary schools in Maseru, and few have explored how these theories can be applied together to understand teacher motivation in low-resource settings (Collie, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017). This study is theoretically significant because it integrates SDT and SCT to provide context-specific insights into how intrinsic needs, personal beliefs, and environmental conditions interact to shape teacher motivation in Lesotho's secondary schools. The findings can extend the understanding of these theories in African and resource-constrained contexts.

This study adds to theory by showing how these two theories work in a local setting with limited resources and different cultural values. By studying teachers in Lesotho, the research helps to determine whether the ideas of autonomy, competence, relatedness, self-belief, and social influence are experienced in the same way as in other countries. The findings may confirm some parts of the theories, but they may also show new ways

in which motivation develops in this context. In this way, the study helps to improve and adapt existing motivation theories so that they better explain teacher behaviour in non-Western and resource-constrained environments. This makes the theories more useful for understanding teacher motivation in diverse settings.

1.4.3 Research Gap

There is limited research that focuses on the motivational experiences of secondary school teachers in Maseru. Most existing studies are from other countries or from different educational contexts, which means such findings may not fully apply to the situation in Maseru. As a result, there is not enough clear evidence on what truly motivates teachers in this area. In particular, little is known about how internal factors – such as personal interest, sense of purpose, and job satisfaction – work together with external factors, such as salary, working conditions, leadership, and support from the school. Without this information, it is difficult for school leaders and education authorities to make strong decisions that improve teacher motivation.

This study addresses the identified gap by providing detailed and local evidence from two secondary schools in Maseru. The findings will help to better understand how intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence teachers' commitment, satisfaction, and performance. The findings will also support better planning and decision-making based on real experiences of teachers in the context of the selected schools and in other similar environments.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is important because teacher motivation is closely linked to teaching quality, student achievement, and overall school performance. By examining the intrinsic and

extrinsic factors that influence teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, the study provides valuable insights for improving educational outcomes.

First, the findings will offer context-specific information to help schools understand the unique factors affecting teacher motivation in Maseru. This can activate the development of strategies that enhance motivation, such as stronger support systems, recognition practices, and improved working conditions (Brown, 2017). Second, the study may assist educational policymakers in designing interventions to improve teacher retention. Motivated teachers are more likely to remain in the profession, reducing turnover and ensuring continuity in teaching (Adams, 2020).

Third, the study contributes to broader educational reform efforts by helping school leaders and policymakers make evidence-based decisions. Understanding what motivates teachers can support more positive and supportive school environments, benefiting teachers and students (Jones & White, 2018). Finally, the study adds to the limited literature on teacher motivation in Lesotho. This local evidence can guide future research and provide a deeper understanding of teacher motivation in similar low-resource contexts (Casteel & Bridler, 2021).

1.6 Statement of the Problem

Teacher motivation is widely recognised as a key factor that influences teaching quality, learner achievement, and teacher retention in schools (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Motivated teachers are more likely to be committed to their work, use effective teaching strategies, and support learners' academic success. However, teacher motivation is not uniform across all teachers. In the same school environment, some teachers may be highly motivated, while others may experience low motivation due to different personal and contextual factors.

In the context of Lesotho, there is limited empirical research that explains why such differences in teacher motivation exist in secondary schools. Existing studies tend to focus broadly on general educational challenges such as resource shortages, workload, and policy issues, without sufficiently exploring how these factors interact with teachers' psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. As a result, the lived experiences of both motivated and less motivated teachers in Maseru secondary schools remain underexplored.

This gap is significant because teacher motivation is influenced by a combination of intrinsic factors (such as passion for teaching and professional identity) and extrinsic factors (such as leadership support, recognition, workload, and resource

1.7 Research Aim

The primary aim of this study is to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho

1.8 Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study was to explore teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho. The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To explore how teachers experience intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence their motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru.
- To understand the challenges that teachers experience in relation to motivation in the selected schools.
- To explore teachers' and school leaders' views on existing support mechanisms that influence teacher motivation.
- To identify possible strategies that could improve teacher motivation in secondary schools in Lesotho.

1.9 Research Questions

Main Research Question

How do teachers experience and understand the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing their motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho?

Sub-Research Questions

- How do teachers describe their intrinsic and extrinsic experiences of motivation in the selected secondary schools?
- What challenges do teachers experience that influence their motivation in these schools?
- How do teachers and school leaders describe existing leadership and institutional support mechanisms that influence motivation?
- What strategies do teachers and school leaders suggest to enhance teacher motivation in secondary schools?

1.10 Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the systematic process used to collect, analyse, and interpret data in order to answer research questions and achieve the objectives of a study. It explains the methods, procedures, and techniques used during the research process and gives reasons why those methods are appropriate for the study (Creswell & Poth, 2024). A clear research methodology helps to ensure that the study is organised, credible, transparent, and easy to understand. It also assists the researcher in collecting reliable and meaningful data that address the research problem effectively.

1.10.1 Research Approach and Design

This study adopted a qualitative multiple case study design to explore the factors influencing teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho. A qualitative approach was selected because it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences, opinions, and perceptions using their own words. This approach is suitable for exploring educational and social issues that cannot easily be explained using numerical data alone (Creswell & Poth, 2024; Braun & Clarke, 2022). Qualitative research focuses on understanding human experiences and social situations from the perspectives of participants, making it appropriate for identifying patterns and themes related to teacher motivation.

The study used a multiple case study design because it involved two schools with different settings, one urban and one semi urban. A case study design enables researchers to examine real life situations within their natural environments and understand how context influences participants' experiences (Yin, 2023). This design was suitable for the study because teacher motivation may be affected by factors such as school leadership, workload, and relationships among teachers, school climate, and the availability of teaching resources. Studying two schools allowed the researcher to compare experiences from different contexts and identify both common and unique motivational factors.

The study was guided by Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Self Determination Theory explains motivation in terms of psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, while Social Cognitive Theory focuses on self efficacy and the influence of environmental conditions such as leadership support and working conditions (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). These theories helped the researcher understand both personal and environmental influences on teacher motivation.

A structured qualitative approach was used during data collection because it allowed flexibility and enabled participants to explain their experiences freely while allowing the researcher to ask follow up questions where necessary (Campbell et al., 2021). Semi structured interviews and focus group discussions were selected as the main data collection methods because they are effective for collecting detailed information about participants' experiences and perspectives.

The study involved eighteen teachers who were purposively selected from the two secondary schools. Purposive sampling was used because it allows researchers to select participants who have relevant knowledge and experience related to the research topic (Ames et al., 2023). The participants included two principals, two Heads of Department (HODs), and fourteen level one teachers. Principals and HODs were included because they are responsible for leadership, supervision, and staff management, while level one teachers were included because they experience motivation directly through their daily teaching responsibilities.

The participants were selected based on their teaching experience, subject specialisation, and willingness to participate in the study. Teachers from Social Science and Life Sciences subjects, including Life Skills, Religious Studies, and Biology, were included because these subjects involve regular interaction with learners and require active teacher engagement. All participants had more than ten years of teaching experience, which enabled them to provide detailed information about motivational challenges and support systems within schools.

In addition, focus group discussions were conducted separately in each school. Each focus group consisted of seven level one teachers, making a total of fourteen participants in the focus group discussions. The discussions encouraged participants to

share experiences and interact with one another, helping the researcher identify common experiences and different opinions regarding teacher motivation. The use of both interviews and focus group discussions provided rich and detailed information that supported a better understanding of teacher motivation in secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho.

1.10.2 Population and Sampling

The study focused on teachers from two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho. The schools were selected purposively because they represented different school contexts, one urban and one semi urban, and reflected common challenges experienced in secondary schools, such as limited resources, leadership practices, and workload demands. Selecting these schools enabled the researcher to gather relevant and meaningful information related to teacher motivation within the local educational context.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could provide rich and relevant information about teacher motivation. This sampling method is commonly used in qualitative research because it focuses on participants who have direct experience and knowledge related to the research problem (Ames et al., 2023). The target population included teachers who were actively teaching in the selected schools and who shared similar professional responsibilities.

A total of eighteen Basotho teachers participated in the study. The sample included two principals, two Heads of Department (HODs), and fourteen level one teachers from the two schools. Participants were selected based on their teaching experience, subject specialisation, and willingness to participate in the study. Teachers with more than ten years of teaching experience were chosen because they were able to provide detailed reflections on the factors influencing teacher motivation over time. The sample also

included variation in gender and subject areas to ensure different perspectives were represented in the study.

1.10.3 Instrumentation and Data Collection Techniques

The study used semi structured interviews and focus group discussions as the main data collection methods. These methods are widely used in qualitative research because they allow participants to explain their experiences, opinions, and feelings in detail (Campbell et al., 2021). Semi structured interviews were conducted with four participants, namely two principals and two Heads of Department (HODs), with equal representation from each school.

The interviews used open ended questions to allow participants to provide detailed responses about their experiences and perspectives related to teacher motivation. The flexible nature of semi structured interviews allowed the researcher to ask follow up questions for clarification and deeper understanding. Interviews were suitable for gathering information from school leaders because they provided insights into leadership practices, teacher support, school management, and institutional challenges affecting teacher motivation.

In addition, two focus group discussions were conducted, one in each school. Each focus group consisted of seven level one teachers, making a total of fourteen participants. Focus group discussions allowed teachers to share experiences, compare opinions, and discuss issues affecting motivation within their schools. The discussions also encouraged interaction among participants, helping the researcher identify shared experiences and differences in perspectives regarding teacher motivation.

The interviews and focus group discussions followed structured guides prepared by the researcher. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study before data collection began. With participants' consent, all sessions were audio recorded and later transcribed into written form for analysis. The interview guide is included in Appendix 1, while the focus group discussion guide is included in Appendix 2.

1.10.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected from the semi structured interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method used to identify, organise, and interpret patterns and themes within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This method was appropriate for the study because it helped the researcher understand participants' experiences and identify important issues related to teacher motivation.

The analysis process began with the transcription of audio recordings into written text. The researcher then read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the data and gain a deeper understanding of participants' responses. Important ideas and statements related to teacher motivation were identified and coded using short descriptive labels.

The codes were then grouped into broader categories based on similarities and relationships among participants' responses. From these categories, themes were developed to explain the main patterns emerging from the data. The themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately reflected the experiences and views of the participants.

Direct quotations from participants were used during the analysis to support the interpretation of findings and to present participants' experiences in their own words. This process ensured that the findings remained closely connected to the data collected from participants and supported a clear understanding of the factors influencing teacher motivation in the selected secondary schools.

1.11 Measures of Trustworthiness

The following determinants of trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, transferability, conformability, and member-checking– as outlined by Guba and Lincoln (1989) in their work on research methods, play significant roles in establishing the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

Credibility, the first determinant, emphasises establishing the truth of the research findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this study, credibility was achieved through multiple data collection methods, such as interviews and observational field notes, to triangulate and cross-validate the information gathered. Additionally, employing various data sources contributes to the richness and depth of the data, enhancing the credibility of the findings.

Dependability, the second determinant, focuses on the consistency and stability of the research over time (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). To ensure dependability, researchers maintain clear documentation of research procedures, methodologies, and data analysis techniques. The use of a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, along with detailed records of the research process, aids in establishing the reliability and replicability of the study.

Transferability, the third determinant, addresses the applicability of the findings to other contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). While the study's focus is on two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho, efforts are made to provide a comprehensive description of the research context, methodologies, and findings. This aids in facilitating the transferability of findings to similar educational settings or contexts.

Conformability, the fourth determinant, pertains to ensuring that the findings are grounded in the data and not influenced by researcher bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Employing rigorous data analysis techniques and maintaining reflexivity throughout the research process are essential for confirming the objectivity of the findings.

This study used several strategies to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. One such strategy was peer debriefing, in which the researcher discussed emerging interpretations and themes with knowledgeable colleagues. These discussions helped refine interpretations and reduce personal bias (Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher also maintained an audit trail, keeping detailed records of decisions made during data collection and analysis.

This provided transparency and allowed others to understand how conclusions were reached (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, the researcher kept a reflective journal to document thoughts, decisions, and insights throughout the research process. Writing reflections helped the researcher remain aware of personal assumptions and how they might influence the study (Nowell et al., 2017). These methods supported the study's credibility by ensuring that findings were carefully considered, justified, and clearly documented.

1.12 Research Ethics

Ethical considerations are fundamental in research that involves human participants. Before the study began, ethical approval was obtained from the University's Research Ethics Committee. Permission was also sought from the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), as well as from the district education offices and the principals of the selected schools. This ensured that the research design and procedures met recognised ethical standards for human subject research.

In this study, informed consent was obtained from each participant before any data collection took place. Participants received clear, written information explaining the purpose of the research, what participation would involve, any possible risks, and how their contributions would be used and protected. They were also informed that participation was voluntary; that they could refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty, and that their personal information would be kept confidential. Signed consent forms were stored separately from the data to ensure that participants' identities could not be linked to their responses, protecting their privacy and confidentiality (McLeod, 2024; Scottish Government Social Research, 2024).

To protect confidentiality and privacy, all identifying information was removed or replaced with codes, and interview recordings and transcripts were securely stored on password protected devices accessible only to the researcher and supervisor. Hard copy materials were kept in a locked cabinet. These steps reduced the risk of identifying participants in any reporting of the study findings (*qualitative research ethics guidance*). Additionally, focus group participants were reminded that while confidentiality within the group could be encouraged, complete anonymity could not be guaranteed due to the group setting, and they were asked to respect each other's privacy outside the sessions. This aligns with recommended focus group procedures in qualitative research (*qualitative research ethics guidance*).

