

# Self-Efficacy, Interest, and Effort Indicators in the Teaching Motivation of Public Senior High School Teachers in the Philippines

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## Abstract

This study sought to determine the level of teaching motivation of 72 teachers from 11 public senior high schools in the Philippines based on self-efficacy, interest, and effort indicators. A 25-item questionnaire was employed, and the resultant data analyzed using a mixed method approach. Results showed that the outcome aspect of self-efficacy posted the highest score, while the personal aspect presented the highest degree of motivation. With regard to interest, the enjoyment aspect received the highest score suggesting the teachers' general satisfaction with teaching. The lowest score was seen in the participants' moderate agreement with the view that enjoyment make up for the financial drawbacks inherent in the profession. As for effort, the two aspects of performance and importance showed almost the same score indicating the participants' equal regard for them as motivators. In addition, the teachers gave the highest score to peer encouragement and the desire for constant professional improvement. Overall, the results showed the participants' passion for educating senior high school students under their tutelage, appreciation for the intrinsic rewards in teaching coupled with a realistic awareness of its strict demands and financial drawbacks, and a strong desire to improve themselves for the benefit of the learners.

**Keywords:** Motivation, self-efficacy, interest, effort, senior high school.

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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of motivation has attracted numerous studies through the years leading to a mass of data on the topic. The idea has provoked much debate because of the different variables involved and remains a fertile area for research. While consensus has been infrequent, the discussions have contributed to a better understanding of this complex construct.

Motivation comes from the Latin word "movere" which means to "move". From this definition, the modern connotation of the term has developed to refer to "what moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action." The conceptual range of reference, however, makes precise definitions difficult so much so that the American Psychological Association considered replacing the term in its database (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

In the educational context, the subject motivation has earned significant attention through the years, with equal enthusiasm being shown on the study of motivation among teachers and among students. This is expected because of the common assumption that the two are correlated: motivated teachers are presumed to teach more effectively and that students can only be motivated if the teachers are themselves enthused about the practice of teaching itself.

Studies on teacher motivation have focused mostly on two main types of variables: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is activated by actions in which the person discovers innate satisfactions, such as finding the act of teaching as interesting and enjoyable in its own right. Thus, the rewards are intrinsic to the activity as proven when the reward areas of the brain are activated during the act. In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to rewards or incentives for participating in the activity. It is something

found after the act, such as prizes or recognition based on a reward structure (Elliot *et al.*, 2017). In other words, intrinsic motivation happens when individuals achieve their work for the pleasure and satisfaction they gain from it, while extrinsic motivation follows when the underlying motives are more instrumental (Kırkiç & Yahşi, 2021).

While intrinsic motivation may simply refer to activities that are considered interesting and enjoyable in their own right, extrinsic motivation can be categorized into four subtypes. Identified and integrated motivations involve a keen sense of autonomy such as when individuals engage in activity that they feel have a beneficial impact on the community and on their own skill development. For example, teachers may appreciate the positive impact of holding a school drama festival on students' learning motivation, language acquisition, well-being, and developmental needs, which then encourages them to repeatedly engage in this endeavour. External and introjected regulation represent the least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation and are related to compliance. For instance, teachers who organize the drama festival may do so to comply with an administrative request or out of a desire to compete with other instructors and thus enhance their ego (Bačová, 2022).

Both types of motivation have their merits, but the bulk of research tend to highlight the effect of the intrinsic type. Hall and Goetz (2013) pointed to studies on teachers' intrinsic versus extrinsic (autonomous vs. controlled extrinsic) motivation in the employment context, teachers' interest in classroom instruction and the subject of instruction. Related to this, a study by Karagun and Ekiz (2020) demonstrated a positive relationship between general satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. Likewise, research by Yildiz and Kılıç (2021) showed that the teachers' intrinsic motivation was higher than their extrinsic motivation. While more extrinsic motivation factors were found, they were mostly negative, while internal factors are mostly positive.

Mobra and Hamlin (2020) discussed studies that suggested that effective teachers are motivated by intrinsic factors such as a desire to inspire young people, an interest in learning processes and a well-developed service orientation. This is corroborated by an investigation of teachers in state secondary schools in Poland which showed that the participants were most motivated by imparting knowledge, self-fulfilment, and self-vision among others. The least motivating factors were expectedly external recognition and being of service to society (Stężycka & Etherington, 2020).

