Improving Teacher Motivation and Performance  
- A Brief Report by Education International

Introduction

Education International (EI) is a global organisation of 300 national teacher organisations in 173 countries representing more than 30 million teachers worldwide. In the Asia Pacific region alone Education International represents more than 8 million teachers in 37 countries.

EI’s policy on education is enunciated in various Congress Resolutions adopted by the world body of teachers since its formation.

This policy statement on Building the Future through Quality Education is underpinned by concepts which are central to EI’s philosophy. These include quality inclusive education and equality in education and society and high professional status for teachers.

We all are aware that improvement in access to education is not matched by the improvements in quality of education. 250 million children fail to learn. Education International has campaigned to draw public attention to the importance of quality education through many campaigns including the “Quality Teachers for Quality Education” and “UNITE for Quality Education; Better Education for a Better World” campaigns.

The United Nations Secretary-General’s Global Education First Initiative, has set quality learning as one of its top priorities and acknowledges the shortage of qualified teachers as a major barrier to quality learning.

Education International’s campaigns have helped in raising public awareness and creating political will in favour of improving the quality of education by improving quality of teaching, quality of education tools and quality of education environment.

Teachers Motivation and Enhancing the Status of Teachers

For quality education, we need quality teachers, teachers who are motivated, well trained and with sufficient tools and academic freedom in a supportive environment. Quality of teaching improves greatly if the teachers are motivated.

Low levels of teacher motivation are strongly related with poor teaching and learning. Studies show teacher motivation is a factor commonly ignored in education policy formulation at school, regional, national and international levels. Teacher compensation is one of the main factors for motivation and non-remuneration factors, such as workloads, trainings, public perception of the occupation, subject mastery, school-level support systems, and giving teachers a voice influence motivation.

National education policies must address teacher motivation factors, like the teacher compensation, workload, training, public perception of the occupation and consultation with teachers and their organisations.
Teachers’ motivation is closely linked with teachers’ status as both are affected by similar factors. A few of them are listed below:

- **Recruitment processes**

  In order to enhance learning, education systems must enable right people to become teachers. There is a need to improve teacher recruitment processes in many countries. The learning crisis has its roots in the extensive appointment of teachers’ without any pre-service training (para-teachers). In our future goals we must commit to only recruit fully trained professional teachers. Quality training is essential for Quality Teachers.

- **Teacher Preparation**

  Teacher education should be offered in higher education institutions up to a high qualification level, including opportunities for post-graduate level study. Structured induction programmes should be provided for newly qualified teachers on recruitment into the profession. Fully funded continuous professional development should be an entitlement for all teachers.

  Teachers and their organisations should be consulted in identifying professional development needs and designing professional development programmes. Many teacher unions provide good professional development programmes which should be enhanced and funded by the governments.

  It has become important to teach students how to learn instead of teaching the content. There is need to build an understanding of how this transversal competencies can be better embedded in teacher preparation, support and evaluation.

- **Making the Profession Attractive**

  Teaching at all levels should be recognised as a professional activity and accorded the same respect and status as other similar professions in society.

  To get right people in the profession, we need to attract the best of the graduates to the profession. Education profession should be viewed as profession of choice and not the profession of the last resort. In order to attract the best and the brightest, the attractiveness of the teaching profession needs to be urgently improved.

  We must work to ensure that the teaching professions remains attractive to both current and potential teachers by ensuring that working conditions, social security arrangements, pension schemes and salaries are attractive and are comparable to those applicable to other professions and improving academic freedom and professional autonomy.

- **Professional Development**

  The importance of quality teaching for quality education cannot be underestimated. To this end, teachers at all levels of education must be appropriately trained and qualified. Teachers should continue their professional development upon recruitment through a period of induction into the profession with the support by a mentor and should have access throughout their careers to high quality continuous professional development and learning. These opportunities should be provided by the public authorities or other employers at no cost to individual teachers.
The profession should have a set of professional standards, ethics, conditions and rights. These should be similar to professional and ethical standards for other professional groups which require comparable qualifications. The professional standards in the teaching profession should be applied to teachers at all levels, in both the public and the private sector. The basis for such professional standards should be inculcated during teacher education programmes.

