

Exploring the motivation of primary school teachers in rural South Sudan: approaches and theorisation

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EdD)

I, Victoria Pendry, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis. I also confirm that the word length of my thesis is 53, 673.



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Reflective statement

I was in high, hard ground hills on 26th July 2019 when my phone pinged to notify me of a message from Mary Richardson at UCL.

Hello Vikki,

I have read your proposal today and really like the way you have constructed your arguments and lines of enquiry. This work seems to have a lot of traction regarding an EdD (it's important to be pragmatic as well as ideas driven!). I'm also very interested in the locale and development challenges.

What followed, from rocky outcrops in the remaining few hours leading up to the IoE submission deadline, was a somewhat frantic upload of my proposal, thankfully a process that did not deny a technical solution. I officially embarked upon my practice-based, professional doctorate in Education on 27th September 2019, with an idea to investigate, '*What strategies and resources can most effectively support teachers in the East African Community to deliver a competence-based, learner-centred curriculum?*'. My thesis, 2023-2025, explores the motivations of primary school teachers in six rural communities in South Sudan, a much more focused inquiry, an approach that I learnt to appreciate throughout the course of my studies.

Through the Global Learning Programme in 2016, I began my researcher adventure through the IoE, UCL to conduct a small-scale study aimed at uncovering the way in which global data could be used to enhance teaching and learning in primary mathematics teaching in England.

Alongside this, from 2013, I began to work internationally with the Curriculum Foundation to develop educational resources and training with Ministries of Education in South Sudan in the first instance.

I came to the EdD with a commitment to deepen my professional practice in international education so that I was more confidently able to support colleagues in countries where I work. By 2019 I had begun to feel the need to disturb the equilibrium (Cunningham, 2020) of my work, sensing the increasing importance of ensuring that decisions around educational programming in low-income countries (LICs) were supported by more rigorous empirical research and theoretical underpinning. I was drawn to the EdD because of its focus on 'practice' and professionalism, its international network, the opportunity that it created for informal peer-to-peer learning and the structure of the taught programme. The structure of the EdD, a part-time course, is shown in [Appendix U](#) to highlight the blend and sequence of taught modules and assignments across a 7 year period.

Professional. Me?

Theorising about professionalism provoked me to question the kind of professional that I was becoming. I realised that I typically operate out of my comfort zone, or to be more positive, in my 'growth zone', where I am forced to find creative solutions, seeking help to uncover meaning and forging new partnerships. The Foundations of Professionalism (FoP) module helped me to appreciate that navigating change on a regular basis had enabled me to develop a certain degree of "imaginative professionalism" (Power, 2008, p.153), but that there was still more to learn. Crucially, FoP highlighted the value of focused reflection (Dewey, 1998), offering a more analytical approach to developing conceptual frameworks in support of educational research and development. I was particularly drawn to the idea of the fragility of knowledge, and to consider the way in which perceptions of truth and belief change through time and across contexts.

It was exploring the trio of Supercomplexity (Barnett, 2008), Liquid modernity (Bauman, 2013) and Swampy lowlands (Schoen, 1983) that particularly excited me however, providing a theoretical framework for the multi-faceted and fluid nature of my consultancy work, with Barnett suggesting that professionalism in the modern world requires "eternal vigilance and courageous action" (p.207). This was particularly encouraging as I began to reflect on the enormity of what I did not already know.

Feedback on my FoP assignment suggested that I consider in more detail the tension between consultancy and the values I hold in relation to quality education. This triggered my interest in the relationship between values and professional integrity, which further led to a deep commitment to interrogating ethical practice and a grounded approach to theorising and research methodologies.

Methods of Enquiry 1 (MOE1) and Methods of Enquiry 2 (MOE2)

Through MOE1 I explored the world of Educational Technology (EdTech) in LICs, learning how to interrogate the literature, a marked departure I realised from my more usual activities of reviewing reports written by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In MOE2, I conducted two semi-structured interviews with EdTech experts which uncovered some of the ways in

which Digital Literacies are a barrier to progress with EdTech in LICs. Discussions during these interviews stimulated my interest in the extent to which there is a disconnect between intended, enacted and experienced programmes of support for teachers. I reflected upon where I might be relying too heavily on assumptions in my own practice and the related need to more critically engage with the connection between research methodologies and related findings.