The researcher maintained a reflective journal throughout the study to document decisions and ethical concerns during data collection and analysis. This contributed to transparency in the research process and helped address potential power dynamics between the researcher and participants by continually reviewing how questions and interactions were conducted. Regular discussion with the supervisor and peers (peer debriefing) further strengthened trustworthiness and ethical integrity. Overall, the procedures for consent, data security, confidentiality, and ethical approvals ensured that the study was conducted in a manner that respected participants' rights, maintained their privacy, and upheld integrity throughout the research process.

1.13 Delimitations

This study has specific boundaries that guide what it includes and what it does not. The research focuses only on two secondary schools in Maseru. These schools were selected because they offered a suitable setting for exploring teacher motivation in a real school environment. The study also includes only fourteen teachers who were chosen through purposive sampling. This means they were selected because they could provide rich and relevant information about motivation. As a result, the study does not aim to represent all teachers in Maseru or in Lesotho. Instead, it aims to provide detailed and meaningful insights that can help understand similar contexts. The study is further delimited by its focus on motivation as explained through Self-Determination Theory and Social Cognitive Theory.

These theories were chosen because they help explain both the internal and external factors that influence motivation. Other theories of motivation are not included as they are outside the scope of this research. In addition, the study uses only qualitative data. This approach allows the researcher to explore teachers' experiences and views in

depth, but it also means the study does not include numerical or statistical data. Qualitative studies often aim for depth rather than breadth, and they prioritise understanding over measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because of these delimitations, the findings are not intended to be generalised to all schools. Instead, thick descriptions and contextual detail derived from this study can be transferred to similar settings where teachers face comparable challenges and conditions, which is an accepted goal in qualitative research (Tracy, 2020).

1.14 Definition of Key Concepts

Teacher motivation refers to the psychological processes that energise, guide, and sustain teachers' effort, commitment, and persistence in their professional work.

Intrinsic motivation is characterised by the involvement in activities that are inherently gratifying or enjoyable (Legault, 2016).

Extrinsic motivation, on the contrary, pertains to undertaking actions primarily driven by the anticipation of outcomes external to the behaviour itself (Legault, 2016).

Self-determination theory According to the self-determination theory, motivation is primarily influenced by the fulfilment of basic human needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These factors serve as pivotal motivators for behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Social Cognitive theory Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura (1986, 1997), explains how people learn and behave through the interaction of personal factors, behaviour, and the environment.

1.15 Chapter Outline

The chapters of the study are structured as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the study, along with the background, rationale, problem statement, research aim, objectives and theoretical framework.

Chapter 2 presents a synthesised literature review and the applied SDT–SCT framework.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology and design.

Chapter 4 presents the findings organised according to the key themes.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings, offers conclusions and makes recommendations.

1.16 Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the importance of teacher motivation and located the study within the educational context of Lesotho. It highlighted why teacher motivation is a key element in shaping teaching quality, learner outcomes, and overall school performance. The chapter explained that motivated teachers are more likely to show commitment, persistence, and satisfaction in their work, which contributes to a positive learning environment and better academic results for learners.

The chapter also outlined a clear research gap by noting that limited evidence exists on how intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence teacher motivation in secondary schools in Maseru. Although international studies show that teacher motivation affects classroom practices and learner achievement, fewer studies have explored these issues within the specific context of Lesotho's schooling system. This gap demonstrates the need for a study that explores teachers' real experiences and the factors that shape their motivation.

In addition, the chapter introduced the theoretical foundation of the study by explaining how Self-Determination Theory and Social Cognitive Theory work together to guide the analysis. These theories provide a strong lens for understanding how personal beliefs, workplace conditions, and social influences interact to shape teacher motivation. The chapter further presented the research aim, objectives, and key questions, which together offer a clear direction for the entire study.

Overall, this chapter laid the groundwork for the next sections by providing the background, justification, and conceptual basis of the research. Chapter 2 builds on this foundation by critically reviewing the existing literature on teacher motivation and explaining in greater depth the integrated SDT–SCT framework that supports the study’s analysis and interpretation. This connection ensures that the literature review is logically aligned with the study’s purpose and contributes meaningfully to understanding the motivational experiences of teachers in the selected schools.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Teacher motivation continues to be a key factor influencing the quality of teaching, learner achievement, and the overall effectiveness of schools. Recent research shows that motivated teachers demonstrate higher levels of commitment, classroom engagement, and instructional effectiveness, which directly contributes to improved learner outcomes (Collie & Martin, 2021; Klassen & Kim, 2022). In contrast, low teacher motivation is associated with stress, reduced performance, and increased intentions to leave the profession.

In many developing countries, including Lesotho, teachers continue to work in difficult school environments characterised by limited teaching resources, heavy workloads, large class sizes, and frequent policy changes (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2022). These challenges may negatively affect both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. However, there is still limited context-specific research that explains how teachers in Maseru secondary schools experience and interpret these motivational factors in their daily professional work.

Teacher motivation refers to the internal and external forces that influence teachers' willingness to initiate, sustain, and regulate their professional efforts. It includes psychological energy, commitment, and persistence in performing teaching duties (Schleicher, 2021).

In the literature, motivation is commonly divided into intrinsic and extrinsic forms. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in teaching because it is meaningful, enjoyable, and personally rewarding, while extrinsic motivation refers to engagement influenced by external factors such as salary, recognition, promotion opportunities, leadership support, and working conditions (Fernet et al., 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Recent studies show that intrinsic motivation is strongly linked to teachers' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, while extrinsic motivation is shaped by school leadership practices, availability of resources, and professional development opportunities (Collie & Martin, 2021). When these conditions are supportive, teachers are more likely to remain committed, emotionally engaged, and effective in their teaching practice. However, when these needs are not met, motivation declines, leading to burnout, stress, and reduced performance.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) explains that motivation is sustained when the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In addition, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasises that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their interaction with the school environment strongly influence their motivation and behaviour (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Together, these theories provide a strong framework for understanding how personal and environmental factors interact to shape teacher motivation.

Despite growing global research on teacher motivation, there remains a gap in understanding how these motivational factors operate in specific school contexts in Lesotho.

In particular, there is limited research comparing semi-urban and urban secondary schools and how teachers experience the interaction between intrinsic motivation, leadership support, and working conditions. This study therefore addresses this gap by exploring teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru using SDT and SCT as guiding frameworks.

2.2 Intrinsic Motivational Factors

Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity because it is experienced as personally meaningful, enjoyable, or aligned with one's values rather than because of external rewards or pressures (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Uysal, 2023). For many teachers, intrinsic motivation arises from a sense of purpose in teaching, enjoyment in working with learners, and personal fulfilment when students succeed, which reflects autonomous forms of motivation described in Self-Determination Theory (Zou et al., 2023). This inner drive often shapes how teachers approach their work and their continued commitment to the profession.

Research shows that intrinsic motivation is closely linked to the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When teachers feel they can make decisions about their teaching, believe in their abilities, and experience supportive relationships with colleagues and learners, their intrinsic motivation tends to be stronger (Han et al., 2020). Recent studies argue that these needs are especially important in challenging school contexts, where teachers rely heavily on internal motivation to maintain commitment despite limited resources (Ahn & Roll, 2022).

This suggests that intrinsic motivation is not only a personal attribute but is also shaped by the school environment. However, some scholars caution that intrinsic motivation alone may not be enough. In low-resource settings, teachers may value their work

deeply but still struggle to remain motivated when structural support is weak or when workloads become overwhelming (Toropova et al., 2021). This highlights the need to view intrinsic motivation as dynamic and influenced by contextual factors, rather than assuming it will always sustain teachers regardless of circumstances.

Intrinsically motivated teachers are often more willing to engage in voluntary professional development, experiment with new teaching strategies, and persist through classroom challenges. These behaviours are linked to improved learner engagement and achievement (Han et al., 2020). Yet, maintaining such motivation requires more than personal interest it depends on whether the school environment supports teachers' psychological needs. Therefore, understanding intrinsic motivation involves critically examining both individual motivations and the wider conditions that either enable or undermine teachers' willingness to invest effort in their work.

2.2.1 Basic Psychological Needs: Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness

Self-Determination Theory emphasises three basic psychological needs –autonomy, competence, and relatedness – that must be satisfied for intrinsic motivation and well-being to develop (Guay, 2022; López-García et al., 2023). These needs describe the conditions teachers require to feel motivated, effective, and connected in their work.

Autonomy

Autonomy refers to feeling a sense of choice, control, and ownership over one's actions. Teachers experience autonomy when they can make meaningful decisions about teaching methods, lesson planning, and classroom management. When principals provide this space for professional judgement, teachers become more committed,

creative, and willing to take initiative (Reeve, 2021). Satisfying autonomy leads to more self-driven and sustained motivation, especially when teachers can align their decisions with personal values and learner needs (Slemp et al., 2021).

Competence

Competence is the need to feel effective, skillful, and capable of achieving desired outcomes. Teachers experience competence when they successfully support learners, overcome instructional challenges, or receive constructive feedback that helps them grow. Opportunities for professional development, recognition of good work (Jang et al., 2021). When competence needs are met, teachers feel more capable and motivated to improve their practice.

Relatedness

Relatedness refers to feeling connected, supported, and valued by others. Teachers fulfil this need through positive relationships with colleagues, leaders, learners, and parents. Supportive school environments characterised by trust, collaboration, and respect promote a strong sense of belonging, which helps sustain motivation even during stressful periods (Collie et al., 2022). Relatedness also gives teachers emotional security and encourages participation in teamwork and professional learning communities.

Across these three needs autonomy, competence and relatedness – need satisfaction is strongly linked to higher autonomous motivation, greater work engagement, and improved well-being. When teachers feel autonomous, competent, and connected, they

are more likely to internalise their work goals, experience intrinsic enjoyment, and show long-term commitment to the profession (Slomp et al., 2021; Collie et al., 2022). Conversely, when these needs are frustrated, motivation becomes controlled or declines, which may reduce instructional quality and job satisfaction.

2.2.2 Evidence from Africa and other Contexts

Studies from various African and international contexts indicate that intrinsic motivation is a key factor influencing teacher commitment, engagement, and performance. In Ghana, for example, teachers reported that their motivation was strongly rooted in personal values, a desire to serve their communities, and the belief that their work contributes to national development, rather than relying solely on salary incentives (Amoah et al., 2022). Similarly, in Namibia, teachers exhibited higher levels of autonomous motivation when their psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were supported within the school environment (Nambala & Nghipondoka, 2023).

These findings suggest that intrinsic motivation depends not only on personal purpose and professional identity but also on the social and organisational climate of schools. Evidence from Southern Africa further confirms these patterns. In South Africa, for instance, teachers' intrinsic motivation was found to be shaped by both internal satisfaction and external contextual factors such as leadership support, availability of teaching resources, and policy stability. Teachers who perceived strong principal support and adequate resources reported higher job satisfaction, commitment, and willingness to adopt innovative teaching practices (Mkhize & Dlamini, 2022).

Similarly, a study in Zambia found that teachers' motivation was affected by frequent policy changes, resource shortages, and heavy workloads, yet those who were

intrinsically motivated continued to engage actively with learners and participate in professional development (Phiri & Banda, 2021). These studies demonstrate that while intrinsic motivation is personal, it is strongly influenced by environmental and contextual factors in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Outside Africa, similar trends are observed.

In China, teachers who enjoyed teaching and felt competent in their instructional practices developed stronger self-efficacy, which encouraged creativity and innovation in the classroom (Li & Wang, 2024). Research from Europe and North America also indicates that intrinsically motivated teachers engage in reflective practices, adopt learner-centred approaches, and persist through challenging working conditions (OECD, 2023; Schunk et al., 2021).

Overall, these findings show that intrinsic motivation is a critical driver of teacher performance across diverse contexts. In SSA, intrinsic motivation is shaped by a combination of personal values, psychological need satisfaction, and school-level conditions such as leadership quality, access to resources, and policy stability. When teachers' autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported, motivation flourishes, resulting in greater commitment, creativity, resilience, and professional satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Vansteenkiste et al., 2021).

2.3 Extrinsic Motivational Factors

Extrinsic motivation refers to engaging in work because of external rewards, recognition, or pressures rather than for personal interest or enjoyment (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

In the teaching profession, extrinsic factors include school leadership, working conditions, financial and non-financial incentives, and the broader organisational and policy environment (Han et al., 2021). While intrinsic motivation arises from personal satisfaction and interest, extrinsic motivators are crucial in reinforcing or sustaining motivation, particularly in contexts where personal drive alone may not overcome resource constraints, high workloads, or systemic challenges.

Leadership as an Extrinsic Motivator

Effective leadership significantly influences teachers' motivation by shaping their work environment and sense of professional value. Supportive principals who provide guidance, involve teachers in decision-making, and recognise their achievements enhance teachers' engagement and commitment (Leithwood & Sun, 2021). Recognition may be formal, such as awards or promotions, or informal, such as praise and feedback. Such practices signal that teachers' effort is valued, which reinforces both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. From an SCT perspective, leadership also affects teachers' self-efficacy: when teachers feel supported and competent in their roles, they are more confident in applying new teaching methods and persisting through challenges (Bandura, 2021).

Working Conditions

Teachers' motivation is closely linked to the physical and organisational conditions in which they work. Adequate classroom resources, manageable class sizes, reliable infrastructure, and administrative support create conditions where teachers can perform effectively and feel capable (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Conversely, poorly resourced schools, overcrowded classrooms, and excessive administrative burdens can cause stress, frustration, and reduced commitment (Chansa & Sampa, 2021). In SSA contexts, studies highlight that motivation is often constrained by structural issues such as limited teaching materials, frequent policy changes, and volatile working conditions (Mokhele & Akinyemi, 2022). These external pressures demonstrate that extrinsic factors do not operate in isolation; they interact with teachers' intrinsic motivation, either supporting or undermining their engagement.

