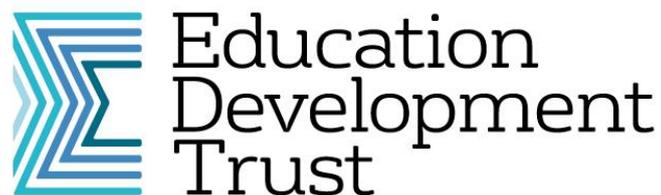




The impact of Professional Learning Networks on headteacher and teacher intrinsic motivation in Rwanda

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Research conducted by Education Development Trust



Transforming lives by improving education around the world

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This research was conducted by Education Development Trust's specialist research and consultancy team. The project was staffed by a small team of specialist educational researchers (Rachael Fitzpatrick and Anna Riggall) and a senior international consultant (Lucy Crehan).

Introduction and context

VVOB have been instrumental in fostering, organising and maintaining Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) of headteachers in Rwanda at sector level, to improve headteachers' leadership competencies. PLNs brought headteachers together to learn from one another to improve learning achievements in students. As part of this programme, 120 Sector Education Officers (SEOs) were trained in coaching and facilitating PLNs, and they gained insight on the latest knowledge about effective school leadership and effective PLNs.¹ Most of the SEOs conducted three PLN sessions with headteachers in their sector, with eight conducted for the headteachers in the pilot. Headteachers have continued to engage with PLNs after the initial pilot, though the time headteachers now meet is decided by them.

As part of the PLN programme, VVOB also launched a PLN magazine, *Urunana rw'Abarezi*, which created a platform for sharing experiences on PLNs and effective school leadership. The magazines document best practice. It is published by the Rwanda Education Board with VVOB support and distributed to school leaders across the country.

Emerging findings from an impact study conducted by VVOB suggested that these PLN sessions had an impact on the motivation of teachers in participating headteachers' schools. The key indicators for this were reduced teacher absenteeism and teachers reportedly taking on more responsibility. Headteachers indicated during focus group discussion that the changes they made had increased teacher motivation in their schools. Exploring this increased motivation was, however, outside the scope of the initial impact study. In July 2017, VVOB commissioned Education Development Trust to conduct a small-scale qualitative research study. The study explored the extent to which PLNs impacted on the motivation of teachers whose headteachers had been engaged in PLNs. The study also looked at the ways in which headteacher's intrinsic motivation increased as a direct result of their involvement in PLNs.

Purpose of the research

The aims and objectives of the research were to:

- explore headteachers' perceptions of the impact of PLNs on **their own** intrinsic motivation
- explore **headteachers' perceptions** of the impact of their resulting actions on **teachers'** intrinsic motivation
- explore **teachers' perceptions about how and why their own motivation was improved**
- **explore the teachers' perceptions about the impact of the PLNs on their headteacher's behaviours.**

¹ There are 416 SEOs in Rwanda, one for each sector, who each report to their respective District Education Officer throughout the 30 districts (Rwanda Education Directory). Headteachers report to SEOs in their sectors.

Theoretical framework

This study set out to explore why PLNs resulted in motivational changes. Headteachers interviewed in VVOB's impact evaluation at the end of 2016 indicated teacher motivation increased in their schools as a result of the changes they made through their involvement in PLNs. To explore this interesting aspect of the impact evaluation, a theoretical framework was developed using literature on intrinsic motivation. This section outlines this framework.

The Muscat Agreement defines the current vision of key education stakeholders for the post-2015 agenda, and includes seven targets which contribute to equitable, inclusive and quality education for all. One of these targets concerns motivation specifically: 'By 2030, all governments ensure that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers'. Teacher motivation is critical for student learning outcomes and teacher well-being, whereas a lack of it results in high attrition rates, varying levels of professional commitment, feelings of helplessness, absenteeism, under-utilization of class time, professional misconduct, and poor preparation (Bennell and Akyeamong, 2007; Michaelowa, 2002; VSO, 2002).

Like many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Rwandan teachers have seen their working conditions deteriorate as the country has successfully enrolled more children in school, but has not managed to increase the supply of teachers to keep up with this increased student enrolment (DeJaeghere et al, 2006). A decade ago, a third of teachers were teaching two shifts a day, with an average class size of 61 (Bennell and Akyeamong, 2007), and some studies reported that Rwandan teachers on average had low levels of motivation (Thomas and Mbabazi, 2004; Bennell and Ntagaramba, 2008). Teachers pay is still low, both in absolute terms, and relative to the salary of other professions in Rwanda (Muvunyi, 2016).

In response to these motivational challenges, the government introduced several reforms aimed at improving teacher motivation in Rwanda between 2008 and 2013, which included (i) increasing and harmonising teachers' salaries; (ii) reviewing teachers' working and living conditions; (iii) promoting public recognition of teachers; (iv) improving school and classroom facilities; and (v) professionalising teacher management (recruitment, deployment and transfer) (Muvunyi, 2016). These reforms were mainly directed at reducing the dissatisfaction of teachers caused by contextual factors. This resulted in some success though challenges remain, not least due to financial constraints (ibid). Research on motivation from the field of psychology suggests, however, that this is only half of the story, and that there are less concrete but equally powerful ways to increase teacher motivation that need to take place alongside these kinds of reform.

Dual-factor theory

American Psychologist Frederick Herzberg developed the 'dual-factor' theory of satisfaction, which has since been borne out by further research. He found that the things people reported as causing them dissatisfaction at work were different kinds of things from those that people reported caused them the greatest satisfaction at work. In the former category were contextual factors like working conditions and pay; Herzberg called these 'hygiene factors' because hygiene prevents poor health without bringing about good health, just as higher pay

reduces dissatisfaction without bringing about great satisfaction in one's work. In the latter category were job-related factors such as recognition, opportunities for development and achievement, which Herzberg called motivators because they were what people found most motivating about their work. These two groups correspond closely to Frase's 'job context factors' and 'job content factors' (Frase, 1992).