The quality of relationship with superiors is also one of the significant factors impacting levels of motivation among teachers. Studies have been done to assess the impact of this variable and what may be done

to enhance it. Freed *et al.*, (2021) examined teacher motivation through nine interviews and one focus group with elementary principals. The results showed that principals have a crucial role in encouraging teacher motivation by giving the tutors a sense of autonomy and competence along with personal and professional support.

In a similar study which analysed the administrators' leadership and achievement and competence of teachers in a senior high school and their effects on teacher performance, the evidence showed that a principal's leadership has a direct positive effect on teacher competence and performance (Mulyadi *et al.*, 2016). Such studies are validated by other investigations on the role of administrative support in enhancing teacher motivation. The previously mentioned study by Stężycka, and Etherington (2020) also noted that among the most demotivating factors cited by the participants were insufficient recognition for achievements, excessive workload, limited professional development opportunities, and low salary. The critical role of administrators was likewise confirmed by Javorčíková *et al.*, (2021) in their analysis of motivation levels of primary school teachers in Slovakia from 2015 to 2020 noting motivating factors such as a basic salary, a fair appraisal system, atmosphere in the workplace, a good team to belong and work with, and the approach used by the supervisor

A critical area of focus of administrative support is the grant of autonomy. Elliot *et al.*, (2017) sorted motivation into three types, autonomous, controlled, and motivated. Autonomous motivation refers to identified, integrated, and intrinsic regulation, which is linked to more positive emotions, more creative output, deeper processing, of information, and more sustainable persistence. Erturan (2021) noted that autonomously motivated teachers are likely to have more energy at their disposal, contributing to their alertness and psychological availability in teaching, thus providing maximum support for the students' psychological needs. The researcher also cited the effect of autonomy in positively predicting behaviours related to fostering student attentiveness in the classroom.

Researchers have studied teacher motivation using diverse theoretical frameworks such as self-determination theory, achievement goal theory, possible selves theory, ecosystems theory, and self-efficacy theory. The last one provides one of the more complex approaches to the subject since "self-efficacy beliefs produce their effects through cognitive, motivational, affective, and elective processes" (Dalanon & Matsuka, 2017).

Self-efficacy theory was proposed by Albert Bandura (1986; 2011), a Canadian American psychologist at Stanford University. It pertains to people's judgement of their capabilities to carry out

certain specific tasks. Accordingly, their sense of efficacy will determine choice of activities tried, along with level of aspiration, amount of effort exerted, and persistence shown. Individuals with a low sense of self-efficacy in a given domain perceive difficult tasks as personal threats; they focus on their own personal deficiencies and the obstacles they meet rather than concentrate on how to perform the task successfully. As a result, they easily lose confidence in their capabilities and are likely to give up. On the other hand, a strong sense of self-efficacy enhances people's achievement behaviour by helping them to approach threatening situations with confidence, to maintain a task- rather than self-diagnostic focus during task involvement, and to improve and maintain effort in the face of disappointment (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Self-efficacy is the optimistic self-belief in our competence or chances of successfully accomplishing a task and producing a favourable outcome. Bandura (1997) named four sources of efficacy beliefs: mastery experiences. Mastering a task or controlling an environment, for example, will build self-belief in that area whereas a failure will undermine that efficacy belief; vicarious experiences; Our observation of people we consider as role models and seeing them succeed by their sustained effort raises our beliefs that we too possess the capabilities and can accomplish the same things; verbal persuasion, usually by parents, teachers, managers or coaches to strengthen our confidence will likely inspire us to put in the effort and sustain it when problems arise; and emotional and physiological states. Depression, for instance, will influence how we judge our self-efficacy by dampening our confidence in our abilities. Positive emotions, on the other hand, can boost our confidence in our skills (Akhtar, 2017).

A fifth route to self-efficacy was suggested by James Maddux, former director of the clinical doctoral program at George Mason and former editor of the *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*. He calls this fifth route to self-efficacy “imaginal experiences”, or the art of visualising yourself behaving effectively or successfully in a given situation. Referencing a well-known figure in children's literature, Maddux notes that “the simple yet powerful truth that children learn from *The Little Engine That Could* has been amply supported by over three decades of self-efficacy research—namely, that when equipped with an unshakable belief in one's ideas, goals, and capacity for achievement, there are few limits to what one can accomplish” (Maddux, 2012).