Financial and Non-Financial Incentives

Extrinsic motivation is also shaped by tangible and intangible rewards. Financial incentives - including salary increases, bonuses, and promotion opportunities – directly reward performance and effort (Murwanashyaka et al., 2024). Non-financial incentives – such as opportunities for professional development, mentoring, recognition in staff meetings, and supportive policies – strengthen teachers' sense of belonging and professional identity. These incentives foster a culture of continuous improvement, encourage participation in collaborative learning, and reinforce commitment to teaching despite challenging conditions (OECD, 2023).

Interaction with Intrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic factors can complement or undermine intrinsic motivation. When external rewards align with personal values and support teachers' psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, they enhance autonomous motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

For example, a teacher who values professional growth will experience both intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic motivation when given opportunities for training, recognition, and leadership support. Conversely, extrinsic pressures such as rigid supervision, excessive workload, or inconsistent policies may frustrate psychological needs and reduce intrinsic motivation, leading to controlled motivation or burnout (Han et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Contextual Factors in Sub-Saharan Africa and Lesotho

In Sub-Saharan Africa, extrinsic motivational factors are particularly salient due to contextual challenges. In Lesotho and neighbouring countries, teachers often face large class sizes, limited resources, unstable policies, and varying leadership quality (Mokhele & Akinyemi, 2022; Chansa & Sampa, 2021).

Studies show that supportive leadership, recognition, and professional development opportunities can buffer these challenges, enabling teachers to remain engaged and committed. These findings highlight the need for policy interventions that strengthen both extrinsic systems and intrinsic satisfaction to maintain teacher motivation in challenging contexts.

2.3.1 Leadership and School Climate

Leadership is one of the strongest external influences on teacher motivation. When school principals are supportive, fair, and collaborative, teachers feel valued and more motivated to perform their duties effectively (Leithwood & Sun, 2021; Day et al., 2022).

Effective leaders provide clear direction, mentoring, and opportunities for professional development. They also recognise teachers' efforts and involve them in decision-making processes. Good leadership helps create a positive school climate characterised by trust, cooperation, and a sense of belonging among teachers. Such an environment strengthens collegial relationships and enhances motivation (Leithwood & Sun, 2021).

In many developing-country contexts, including settings similar to Lesotho, leadership support becomes even more important when teachers face large class sizes, heavy workloads, limited teaching materials, time pressure, weak infrastructure, and concerns about safety. Addressing these conditions helps teachers focus on teaching rather than coping with daily constraints. Research from Indonesia found that schools where leaders actively supported teachers and involved them in decision-making reported higher teacher satisfaction and improved performance (Zulfiter et al., 2023). In addition, transformational leadership strengthens teachers' self-efficacy, which increases their willingness to innovate and take on leadership responsibilities within the school (Zainal & Matore, 2022).

A recent systematic review also identified a reciprocal relationship between leadership and teacher self-efficacy: confident teachers are more likely to assume leadership roles, and participation in leadership activities further strengthens their confidence (Educational Sciences Review, 2024). It is important to distinguish between hygiene conditions and motivational forms of support. Hygiene conditions include basic resources and working conditions such as manageable class sizes, adequate materials, safe facilities, and reasonable workloads.

When these are absent, teacher dissatisfaction increases. Motivational support mechanisms such as recognition, professional autonomy, participation in decision-making, and opportunities for growth, foster commitment and professional enthusiasm once basic conditions are met. Overall, effective leadership and a positive school climate motivate teachers directly and also create an environment in which they feel empowered, capable, and committed to improving teaching and learning outcomes. Strong leadership combined with supportive working conditions can therefore have a lasting impact on teacher performance, innovation, and overall school success.

Positive working conditions support teachers' professional growth by creating opportunities for collaborative planning, participation in workshops, and trying new teaching methods (Richter et al., 2022). When teachers have time to plan together, share ideas, and experiment with new approaches, they are more confident improving their classroom practice. Supportive environments also encourage continuous learning and innovation. Schools that provide adequate resources and a supportive environment help teachers remain motivated, committed, and resilient. This includes access to teaching materials, manageable workloads, and time for professional learning. Such conditions enable teachers to focus on improving instruction, which benefits learner achievement and overall school success (Day & Gu, 2022; OECD, 2023).

Research also shows that distributed leadership can strengthen teacher professional learning. When leadership responsibilities are shared and teachers trust their principals, motivation increases and teachers become more engaged in professional development activities (Spillane, 2021). This suggests that supportive leadership and positive working conditions together promote continuous professional growth and improved teaching practice.

2.3.2 Recognition and Incentives

Recognition, both financial and non-financial, plays a key role in motivating teachers. Positive feedback, awards, certificates, promotions, and bonuses help teachers feel valued and competent, which enhances their satisfaction and commitment to the profession (Gillet et al., 2021). When teachers are acknowledged for their efforts, they are more likely to maintain high performance and continue contributing positively to the school environment (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

In Rwanda, financial incentives were found to improve the perceived quality of teaching in secondary schools, highlighting the motivational impact of tangible rewards (Murwanashyaka et al., 2024). However, non-financial incentives are equally important. Public recognition, opportunities for professional development, appreciation from school leaders, and acknowledgment by parents and the community all positively influence teacher motivation (OECD, 2023). These forms of recognition reinforce teachers' sense of competence, boost morale, and create a supportive work climate.

Research suggests that a balanced approach, combining financial and non-financial incentives, is most effective in motivating teachers (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Murwanashyaka et al., 2024). Financial rewards address extrinsic needs, such as salary and job security, while non-financial incentives satisfy intrinsic needs, including recognition, belonging, and professional growth. Together, they contribute to sustained motivation, higher job satisfaction, and reduced turnover, especially in schools facing resource challenges.

Moreover, consistent recognition and meaningful incentives encourage teachers to innovate in their teaching methods, participate actively in school initiatives, and engage more deeply with learners. Such strategies not only improve individual teacher performance but also strengthen the overall school climate and learning outcomes. According to Self-Determination Theory, teachers are more motivated when their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Vansteenkiste et al., 2021). When teachers feel that they have choice in their work, believe they are capable, and experience supportive relationships, they are more likely to show strong commitment and professional engagement.

However, the theory also explains that incentives can have different effects on motivation. Rewards and incentives may weaken autonomous motivation when they are experienced as controlling or as pressure to comply with instructions. In such cases, teachers may work only to obtain the reward rather than from personal commitment. In contrast, incentives can strengthen motivation when they are provided as recognition that affirms teachers' competence, effort, and contribution. When incentives are informative rather than controlling, they support a sense of professional value and encourage continued engagement (Deci et al., 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

2.4 Challenges that Hinder Teacher Motivation

Teachers face many challenges that reduce their motivation and affect their ability to perform effectively. These challenges can be grouped into (i) structural or system-level factors, (ii) school-level leadership and management factors, and (iii) classroom-level demands.

Structural and System-Level Challenges

At the system level, low salaries remain a serious concern in many developing countries, including Lesotho. When teachers feel that their pay does not match their workload or the increasing cost of living, their morale and sense of professional value decline. Inadequate pay can also lead to absenteeism and teachers leaving the profession, which disrupts school stability and negatively affects learner achievement. Limited opportunities for career advancement also weaken motivation. When teachers perceive few chances for promotion, further study, or professional growth, they may feel stuck in their positions with little hope for development (Amoako, 2022). This lack of progression reduces long-term commitment and enthusiasm for the profession.

School-Level Leadership and Management Challenges

School-level conditions also influence motivation. A lack of teaching materials and poor infrastructure can make it difficult for teachers to deliver effective lessons. Shortages of textbooks, outdated equipment, and limited instructional resources restrict teaching strategies and reduce opportunities for innovation (UNESCO, 2023).

In addition, poor infrastructure such as overcrowded classrooms, unreliable electricity, and inadequate sanitation creates stressful working conditions and reduces teachers' sense of institutional support (World Bank, 2022). When leadership fails to address these issues or provide adequate support, teachers may feel undervalued and discouraged, which further weakens motivation.

Classroom-Level Demands

At the classroom level, heavy workloads and large class sizes place significant pressure on teachers. Teachers often manage lesson preparation, marking, administrative duties, supervision, and extracurricular activities alongside their teaching responsibilities. Excessive workload contributes to stress, exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction, weakening teachers' sense of competence and professional fulfilment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Large classes make it difficult to provide individual support, manage behaviour effectively, and assess learner progress. Overcrowded classrooms increase pressure and reduce teachers' confidence in their instructional effectiveness, which can lower both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (OECD, 2023).

Impact on Motivation and Teaching Quality

These challenges weaken teachers' autonomy, competence, and sense of belonging, which are the key psychological needs identified in Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020). They also reduce teachers' self-efficacy and positive expectations about their work, as explained in Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2019). When teachers face excessive workloads, limited resources, and insufficient recognition, they often feel unsupported and undervalued. This not only lowers motivation but also affects teaching quality, learner outcomes, and overall school performance (UNESCO, 2023).

2.5 Support Mechanisms to Strengthen Teacher Motivation

Although teachers face many challenges, research identifies several support mechanisms that strengthen motivation and improve professional performance. The literature highlights five main categories of support: leadership practices, continuous professional development (CPD) and mentoring, collegial collaboration, wellbeing support mechanisms and resource mobilisation.

Leadership Practices

Supportive leadership plays a central role in strengthening teacher motivation. Leaders who provide clear guidance, constructive feedback, and professional autonomy help teachers feel trusted and valued. When teachers are involved in decision-making and receive supportive supervision, their sense of competence and professional commitment increases (OECD, 2023). Leadership that supports autonomy, competence, and collaboration aligns with need-supportive practices shown to enhance motivation and instructional quality (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Continuous Professional Development and Mentoring

Meaningful professional development is a key strategy for strengthening teacher motivation. Continuous training, workshops, and in-service programmes help teachers update their subject knowledge, improve classroom practice, and learn new instructional strategies (UNESCO, 2023). Effective CPD is ongoing, practical, and relevant to teachers' daily work (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021). Mentoring programmes further

support professional growth by guiding less experienced teachers, building confidence, and strengthening instructional skills.

Collegial Collaboration

Teacher collaboration also plays an important role in enhancing motivation. Participation in professional learning communities, team teaching, and peer observation allows teachers to share ideas and reflect on their practice (Vangrieken et al., 2021). Collaboration reduces professional isolation and strengthens a sense of belonging among teachers. This sense of relatedness is a key psychological need that supports motivation and resilience (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Wellbeing Support

Support mechanisms that address teacher wellbeing contribute significantly to motivation and retention. Emotional support from colleagues and administrators, manageable workloads, and access to counselling or stress-management programmes help teachers cope with workplace pressures. Teachers who feel emotionally supported are more resilient and better able to manage classroom challenges and workload demands (World Bank, 2022).

Recognition and Incentives

Recognition and incentives also support motivation. Teachers who receive acknowledgment through praise, awards, certificates, promotions, or financial incentives

feel valued and respected (Gillet et al., 2021). Both financial and non-financial recognition improve morale and reinforce professional identity. A balanced approach that combines intrinsic recognition (appreciation and respect) with extrinsic rewards (bonuses, promotions) is associated with sustained engagement and reduced turnover (Ryan & Deci, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

Resource Mobilisation and Instructional Support

Access to adequate teaching materials, technology, and instructional support enables teachers to implement effective teaching strategies. When schools provide sufficient resources and structured support for new technologies or innovative methods, teachers experience greater competence and psychological satisfaction, which improves motivation and instructional quality over time (World Bank, 2022).

Supportive School Culture

A supportive school culture that promotes open communication, collaboration, and shared leadership further strengthens teacher motivation. When teachers feel their voices are heard and their contributions valued, they develop a stronger professional identity and commitment to their work (OECD, 2023). Such environments are associated with improved student outcomes, reduced burnout, and increased teacher retention (UNESCO, 2023).

2.6 Applied Theoretical Framework: Integrating Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Researchers often study teacher motivation using a single theory. However, combining Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) provides a more complete understanding of how teachers think, feel, and behave. SDT explains motivation by focusing on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). When these needs are met, teachers develop an inner desire to teach, a sense of purpose, and a strong emotional connection to their profession. Teachers who experience autonomy in lesson planning, feel competent in their instructional skills, and maintain supportive relationships with colleagues and learners are more likely to remain motivated and committed (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

SDT therefore explains the quality of motivation, distinguishing between autonomous motivation (teaching because it is meaningful and valued) and controlled motivation (teaching due to pressure or external demands). SCT complements this perspective by emphasising the role of beliefs, social experiences, and environmental influences on behaviour. Central concepts such as self-efficacy, observational learning, and reinforcement explain how teachers' confidence and professional engagement develop within their working context (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). For example, when teachers observe peers successfully using new teaching strategies or receive constructive feedback from school leaders, their belief in their own capabilities strengthens. This increased self-efficacy encourages them to adopt similar practices and persist when challenges arise (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). SCT highlights the reciprocal interaction between personal beliefs, behaviour, and environmental conditions.

Complementarity of SDT and SCT

SDT and SCT complement each other in a number of important ways. SDT explains why teachers are motivated by examining the quality of their motivation and the fulfilment of psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2020). SCT explains how teachers develop confidence and sustain effort through self-efficacy beliefs and reciprocal interactions with their environment (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Together, they show that motivation is shaped by both internal needs and external social conditions.

Integrative Proposition

This study adopts the proposition that need-supportive environments – those that promote autonomy, competence, and relatedness – strengthen teachers' autonomous motivation (SDT). At the same time, such environments can build teachers' self-efficacy (SCT) through positive feedback, modelling, and successful experiences. Increased self-efficacy then influences persistence, instructional innovation, and professional behaviour. In this way, psychological need satisfaction and efficacy beliefs operate together to sustain teacher motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021).