The implication for Rwanda is that there are other motivating factors which could be developed, in addition to removing sources of dissatisfaction such as low pay and poor working conditions. 'In addition' is used deliberately, in place of 'instead of', because those who have conducted research on teacher motivation in developing contexts warn that basic needs must be met before teachers can be motivated by higher-order factors, such as the need for achievement, responsibility, and personal growth (Bennell and Akyeamong, 2007). If teachers are hungry, this will be their first concern. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that Rwandan teachers are already somewhat motivated by these 'motivator' factors, such as professional development and teacher voice (Muvunyi, 2016).

Self-determination theory

How do you encourage teacher motivation beyond the removal of things which are dissatisfying? That depends on the kind of motivation you are trying to encourage. The most well-known theory of motivation is that there are two types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. One refers to the motivation to pursue an activity because you enjoy it, the other is the motivation to do something because of external factors – an incentive or a disincentive. The psychologists who developed these original ideas as part of Cognitive Evaluation Theory have spent many more years studying motivation, and have put forward a second theory that subsumes the first: self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Self-determination theory recognises that motivation is not binary, but that types of motivation sit along a scale, with intrinsic motivation at one end, where the action is internal and autonomous, with the reason for action being it is inherently interesting or enjoyable (Ryan and Deci; 2000).

The rest of the scale is made up of different types of extrinsic motivation. This is in recognition of the fact that extrinsic motivation covers any type of motivation that is not based on inherent enjoyment of an activity, which ranges from, for example, marking pupils' work because you care about the pupils' education (an example of 'integration'), to marking pupils' work because you will be fired otherwise (an example of 'external regulation'). What is changing from one end of this scale to the other is the extent to which the behaviour is motivated one's own wishes (because you enjoy it or care about it) rather than being motivated by pressure put upon you by someone else, or the context in which you work. Ryan and Deci explain this as the difference between 'autonomous motivation' and 'controlled motivation'.

This matters because there are behavioural differences associated with these two types of motivation, both in the wider psychological literature, and in studies on teachers. Research in a range of settings has found that organisations and environments that promote autonomous motivation bring about positive effects on the behaviour and outlook of their employees: persistence and maintained behaviour change; effective performance (particularly on tasks requiring creativity, cognitive flexibility, and conceptual understanding); job satisfaction; positive work-related attitudes; organizational citizenship behaviours; and psychological adjustment and well-being (Gagné and Deci, 2005).

Autonomous motivation in schools

Teachers who are autonomously motivated to teach have reported a greater sense of personal achievement and reduced emotional exhaustion, have been found more likely to have a student-centred teaching style, and more likely to try innovative teaching strategies (Roth et al., 2007; Hein et al., 2012, Lam, et al., 2010). They are also more likely to support autonomous motivation in their students (Roth et al. 2007).

According to self-determination theory, the way to bring about this autonomous motivation in teachers, and other employees, is to organise environments and roles in a way which supports them in fulfilling three needs: the need for competence, the need for relatedness, and the need for autonomy (Gagné and Deci, 2005). The need for, and the effects of, autonomy are particularly relevant to teacher motivation in schools. The TALIS survey of teachers run by the OECD in 2013 found that ‘teachers who report that they are provided with opportunities to participate in decision making at a school level have higher reported levels of job satisfaction in all TALIS countries...The relationship between job satisfaction and teacher participation in school decision making is particularly strong for all countries.’ (OECD, 2013: 182). This is something that may be affected by changes in Rwandan headteachers’ behaviour, having taken part in the PLN.

Another possibility for change as a result of headteacher involvement in PLNs is the extent to which teachers are able to plan and share ideas with one another, which might fulfil their needs for relatedness, and therefore have a positive impact on autonomous motivation. Finally, there may be other effects on headteachers’ behaviours that lead to the teachers growing in their teaching competence, and recognising that growth through feedback from peers or the principal, or through their impact on the students. Meeting these needs would contribute to autonomous motivation and its associated positive effects.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach using focus groups to explore questions related to the objectives above.

Focus groups

Focus groups were conducted in six districts across Rwanda. The districts were spread in the north, south, eastern and western provinces:

- Tabagwe, Nyagatare
- Bigogwe, Nyabihu
- Ntongwe, Ruhango
- Kageyo, Gicumbi
- Kigabiro, Rwamagana
- Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

Focus group guidelines were open ended to allow for free discussion on the impact of PLNs. This was particularly important when discussing motivation with teachers, as it allowed for

corroboration of headteacher perceptions of improved teacher motivation with teachers own perspectives.

Focus group discussion was recorded with notes taken by the researcher. Focus group questions were asked in English, with an interpreter for participants to speak in French, Kinyarwanda or Kiswahili. The majority of headteachers responded in English, with the majority of teachers responding in Kinyarwanda. Simultaneous translation was used by the interpreter. Focus groups ranged in length between 40 and 90 minutes, with an average time of 50 minutes.

Participants were told at the beginning of each session that the researcher was independent of VVOB so they could speak freely about their experiences of the PLNs. The SEO was also not present during any focus group to allow for open discussion.

Sample

The sampling was purposive to allow for a broad range of locations in the four provinces in Rwanda, and to ensure participating headteachers were still active in PLNs. SEOs were asked to select a minimum of six schools within their sector to participate in the focus groups. A telephone survey in May 2017, conducted by VVOB, identified that 51 (49%) SEOs were still active in PLNs. They were classified as active if they had held a session within the last 100 days. These SEOs selected headteachers who still attended sessions to participate in the research. As the research set out to explore how the link between headteacher participation in PLNs and teacher motivation works, if at all, it was important to select only headteachers still participating in PLNs for the sample. It was therefore necessary to exclude headteachers who no longer participated in PLNs, as this would have prevented this link being explored. The reasons why some headteachers remained active in PLNs and others did not, and any impact this had on teachers, was outside the scope of this study.