A significant number of studies conducted on teacher motivation have focused on the self-efficacy expectations of teachers, i.e., the degree to which teachers see themselves as capable of mastering pedagogically challenging situations through their own actions. A number of empirical studies have shown that higher self-efficacy expectations among teachers correspond to a more conducive classroom atmosphere,

more comprehensive support behavior, and better student performance. With regard to the personal psychological and physiological benefits of teacher self-efficacy, other investigations have demonstrated that higher self-efficacy in teachers tend to result in lower levels of burnout, better physical health, in addition to higher job satisfaction (Hall & Goetz, 2013).

Motivation studies in the Philippine setting have focused mostly on student motivation. There is a good number of investigations on teacher motivation, but most were done in connection in the broader contexts of student achievement, job satisfaction, teacher performance, and educational governance. For instance, Basbas and Libot's (2022) research on teacher motivation at the Philippine School in Dubai was subsumed under the broader imperative of examining the level of teachers' classroom performance by weighing the perspectives of selected school administrators and teachers in that overseas institution. Ulla *et al.*, (2017), on the other hand, explored teachers' perceptions and motivations, as it relates to research work, while Jimenez's (2020) study identified the motivating factors of teachers in developing supplementary learning materials in the Schools Division in Central Luzon. Gumarang's (2021) study of teacher motivation factors in a private school were made in the light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying challenges.

There have been only few studies on the critical indicators of teacher motivation itself such as that of Dalanon and Matsuka (2017) which sought to determine the teachers' sense of efficacy (TSE) in inclusion classes in a rural, private, basic-education school in the Philippines. Related research was undertaken by De Guzman and Fernandez (2005) on how a select group of 26 pre-service and in-service teachers recruited from seven teacher education institutions in the capital of the Philippines viewed their teaching motivations.

Given the dearth of local studies in this particular area, the researchers set out to conduct an inquiry on teacher motivation indicators with emphasis on self-efficacy indicators. To further enhance the validity of the findings, the study focused on a smaller subgroup of teachers selected from eleven public senior high schools in the Philippines.

This study of self-efficacy factors in the teaching motivation of senior high school teachers could give teachers a more nuanced measurement of their motivation level leading to a greater understanding of the factors influencing their view of their chosen profession. Additionally, it could provide a basis for enhancing their motivation levels, or in contemplating a career decision to either stay in the field of teaching or to move to another profession. It could also provide school administrators a basis for determining the motivation levels of teachers, and offer critical information on what particular aspects require administrative intervention in

terms of psychological support, financial assistance, skills training, pre-service/in-service guidance, etc.

Furthermore, this study could offer new insights on what motivates teachers, particularly in the senior high school level, and all teachers in general. Those insights can serve as inputs in formulating policies towards improving the recruitment and retention of capable teachers. Lastly, it could suggest to future researchers new areas of investigation on the subject of motivation especially as it applies to teachers in all levels—elementary, high school and college.

This investigation is framed by the Theory of Self-efficacy as formulated by Albert Bandura, a Canadian American psychologist at Stanford University. Bandura laid out the fundamentals of the theory in his book *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their capacity to act in the ways necessary to reach specific goals. This belief is not concerned with “the number of skills you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances” (Bandura, 1997).

A strong sense of self-efficacy fosters human achievement and personal well-being. Instead of viewing challenges as threats to avoid, a person with high self-efficacy considers them as situations to be mastered rather than threats to avoid. Regarding unfavourable circumstances as things they can control, they are easily able to recover from disappointments. On the other hand, individuals with a low sense of self-efficacy view hard tasks with trepidation and consequently try to avoid doing them. When faced with difficulty, they focus on the skills they lack rather than on their capabilities easily losing heart and suffering from stress or depression.

The study commenced with a purposive sampling of 72 teacher-participants from 11 selected public senior high schools in the Philippines. The distribution and collection of questionnaires were done either personally or online depending on the preference of the participants. After the data was gathered, descriptive statistics were used to bring out the levels of motivation according to the different subsets of questions containing self-efficacy indicators. Conclusions and recommendations were formulated based on the findings, with emphasis on their implications for educational governance.

This study sought to answer three critical questions:

1. What aspects of self-efficacy, interest and enjoyment show the highest degree of motivation for the senior high school teacher-participants?
2. What aspects of self-efficacy, interest and enjoyment exhibit the lowest degree of motivation for the senior high school teacher-participants?
3. What are the implications of the findings for educational governance?