Relevance to the Study Context

The combined framework is particularly relevant in contexts such as Lesotho, where teachers often work under conditions of limited resources, heavy workloads, and evolving educational policies. Integrating SDT and SCT allows the study to examine how teachers' internal drive interacts with external conditions, providing deeper insight into both motivational barriers and support systems (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). It also helps identify strategies that may strengthen motivation, including autonomy-supportive leadership, adequate resources, peer collaboration, and opportunities for professional growth (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023).

Implications for Data Collection and Analysis

This integrated framework informs both data collection and analysis in the study. Interview and focus group questions are guided by SDT constructs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) and SCT constructs (self-efficacy, modelling, feedback, environmental support). In Chapter 4, the coding and thematic analysis are structured around these dimensions, allowing the researcher to examine how psychological needs, efficacy beliefs, and contextual factors interact to shape teacher motivation.

By combining SDT and SCT, the study recognises teacher motivation as a dynamic process shaped by internal psychological needs and external environmental influences. This integrated perspective provides a strong foundation for understanding and improving teacher motivation and professional practice.

2.6.1 How SDT and SCT Interact: The Dual-Pathway Model

The interaction between Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) can be explained through a dual-pathway model that shows how internal psychological processes and external environmental influences combine to shape teacher motivation. This model proposes that motivation develops through two interconnected pathways: a psychological need-satisfaction pathway and a self-efficacy pathway.

The first pathway is derived from SDT and focuses on the satisfaction of teachers' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Autonomy refers to teachers having professional discretion in lesson planning and instructional decisions. Competence refers to teachers feeling capable and effective in delivering instruction and managing classroom tasks. Relatedness refers to supportive relationships with colleagues, learners, and school leaders. When these needs are fulfilled, teachers experience autonomous motivation, meaning they engage in teaching with interest, commitment, and a strong sense of purpose.

The second pathway comes from SCT and centres on self-efficacy, which refers to teachers' beliefs in their ability to successfully organise and perform teaching tasks (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy develops through successful teaching experiences, observing colleagues implement effective strategies, receiving constructive feedback, and working in supportive environments with adequate resources. Teachers with strong self-efficacy are more confident, persistent when facing challenges, and more willing to implement new instructional strategies (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

These two pathways work together and strengthen each other. When teachers feel confident in their skills, their sense of competence grows, which increases motivation according to SDT. At the same time, when school leaders set clear expectations,

demonstrate good practices, and provide necessary resources, teachers' self-efficacy improves. Higher self-efficacy then helps meet teachers' psychological needs by making them feel capable, supported, and connected at work. In this way, supportive school environments, as described in SCT, enhance the internal motivation emphasized in SDT.

A practical example illustrates how the dual pathways operate together in schools. When leadership is autonomy-supportive and involves teachers in decision-making, they experience autonomy satisfaction, which strengthens autonomous motivation. At the same time, when leaders and colleagues model effective teaching practices and provide constructive feedback, teachers' self-efficacy improves, increasing persistence and willingness to adopt new methods. Through this interaction, teachers become more engaged, invest greater effort in their work, and maintain stronger commitment to the profession.

The interaction of these pathways produces important motivational outcomes, including stronger professional engagement, higher job satisfaction, increased effort, and a greater likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. This dual-pathway model therefore demonstrates that teacher motivation is shaped both by teachers' internal experiences and by the external conditions that influence their daily work.



Fig 2.6.1: Dual-Pathway Motivation Model (SDT + SCT) -Adapted from Deci and Ryan (2000), Ryan and Deci (2017), Bandura (1997), and Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020)

Figure 2.6.1 depicts the conceptual model showing how teachers' psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and self-efficacy jointly influence teacher motivation. The pathway from the school environment to the two theoretical frameworks, culminating in the motivational outcomes, is clearly demonstrated. The features of the figure are elucidated further in the section below.

2.6.2 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model guiding this study illustrates how the school environment shapes teacher motivation through the interaction of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). At the top of the model is the school environment, which comprises leadership practices, availability of teaching resources, professional development opportunities, and recognition of teacher efforts (OECD, 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2020). These environmental factors directly influence teachers' self-efficacy, access to role models, and the quality of social and professional support they receive, which are central concepts in SCT. When teachers observe effective practices, receive constructive feedback, and work under supportive leadership, their confidence in their abilities increases, enhancing their motivation to engage in teaching (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021).

This enhanced self-efficacy then contributes to the satisfaction of basic psychological needs outlined in SDT. Teachers who perceive support in their environment are more likely to experience autonomy, which allows them to make independent decisions in lesson planning and classroom management (Reeve, 2020). They also develop competence by mastering teaching tasks and handling classroom challenges successfully, and relatedness through positive relationships with colleagues, school leaders, students, and parents (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). Fulfilment of these psychological needs strengthens intrinsic motivation and promotes professional satisfaction, resilience, and long-term commitment to teaching.

Furthermore, the model highlights that teacher motivation is a dynamic process. Environmental factors do not influence motivation in isolation; rather, their impact is mediated by teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy and the degree to which their

psychological needs are satisfied. Teachers who feel capable, autonomous, and connected are more likely to engage actively in instructional practices, participate in school initiatives, adopt innovative teaching methods, and remain committed to their profession (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

In this framework, motivation is therefore understood as a process that begins with external environmental conditions, moves through personal cognitive evaluations, and results in the fulfilment of intrinsic psychological needs, ultimately influencing long-term teaching behaviour and professional growth (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2020). This conceptual model provides a foundation for understanding the interplay between external support and internal psychological processes in shaping teacher motivation in Lesotho's secondary schools.

The figure below presents a conceptual model of teacher motivation, illustrating how the school environment interacts with Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to influence motivational outcomes. The first arrow, from School Environment to SCT, shows that leadership practices, availability of resources, professional development opportunities, and recognition create the conditions in which teachers develop confidence in their abilities. When school leaders provide guidance, model effective teaching practices, and ensure access to instructional materials, teachers' self-efficacy is strengthened, consistent with SCT principles that emphasise the influence of social and environmental factors on beliefs and behaviour (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). The second arrow, from SCT to SDT, represents the way increased self-efficacy supports the satisfaction of psychological needs.

As teachers feel more capable and supported, they experience greater autonomy in lesson planning, enhanced competence in instructional tasks, and stronger relatedness with colleagues and learners. This operationalises SDT constructs, linking observable

support mechanisms in the school to teachers' internal motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Van den Broeck et al., 2021).

The final arrow, from SDT to Motivational Outcomes, demonstrates that when psychological needs are met, teachers exhibit higher engagement, stronger commitment, and a greater likelihood of remaining in the profession. For data collection, this model guides the formulation of interview and focus group questions, for example, asking teachers about leadership support, access to resources, and experiences of competence and autonomy. During analysis, thematic coding can be aligned with each construct in the model, allowing the researcher to examine how school environment factors, self-efficacy, and psychological need satisfaction interact to produce motivational outcomes. By clearly defining each arrow, the model provides a systematic framework for understanding and measuring the dual influence of internal and external factors on teacher motivation.

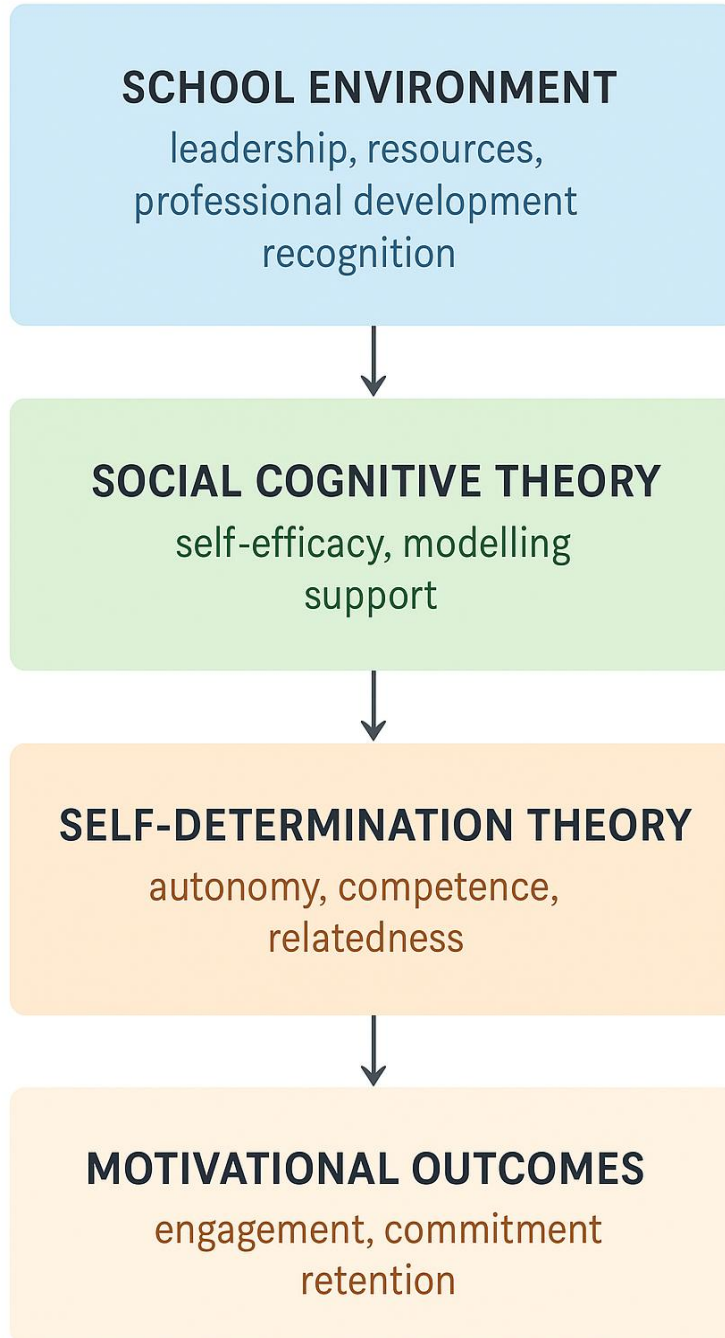


Figure 2.6.2 conceptual model of teacher motivation: Dual-Pathway Model (SDT + SCT). Deci and Ryan (2000), Ryan and Deci (2017), Bandura (1997), and Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020)

Figure 2.6.2– adapted from Deci and Ryan (2000), Ryan and Deci (2017), Bandura (1997), and Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020) – shows the conceptual model of teacher motivation: Dual-Pathway Model (SDT + SCT). This conceptual model illustrates how teachers' psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and self-efficacy jointly influence motivation. 2.6.4 Link to Research Questions The integrated Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) framework directly supports the research questions of this study by offering a broad understanding of what shapes teacher motivation. First, the two theories help explain both internal and external influences on teachers' motivation. SDT focuses on internal motivation, such as enjoyment of teaching, personal growth, and the feeling of being capable.

These internal drivers encourage teachers to stay committed to their work (Ryan & Deci, 2020). SCT adds an understanding of how external conditions, including leadership support, modelling by experienced teachers, and availability of teaching resources, influence teachers' confidence and behaviour (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Second, the framework helps explain how the school environment affects teacher motivation. SCT concepts such as modelling, feedback, and supportive structures show that teachers' self-efficacy improves when they receive guidance, observe effective colleagues, and experience constructive interactions (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021).

SDT shows that when teachers' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met, intrinsic motivation becomes stronger; leading to positive work attitudes (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Third, the framework clarifies how motivation is reduced when school conditions are poor or when teachers' psychological needs are unmet. For example, limited teaching resources, weak leadership, heavy workload, and lack of recognition lower both self-efficacy and need satisfaction. These challenges often result in reduced motivation, higher stress, and lower job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Furthermore, the extended SDT–SCT framework shows how support systems can strengthen teacher motivation. SCT highlights the value of professional development, mentoring, modelling, and leadership guidance in improving teachers’ confidence and teaching skills (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). SDT demonstrates that such support also increases autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which help sustain intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Finally, the combined theoretical approach helps identify practical strategies to improve teacher motivation. Effective strategies are those that address both external conditions such as resources, leadership support, and structured professional development and internal needs such as recognition, autonomy, and opportunities to build competence (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023). By connecting theory and practice, the SDT–SCT framework strengthens the study’s ability to answer the research questions and propose realistic solutions for improving teacher motivation in schools.

Table 2.6.1: Research Questions, Theoretical Constructs, Data Sources, and Expected Themes

Research Question	Relevant Constructs (SDT / SCT)	Data Source	Expected Theme Labels

What intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence teacher motivation?	SDT: Autonomy, competence, relatedness; SCT: Self-efficacy, modelling, reinforcement	Interviews & FGDs	Intrinsic drivers; extrinsic conditions; teacher confidence; leadership support
What challenges reduce motivation among teachers?	SDT: Need frustration; SCT: Low self-efficacy, weak support systems	Interviews & FGDs	Workload challenges; lack of resources; limited recognition; poor leadership
What support structures enhance teacher motivation?	SDT: Competence support, autonomy support; SCT: Mentoring, modelling, guided practice	Interviews & FGDs	Mentorship; professional development; leadership guidance
What strategies can improve teacher motivation in schools?	SDT: Intrinsic need satisfaction; SCT: Strengthening self-efficacy and support	Interviews & FGDs	Enhanced support systems; motivation-building strategies; improved working conditions

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of literature on teacher motivation, focusing on the factors that influence teachers' engagement, commitment, and performance in secondary schools. The review identified both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that shape teacher motivation. Intrinsic factors refer to elements that come from within the teacher, such as personal satisfaction, sense of purpose, and fulfilment of psychological needs, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). These factors are important because they encourage teachers to carry out their responsibilities with commitment and enthusiasm, even when external rewards are limited.

Extrinsic factors refer to external conditions that influence teacher motivation, including leadership styles, working conditions, salaries, recognition, and opportunities for professional development (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). These factors are important because they provide the support, resources, and working environment needed for teachers to perform their duties effectively.