Table 1: sample of headteachers

District	Sector	No. participants	Mean years of experience as headteacher	Range: lowest years	Rang: longest years	Gender
Bigogwe	Nyabihu	8	9 years	2 years	13 years	All male
Gicumbi	Kageyo	6	6 years	1 year	13 years	5 male, 1 female
Rwamagana	Kigabiro	6	9.8 years	1 year	12 years	All male
Ruhango	Ntongwe	7	9.5 years	1 year	17 years	5 male, 2 female
Nyarugenge	Rwezamwenyo	6	7.8 years	3 years	17 years	4 male, 2 female
Tabagwe	Nyagatare	6	11.8 years	4 years	23 years	All male

Table 2: sample of teachers

District	Sector	No. participants (across 2 groups)	Mean years of experience as teacher	Range: lowest years	Range: longest years	Gender
Bigogwe	Nyabihu	14	13.9 years	2 years	27 years	12 male, 2 female
Gicumbi	Kageyo	10	16 years	2 years	26 years	9 male, 1 female
Rwamagana	Kigabiro	12	14 years	3 years	34 years	10 male, 2 female
Ruhango	Ntongwe	8	9.8 years	3 years	26 years	4 male, 4 female
Nyarugenge	Rwezamwenyo	10	13.4 years	1 year	23 years	6 female, 4 male
Tabagwe	Nyagatare	10	11.4 years	1 year	14 years	7 male, 3 female

Analytical framework and focus group questions

The analysis of data was based on Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. The study sought to test the extent to which PLNs had an impact on headteacher and teacher intrinsic motivation, using this theory as an analytical framework.

Headteachers were prompted on the following areas:

- The key changes that had impacted their motivation
- The extent to which they felt PLNs impacted on their sense of competence in their role
- The effect PLNs had on their relationships with other headteachers and stakeholders in their school and local community
- The impact of PLNs on their confidence and vision in school decision making

Teachers were prompted on the following areas:

- What changes had taken place since their headteachers joined a PLN that impacted on their motivation
- Whether any changes made impacted on their relationships at school with headteachers, other teachers, students and parents
- Whether teachers had been given any more responsibility as a result of the PLNs and how this made them feel
- Whether any changes made had improved their teaching, and whether they had seen a change in student learning as a result of this

Rather than ask specific questions relating to this theory however, the research opted for open ended questions to test the relevance of this theoretical framework. This allowed the relevance of the theory to be tested without projecting the theory onto participants. Most respondents gave detailed responses to the first question (the below varied dependent on being asked to headteachers or teachers):

- Did your involvement/your headteacher's involvement in PLNs impact on your motivation? Please tell me how, using examples where possible.

Respondents required few probes after this question was asked and the majority of interview sessions were spent with headteachers and teachers openly responding to this question. If responses were vague or lacked detail the researcher would probe for specific examples. Headteacher focus groups took place first, which enabled the researcher to corroborate headteacher examples with those given by teachers. The researcher would not specifically ask about an example raised by the headteacher, but found teachers would often raise the same examples without being prompted.

Measuring teacher motivation was achieved by exploring the self-perception of headteachers and teachers on the things they found motivating, rather than asking questions specifically relating to the theoretical framework. Headteachers and teachers were prompted on the core themes of the theoretical framework (the need for relatedness, autonomy and competence), if they previously mentioned it without prompt but did not provide detail. For example if they mentioned improved relationships with parents, which would be an example of relatedness, but did not provide examples of how and why that relationship had improved, then a follow up question would be asked about relationship with parents.

Despite the open ended nature of the focus group sessions, the headteacher and teacher responses did fit with the theoretical framework being tested during the fieldwork. The below 'fieldwork findings' and 'discussion' sections will explore the data from the fieldwork.

Findings from the fieldwork

This chapter presents the findings from the focus groups across the six sectors. The first section reviews the impact of PLNs on headteacher motivation, and the second explores the impact of PLNs on teacher motivation, as perceived by headteachers and teachers.

Headteacher motivation

All headteachers interviewed expressed a strong belief that PLNs had improved their motivation. Changes in relationships were at the heart of this.

Building and maintaining positive relationships

The most important change cited by headteachers linked to increased motivation was a consequence of more and richer professional relationships with others. They attributed this change directly to their involvement in PLNs. They said that PLNs showed them the benefits of collaboration and the different ways stakeholders in schools could be engaged. These positive relationships were primarily established with other headteachers in PLNs but soon radiated out to include relationships with teachers, students, parents, the local community and their superiors. This created a path to further transformations that will be discussed in later sections, but it was the relationships themselves that had the most impact on headteachers' self-perceived motivation.

Headteachers finding motivation from each other

All the headteachers that took part in the focus groups stated they were working in isolation before the PLNs and did not have support from anywhere. They described how they often made decisions alone, as they believed this was the only way to work, and did not have a sense of whether or not they were doing things in the best or correct way. They explained that joining the PLNs enabled them to find solutions to problems together, and helped them realise they were not alone in facing the particular challenges of their school.

“Before PLNs I thought we were alone and the only ones facing problems. After joining we realised we shared the same problems and were able to find solutions together. We found this motivating. We created friendships.” Headteacher, Bigogwe, Nyabihu

Understanding that the challenges of their schools’ context were also experienced in other school contexts was particularly important regarding student dropouts. Summing up the spirit of other comments, one headteacher said:

“Usually when you share your issues you realise it is a problem in your school and another school may have the same problem. It saves energy. For example, we had high dropouts and struggled, but were able to solve it with others. We went to a school that successfully reduced their dropout rates as a learning trip.” Headteacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Once headteachers had started to make positive change, and see the outcomes, a friendly and supportive competitiveness developed among them. This renewed enthusiasm and engagement was infectious and inspired action. A number of headteachers spoke about wanting to be the first to innovate or try something new within their PLN, and to be a future example of a good school held up to the group. Another headteacher commented on the effect on the school environment of this changed attitude:

“Headteachers are now not only collaborative but also competitive. They want to be the first to innovate and share their innovations. This also makes teachers competitive and want to do better. We are new creatures.” Headteacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

More and richer relationships between headteachers within PLNs led in turn to more and richer relationships with all stakeholders. Once headteachers saw the benefits of working together they replicated this approach with teachers, students, parents and their superiors. Headteachers across all focus groups explained that reinvigorated and more collaborative school environments motivated them by reducing their sense of isolation and by providing a support system that was previously absent from their professional lives. Responsibility for decision making was no longer solely on their shoulders, and many spoke of finding work ‘lighter’ or better at their work as a result of this.