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study employed a mixed method approach to come up with the best answer to the research questions. The quantitative part consists of measuring the level of teacher motivation using a four-point Likert scale and statistical tools to identify correlation in the data and corroborate them with existing literature, the quantitative part was in analysing the results of the measurement, identifying corroboration with existing literature, and making appropriate recommendations.

The study was conducted in ten (10) public senior high schools in the provinces of Bulacan and Nueva Ecija, and one (1) in Pasig City in Metropolitan Manila. Seventy-two (72) teachers from the aforementioned schools, of varying genders, educational attainment, and years of experience participated in the study. The participants were chosen through purposive sampling which is ideal for accessing a particular subset of the population that shares certain characteristics.

The research instrument was a 25-item questionnaire using a Likert scale divided into four categories, namely Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree with assigned ratings of 1 to 4 respectively. 11 of the questions were about self-efficacy indicators, nine on effort, and five on interest. The questionnaire was patterned after a 34-item questionnaire compiled by Visser-Wijnveen *et al.*, (2012) from three questionnaires: the motivation questionnaire created by Trigwell *et al.*, (2004); the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (Deci & Ryan, n.d.); and Soodak and Podell's Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire (1996), which is a modified version of the questionnaire developed by Gibson and Dembo (1984). The tables below show the frequency distribution of the participants.

## FREQUENCY TABLES

**Table 1: Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	30	46.2	46.2	46.2
	FEMALE	35	53.8	53.8	100.0
	Total	65	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2: Years of Experience**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5-10 YEARS	36	55.4	55.4	55.4
	11-15 YEARS	22	33.8	33.8	89.2
	16-20+ YEARS	7	10.8	10.8	100.0
	Total	65	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3: Educational Attainment**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BACHELORS	40	61.5	61.5	61.5
	MASTERAL	19	29.2	29.2	90.8
	DOCTORAL	6	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	65	100.0	100.0	

**Material and Methods**

The data gathered using the research instrument were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results are

presented below along with their corresponding analysis and interpretation.

**Table 4: Summary of Efficacy Indicator Results**

		INTERPRETATION	
		MEAN	RANGE
<b>EFFICACY-PERSONAL</b>			
Q6.	I have a talent for teaching young people.	3.49	Agree
Q7.	I consider myself as a very good teacher.	3.46	Agree
Q8.	I am satisfied with my competencies as a teacher.	3.35	Agree
Q9.	I can confidently say that I have the requisite content knowledge to teach my subject.	3.21	Agree
Q10.	I am certain that I possess the requisite skills to teach my subject well.	3.44	Agree
Q11.	Given my experience, I believe that I am now a competent teacher.	3.56	Strongly Agree
TOTAL		3.42	Agree
<b>EFFICACY-TEACHING</b>			
Q12.	Even an excellent teacher is not successful all the time.	3.4	Agree
Q13.	A student does well because he or she has innate abilities to excel.	3.3	Agree
TOTAL		3.35	Agree
<b>EFFICACY-OUTCOME</b>			
Q14.	A student is able to understand a new idea because of my ability to explain it clearly.	3.4	Agree
Q15.	I am quite sure that my learners have learned something from the subject that I taught.	3.4	Agree
Q16.	My students' progress inspires me to do better.	3.73	Strongly Agree
TOTAL		3.51	Strongly Agree

The table above shows that the highest results was in Efficacy-Outcome which, as noted by Visser-Wijnveen *et al.*, (2012), focuses on the question of how far the effort that teachers are expected to make also leads to a desired result. Specifically, the question that shows the highest score is No. 16 ("My students' progress inspires me to do better.") with a rating of 3.73 for Strongly Agree.

The lowest score is seen with Efficacy-Teaching. As also noted by Wijnveen *et al.*, (2012), this category is concerned with whether teachers are able to overcome external factors, such as genetics and pupils' home environment. Specifically, the query that shows the lowest rating is No. 13 ("A student does well because he or she has innate abilities to excel."). This implies that the teachers have a lot of confidence in their abilities to achieve their instructional aims and do not consider factors innate to the students as insurmountable.