The chapter also discussed the major challenges that reduce teacher motivation, such as low salaries, shortage of teaching resources, heavy workloads, limited opportunities for professional development, and poor administrative support. These challenges may result in teacher burnout, absenteeism, low morale, and reduced classroom performance, which can negatively affect learners' academic outcomes (Sokal et al., 2020; Pressley, 2021). To address these challenges, the literature highlighted several strategies that can improve teacher motivation. These include mentorship programmes, opportunities for career growth, supportive leadership, recognition of teachers' achievements, and the creation of positive and collaborative working environments.

The chapter further presented an integrated theoretical framework based on Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Self Determination Theory explains how teachers' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness influence their motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Social Cognitive Theory complements this by explaining how teachers' beliefs about their abilities, together with environmental influences such as leadership and school support, affect their behaviour and motivation (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). By combining these two theories, the framework shows that teacher motivation in Lesotho's secondary schools is influenced by both personal and environmental factors. This integrated perspective provides a broader understanding of how teacher motivation can be supported and sustained in educational contexts similar to Lesotho.

The review also identified gaps in the existing literature, particularly the limited qualitative studies in Lesotho that explore teachers' lived experiences and perspectives on motivation. Because these gaps require detailed and context specific understanding, the integrated SDT and SCT framework further supports the use of a qualitative multiple case study design. This approach, together with semi structured interviews and focus group discussions, allows the researcher to explore teachers' experiences, beliefs, and school environments in depth (Creswell & Poth, 2024; Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Having reviewed the literature and theoretical framework, the next chapter presents the research methodology, including the research design, sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework used to examine the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing teacher motivation in two secondary schools situated in Maseru, Lesotho. It describes the research paradigm, approach, design, participant selection procedures, data collection techniques, analytical strategies, trustworthiness measures, and ethical considerations that guided the study. All methodological choices were informed by the integrated lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which together provided a comprehensive perspective for understanding the various internal and environmental influences shaping teacher motivation within the selected schools.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The study was anchored in the interpretivist paradigm, which recognises that reality is socially constructed and shaped by individuals' subjective experiences and interactions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This paradigm assumes that knowledge is not fixed or objective but emerges from the meanings people assign to their experiences within specific contexts. Because teacher motivation is influenced by personal beliefs, relationships with colleagues and learners, leadership practices, and everyday school experiences, interpretivism provided an appropriate foundation for exploring these lived realities in depth.

By adopting an interpretivist approach, the researcher was able to access teachers' perspectives, interpretations, and the subjective meanings they attach to their work. This

allowed for a deeper understanding of the contextual and environmental conditions that affect motivation, such as school culture, professional support, recognition, and resource availability. The paradigm also acknowledges that the researcher is part of the knowledge construction process, as their engagement with participants, observations, and interpretations contribute to understanding the phenomena under study (Schwandt, 2015).

Interpretivism aligns closely with qualitative research methods, such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, which enable participants to express their experiences in their own words and allow the researcher to explore emerging insights through probing and clarification. This co-constructed understanding ensures that the findings reflect the complexity and diversity of teachers' motivational experiences rather than imposing preconceived assumptions (Patton, 2015). In this way, the interpretivist paradigm provided a robust framework for examining teacher motivation in the two selected secondary schools in Maseru, capturing the interplay between personal, social, and institutional factors that shape motivation.

3.3 Research Approach

A qualitative approach was adopted because it provides opportunities for in-depth exploration of complex human experiences that cannot be adequately captured through numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Teacher motivation is a multidimensional phenomenon, deeply connected to how teachers interpret their professional identities, make sense of challenges, and engage with their work environments. By focusing on participants' lived experiences, qualitative inquiry enabled the researcher to obtain rich, detailed accounts of the factors that influence motivation, including both internal psychological processes and external contextual conditions.

The qualitative approach also offered flexibility during data collection, allowing participants to express their experiences in their own words while giving the researcher the opportunity to probe further when clarity or deeper understanding was required (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This flexibility was essential for exploring context-specific issues such as school climate, interpersonal relationships, leadership support, professional development opportunities, and teachers' personal beliefs about their work. Unlike quantitative methods, which often reduce experiences to measurable variables, qualitative research allowed the study to uncover the underlying reasons, emotions, and processes associated with teacher motivation (Nowell & Albrecht, 2019).

Moreover, the qualitative approach facilitated the use of multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, which enabled triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach was particularly appropriate for understanding the nuances of teacher motivation in the two selected schools, as it captured not only what motivated teachers but also how and why these factors influenced their daily professional practices. By adopting a qualitative methodology, the study generated contextually grounded insights necessary for informing interventions, policies, and leadership practices aimed at enhancing teacher motivation in Lesotho's secondary schools.

3.4 Research Design

The study employed a multiple case study design involving two secondary schools –one urban and one semi-urban. Case study research is particularly suitable for producing a holistic understanding of real-life situations within their natural contexts (Yin, 2018). This design enabled the researcher to explore how contextual differences across the two settings influenced teacher motivation.

Schools vary in leadership practices, resource availability, organisational culture, workload demands, and interpersonal relationships. These contextual differences significantly shape teachers' perceptions of their work and their motivation to engage effectively. By examining two contrasting schools, the study was able to identify both shared and divergent motivational patterns. The use of multiple cases also strengthened the credibility of the findings, as recurring themes across both schools indicated meaningful patterns rather than isolated experiences (Harrison et al., 2017).

The design was guided by an integrated framework drawing on SDT and SCT. SDT emphasises psychological needs such as autonomy, competence and relatedness, while SCT focuses on self-efficacy and the influence of environmental factors such as leadership support. This combined framework ensured a balanced examination of both internal and external influences on teacher motivation and informed the development of interview guides, focus group prompts and analytical decisions.

3.5 Selection of Participants (Sampling)

Purposeful sampling was used to select participants who possessed rich, relevant insights into the phenomenon of teacher motivation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Teachers were chosen because their experiences positioned them to offer meaningful perspectives on motivational influences within their respective schools. The study focused specifically on Social Science and Life Sciences teachers, including those teaching Life Skills, Religious Studies and Biology. The nature of these subjects often requires teachers to engage closely with learners' behaviour, personal challenges and value systems, making teacher-student interactions central to their work. Such relational demands have implications for teacher motivation (Schunk et al., 2014).

Teachers with more than ten years of experience were selected because their long-term involvement in education enabled them to reflect deeply on motivational challenges and enabling conditions within schools. A total of eighteen teachers participated in the study, with nine selected from the semi-urban school and nine from the urban school. Each school contributed a principal, one head of department, and seven subject teachers. Teachers from Grades 8 to 11 were included to ensure a comprehensive understanding of motivational influences across various teaching levels.

Principals at both schools assisted in identifying teachers who met the selection criteria and who could provide relevant and insightful contributions. Among the eighteen teachers, seven were male and eleven were female. Thirteen of the teachers held bachelor's degrees while the remaining five held diplomas. All participants had more than ten years of teaching experience. Across both schools, eight teachers taught Life Skills, seven taught Religious Studies and three taught Biology.

Table 3.5:1: Biographical Information on Participants

Category	Secondary School A (semi-urban)	Secondary School B (urban)	Total
Number of Participants	9	9	18
Gender Distribution	Male: 4, Female: 5	Male: 3, Female: 6	Male: 7, Female: 11
Qualifications	Bachelor's Degree: 7, Diploma: 2	Bachelor's Degree: 6, Diploma: 3	Bachelor's Degree: 13, Diploma: 5
Teaching	Over 10 years of	Over 10 years of	Over 10 years of

Category	Secondary School A (semi-urban)	Secondary School B (urban)	Total
Experience	experience	experience	experience
Subject Diversity	Life Skills: 5, Religious Studies: 3, Biology: 1	Life Skills: 3, Religious Studies: 4, Biology: 2	Life Skills: 8, Religious Studies: 7, Biology: 3

3.6 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, methods that allow participants to describe their experiences, beliefs, and emotions in an open and flexible manner (Adams, 2023; Kallio et al., 2016). These approaches were particularly suitable for the interpretivist paradigm and the qualitative nature of the study, as they enabled the researcher to explore participants' perspectives in depth and understand the meanings they attach to their professional experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity to gather detailed, individual insights from school leaders, including principals and heads of departments, on the factors that influence teacher motivation. The flexibility of this method allowed participants to elaborate on their responses, clarify points, and reflect on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, challenges, and support mechanisms within their schools (Patton, 2015).

Focus group discussions complemented the interviews by enabling teachers to interact and share collective experiences, compare perspectives, and discuss issues in a collaborative setting. This method also allowed the researcher to observe group dynamics and how teachers' experiences intersect within their professional environment, providing additional context for understanding motivational factors (Morgan, 2019).

The combination of these data collection methods allowed for triangulation, which strengthened the credibility of the study by ensuring that findings were supported by multiple sources of evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data collection was conducted after obtaining ethical approval and informed consent from participants, and all sessions were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim to preserve the richness of participants' responses. These procedures ensured that the study captured authentic, detailed, and context-specific insights into teacher motivation in the two Maseru secondary schools.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four key participants: the principal and the head of department (HOD) from each of the two schools. This method was selected because it provides flexibility for participants to share detailed and personal accounts of their experiences, while allowing the researcher to probe for clarification or explore emerging ideas in greater depth (Adams, 2023; Kallio et al., 2016).

The interview questions were guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), focusing on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Participants were asked about their experiences related to autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as well as self-efficacy and the influence of environmental conditions, including leadership support, workload, and availability of teaching resources (Ryan &

Deci, 2000; Bandura, 2018). Additional questions explored challenges that affect teacher motivation, such as policy inconsistencies, heavy administrative duties, and limited professional development, as well as the support mechanisms currently in place within the schools to sustain teacher engagement and commitment.

Each interview lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes. With the participants' informed consent, the interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy and completeness of the data. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim, preserving the participants' wording, tone, and meaning. Field notes were also taken during the interviews to capture non-verbal cues, expressions, and additional context that could enrich the interpretation of responses.

Although the sample size was relatively small, the semi-structured interviews yielded rich and nuanced insights into the individual experiences of school leaders, highlighting how leadership practices and personal approaches to motivation shape teacher engagement within different school environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The method allowed participants to discuss sensitive issues openly, reflecting on both successes and challenges in motivating teachers, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing teacher motivation from a leadership perspective (Patton, 2015). (see Appendix F –semi-structured interview guide).

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions

Two focus group discussions were conducted, each consisting of seven teachers, making a total of fourteen participants. Focus group discussion was chosen as a data collection method because it allows participants to share experiences, compare perspectives, and reflect collectively on issues influencing their motivation (Patton, 2015). The interactive nature of focus groups enabled the researcher to observe group

dynamics, how participants responded to each other, and the ways in which shared experiences influenced their understanding of motivation within their professional contexts. The discussion questions were guided by the theoretical frameworks of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), addressing areas such as student behaviour, teacher-student relationships, interactions among colleagues, leadership support, professional development opportunities, recognition, and the overall school environment. This alignment ensured that the discussions generated rich data directly relevant to the research objectives (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Bandura, 2018).

Each session lasted approximately one hour, allowing sufficient time for in-depth discussion while maintaining participant engagement. Participants were encouraged to share personal experiences and provide examples to illustrate their perspectives, which enriched the depth and quality of the data collected. Notes were taken during the discussions to capture non-verbal cues, group dynamics, and significant points that might not have been fully conveyed in the audio recordings (see Appendix G – Focus Group Discussions guide).

As with the semi-structured interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understood the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw, and measures to protect confidentiality. Sessions were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of participants' responses. Ethical approval for the data collection process was obtained prior to fieldwork, ensuring that the study complied with established ethical standards in educational research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Overall, the focus group discussions provided a valuable platform for exploring teacher motivation in a collaborative setting, allowing the researcher to identify shared and

divergent experiences, and gain a holistic understanding of the factors that influence motivation in the two secondary schools (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

3.7 Data Analysis

Data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis framework, which provides a systematic and rigorous method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. This approach was suitable for the study because it allowed the researcher to capture both the depth and complexity of teachers' experiences regarding motivation.

The analysis began with the familiarisation stage, during which the researcher repeatedly read and re-read the interview and focus group transcripts to immerse her in the data and gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives. Notes and initial observations were recorded to aid reflection and identify potential patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

During the coding stage, meaningful units of data were highlighted and assigned labels that reflected key ideas. The coding process was both inductive, allowing new concepts to emerge from the data, and deductive, linking codes to theoretical constructs drawn from Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Bandura, 2018). This approach ensured that the analysis was both data-driven and theoretically informed.

After coding, potential themes were generated by clustering related codes into broader categories that reflected patterns across the dataset. Themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure that they were coherent, distinct, and consistently represented the data

from both schools. During this stage, some themes were combined or separated to enhance clarity and accuracy.

In the next stage, themes were clearly defined and named to capture the essence of each one, such as autonomy, competence, leadership support, environmental constraints, collegial relationships, and recognition. Each theme was supported by illustrative quotations from participants to provide evidence and context for the findings. The final stage involved producing a detailed written account that described and interpreted each theme, linking the findings to the study's theoretical framework and research objectives. A coding structure was developed to show how key themes emerged and how intrinsic, extrinsic, social, and contextual factors interacted to influence teacher motivation. This rigorous process enhanced the reliability, credibility, and transparency of the analysis, providing a strong foundation for the discussion of findings (Nowell et al., 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 3.7.1: Coding tree

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes
Freedom to teach	Autonomy	Intrinsic Factors
Confidence in skills	Competence	Intrinsic Factors
Principal support	Leadership	Extrinsic Factors
Lack of resources	Constraints	Demotivation
Teamwork with peers	Relatedness	School Climate

The figure below provides a visual overview of Braun and Clarke's six-step thematic analysis process, showing the sequential phases from familiarisation to producing the report. Each step guided the systematic analysis of the qualitative data and ensured that the findings were credible and well-organised.