“PLNs reminded us of our responsibilities. Before we thought all tasks were on our shoulders, the job became easier.” Headteacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

“Before it was a heavy responsibility working with teachers because I used to do things alone. Now sharing with teachers, I realised it is lighter.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Building positive relationships with parents

Headteachers told us that as a result of their involvement in PLNs, they began to involve parents in decision making, which improved the relationship by creating an environment of mutual respect.

“Parents now explain to other parents the importance of education. Some parents think paying fees and sending children to school is enough. Learning is a triangle: parents, students and teachers/headteachers. Working in this triangle takes learners where they want to go. Now they are interested in results and will come and see why the students improve. Children give reports to their parents each month and parents now take an interest.” Headteacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Headteachers considered improved relationships with parents to be motivating as they felt the decisions they made were supported, and sometimes contributed to, by parents. This made their decisions more likely to be accepted and successfully implemented.

“I had a case of many parents not attending parent meetings. PLN empowered me to get solutions and bring parents on board.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“I am headteacher of a private school and I would do all recruitment alone before. Now I have members of the PTA interview new teachers with me. Teachers know that parents will hold them to account. Parents are happy they trust teachers and also know they are now responsible for the quality of teaching in who they recruit.” Headteacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Not only were relationships improved between headteachers and parents, but also with the wider school community. One headteacher indicated the local community and parents frequently referred to it as ‘the school’, but since improvements have been made they began to refer to it as ‘our’ or ‘my school’. Headteachers found this sense of ownership from the community motivating.

Improved relationship with superiors

Headteachers reported that the relationship between themselves and SEOs (their superiors), also changed as a result of PLNs. Following the commencement of their participation in PLNs there followed greater collaboration. This was reported to be caused by headteachers developing a greater awareness and value for school evaluation and openness to supportive criticism that facilitated improvement. Headteachers said they felt more effective, more resilient and more empowered to direct positive change in their schools for their learners. They also described experience less fear of evaluation and feedback. These relationship with SEOs became reportedly less hierarchical and more cooperative and team-like.

“The headteacher and SEO are now ‘talking the same language’. Headteachers, along with SEOs, will now also make school visits and evaluate how learning is taking place. It has united SEOs and headteachers” Headteacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“Before when SEOs visited their comments weren’t excellent and we needed lots of improvements. Now the comments are getting better and they can see innovations which makes headteachers want to do more.” Headteacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“We are willing to tell superiors what we think should happen more, we are more confident with this” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“Now we’ll work better with superiors to find solutions, before the hierarchy was not about resolutions. Now whenever there is a problem you can call anyone and ask for their point of view. It’s all about collaboration and providing advice.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Increased sense of competency through peer learning

In addition to reducing headteacher feelings of isolation, working with other headteachers gave them professional learning opportunities. All headteachers believed they had improved in their work as a direct result of the PLNs, particularly by learning from other schools and good practice.

“It had an impact, learning from one another and sharing experiences. Helping each other. What helped a lot were the resolutions, especially concerning dropout but also improving our teaching. Improved because we were learning from colleagues. Gave us examples of good practice we could import” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“It gave headteachers the possibility to learn from each other in different domains and made us better. It improved our knowledge and helped us perform better.” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

Headteachers found this enabled them to make changes in the school and to commit to making further changes. The focus group analysis suggested that peer learning improved headteacher motivation on two levels. Firstly, headteachers were motivated to listen to examples of good practice from other schools and import them to their own, particularly because they knew they would have support when doing so. Secondly, headteachers started to see positive changes in their own schools as a result of changes they made. This increased their confidence in their own ability to bring about positive change. Motivation therefore began with inspiration from others, and then moved to inspiration from themselves and the changes they made. Those schools where a headteacher was part of a PLN reportedly had great success in reducing drop out and this was something attributed by headteachers to the PLNs and confidence they got from taking part in these. More generally, successes motivated them to make further change and to keep the momentum of working collaboratively and openly.

“Because we have a network we have a common action plan. We have more knowledge, which has increased confidence and increased trust in our own ability. You feel like you can make things happen. Other leaders will ask us about what challenges we face when we implement change and they push us to give us courage to continue.” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

The PLNs not only provided the opportunity for peer learning but also were a forum to access other forms of professional learning. Headteachers explained they were given opportunities to learn new skills within their PLNs. The skills they discussed in the focus groups often involved public finance management or financial areas.

“Public finance management – in consultation with the sector level we organised training. We then have a meeting about it on our school level” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbu

“In terms of financial matters, I do not have training in this. Since PLN I will involve economics or accounting teachers in the process which helps a lot. Headteachers are not always competent with finance.” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

Echoing earlier points the headteachers described how they took their own experiences of the PLNs and tried to replicate this for their staff and learners. A notable change that headteachers said followed the PLNs was the creation of departments in schools. For some headteachers they already had departments in their schools but they weren't given any responsibilities; teachers were also not encouraged to work together within these departments. In this respect they served an administrative purpose only. Teachers saw these departments as becoming communities of practice after the headteacher joined the PLN. For other schools these departments represented communities of practice opposed to departments. This was specifically about reducing isolation and creating opportunities for collaboration and shared learning. Previously headteachers had worked in isolation, and had created an environment where all staff and students did too. One headteacher described:

“Our school created departments among the teachers where we didn't have them before. Helped teachers to learn from each other do they can transmit knowledge to learners. Ask each other if strategies are not working. PLNs gave us more experience to understand how to delegate. All about learning how to resolve problems. Teachers should themselves be responsible.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Purpose and clarity of vision

The majority of headteachers talked about how they had become more focused as a result of the PLNs and their own increased motivation.

“After PLN we realised our schools should have clear direction. When you don't know where you're coming from you don't know where you're going. We started implementing 5 yearly strategies, yearly action plans. Action plans include budget and M&E of planned activities.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“I would not say the vision changed but it improved and PLNs helped us reach our vision 100%. They helped us align our activities to achieve our vision.” Headteacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

Creating a positive learning environment for students

Headteachers believed the changes they had made as a result of their involvement in PLNs had a direct impact on students. Changes brought in from other schools, such as the formation of clubs or management of behaviour, were considered to have had a positive impact on students.