The EI Declaration on Professional Ethics represents the core values of the teaching profession itself. It aims to provide a basis for EI affiliates to develop their own guidelines or professional codes of ethics and at the same time, the Declaration also puts forward fundamental values that the worldwide teaching community recognises as core components of its professional ethics.

Enhancing the professional autonomy and self-confidence of teachers in their professional and pedagogic judgements and through the assertion of their right to academic freedom and to undertake research should be given the highest priority by governments and employers as this is essential to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

- **Decent Life and Academic Freedom**

  It is important to make sure that teachers remain in the profession. For a good teacher to remain in the profession, in addition to the right to decent life, the commitment of teachers to the education and welfare of their students should be recognised and respected. Enhancing professional autonomy and self-confidence of teachers should be given the highest priority by governments and employers as this is essential to motivate teachers.

- **Job Security and Career Progression**

  In this context, job security is of enormous importance and casualisation of the teaching profession must be rejected as it is fundamentally harmful to the profession. The status of young teachers, academic staff, researchers and education employees deserves particular attention. The young and women are often the first to face employment on short-term, casual contracts, without any clear future career paths.

  Career structures at all educational and research levels must have the clear potential for progression based on professional standards, qualifications and the acceptance of additional professional responsibilities. There should be no possibility of discrimination on any grounds in promotion processes.

  The UNESCO-ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers adopted in 1966 has essentially served as a charter of rights for teachers worldwide. It is important that the UNESCO-ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation on the Status of Teachers and the Recommendation on the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (CEART) continues to monitor the application of the Recommendations, and to rule on violations of teachers’ rights.

- **Teaching Learning Environment**

  Successful and quality teaching is affected to a great extent by the work environment. Daily working conditions foster and sustain essential motivation to teach. Factors like condition of school building and classroom, tools available to teachers and students, seating arrangements, classroom size, multi
grade teaching, single teachers school, sanitary facilities, libraries, labs etc. impact the effective teaching and learning and motivation of teachers and students.

Even the most qualified and skilled teachers will struggle to perform at their best and promote learning when basic teaching environment conditions are missing. This is evident in schools with multi-grade teaching and in schools where more than 60 students are cramped in a classroom built for 30 students.

The teaching and learning environment should be designed in such a way that it supports teachers and education employees in their missions. Public authorities should provide the necessary infrastructure and resources to cater for this environment.

- **Curriculum**

  Public authorities should ensure that education institutions have a broad and balanced framework curriculum which sets out common rights and responsibilities. The framework should be sufficiently flexible to allow schools to adapt it to the needs of all of their students. Education institutions themselves should be responsible for adapting the curricular framework to the needs of the relevant societal context.

- **Use of Technology**

  Information and communication technologies (ICT) can enhance the quality of education. Teachers play important role in integrating technology into education. These technologies are best used as supplements to, and not replacements for, in-class-instruction. The issue of equity of access to such technologies across the globe needs to be resolved. The use of ICT in education requires more reflection, especially on the improvement of teacher training and development programs, curricula, teachers’ workload and education institutions’ infrastructure.

- **School Leadership**

  Education International recognises the key role which professional leadership plays in contributing to quality education. Capable and efficient professional school leaders inspire and motivate teachers. However, the rapidly changing economic, social and cultural environment has created new challenges for school leaders. For example the implementation of decentralization policies and new accountability demands has made school leadership more and more demanding. Those in leadership positions in schools and other educational institutions must receive the support and specific training which their demanding role requires.

  Pedagogical leadership requires high-level qualifications and should be engaged regularly in activities that promote effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Leadership should be founded on the principles of collegiality, teamwork, democratic decision-making processes and recognise the importance of dialogue and cooperation.

