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Motivation research, thus far, has almost entirely been confined to probing the factors giving rise to learner motivation. Though literature abounds with studies addressing teacher-related facets such as teacher burnout, autonomy and self-efficacy, very scant attention has been given to the concept of teacher motivation. Thus, the main incentive for the writers of the book being reviewed here, is filling the gap in this regard, and drawing together the findings of a decade-long research on teacher motivation, hence the title Teacher Motivation: Theory and Practice.

This edited volume is divided into three sections, i.e. Major Theoretical Approaches to Teacher Motivation (composed of four papers), Motivation-Related Processes (encompassing papers five to ten), and Motivation and Teacher Career Trajectories, which elaborates on the way teacher motivation may undergo changes during the career span, and hosts the last five papers.

Chapter 1 by Richardson and Watt deals with the motivations behind choosing teaching as a career. The authors mainly discuss the development and validation of the Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) scale which is designed to provide an integral model to guide systematic inquiry into what motivates people to choose teaching as a career. The scale considers not only the antecedent social influences and teaching and learning experiences but also the more proximal influences such as self-perceptions, values, and fallback career. Besides, issues related to task demand and task return are incorporated in the scale.

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Extrapolating from research on student achievement motivation, Butler, in chapter 2, adopts an achievement goal approach to teacher motivation and identifies four classes of objectives emanating from previous work on students’ motivation which can be applied to teacher motivation. These goals include master, ability-approach, ability-avoidance, and work-avoidance. She also identifies a fifth achievement goal for teachers, that is, the relational goal, which mainly tries to address the interactive nature of teaching.

Roth adopts a self-determination perspective and examines the antecedents and outcomes of teachers’ autonomous motivation. Thus, the third paper hinges upon the theoretical foundations concerning teachers’ autonomous and controlled motivations. Moreover, the paper reviews related previous studies which have either examined the antecedents and outcomes of teachers’ motivation such as the links with teachers and students’ outcomes, or the contextual pressures and supports as antecedents of teachers’ autonomous motivations.

Section 1 of the book comes to a close with the section commentary by Kaplan who provides a summary of the first three chapters and states that individual theories will be most illustrative when integrated in the form of a scheme which draws on the complementary aspects of different theories. Kaplan, then, suggests that the complex dynamic system approach be adopted in investigations of teacher motivation as it can accurately reflect the complex nature of the motivational phenomena.

The fifth chapter by Keller, Frenzel, Goetz, Pekrun, and Henry, as the first chapter of section 2, concerns teacher emotions. The authors review the literature on teacher emotions, discuss methodological considerations, and report on an experience sampling method (ESM) study. The authors in this paper mainly discuss methodological issues in investigations of teacher emotions. They, finally, report on a pilot study using an ESM to investigate teacher emotions, the results of which prove the applicability of ESM and the predominance of positive emotions.

Chapter six by Kunter and Holzberger addresses loving teaching against the background of research on intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is examined in light of various theories such as interest theory, self-determination theory, flow theory, expectancy-value theory, and teacher effectiveness research. The chapter, then, discusses the antecedents and consequences of teachers’ intrinsic orientations. Teacher and student characteristics, interventions, and the variables of the school context are viewed as antecedents whereas links with student outcomes and instructional quality are regarded as consequences of teachers’ intrinsic orientations.

Paper seven by Klassen, Tracy, Durksen, and Tze affords an account of changes in beliefs regarding teachers’ self-efficacy over time, teachers’ collective self-efficacy, and issues of applicability of related research findings. Important to the authors of the chapter are the challenges facing researchers and policymakers to make the transition from theory-building to influencing practice in the context of education. They suggest two ways this challenge can be overcome: the need for a focus on examining, development, and testing the sources of teachers’ self- and collective efficacy, and the need to make links with such factors as teachers’ efficacy and student outcomes.
Lauermann and Karabenick examine the concept of personal responsibility in light of a number of theories and lines of research, namely, personality research, attribution theory, self-determination theory, job characteristics model, and self-discrepancy theory. They, then, examine the concept of teacher responsibility and point to the interconnectedness of teacher and student responsibility. At the end, they point out that the area of teacher responsibility is underexplored and offer some suggestions in this regard.