“Students participation has increased after the formation of clubs. Students express themselves now and what they expect from us. This helps us to know what to improve. Including students is very important.” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“It [being part of a PLN] has had a huge impact on socialisation and academic performance. We had one child who was very troublesome for a long time. We had meetings with teachers to discuss what could be done and decided peer learning of behaviour would be good for him. We had some other students mentor him. We saw a big change and when he went home his parents also saw a change. Their parent came into school and asked what had been done. We told the parent we assigned a group of students to act as social mentors and it had helped improve his behaviour. The parent was pleased and shocked.” Headteacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Teacher intrinsic motivation

This section will explore the impact of PLNs (attended by headteachers) on teacher intrinsic motivation. The VVOB PLN impact evaluation suggested a connection between these two elements. Focus groups with teachers were used to discuss motivation with teachers. In addition, headteachers, in their focus groups, were asked about their perceptions of the impact of PLNs on teacher motivation.

Headteachers’ perceptions about teacher motivation

All headteachers said that they believed that the intrinsic motivation of teachers had improved as a direct result of changes they made after attending the PLNs. Headteachers believed the following changes had a direct impact on teacher motivation:

- **Devolving more power to departments:** Headteachers said that devolving more power to subject departments, or creating departments, in schools was an important way of improving teacher motivation through giving them more responsibility and more autonomy. Headteachers explained teachers found this motivating.

“After PLN, teachers are in departments. This gave them more platforms for learning from one another. Before the atmosphere was not positive. Now they are free to disclose their problems with each other and will bring their problems to the headteacher.” Headteacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

- **Encouraging collaboration:** Headteachers encouraged teachers to collaborate, which they believed improved teacher motivation in the same way increased collaboration improved their own motivation. It allowed teachers to improve their teaching skills and thus improved their own sense of competency and confidence in teaching.

“Spirit of working together has been promoted. Before it was seen as hierarchical but now it is flexible. Now teachers are not fearing headteachers and students are not fearing teachers.” Headteacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

- **Observation for professional development, not for judgement:** Headteachers explained that after participating in PLNS they no longer observed lessons as police officers, but as counsellors. Headteachers believed this gave teachers important opportunities for professional development and also made them feel supported.

“Teachers are no longer working in fear of my visits. They now welcome feedback and everyone is working freely. It is not disorder, as they have developed professional behaviours. I am not a police officer.” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

- **Allowing teachers to express their opinions:** Headteachers said they saw teachers as colleagues and equals, and were less hierarchical in the way they approached problems. They began giving teachers the opportunity to put items on the agenda of staff meetings and to consult on issues before decisions were made, rather than informing them afterwards.

“Before we had the wrong attitude. Before the headteacher was there to criticise and make sure his or her own ideas prevail. Only go to look at what is not going right. After working with PLN my attitude changed. Teachers have their own opinions and ideas that should be valued. I give them trust to come up with resolutions and more responsibilities. They make decisions as a team.” Headteacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

The research also offered teachers the opportunity to comment on the effect of their headteacher’s participation in PLNs on their own motivation. All teachers that took part in the focus groups had been teaching in their school before, during and after the period of the headteacher PLN. This meant they were able to reflect on changes and differences they perceived. Of course, the methodology does not mean that any causation can be directly attributed but it can give a strong indication of the relationships.

Improved relationship with headteacher

The first thing that came to mind when teachers were asked about the impact of PLNs on them was the improved relationship with the headteacher of their school. Prior to the PLNs they explained they rarely spoke with headteachers about their issues, they often felt judged and criticised when observed and they did not consider the headteacher approachable.

The changed relationship with the headteacher was considered important for motivation in different ways. Teachers started to think about the headteacher as a colleague and a friend. Some teachers spoke of headteachers eating lunch with them which previously had not happened, and the headteacher spending a lot more time with teachers and not in their office.

“Before the headteacher used to go to their office and not greet anyone. Now they come and greet. Now there is more collaboration. We are all in the same profession” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“The headteacher takes time during breaks, he comes, is free, makes jokes, tells us news. More approachable. No longer high and he is ready to collaborate.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

“Before PLNs headteachers were authoritative and lead like dictators. Now they are more understanding and flexible. We are freer to go to the headteacher.” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

This different relationship extended into the classroom and helped create more professional development opportunities for teachers. Teachers said that headteachers were previously “dictators” or “police officers”, and that whenever they came to observe lessons, teachers would be frustrated and afraid of the criticism. After the PLNs headteachers developed more of a supporting and counselling role. Not only did they visit classrooms more often but they also praised teachers when they did well and helped provide constructive feedback where there were areas for improvement. This meant that teachers were willing to listen and learn,

and were also appreciative of the feedback and opportunities to improve. Some quotes taken from the teacher focus groups are presented below to illustrate these points:

“Headteachers were like governors or police, now they’re like counsellors. They tell you what can be improved and how to change. The change never takes long.” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

“Two years ago, when our lessons were observed they were given little feedback. After the PLNs headteacher spoke in their office and gave motivation to improve on specific recommendations.” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“Before when we met the headteacher it was all about being told what we did wrong. Now if we have problems the headteacher will explain it. Now if others see you with the headteacher they know you are discussing teaching and learning. Before they might think you were in trouble.” Ntongwe, Ruhango

“The frequency of headteacher observation increased and they give feedback and are willing to correct us on our weaknesses. This helps me a lot.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“The reason why feedback is not overwhelming is because they congratulate you if you do well and you know they want to help you improve if they give negatives” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“Before they would give you feedback on a lesson just to show you they are superior. Now it is advice on how to improve. Sometimes if you don’t agree you can talk about it with them.” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

“Previously with class inspections the headteacher would be argumentative. Now teachers talk with headteachers about any areas for improvement and find solutions together. Teachers feel happy when headteachers come to observe their lessons. They are happy to receive advice because they want to be better teachers.” Teacher, Nyabihu

“Previously inspections were about what went wrong and the feedback was in quantitative marks and wasn’t very helpful. Now it is qualitative so we can use it better.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Teachers explained in some focus groups that after PLNs, headteachers provided support on training for key areas such as the new competency based curriculum. Teachers said they were better able to adapt to the new curriculum as a direct result of this support.