  EI is committed to improving school leadership and works closely with international and regional organisations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, the OECD, European institutions and the Commonwealth Secretariat in this endeavour.
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- **Evaluation**

  The purpose of evaluation should be clear to all those involved in education. All forms of evaluation involving students, teachers, schools and higher education institutions, and education systems should be understood and be agreed with teachers and education unions. All forms of evaluation should be formative, rather than punitive. Imposed high stakes testing systems and punitive school inspection models, for example, lead to schools focusing mainly on what is tested and inspected, to the curbing of the capacity to innovate, to curricula being narrowed and to teachers’ self-confidence being undermined. The teacher evaluation, should lead to teachers’ professional development needs being identified and provided for.

- **Standardized Tests**

  Widespread abuse of the notion of quality to justify standardised forms of testing is harmful to the education system as the teaching will be directed to meeting the standardised external requirements stifling innovation and creativity and undermining professional autonomy.

- **Inclusive Education**

  We must take note that children from the marginalized groups, rural communities and poor families are the ones who fail to learn and even do not have access to education. The lack of qualified teachers for marginalized groups, problems of gender inequality and continuing use of child labour need to be addressed. Issues relating to gender are a central aspect of inclusive education. From the earliest stage possible, all forms of gender stereotyping should be challenged and eliminated from education.

  All students should be educated together, to the same high standards, in so far as possible in the same education institution. It is particularly important that education should also instil concepts of equality, tolerance and respect for diversity.

- **Global Challenges**

  Education systems have a responsibility to assist students in becoming aware of and confronting the challenges facing the modern world. Sustainable development education must be an integral part of the curriculum. As the citizens of tomorrow, students should be made aware of the impact which human beings have had on the environment and, in particular, of the implications of the continuation of a consumerist culture in society, for the future of the planet.

- **Privatization**

  Quality education not only nurtures human talent and creativity but also promotes peace, democracy, creativity, solidarity, inclusion, and other social values and enables international and intercultural understanding providing people with the critical knowledge, abilities and skills that are needed to conceptualise, question and solve problems.

  Education International believes that education is a public good and human right and public authorities should protect education from privatization and commercialisation. There are few good examples of Public Private Partnerships but the application of private-sector management models
on education institutions, the privatisation of public provisions, and the intrusion of for-profit motives in education has had detrimental effect on education.

Forms of privatization in and of public education changed the way in which education is organised, managed and delivered; how the curriculum is decided and thought; how students’ performance is accessed and how student, teachers, schools and communities are judged.

Forms of privatization, changes, how teachers are prepared, the nature of and access to ongoing professional developments; the terms and conditions of teachers’ contracts and pay; the nature of teachers’ day-to-day activities and the way they experience their working lives.

Privatization in and of public education can have a significant impact on equality and educational access, experiences and outcomes. Indeed it can change what equality in education means with dire consequences for social justice.

The social values of education therefore require public authorities to protect the education sector from privatization and commercialisation.

We have heard companies like Pearson being hailed for Educator Effectiveness program, but it is unacceptable that Pearson forces gag orders against teachers who want to bring to public attention the flaws in the tests designed by it in New York USA. We should not endorse actions that threaten the rights and freedom that humanity gained over the centuries. Quality education will not remain quality education if the policies on education do not continue to uphold these rights and freedoms.

➢ Teacher management system

It is essential to strengthen teacher management system and reconcile “what the system needs” with “what the teachers need”. Reforms on teacher management require that measures like the ownership by teacher unions, approval by government at the highest level, wide consultations, appropriate budget lines, effective management of deployment, promotion, and in-service training are in place.

Conclusion

Enabling learning is not easy. Intrinsically motivated teachers and quality education are interlinked. Enhanced status of the profession motivates teachers to perform better.

Quality education should be defined in terms of context and culture. Quality is neither one-dimensional nor straightforward. Quality education is defined by its inputs (including students’ background, teachers’ qualifications, working conditions, class-size and investment in education); by the education process (including teaching, parenting and related processes of learning) and by projected outcomes (including individual, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs).

A contextual approach to quality, status and motivation is never deterministic, as it is contingent upon creativity and constant development.

It is necessary that we focus on quality education across the board without forgetting the access problems of the most marginalized. Thank you UNESCO for bringing to the forefront that a well equipped and supported teacher is an agent for quality education and students’ learning.