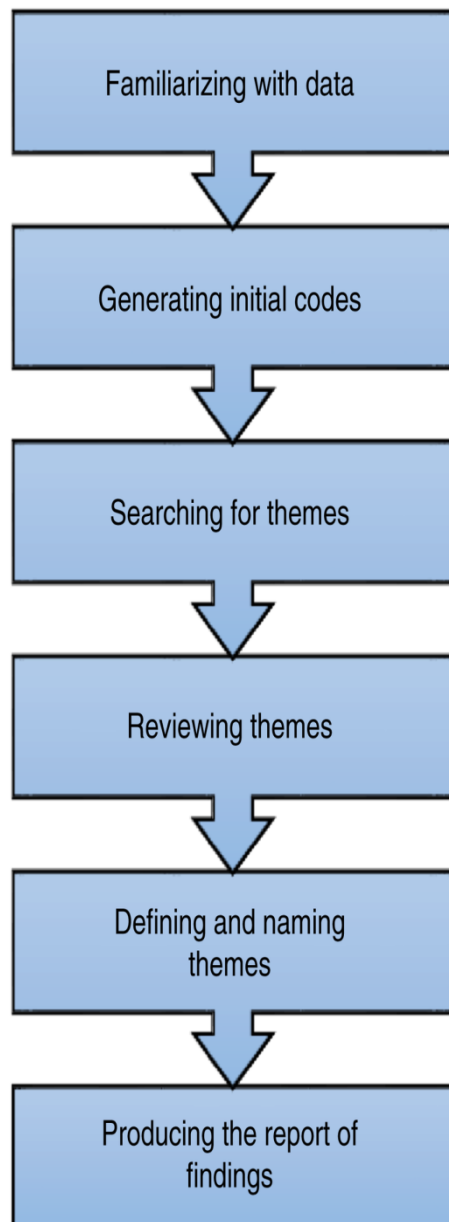


Figure 3.7.3: Braun and Clarke's Six-Step Thematic Analysis Process

Source: Braun & Clarke (2006)

3.8 Measures of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the extent to which qualitative findings accurately and authentically represent participants' experiences and perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Ensuring trustworthiness is essential in qualitative research because it provides confidence that the findings are credible, applicable, consistent, and neutral. This study followed established qualitative research guidelines by addressing the four key criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Nowell et al., 2017).

To enhance trustworthiness, the researcher implemented multiple strategies. Credibility was ensured through triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement with the participants, allowing verification of findings and a deeper understanding of the context. Transferability was achieved by providing rich, detailed descriptions of the research settings, participants, and contextual factors, enabling readers to determine the applicability of the findings to other similar contexts. Dependability was strengthened through peer debriefing, which provided an external, critical review of the research process and findings to ensure consistency. Finally, confirmability was maintained by grounding interpretations in participants' direct quotations and experiences while using reflexive journaling to acknowledge and minimise researcher bias.

These measures collectively ensured that the study's findings were trustworthy, reflecting the true experiences of teachers and providing a reliable basis for interpretation, discussion, and recommendations (Shenton, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By addressing all four criteria, the research adhered to high qualitative standards

and contributed meaningful, contextually relevant insights into teacher motivation in Maseru secondary schools.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility was enhanced through multiple strategies that ensured the research findings accurately reflected the participants' experiences. Triangulation was employed by comparing data obtained from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, which allowed the researcher to cross-check information and identify consistent patterns across different sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Member checking was also conducted, enabling participants to review transcriptions and preliminary interpretations to confirm their accuracy and provide clarification where needed. This process helped reduce misinterpretations and increased confidence in the validity of the findings.

Prolonged engagement with the schools further strengthened credibility, as spending extended time in the research setting allowed the researcher to build trust with participants, understand the school culture, and observe day-to-day practices influencing teacher motivation. Additionally, maintaining reflective notes and field memos helped the researcher document insights, emerging patterns, and contextual factors, providing a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study. These combined strategies ensured that the findings were grounded in authentic experiences and enhanced the overall trustworthiness of the study (Shenton, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017).

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability was achieved by providing rich, detailed descriptions of the two school contexts, including information on their location, size, student population, teacher

composition, and available resources. By exploring the differences between the urban and semi-urban schools, the study highlighted how varying environmental, cultural, and infrastructural factors influence teacher motivation. These detailed contextual accounts allow readers to assess the relevance and applicability of the findings to other schools or educational settings with similar characteristics. Furthermore, including participants' direct quotations and examples of teaching practices enhanced the depth of understanding and provided concrete evidence of how motivational factors operate in different contexts. This approach supports transferability by enabling other researchers, policymakers, and educators to consider whether the study's insights are applicable to their own contexts (Shenton, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability was strengthened by implementing procedures that ensure the research process is consistent and could be replicated in similar contexts. Peer debriefing was a key strategy, in which an English Language teacher reviewed the research design, data collection procedures, and interpretations of findings. This provided an external, critical perspective, helping to identify potential inconsistencies or overlooked biases in the methodology. The process of peer review also allowed the researcher to reflect on methodological decisions, justify analytical choices, and make adjustments to maintain a consistent and logical approach throughout the study. In addition, the study documented all steps of data collection and analysis in a systematic manner, which further supports dependability and transparency. These strategies collectively ensured that the study's procedures were stable and the findings were reliable, enhancing the trustworthiness of the research (Shenton, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017).

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability was ensured by using strategies to reduce researcher bias and make sure the findings reflect the participants' views. The researcher kept a reflexive journal to record personal assumptions, beliefs, and possible biases that might affect how the data were interpreted. This practice allowed the researcher to remain self-aware and critically evaluate decisions made throughout data collection and analysis. Additionally, the study relied heavily on direct quotations from participants, providing concrete evidence for each theme and ensuring that interpretations were grounded in the actual data rather than the researcher's subjective views. Audit trails – including detailed records of coding, theme development, and data analysis procedures – were maintained to allow external reviewers to verify the research process and decisions. These measures collectively enhanced the study's neutrality and objectivity, supporting the trustworthiness of the findings and confirming that conclusions were based on participants' perspectives rather than the researcher's influence (Nowell et al., 2017; Shenton, 2004).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the UNISA College of Education Research Ethics Committee, (see Appendix E), and permission to conduct research in the selected schools was obtained from the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training (see Appendix B). Written informed consent was secured from school principals and participating teachers before data collection commenced (see Appendices C and D). Participants were informed of the study's purpose, their voluntary participation, their right to withdraw at any time and the intended use of their data. Confidentiality was protected through the use of pseudonyms, and digital files were securely stored with restricted access. These measures ensured compliance with ethical standards for conducting research with human participants.

In addition, participants were assured that refusing to participate or withdrawing would not affect their professional roles in any way (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They were given enough time to read the consent forms and ask questions before agreeing to take part (Kumar, 2019). Interviews and discussions were conducted in a respectful manner to avoid emotional discomfort, and participants were free to skip any question they did not wish to answer (Orb et al., 2001). These steps further protected participants' dignity, safety, and rights throughout the research process.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter explained the research methods used to study the factors that influence teacher motivation in two secondary schools. The study was guided by an interpretivist paradigm, which recognises that knowledge is constructed through people's experiences, meanings, and interpretations. Based on this paradigm, an interpretivist, qualitative multiple case study design was used to provide a deep understanding of teachers' views and everyday experiences. The study was informed by the combined Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). These theories helped the researcher examine both internal psychological factors and external environmental influences that shape teacher motivation. Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied.

Teachers with at least five years of teaching experience were included to ensure rich and informed insights, while teachers with fewer than five years of experience were excluded because the study focused on experienced practitioners who have a deeper understanding of motivational challenges and support systems. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation of data sources, member checking, thick description, and reflexive practice. Ethical procedures were also followed carefully to protect participants'

rights, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. The chapter also acknowledged important limitations, including the absence of classroom observations due to time constraints. This limitation may introduce some bias, as the researcher relied only on self-reported data without observing actual classroom practices.

The next chapter presents the findings from the interviews and focus group discussions. These findings are organised and discussed using the combined SDT–SCT framework to explain the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence teacher motivation in the two schools.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study, which were collected through semi-structured interviews with two principals and two heads of departments (HODs), as well as focus group discussions with teachers in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho. School A is located in a semi-urban area, while School B is in an urban setting. The data were analysed thematically and interpreted through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT).

The purpose of this chapter is to address the research questions by exploring:

- The intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence teacher motivation.
- The challenges that hinder teacher motivation.
- The leadership support mechanisms currently in place to strengthen motivation.
- The strategies that can be implemented to enhance teacher motivation.

Findings are presented in the following order: (i) participant profile to contextualise voices, (ii) major themes reflecting intrinsic, extrinsic, social, and structural factors, (iii) leadership support and proposed strategies for improving motivation, and (iv) a synthesis of how intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors interact to shape teacher motivation.

4.2 Participant Profile (Biographical Data)

Understanding the professional background of the participants is important to contextualize their perspectives on motivation. The study involved two focus group discussions (FGDs) with seven teachers per school, resulting in a total of fourteen participants, and four interviews including the principal and head of department from each school.

Table 4.1, shows the focus group participants' biographical data. In School A, seven teachers (P1 to P7) participated, including three males (P1–P3) and four females (F4–F7). Life Skills was taught by P1, P2, P3, and P7, Religious Studies by F4 and P6, and Biology by P5. Teaching experience ranged from 10 to 25 years, with P1 and P2 having 10–15 years, P3 to P6 having 15–20 years, and P7 having 20–25 years.

In School B, seven teachers (P8 to P14) participated, including three males (P8–P10) and four females (P11–F14). Life Skills was taught by P9, P11, and P14, Religious Studies by P8, P10, and P13, and Biology by P12. Experience ranged from 10 to 20 years, with P8–P11 having 10–15 years, and P12–P14 having 15–20 years.

Table 4.2.1: Focus-group participants (teachers)

School	Pseudonyms	Gender (M/F)	Teaching Subjects			Teaching Experience (Years)
			Life Skills	Religious Studies	Biology	

School A(semi-urban)	P1 –P7	P1- P3(M) P4–P7 (F)	P1, P2, P3, P7	P4, P6	P5	P1-P2 (10-15); P3-P6 (15-20); P4-P7 (20-25)
School B (urban)	P8 –F14	P8 – F10 (M) P11–P14 (F)	P9, F11, F14	P8, P10, P13	P12	P8-11 (10-15 years); P12-P14(15-20)

Table 4.2 presents the biographical data of participants in the semi-structured interviews. In School A, S1, a male, served as Head of Department for Life Skills, while S2, a female, was the Principal and taught Religious Studies. In School B, S3, a female, was the Principal teaching Religious Studies, and S4, a female, was the Head of Department for Life Skills. These profiles provided a balance of gender, experience, subject specialization, and leadership positions, which helped to capture diverse insights

Table 4.2.2: Interview participants (principals and HODs)

	Pseudonyms	Gender (M/F)	Teaching Subjects			Designation	
			Life Skills	Religious Studies	Biology	Principal	HOD

School A(semi-urban)	S1,S2	S1 (M) S2(F)	S1	S2		S2	S1
School B(urban)	S3, S4	S3,S4 (F)		S4	S3	S3	S4

Across both schools, participants had substantial experience (≥ 10 years), which likely contributed to reflective and practice-grounded accounts of motivation. Subjects spread across Life Skills, Religious Studies and Biology provided varied classroom demands that are relevant to the themes reported below.

The similarities in experience profiles between the two schools enable focused comparisons that highlight key organisational factors. These factors include leadership routines, recognition practices, resource reliability, and collaboration structures. By examining these elements, I could gain deeper insights into how organisational conditions influence outcomes in both cases.

4.3 Emergent Themes

4.3.1 Intrinsic Motivation: Passion, Autonomy, and Competence

4.3.1.1 Passion and Sense of Purpose

Teachers across both schools expressed passion for teaching. School A:

“Teaching is not just a job; it is a calling. When my learners understand a difficult concept, I feel accomplished.” (P3)

School B:

“Even in a busy school, seeing learners improve reminds me why I became a teacher.” (P9)

Principals echoed these sentiments. S2 (Principal, School A) stated:

“When I see teachers motivated by their own love for teaching, it inspires them to maintain high standards.”

HOD perspectives highlighted the link between teacher passion and school outcomes. S1 (HOD, School A) said:

“Teachers who are genuinely passionate often take extra steps to ensure students succeed, even when resources are scarce.”

These responses demonstrate relatedness and competence (SDT), showing that motivation stems from meaningful learner-teacher interactions and observable impact on student learning. Teachers in School A emphasised emotional fulfilment in under-resourced contexts, while urban teachers in School B linked passion to managing large classes and higher performance expectations.

4.3.1.2 Autonomy in Teaching

Teachers valued autonomy in lesson planning and classroom management. School A:

“I feel motivated when I can teach in my own way without being controlled. It makes me confident in my skills.” (P7)

School B:

“Designing my own lessons makes me responsible for results and motivates me to do better.” (P2)

HODs and principals also reflected on autonomy. S3 (Principal, School B) noted:

“Teachers who can adapt lessons creatively perform better and stay motivated.”

Autonomy fulfills SDT’s need for choice and ownership, encouraging creativity and professional responsibility. Semi-urban teachers associated autonomy with improvisation under scarcity, whereas urban teachers focused on curricular flexibility in resource-rich classrooms.

4.3.1.3 Competence and Self-Efficacy

School B:

“When students achieve high results, I feel proud. It reminds me why I am a teacher.”
(P8)

School A:

“Seeing students apply what they learned makes me feel my work is meaningful.” (P5)

S4 (HOD, School B) highlighted the link between competence and recognition:

“When teachers see the impact of their lessons on learner performance, it reinforces their commitment and confidence.”