**Table 5: Summary of Interest Indicator Results**

		INTERPRETATION	
		MEAN	RANGE
<b>INTEREST-ENJOYMENT</b>			
Q1.	I find teaching fun.	3.56	Strongly Agree
Q2.	I enjoy teaching very much.	3.67	Strongly Agree
Q3.	I have fun teaching my subject.	3.55	Strongly Agree
Q4.	I see myself enjoying teaching for at least the next three years.	3.55	Strongly Agree
Q5.	The feeling of fulfilment makes up for the financial drawbacks of teaching.	3.16	Agree
TOTAL		3.50	Strongly Agree

The table above shows Q2 (“I enjoy teaching very much.”) as registering the highest score with 3.67 on the Strongly Agree range. Q1 (“I find teaching fun.”) is a close second with 3.56 in the Strongly Agree range. The lowest score is seen in Q5 (“The feeling of fulfillment makes up for the financial drawbacks of teaching.”) registering a 3.16 in the Agree range. The high Strongly Agree total of 3.50 implies the participants have a deep intrinsic motivation to teach and a

comparatively lower regard for the extrinsic rewards derived from the practice of their profession.

This validates the conclusions in previous studies (Karagun & Ekiz, 2020; Yildiz & Kılıç, 2021; Mobra & Hamlin, 2020; Stężycka, & Etherington, 2020) that highlight the importance that teachers put on intrinsic factors as their prime motivators in teaching.

**Table 6: Summary of Effort Indicator Results**

		INTERPRETATION	
		MEAN	RANGE
<b>EFFORT-PERFORMANCE</b>			
Q17	I consider it personally important to be a good teacher.	3.69	Strongly Agree
Q18	The prospect of advancement motivates me to perform at my job better	3.29	Agree
Q19	Rewards and official recognition are important motivating factors for me.	3.49	Agree
Q20	The encouragement of my colleagues inspires me to become a better teacher.	3.72	Strongly Agree
TOTAL		3.55	Strongly Agree
<b>EFFORT-IMPORTANCE</b>			
Q21	Q21. It is important for me that students learn the content of the subject I teach.	3.63	Strongly Agree
Q22	Q22. I am quite energetic when I teach.	3.66	Strongly Agree
Q23	Q23. I give my very best in performing my teaching tasks.	3.58	Strongly Agree
Q24	Q24. I welcome the teaching challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.	3.38	Agree
Q25	Q25. I constantly seek to improve my knowledge of my specialization.	3.61	Strongly Agree
TOTAL		3.57	Strongly Agree

The table above shows that participants put a premium on collegial praise as a prime motivator as evidenced by a high 3.72 rating for Q20 (“The encouragement of my colleagues inspires me to become a better teacher”). The comparatively lower score for extrinsic motivators (Q18 and Q19) re-affirms the participants preference for the satisfaction innate to the practice of the profession. This is complimented by the high scores they gave for their regard of student welfare (Q21) and for self-improvement (Q25). These findings corroborated the studies previously mentioned regarding the table on Interest-Enjoyment. In addition, they confirm those of local studies such as those by Jimenez (2020), and De Guzman and Fernandez (2005) which highlighted the students’ improvement and enhanced learning experiences as the prime motivation of their participants to teach.

## CONCLUSION

At the start, this study aimed to answer certain questions about self-efficacy, interest, and effort indicators in the teaching motivation of senior high school teachers. With regard to efficacy, the personal aspect showed the lowest score, while the outcome aspect presented the highest degree of motivation. Concerning interest and the lone aspect of enjoyment, the highest score was shown in the teachers’ enjoyment of teaching in general. The lowest score was shown in the participants’ moderate agreement with the view that enjoyment make up for the financial drawbacks inherent in the profession. As for effort, the two aspects of performance and importance showed almost the same

score indicating the participants’ equal regard for them as motivators. In addition, the teachers gave the highest score for peer encouragement and the desire for constant professional improvement. Overall, the results showed the participants’ passion for educating senior high school students under their tutelage, appreciation of the intrinsic rewards coupled with a realistic awareness of its demands and financial drawbacks, and a strong desire to improve themselves for the benefit of their learners.

In view of the conclusions stated above, the following steps are hereby recommended:

1. In terms of educational governance, steps may be taken to:
  - a. Enhance, rather than take advantage of teachers’ innate altruism and passion for their learners’ progress
  - b. Improve the intrinsic rewards of the profession such as lighter teaching loads, smaller classes, and updated teaching materials and technology
  - c. Upgrade the extrinsic rewards of the profession through better compensation, fair ranking and promotion, and periodic recognition for achievements
2. A more nuanced evaluation of teacher motivation may be devised which considers the significant relationship between self-efficacy and educational attainment, years of experience and gender.
3. Further studies on other aspects of motivation may be done, specifically those that involve the

aspects of interest and effort so that a more rounded instrument can be employed in measuring teacher motivation.

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