“When they come visit and see you are struggling they will give you professional development opportunities. For example, we can receive extra help and training in English and the new competency based curriculum” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

Teachers also reported that the different dynamic with headteachers was having an impact on their own relationship with students, and that they saw positive changes in student learning as a result of this change.

“The relationship between teachers and students changed. Students used to look at teachers as police officers, now they look at us as counsellors. This is the same as what it was like between teachers and headteachers before. Before we used to give theories and lecture but now students actively participate” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“Performance of learners has increased compared to before. Attendance has increased because we’ve been sharing ideas” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

The effect of peer learning and collaboration on teacher motivation

Teachers considered it motivating to work with other teachers both within their school and other schools. Teachers engaged in peer learning through planning lessons with other teachers, observing model lessons, evaluating each other’s lessons and by visiting other schools to learn from good practice. Teachers all found this collaborative work motivating because they felt like better teachers as a result of this peer learning.

“We share books with teachers in other schools to compare how their teachers teach. This also allows for friendships to develop between teachers.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“Teachers consult other teachers when preparing lessons. Different seniority levels will consult and share plans and lesson materials.” Teacher, Bigogwe, Nyabihu

“We travel to other schools to see how they do things and learn how to improve. Borrow teaching methods from other schools.” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“We now work in departments and conduct model lessons. Teachers from our department will come and watch us teach, then we all discuss together. They talk about what was good and bad about the lesson.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

Another teacher also mentioned competitiveness among departments and classrooms to motivate teachers to do better. Motivation through competition is similar to motivation among headteachers.

“Interclass competitions and competitions between schools to help teachers improve and motivate them to be their best.” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

Working together with other schools to create exams was also an important factor that was linked to teacher motivation. Previously schools had the responsibility of creating end of term exams alone, which both added to workload and also made benchmarking against other schools difficult. PLNs meant that schools within the same sector or district started to share responsibility for this and foster collaboration between schools.

“Teachers across the district will work together to create student tests” Teacher, Bigogwe, Nyabihu

“We are collaborating with other schools to improve exams. We started preparing primary level exams together. We divide responsibility for creating them and then all

schools in the area do they exam. For example, school A will prepare English, school B mathematics.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Increased autonomy and teacher motivation

Increased autonomy was considered another motivating change that was facilitated by the headteachers that had taken part in the PLNs. This increased autonomy was a by-product of both the creation of departments and/or communities of practice, and the changed nature of teacher/headteacher interactions. According to the teachers who took part in the focus groups the creation of departments led to a stronger focus on subject leadership and a raised profile for teachers in this capacity. In the same vein teachers explained that the altered nature of teacher/headteacher interactions made teachers feel professionally valued.

“The headteacher...created departments so teachers could learn to improve teaching methods and have more responsibility. We have meetings twice a month and find solutions together.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“The headteacher organised us into groups – commissions in charge of teaching and learning, agriculture, sports etc. They make sure the teacher performs their responsibilities willingly.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Teachers considered increased responsibility to be motivating for a number of reasons. One of the reasons was that they perceived a change in ethos to one where they were encouraged to try new things without fear of punishment. The increased responsibility also motivated teachers by making them feel more trusted.

“The thing that most motivated teachers is the delegating of powers and responsibility. This created in teachers the spirit of doing work without being watched and taking ownership.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanda

“The headteacher is no longer the sole decision maker. Teachers make decisions together to solve problems. Examples of this include problems relating to discipline.” Teacher, Bigogwe, Nyabihu

Teacher motivation and opportunities for conflict resolution

Strongly linking with improved relationships, teachers described changes in the way conflict was dealt with within school. They spoke of discipline and disagreements being problematic prior to their headteacher’s participation in PLNs, with problems often escalating to the authorities. After the PLNs, headteachers created disciplinary boards for staff within schools which meant problems could be solved at school level often removing the need to escalate these.

“There is better conflict resolution instead of problems reaching district level” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“The discipline committee follows up on imperfections in teaching and teacher behaviour. They follow up and resolve this before it becomes an issue for a higher authority.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

“We no longer have conflicts between teachers because we have more frequent meetings that tackle conflicts. This is motivating.” Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge

PLNs helped to give teachers a voice and role in school-level decision making

During focus groups teachers explained that prior to PLNs staff meetings typically involved headteachers announcing changes that would be or had been made, and did not give teachers the opportunity to contribute. After PLNs headteachers gave teachers the opportunity to add items to the agenda. They also let teachers know they could approach them at any time if they had ideas for change, and teachers have found headteachers are willing to listen to their ideas. Teachers explained that they found this motivating because they could see their suggestions being put into practice.

“Working harmoniously with headteachers is motivating. The headteacher is no longer the final man or decision maker. They give teachers opportunities to contribute and ask for advice from them. Teachers now feel confident in what they are there for. Headteacher considers them as important which motivates them.” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“The headteacher is now calling teachers into more meetings and teachers can express their opinions” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“No person’s opinion is valued more than another. Some discuss or even oppose the idea of the headteacher and come up with their own solutions.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

Teachers found better relationship with parents helped increase motivation

As mentioned earlier among the motivating factors for headteachers, richer relationships with parents and the school community was a key factor and this was echoed in teacher focus groups. Teachers reported that they found motivation in the new avenues that were available for them to communicate with parents, and with parents’ changes in attitude towards their child’s education. Teachers attributed this improved relationship with parents to changes made by the headteacher that encouraged parental involvement in school and more actively reaching out to parents who previously showed little interest in their child’s education.