These findings support SDT and SCT, showing that mastery and observable outcomes reinforce intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Bandura, 2018).

4.3.2 Extrinsic Motivation: Recognition, Leadership Support, and Resources

4.3.2.1 Leadership Recognition

Teachers reported that recognition from principals and HODs improved morale. School A:

“When the principal appreciates my work, I feel valued and willing to do more.” (P7)

School B:

“Being acknowledged during staff meetings motivates me to keep high standards.” (P10)

“A simple thank-you from the HOD can lift my spirit.” (P14)

Principals also emphasised the role of recognition. S2 (Principal, School A) stated:

“Recognition encourages teachers to go beyond their duties and maintain professionalism.”

HODs shared similar views. S1 (HOD, School A) said:

“Teachers respond positively when their efforts are acknowledged; it improves classroom performance and collaboration.”

Recognition reinforces competence and professional value, consistent with research linking supportive leadership to engagement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

4.3.2.2 Teaching Resources

Teachers identified access to materials as critical. School B:

“Having enough textbooks and lab materials makes teaching easier.” (P11)

School A:

“Without materials, I often have to improvise, which is frustrating.” (P5)

Principals and HODs acknowledged resource challenges. S3 (Principal, School B):

“Urban schools may have more resources, but large classes and administrative demands create additional pressures.”

S4 (HOD, School B) added:

“When teachers have sufficient materials, they focus more on teaching and less on managing shortages, which improves motivation.”

Resource availability supports effective teaching and reduces stress, while scarcity undermines motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

4.3.2.3 Professional Development

“Workshops keep me updated and energized.” (P9)

“Training shows that leadership values my growth, which motivates me.” (P12)

S2 (Principal, School A) highlighted:

“Investing in teacher development enhances both competence and motivation, as teachers feel supported and prepared.”

Continuous professional development enhances competence and reinforces extrinsic motivation. Both teachers and management noted the importance of training to improve teaching quality and confidence.

4.3.3 Social Environment: Collegial Support, School Culture, and Learner Relationships

Teachers emphasised the importance of collegial collaboration. School A:

“Even when I am struggling, my colleagues help me. That teamwork keeps me motivated.” (P4)

School B:

“Sharing ideas and celebrating small wins together makes the school feel like a family.” (P6)

Learner interactions further reinforced motivation. School B:

“When students participate and improve, I feel proud and driven.” (P3)

School A:

“A simple ‘thank you, teacher’ boosts my morale.” (P14)

Principals and HODs supported the role of social environment. S3 (Principal, School B):

“Positive relationships between teachers and students create a sense of purpose and strengthen school culture.”

S1 (HOD, School A) added:

“Peer collaboration is essential; it prevents burnout and builds resilience, especially in under-resourced schools.”

These findings highlight relatedness, demonstrating that social support strengthens both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005).

4.3.4 Challenges Hindering Teacher Motivation

4.3.4.1 Workload

School B:

"I spend more time on paperwork than teaching. It is exhausting." (P10)

"Balancing marking, admin work, and teaching is draining." (P12)

Principals noted workload pressures but emphasised delegation: S2 (Principal, School A):

"We try to distribute tasks fairly, but administrative demands often overwhelm teachers."

4.3.4.2 Resource Scarcity

School A:

"I often have to improvise because materials are not available. It is frustrating." (F5)

"Without proper resources, my creativity is limited." (P12)

4.3.4.3 Financial and Policy Issues

"Sometimes I feel my efforts do not matter because recognition and promotions are unclear."(P7,SchoolB)

"Delayed salaries reduce my enthusiasm." (P11)

"Constant policy changes make planning difficult and reduce motivation." (P7, School A)

S4 (HOD, School B) added:

“Policy changes without consultation create stress and reduce teachers’ sense of control.”

These factors negatively affect autonomy, competence, and relatedness, consistent with SDT (Nwoko et al., 2023; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

4.3.5 Leadership Support Mechanisms

Teachers identified supportive leadership practices, including participatory decision-making, feedback, mentoring, and recognition. School A:

“Our principal listens to our concerns and involves us in decisions.” (P2)

School B:

“The HOD provides guidance and checks in regularly, which motivates me.” (P6)

Principals and HODs also acknowledged their role in motivation. S3 (Principal, School B):

“We aim to support teachers through mentorship and professional development opportunities, but challenges like workload sometimes limit our engagement.”

These mechanisms partially address sub-question 1.9.3 but indicate room for more consistent support.

4.3.6 Strategies to Enhance Teacher Motivation

Teachers and management suggested strategies that address intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Promoting autonomy and professional growth was important. A teacher from School A said: *“If we are allowed to design lessons and try new methods, I feel more responsible and motivated.”* (P2) The Principal of School B added: *“Encouraging teachers to innovate and giving them freedom in the classroom helps them stay engaged.”* (S3)

Recognition and feedback were also highlighted. A School B teacher stated: *“Even a small ‘thank you’ from the HOD or principal motivates me to keep performing well.”* (P14) The HOD from School A noted: *“I try to recognise achievements in staff meetings; it reminds teachers that their work is valued.”* (S1)

Addressing resources and workload was another key strategy. Teachers reported: *“When textbooks and lab equipment are available, it’s easier to stay motivated.”* (P5) Management added that redistributing administrative tasks could reduce stress (S3).

Finally, fostering a supportive school culture strengthened motivation. A School A teacher said: *“Working with colleagues and sharing ideas makes the school feel like a family; it keeps me motivated even on hard days.”* (P4) Principals and HODs confirmed that mentoring and collaboration help reduce stress and build resilience.

4.4 Interplay of Intrinsic, Extrinsic, and Social Factors

Teachers emphasised that motivation is strongest when intrinsic passion is reinforced by external support and social relationships. A teacher from School A stated: *“I love teaching, but when I also get recognition and resources, I feel unstoppable.”* (P2) Similarly, a School B teacher added: *“Motivation is not only passion; it is also feeling*

supported and valued.” (P9) The Principal of School A reflected: “Teachers need both personal drive and a supportive environment. Motivation drops if one is missing.” (S2)

These findings demonstrate Self-Determination Theory principles, where autonomy (freedom in teaching), competence (effectiveness), and relatedness (supportive environment) interact to sustain motivation. Social Cognitive Theory also highlights that environmental factors such as leadership practices, access to resources, and collegial support influence teacher behaviour and engagement (Bandura, 2018).

4.5 Synthesis of Findings

Teacher motivation in both schools is shaped by the interaction of intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Intrinsic motivation, including passion for teaching, autonomy in lesson planning, and competence, strengthened teachers’ confidence and sense of purpose. Semi-urban teachers (School A) highlighted emotional fulfilment and improvisation under limited resources, while urban teachers (School B) focused on managing large classes and adapting the curriculum (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Bandura, 2018).

Extrinsic factors, such as recognition from principals and HODs, access to teaching resources, and professional development opportunities, reinforced motivation. Teachers valued acknowledgment and constructive feedback, while management emphasised training and growth. Semi-urban teachers frequently noted resource shortages, whereas urban teachers highlighted workload and class size pressures.

The social environment, including collegial collaboration, supportive leadership, and positive learner relationships, further strengthened motivation and resilience. Teachers reported: *“Working with colleagues and sharing ideas makes the school feel like a*

family; it keeps me motivated even on hard days.” (P4, School A) Principals and HODs confirmed that mentorship and peer collaboration reduced stress and supported sustained engagement. These findings align with SDT’s relatedness, autonomy, and competence components (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Challenges such as heavy workloads, limited resources, delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies undermined motivation. Teachers focused on daily operational difficulties, whereas management highlighted recognition and professional development as primary strategies to sustain engagement.

To address these challenges, participants suggested practical strategies to enhance motivation. Promoting autonomy and professional growth allows teachers to design lessons and innovate, fostering intrinsic motivation. Recognition and feedback, such as acknowledgment in meetings or a simple *“thank you”*, strengthen extrinsic motivation and professional competence. Ensuring adequate resources and manageable workloads helps teachers focus on teaching and reduces stress. Finally, cultivating a collaborative school culture through collegial support, mentoring, and positive learner interactions reinforces social connectedness and resilience.

The findings were initially presented using participants’ verbatim responses to preserve authenticity. However, the discussion of these findings was guided by Self-Determination Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, which provided a lens for interpreting how psychological needs and self-efficacy beliefs interact with environmental conditions to shape teacher motivation.

4.6 Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 explored teacher motivation in two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho, highlighting the complex interplay of intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Intrinsic

motivation was driven by passion, purpose, autonomy, and competence, with semi-urban teachers emphasising emotional fulfilment and improvisation, and urban teachers focusing on managing large classes and curriculum adaptation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Bandura, 2018).

Extrinsic motivators included recognition from principals and HODs, access to resources, and professional development. Both teachers and management agreed that acknowledgment, training, and adequate materials strengthened motivation, although semi-urban teachers more frequently reported resource scarcity. The social environment, including collegial collaboration, positive learner interactions, and supportive leadership, enhanced teachers' sense of belonging and reinforced motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Principals and HODs confirmed that guidance and peer support reduced stress and promoted resilience. Challenges such as heavy workloads, resource shortages, delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies undermined motivation by affecting autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Teachers focused on operational difficulties, while management emphasised recognition and professional growth.

Overall, teacher motivation in Maseru secondary schools is context-dependent and sustained by a combination of intrinsic passion, extrinsic support, and social relationships. Implementing strategies that promote autonomy, provide recognition and feedback, ensure adequate resources, and foster a collaborative school culture can enhance motivation and professional commitment. These findings provide a foundation for Chapter 5, which will present conclusions and practical recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the study's findings, linking them to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The discussion addresses the research sub-questions by examining intrinsic and extrinsic factors, challenges, leadership support mechanisms, and potential strategies to enhance teacher motivation. Findings from Chapter 4 are synthesised to highlight how Maseru secondary school teachers experience motivation within semi-urban (School A) and urban (School B) contexts. The chapter also outlines conclusions, contributions, practical recommendations, limitations, and directions for future research.

The study revealed that teacher motivation is shaped by a dynamic interplay of intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Teachers reported deriving satisfaction from student success, opportunities for autonomy, and recognition of their professional competence. Semi-urban teachers emphasised emotional fulfilment and creative improvisation under resource constraints, while urban teachers focused on managing large classes and meeting higher performance expectations. While intrinsic motivation, grounded in passion, autonomy, and competence, was strong, external challenges such as heavy workloads, resource shortages, and policy inconsistencies sometimes undermined sustained engagement.

5.2 Discussion of Key Findings

5.2.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors Influencing Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation: Passion, Autonomy, and Competence

Teachers across both schools exhibited strong intrinsic motivation. Passion and a sense of purpose were evident in comments such as: *“Teaching is not just a job; it is a calling. When my learners understand a difficult concept, I feel accomplished”* (P3, School A) and *“Even in a busy school, seeing learners improve reminds me why I became a teacher”* (P9, School B). Principals and HODs corroborated that passionate teachers often exceed expectations, even in resource-limited settings. These findings align with SDT’s components of relatedness and competence, showing that meaningful learner-teacher interactions strengthen motivation.

Autonomy also contributed significantly to intrinsic motivation. Teachers valued the freedom to design lessons, manage classrooms, and adapt teaching methods. Semi-urban teachers linked autonomy to improvisation under scarce resources, while urban teachers used it for curricular flexibility and creative problem-solving. Competence was reinforced through visible student achievement, giving teachers confidence and a sense of professional mastery. These findings support SCT, emphasizing that self-efficacy and observable results enhance engagement and motivation.

Extrinsic Motivation: Recognition, Resources, and Professional Development

Extrinsic factors were also critical. Recognition from principals and HODs, access to teaching resources, and professional development opportunities strengthened teacher motivation. Teachers reported feeling valued when acknowledged in staff meetings or through verbal appreciation: *“A simple thank-you from the HOD can lift my spirit”* (P14, School B). Adequate teaching resources, such as textbooks and lab materials, reduced stress and enabled effective teaching. Professional development, including workshops and training, enhanced competence and reinforced extrinsic motivation, confirming the SCT perspective that environmental support and reinforcement are central to teacher engagement.

5.2.2 Challenges Hindering Motivation

Several factors undermined teacher motivation. High workloads, including administrative tasks and marking, reduced time for instructional planning and diminished autonomy. Resource scarcity forced teachers to improvise, often causing frustration. Financial constraints, such as delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies reduced motivation by creating uncertainty and stress. These challenges negatively affected the SDT needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and were consistent across both schools, with semi-urban teachers more impacted by resource limitations and urban teachers by workload pressures.

5.2.3 Leadership Support Mechanisms

Teachers identified several existing leadership support mechanisms that partially addressed motivational needs. Participatory decision-making, feedback, mentoring, and

recognition were noted as valuable. Teachers reported: *“The HOD provides guidance and checks in regularly, which motivates me”* (P6, School B) and *“Our principal listens to our concerns and involves us in decisions”* (P2, School A). Principals and HODs acknowledged their role but noted that workload and administrative demands sometimes limited consistent engagement. While supportive leadership fostered competence and relatedness, there is room to formalize and expand these practices across both schools.

5.2.4 Strategies to Enhance Motivation

Teachers and management proposed strategies targeting intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Promoting autonomy and professional growth was critical, allowing teachers to design lessons and innovate. Recognition and feedback, including verbal appreciation and acknowledgment during meetings, reinforced extrinsic motivation. Ensuring access to teaching resources and managing workloads enabled teachers to focus on pedagogy. Finally, fostering a supportive school culture through collegial collaboration, mentoring, and positive learner interactions enhanced social connectedness and resilience.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the discussion of findings, the study concludes that teacher motivation in Maseru secondary schools is shaped by a combination of intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors. Intrinsic factors, including passion for teaching, autonomy in lesson planning, and competence in classroom practice, strongly influence motivation and are central to sustaining engagement. Extrinsic factors, such as recognition from school leadership, access to teaching resources, and opportunities for professional development, reinforce motivation and enhance professional efficacy. The school climate and social environment, characterized by collegial support, positive learner relationships, and

mentorship, further strengthen motivation by satisfying the relatedness component of Self-Determination Theory.