Ho and Hau examine the role culture plays in teacher motivations in western and eastern contexts. They count individualism and rationalism as tenets in the western culture that constitute educational beliefs and practices. In China, as an example of the eastern culture, collectivism and related beliefs and practices abound. Despite this difference, as they assert, there are similarities in, for example, the validity of the findings on teachers’ self-efficacy in both contexts which leads the authors to maintain that there exist both universal and culture-specific factors. In addition, they point to the importance of the development of appropriate methods and culture-specific interpretations in order to ensure the generalizability of the findings.

In their commentary on section two, Alexander, Grossnickle, and List elaborate on teacher motivations and emotions in terms of a problem space and liken it to a labyrinth with each chapter of the section providing a glimpse into it. After that, they touch on the five contributions the chapters offer the community as well as the five challenges and barriers on the way of conquering the labyrinth.

Section three begins with Nolen, Ward, and Horn’s paper on a situative account of what motivates teachers to learn. The authors point to three levers which can be used to change teacher motivations in and across the social context. Firstly, there are low-level conflicts between the novice and their mentors’ views of teaching. Secondly, there exist material tools such as assessment rubric which can stimulate change. Finally, by creating hybrid spaces, teachers can provide emotional support for their different experiences.

Husman, Duggan, and Fishman turn to future time perspective (FTP) to account for the way teachers’ motivation is influenced by their temporal context. They conceptualize FTP as a person’s ‘time bubble’ that spans over past and present. According to the authors, teachers’ time bubble may be affected by both dispositional and contextual factors. They also assert that FTP works in sync with other motivation constructs in a reciprocal way. The chapter concludes with implications of FTP to teacher motivation.

In chapter thirteen, Durr, Chang, and Carson explore two transactional strategies, namely, teacher efficacy and emotional regulation that can effectively limit teacher burnout. Later in the paper, they touch upon the process of development and validation of the three-component Maslach Burnout Inventory, and elaborate on the sources of teacher burnout such as role conflict and ambiguity as well as work overload. Throughout the chapter, the authors mainly focus on teacher efficacy and emotion management development through regulation and coping.

The commentary on the third section is divided into two parts. The first section draws implications for practice and policy, whereas the second section does so for research. The author relies on the
evidence from the literature on student motivation to examine the way teacher motivation is prone
to change. Opfer concludes that teacher motivations may change through interventions. As to the
implications for research, the author points to the need for empirical research to examine the
situational and dispositional dimensions of teacher motivation.

The book comes to an end with a concluding commentary by Urdan, which summarizes the
findings of the chapters under two headings: beliefs and emotions. The author, then, elaborates on
the challenges and remaining questions. He focuses especially on mixed findings. As to the
challenges, the author refers to conceptual and methodological ones and the need for the
development of measures that extend self-reports. As to the future directions, the author refers
especially to the significance of the situative perspective on teacher motivation.

All in all, faced with the dearth of research on the enticing, yet fledgling domain of teacher
motivation, the interested readers will find the collection of papers in this invaluable volume very
illuminating and disentangling. The book can be regarded as an all-encompassing introduction to
teacher motivation as it provides a thorough literature and maps the future direction of the concept.
Mainstream motivational theories as tailored to the study of teacher motivation, motivational
processes, and changes to teacher motivation throughout their career have been detailed in the
book, as well. Indeed, the authors of the current review are of the view that this priceless tome has
proven and will continue to be a highly precious inspirational source for the aspiring researchers
in the field to delve into more robust research in the realm of teacher motivation.

Nevertheless, amid the myriad teacher-related factors, the role of some issues seems to have been
given scant attention in the book. Among such partially neglected notions, mention can be made
of the concept of ‘teacher misbehavior’ (Kearney, Plax, Hays & Ivey, 1991) which refers to those
teacher behaviors that adversely affect the process of instruction and student learning, three
underlying dimensions of which are incompetence, indolence, and offensiveness. Since concepts
like ‘teacher misbehavior’ are among the highly influential factors in learner outcome (e.g. Bolk
& Goodboy, 2009), some more attention is due to be given to this as well as other prominent
notions, such as teacher creativity, that affect students’ performance, and it is hoped that the
following editions of the book may include a chapter on concepts like ‘teacher misbehavior’.

References

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