“We had a dropout problem and we sat with the headteacher and parents’ committee to solve it. We worked with mentors and also recruited someone who could go to families and work hand in hand to get their children to school. This taught parents the importance of school and there are more children now at our school.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“Our relationship with parents has improved. Before they would not let us follow up on their child’s learning. Sometimes parents would send their children to school and not know what class they go to or who their teachers are. Now parents know their role and they follow up and participate. For example, I could be teaching a class and a

parent might come and check their child is in there. The parent will want to know if their child is learning well.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

“Teachers and parents are now working together to reduce absenteeism. Parents now have a stake in their child’s learning and care how they do.” Teacher, Bigogwe, Nyabihu

Teachers also considered this improved relationship with parents to have a positive impact on student learning and attitudes towards learning. As students knew that they were being “watched” by the school and their parents their behaviour and attitude to learning started to improve, which teachers found motivating.

“Before the performance of students was not good. We realised that some parents are bringing their children to school and wouldn’t follow up if they dropped out. Now the school is very crowded. Parents come in and meet the teachers. When students see their parents talking to teachers this motivates them to learn.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

“The headteacher now approaches teachers every day so they know the behaviour of the students more, which has had a positive impact on teaching activities.” Teacher, Kageyo, Gicumbi

More rewarding working environment

Many teachers in the focus groups considered improved working environments and social conditions in schools to be particularly motivating. After PLNs headteachers had reportedly encouraged teachers to support each other in their personal lives, particularly when other teachers were sick, had experienced a recent death in the family or recently welcomed a new child. Some schools also set up funds to help these teachers financially. This fostered friendships amongst staff.

“There is better socialisation. For example, if a colleague has a baby or a sick relative we will make sure someone visits them. This has had an impact on motivation. We all support one another at school and at home. We are encouraged to work as a team.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

“The headteacher has built a spirit of partnership in working as one team. For example, if a teacher is sick he gets someone to visit the sick teacher. When someone fills in for them we make sure we deliver the content to fill the gap when they’re not there, so they know what is going on in their classroom and can have a say.” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

“We have a social fund everyone, including the headteacher, contributes to, in case there is someone who is sick or has a sick family member” Teacher, Kigabiro, Rwanagana

In some districts this consideration for staff extended to include the provision of lunch and other rewards. This was mentioned in two districts where stories were shared about pooling money, with some contributions from the headteacher, for lunch to be provided at school.

“Before teachers were not eating at the school and wouldn’t always have lunch. Now they are motivated by being given lunches. If the teachers aren’t motivated the learners won’t learn.” Teacher, Tabagwe, Nyagatare

“For me the change in my school and elsewhere that really helped us was lunch. We use to have problems such as teachers travelling a long distance to get food between shifts. We submitted this problem to the headteacher and parents’ committee and the solution was to organise cooking lunch at school. Together we raised funds to build a kitchen and started cultivating vegetables. We hired a cook. We all agreed on money teachers would put in common and all teachers support that. For me this works well and I can teach better. Teaching in the afternoon was very difficult without eating. Now we see something very good.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

Teachers in Kigali said that they found rewards and gifts at the end of the school terms and year was also motivating, and they felt appreciated because of these rewards: “at the end of term we have a treat and have fun, this motivates us” (Teacher, Rwezamwenyo, Nyarugenge).

Demotivating factors

The majority of headteachers and teachers spoke positively about PLNs, though there were other external factors that prevented them from being fully motivated as a result of any changes made. One of these factors was limited resources, with one sector in particular noting this to be a problem. Teachers in this sector indicated they had asked to visit other schools but were told by their headteacher that there wasn’t enough budget available to enable them to do so. A teacher in another sector commented they were an ICT teacher but they do not have a computer themselves.

“Even though we are given a platform to express these can’t always be solved, as there are some things that relate to resources. For example I teach ICT but I don’t myself have a computer.” Teacher, Ntongwe, Ruhango

These teachers considered the problem of limited resources to be greater than the PLNs, though said it did hinder the extent to which their motivation could be increased as a result of PLNs. A number of teachers also raised low salaries to be demotivating, though they often mentioned this after the focus group had ended. They believed these issues should be taken to a higher authority, as headteachers did not have control over how much income the school receives each year, though they are given a certain level of autonomy in how to spend it.

Discussion

Headteachers reported improvements in their motivation as a direct result of their involvement in PLNs, with teachers also reporting improved motivation due to changes the headteacher made. The findings from this research directly support self-determination theory, where autonomous motivation is supported by three needs: the need for *autonomy*, *relatedness* and *competency* (Gagné and Deci, 2005). In the context of PLNs, this was primarily achieved through the building of positive relationships with others both within and outside the school.

The need for relatedness was fulfilled for both headteachers and teachers due to headteacher involvement in PLNs. This links to the desire to have positive relationships and feel belonging to a group. This research suggests that PLNs were the catalyst for change within schools and allowed positive relationships to be formed through collaboration and interaction. For headteachers this was directly linked to the support they received from other headteachers, through the development of positive relationships with teachers, students and parents, and through encouraging collaboration among all groups within and beyond the school. For teachers, fulfilment of the need for relatedness was realised through improved relationship with headteachers, greater collaboration with other teachers and through improvements to their working environment.

The need for autonomy was fulfilled as a direct result of these changing relationships. This research suggests that headteachers developed a stronger capacity for leadership in their schools and had greater confidence in understanding how to drive the school forward in line with their vision. The increased pool of experiences and solutions that PLNs exposed them to, played a part in this too. The supporting relationships empowered headteachers to be bolder in their decisions and to be confident in driving change. For teachers, increased autonomy was realised through heads of departments being given more responsibility, or heads of department being allocated from the teaching staff, and the capacity for distributed and subject leadership, but also through their new, more collegiate relationship with the headteacher. The creation of departments enabled teachers to take more ownership over the work in their subject area, and also allowed opportunities for growth and new responsibilities such as leading a department. Teachers were given greater opportunities to engage with school-level decision making and were given a voice during staff meetings. This created a sense of ownership and investment, as they were able to effect change in their schools. Teachers reported all of these factors to have influenced increases in their motivation.

The final aspect of self-determination theory is the need for competency. This relates to the desire to be an effective practitioner. Headteachers and teachers both reported improvements in their sense of professional competence and found this to be motivating. The headteacher focus groups suggest this links strongly to peer learning and training opportunities that PLNs opened up. For teachers, this was realised through more effective headteacher and peer observation and feedback that helped them to make improvements within their classrooms.