Despite these supportive factors, challenges such as heavy workloads, resource shortages, delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies undermine teacher motivation by reducing autonomy, competence, and feelings of being valued. Existing leadership support mechanisms, including feedback, mentoring, and recognition, were found to be helpful but inconsistently applied, indicating the need for more structured and systematic strategies. Finally, the study identifies that proposed strategies, such as promoting teacher autonomy, providing recognition, improving resource availability, managing workload, and fostering collaboration, can collectively enhance teacher motivation, professional satisfaction, and ultimately, learner outcomes.

5.4 Contributions of the Study

The study makes theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. Theoretically, it demonstrates how Self-Determination Theory and Social Cognitive Theory can be applied complementarily to understand teacher motivation in the context of developing countries. Methodologically, the study offers rich qualitative insights through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with teachers, principals, and heads of departments in both semi-urban and urban schools, providing context-specific perspectives. Practically, the study delivers actionable recommendations for school leaders, HODs, and the Ministry of Education and Training, highlighting strategies that can enhance teacher motivation, reduce burnout, and improve learner achievement. These contributions provide a foundation for improving teaching conditions and policy interventions in Lesotho and similar educational contexts.

5.5 Recommendations

The study recommends coordinated actions at multiple levels to strengthen teacher motivation. School leaders should provide regular feedback, recognize teacher achievements, foster collaboration, and ensure participatory decision-making to create a supportive working environment. The Ministry of Education and Training should clarify policies, ensure timely payment of salaries, improve resource allocation, reduce class sizes, and expand professional development programs to address structural and systemic challenges. Professional development providers should prioritize training in subject content, assessment strategies, digital literacy, classroom management, and mentorship to reinforce teacher competence. Teachers themselves are encouraged to engage in reflective practice, collaborative lesson planning, and continuous professional growth to sustain intrinsic motivation. Overall, coordinated efforts at the individual, school, and systemic levels are essential for cultivating a motivated and effective teaching workforce capable of delivering quality education.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to two schools in Maseru, reducing generalizability. Self-reported data may have introduced bias, and the absence of classroom observations limited triangulation. The focus on urban and semi-urban schools may not reflect rural teacher experiences. Nevertheless, the study provides context-specific insights into teacher motivation in Lesotho.

5.7 Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies could include a larger sample across multiple districts, school types, and socio-economic contexts. Mixed-method approaches and longitudinal designs could track changes in teacher motivation over time. Investigating leadership styles, community engagement, and policy impact would further illuminate factors influencing teacher motivation.

5.8 Chapter Summary

In conclusion, teacher motivation in Maseru secondary schools is influenced by the interplay of intrinsic passion, extrinsic support, and social connectedness, while challenges such as heavy workloads, resource scarcity, delayed salaries, and policy inconsistencies undermine engagement and professional satisfaction. Intrinsic factors, including a sense of purpose, autonomy, and competence, drive teachers' commitment, while extrinsic motivators such as recognition, professional development, and access to resources reinforce their engagement. The social environment, including collegial collaboration, supportive leadership, and positive learner interactions, strengthens relatedness and resilience. Sustainable motivation requires holistic strategies that promote autonomy, recognize achievements, ensure adequate resources, and foster collaborative school cultures.

By addressing both personal and organizational factors, these strategies enhance teacher satisfaction, reduce stress and burnout, improve professional performance, and ultimately support better learner outcomes. The chapter also underscores the importance of context-sensitive interventions that consider the distinct challenges of semi-urban and urban school settings in Lesotho, emphasizing that motivation is sustained when intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors work together synergistically.

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APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: District Education Office Permission Request

Ha Paki

P.O.Box 205

Mazenod160

Maseru,

Lesotho

24 October 2024

The Director

District Education Office

P.O.BOX 47

Maseru

Lesotho

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Request for Permission to Conduct Interviews in two secondary school.

I am writing this letter to kindly request permission to conduct interviews in two secondary schools in Maseru, the interview will involve 18 teachers, 9 teachers per each school Secondary School as part of my research titled **"Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho."**

I am currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology, and my research aims to explore the factors that impact teacher motivation in secondary schools. The interviews will be conducted with selected teachers who have at least 10 years of teaching experience, and their responses will be used solely for academic purposes. I assure you that all interviews will be conducted with respect to the participants' confidentiality and privacy, in line with ethical research standards.

The interviews will be done only on teacher's spare time that is after classes, and during the weekends, so that they cannot interrupt learning process.

I kindly seek your approval to proceed with these interviews. I believe that the findings from this study will contribute to understanding teacher motivation and its effects on education in Lesotho.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to your positive response.

Yours faithfully,

Mathabo Phalatsi (+26658063911/+26669203539)

(Student at University of South Africa)

APPENDIX B: Permission from the Ministry of Education and Training



**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING – MASERU**

P.O.BOX 47 MASERU 100

TEL:22322816

The Principal

.....
Maseru, Lesotho.

14th January 2024

Dear Principal

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY FOR A MASTERS PROGRAMME

This letter serves to introduce 'Mathabo Letao, Student Number 53848357 to your office. She is a Masters student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) She is requesting to conduct a research study on, "The Influence of Teacher Motivation in two Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho: Research of this nature has the potential to improve the teaching and learning in the schools of Lesotho.

May your kind office assist her with all she might need in your school to conduct this study.

Your usual cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Regards.

Teboho Mponeri (Mr.)

Regional Inspector - Central



APPENDIX C: Principal Permission Request Form for Research Study

Date: 24 October 2024

The Principal

.....
.....
.....

Subject: Request for Permission to Conduct Research

Dear Madam

I am writing this letter to request permission to conduct a research study at your school. The study is titled **“Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation: A Qualitative Case Study of Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho.”**

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this research is to understand what factors affect teacher motivation, both positive and negative. We will look at things like personal values, school environment, and support mechanisms. This will help improve teaching conditions and support for teachers.

My Request:

If you grant me permission, I would like to, conduct semi-structured interviews and focus groups interview with 12 teachers at your school. Collect and analyse data to understand the factors influencing teacher motivation.

Duration:

The study will take place during the after classes and during the weekends so that learning process cannot be interrupted and each session will last about 20-30 minutes.

Confidentiality:

All information collected will be kept confidential. I will ensure that individual identities are protected, and only the researcher will have access to the data.

Benefits:

The findings of this study may provide valuable insights into how to better support teachers and improve the educational environment at your school.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or need more information, please feel free to contact me at +26658063911/+26669203539.

I would be grateful if you could grant me permission to conduct this research. Please sign below to indicate your approval.

Principal's Name: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for considering this request.

Yours Sincerely,

Mathabo Phalatsi (a student at University of South Africa)

APPENDIX D: Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Study: Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho.

Researcher: Mathabo Phalatsi

Institution: University of South Africa

Contact Information: +26658063911/+26669203539, email: letoaom@gmail.com

Introduction:

You are being invited to participate in a research study about factors that influence teacher motivation. This form provides information about the study to help you decide whether to participate. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask any questions.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to understand the key factors that influence teacher motivation at two secondary schools in Maseru, Lesotho. This includes examining both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, challenges faced by teachers, and support mechanisms available.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in interviews or focus groups. These sessions will be recorded with your permission. The interviews will last approximately 20-30 minutes, and you may be asked questions about your experiences and views on teacher motivation.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits.

Risks and Discomforts:

There are minimal risks associated with this study. However, discussing certain topics may cause emotional discomfort. If you feel uncomfortable, you can stop the interview or talk to a counsellor if needed.

Confidentiality:

All information collected will be kept confidential. Your responses will be coded to protect your identity, and only the research team will have access to the data. Findings will be reported in a way that does not identify individual participants.

Benefits:

While there may be no direct benefits to you, your participation will contribute to a better understanding of teacher motivation, which could help improve the educational environment.

Consent:

By signing below, you agree to participate in this research study. You have read and understood the information provided and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX E: Ethical Clearance



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 12 October 2024

Ref: **2024/10/12/000000220/05/RB**

Name: **Mrs Mathabo Letoao**

Student No.: **53848357**

Decision: Ethics Approval form

Dear **Mrs Mathabo Letoao**

Researcher(s): Name: **Mrs Mathabo Letoao**

E-mail address: 53848357@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Telephone: **+26 658063911**

Co-Researcher: Name: **Dr A van der Nest**

E-mail address: evdnesa@unisa.ac.za

Telephone: **0828232645**

Title of research: Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation In Two Secondary Schools Maseru, Lesotho.

Qualification: MEd

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above-mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period **2024/10/12 to 2027/10/12**.

*The **write risk level** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on **12 September 2024** in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



University of South Africa
Pretorius Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2027/10/12**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **2024/10/12/00000220/05/RB** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof RB Monyai
Acting Head: CEDU Research
monyarb@unisa.ac.za



Prof Mpine Makoe
Executive Dean: CEDU
gakisme@unisa.ac.za



Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX F: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Duration: 20-30 minutes

Moderator: Researcher

Introduction

1. Background Information

- Can you tell me a bit about your background and your role in the school?

Key Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation

2. Intrinsic Motivation

- How would you describe your personal satisfaction with teaching? What aspects of your job bring you the most fulfillment?
- Can you share an example of a time when you felt particularly passionate about your teaching? What factors contributed to that feeling?
- How important is professional growth and personal achievement to you in your teaching role?

3. Extrinsic Motivation

- How do external rewards or recognition (e.g., awards, bonuses) impact your motivation to teach?
- In what ways do you think salary and working conditions affect your motivation?

Contribution of Teachers' Personal Values, Beliefs, and Passion

4. Personal Values and Beliefs

- How do your personal values align with your teaching profession? Do you think this alignment affects your motivation?
- What beliefs do you hold about the impact of your teaching on students' lives? How do these beliefs influence your motivation?

5. Passion for Teaching

- Can you describe how your passion for teaching has influenced your daily work and interactions with students?
- How does your passion affect your commitment to your professional development and innovation in teaching?

School Community and Leadership Influence

6. School Community

- How does the support from your colleagues, students, and parents impact your motivation?
- Can you provide examples of how positive relationships within the school community have influenced your motivation?

7. Leadership

- What role do professional development opportunities play in your motivation? How does the school support your growth?

Challenges to Teacher Motivation

8. Challenges

- What are some of the major challenges you face that affect your motivation to teach?
- How do workload, salary, and working conditions impact your motivation? Can you provide specific examples?

- Are there any changes in the educational system or school policies that have influenced your motivation?

Support Mechanisms

9. Support Mechanisms

- What types of support mechanisms or incentives (both monetary and non-monetary) do you think are most effective in motivating teachers?
- How can the school administration improve support for teachers to enhance their motivation?

Conclusion

10. Final Thoughts

- Is there anything else you would like to add about factors influencing teacher motivation that we haven't covered?
- Do you have any suggestions for improving teacher motivation in your school?

APPENDIX G: Focus Group Discussion Questions

Duration: 30-40 minutes

Moderator: Researcher

Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Intrinsic Factors: Personal Values, Beliefs, and Passion

- What personal values or beliefs do you feel are most important in your role as a teacher?
- How does your passion for teaching influence your daily activities and interactions with students?
- In what ways do you feel personally fulfilled in your role as a teacher, and how does this impact your motivation?

2. Extrinsic Factors: External Rewards and Pressures

- How do external factors, such as salary, recognition, or benefits, influence your motivation to teach?
- Do you feel that administrative support and recognition play a role in keeping you motivated? If so, how?
- Are there any changes in the work environment or resources that could improve your motivation?

3. School Community and Leadership Influence

- How does the support you receive from the school community (colleagues, students, parents) affect your motivation?
- In what ways does the school leadership (e.g., principals, administrators) influence your motivation?

- Do you feel that the leadership in your school provides adequate opportunities for professional development and career growth? How does this affect your motivation?

4. Challenges Hindering Teacher Motivation

- What are some of the key challenges you face as a teacher that hinder your motivation?
- How do factors like workload, lack of resources, or working conditions affect your motivation to teach?
- Are there any policies or changes in the education system that have negatively impacted your motivation?

5. Support Mechanisms for Teacher Motivation

- What forms of support, either from the school or the government, have been most helpful in maintaining your motivation?
- What additional support or resources do you think would help improve your motivation as a teacher?
- Are there any incentives or recognition programs in place at your school, and how effective are they in motivating you and your colleagues?

6. Suggestions for Improvement

- What would you recommend to improve teacher motivation in your school or in the education system as a whole?
- How do you think teacher motivation can be better supported through policy changes or school-level initiatives?

APPENDIX H: EDITOR'S REPORT

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO



P.O. Roma 180
Lesotho
Southern Africa

Telephone: +266 22340601
 +266 52213632
 +266 52213639
Fax : +266 22340000
Website: <http://www.nul.ls>

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

22 February 2026

The Supervisor
Faculty of Education
University of South Africa

Dear Supervisor

Re: Proof of language editing

This letter certifies that I read and edited 'Mathabo Phalatsi's Masters Dissertation titled ***Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation: A Qualitative Case Study of Two Secondary Schools in Maseru, Lesotho***. This ensured that the Dissertation meets the required standards of language and academic writing.

Sincerely,

Mahao Mahao (PhD)
Senior Lecturer - Department of Language and Social Education
Faculty of Education,
National University of Lesotho
mahaomahao05@gmail.com
+266 58730927

APPENDIX I: TURNITIN REPORT

Similarity Report

PAPER NAME

final to turnitin.docx

AUTHOR

MATHABO JOSEVINA LETOAO

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