In addition to improvements in intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation also played a role for some teachers. In the two districts where school lunches were provided as an intervention from PLNs, this was considered to be motivating. In Kigali, where focus groups did not talk about school lunches as extrinsically motivating, they did value rewards at the end of the term to be a motivating factor. Teachers also identified a number of demotivating factors, which often linked to a lack of resources. This included teachers not having adequate IT facilities, in addition to teachers not being able to visit other schools due to budget constraints. Teachers also commented on very low salaries after the focus groups had ended. Although teachers acknowledged these factors were outside the scope of PLNs, they did limit the extent to which changes made through PLNs had a positive impact on their motivation.

Areas to improve motivation

Headteachers and teachers were asked what might have been improved in PLNs to help improve their motivation. Headteachers and teachers generally considered the PLNs to have

been successful and to have increased their motivation, though they did have recommendations for how this could be sustained and improved.

- The most frequently raised recommendation by both headteachers and teachers was to provide PLNs for teachers. Both groups believed this would be beneficial for professional development of teachers, and would contribute to improved outcomes for their students. This was suggested both within and outside their districts. This is an expansion on the new collaborative environment seen within schools with teachers working together, as teachers are now looking to expand
- An area for improvement raised by headteachers involved the opportunity to visit schools in other districts to learn from good practice. The PLNs had mostly limited them to learn from others within their own sectors, and they felt they could benefit a lot from good practice elsewhere.
- Headteachers and teachers all felt more training opportunities would increase their motivation. Headteachers believed that training through PLNs would help them train their teachers, and would therefore bring about more positive change. The training opportunities commonly requested involved matters of discipline, ethics and general school management training. Although some headteachers indicated they received training on management of public funds through the PLN, many stated this was still an area of weakness for them.
- The final recommendation related to the PLN magazines that were distributed on a quarterly basis. Headteacher believed these magazines would benefit their teachers and they would like more copies more frequently. When magazines were distributed headteachers and teachers benefitted, and some headteachers indicated they also gave them to parents to read.

Research methods

As discussed in the methodology, despite the open ended nature of questions, the data from the fieldwork mirrored the theoretical framework outlined for this study. Across the six sectors, headteachers and teachers often echoed each other's sentiments, which suggests a strong level of consistency in how PLNs were implemented across the different sectors.

The theoretical framework was used as a prompt opposed to asking headteachers and teachers a series of questions that directly linked to the framework. This allowed participants to talk freely and to test the theoretical framework. Headteachers and teachers were only prompted on these areas if they raised them independently, rather than being specifically asked. This worked well as respondents generally began talking freely with little questioning from the start. This was particularly true for headteachers who were keen to share their experiences and the ways PLNs had helped them. The views of headteachers naturally fit into the framework from much of the initial open ended discussion without prompting. The strongest area that was spoken of linked to relatedness, though this is perhaps unsurprising as it is a learning network under investigation.

There were, however, a number of limitations to the research methods. Firstly, the sample size was not consistent across different sectors. This was often due to absences and occasionally due to the SEO misunderstanding the request to invite teachers for two groups. In Ntongwe for example, one focus group was held with only eight teachers as the SEO was unaware two focus groups were to be held with teachers - a minimum of ten teachers in total. This meant focus groups with teachers varied in sample size from eight in one sector (Ntongwe) to 14 in another (Nyabihu).

Another limitation concerned only one sector, where teachers were unaware their headteacher had taken part in a PLN. As the researcher was aware of the time period headteachers had begun engaging in PLNs, they were able to ask respondents to think back over this period. Teacher's lack of awareness, however, could have meant they were attributing changes to PLNs where there was another cause. But since examples given by teachers mirrored those of headteachers and teachers in other sectors, there can be a certain level of confidence that positive changes were correctly attributed to headteacher involvement in PLNs.

Conclusion

The qualitative research conducted during this research project with these specific groups of headteachers and teachers suggests strongly that VVOB's PLN programme was successful in increasing headteacher and teacher motivation. There was a high level of agreement between all research participants that the PLNs had motivated headteachers and subsequently those teachers had experienced increases in motivation too.

The research centred around self-determination theory, which suggests the need for *relatedness*, *autonomy* and *competency* are central to being intrinsically motivated (Gagné and Deci, 2005).

Our analysis suggests that the key drivers to improving **headteacher motivation** revolve around:

- **Relatedness**
 - Changing dynamics and focus of relationships between headteachers, schools, staff and communities to make these more professionally targeted, less hierarchical, more open to challenge and support.
 - Fostering collaborative environments for headteachers and teachers to work in. This reduced headteachers' feelings of isolation, particularly in school decision making.
- **Autonomy**
 - Giving headteachers the confidence and clarity of vision to bring about positive change and to achieve their school vision.
 - Developing headteacher capacity for leadership, enabling them to make decisions more independently.
- **Competency**
 - Providing peer learning opportunities for headteachers to develop their skills as leaders.
 - Encouraging the spirit of competitiveness for success and innovation within and between schools, which encouraged headteachers to further develop their skills and to innovate.

Our analysis suggests that the key drivers to improving **teacher motivation** revolve around:

- **Relatedness**
 - Encouraging headteachers to foster caring working environments.
 - As with headteachers, changing dynamics and focus of relationships between headteachers, schools, staff and communities to make these more professionally targeted, less hierarchical, more open to challenge and support.

- Fostering collaborative environments for headteachers and teachers to work in and the opportunities for learning that this provided.
- **Autonomy**
 - Headteachers giving teachers more responsibility and subject ownership through devolving more powers to departments, creating departments where there previously weren't any, and allocating heads of departments.
- **Competency**
 - Greater distribution of workload within and between schools, for example through shared responsibility of examinations. This allowed teachers to learn from other schools through working together.
 - Headteachers taking more responsibility for developing teachers, through increased observation and effective feedback.

Although headteachers and teachers were positive about PLNs and their impact on motivation, there were a number of recommendations both groups felt would improve motivation throughout their schools. All of these recommendations centre around a desire to learn more and improve their practice.

In summary the findings from this study suggest PLNs are an effective model for improving headteacher and teacher motivation.

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