MOE2 helped me to understand that any chosen methodology is complex, and I became intrigued by the Problem Centred Interview approach (Döringer, 2020) which resonated with my commitment to co-constructivism. I enjoyed considering what Kvale (2012) describes to be an interviewing 'journey' and what Flick (2013) refers to as a 'flowing conversation' as compared to 'mining' for information during interviews.

Feedback on MOE1 centred around a lack of clarity, with too broad a series of problems. This was a crucial point for reflection which encouraged me to engage carefully with the literature with respect to the scope and scale of study designs. Feedback on MOE2, and indeed on my IFS, concerned the need to strengthen the relationship between the research question and the appropriateness of the methodology which subsequently became a feature of my thesis.

Institution Focused Study (IFS)

For my IFS, building on what I had learnt about problem centred interviewing, I decided to investigate what educational experts from South Sudan perceived to be the professional development priorities for teachers in South Sudan. MOE1/2 had highlighted that there are a number of programmes developed and available, but that their relevance and accessibility is questionable in places. As I worked through my IFS, I considered the role of teachers in South Sudan. To what extent do they perceive their role as complex, particularly when, from an outsider's perspective, it appears fraught with multiple challenges?

My progress through the IFS was frustratingly slower than I had expected, not helped by an inability to travel to South Sudan as a result of Covid-19. My data analysis however uncovered some clear themes which I was able to share with the Ministry of Education in support of the early developments of the Teacher Education Policy. The theme of 'motivation' stood out to me to be worthy of further interrogation because of the disconnect I had already considered with

respect to the challenges that teachers face and a seemingly sustained workforce, but that also, any 'next study' for me should amplify the voices of teachers themselves.

Feedback on my IFS suggested that it would be good to see more evidence for my decision-making in view of my comments about the iterative nature of the interviews. This feedback instigated a more thorough inquiry into the space between the insider–outsider dichotomy (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), and I resolved to better reflect on my positionality during my thesis which led to a grounded-approach to theorising. Taylor (2007, p.156) uses the term “balancing on the cusp” (p.43) with respect to positionality which resonates with my emerging identity as an 'in-betweenener'.

Thesis

My thesis came to life as result of comments from IFS participants who said that they had not asked teachers themselves about what they wanted and needed. To help me better understand potential ways to engage with teachers and how to explore their motivations, I became interested in the challenge of research methodologies and applied theory in under-researched contexts and the impact of outsider, Global North research(ers) on knowledge construction. I began reading about these tensions, initially via papers such as, 'Power, Pedagogy and Praxis' (Mitchell & Moore, 2008) and 'Theory and Praxis: Reflections on the Colonization of Knowledge' (Jal & Bawane, 2020), which provided insights into Indigenous research methodologies, leading me to explore the value of decolonising research. After considerable reflection and discussions with my evolving research community, I decided that adopting a full grounded-theory approach to my research would be too challenging in view of the fragility of my access to teachers in South Sudan. Instead, I committed to engaging with teachers through research assistants and to adopt a grounded *approach* which was a safer route to completing an assessed piece of research in this context, whilst still placing a focus on the voices of teachers themselves.

In view of wanting to conduct research in a country where the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) advises against all travel and the associated risks which prevent UCL from granting permission for ECRs to conduct research, I began my thesis upgrade process by developing a detailed ethical application. This application evolved into an incredibly valuable exercise that set out how my research would flow alongside my work in South Sudan, enabling UCL to accept my ethical application in advance of my upgrade assessment.

Studying theories of motivation was quite challenging because so few existing studies were situated in LICs. This fuelled my resolve to adopt a grounded approach to the development of a contextualised theory of motivation (for teachers in my study) and stimulated an inquiry into the cultural epistemologies and philosophies that I felt might be reflected in responses from participating teachers.

My upgrade assessment was a thought-provoking discussion where I was able to reflect on the originality of my study and the need to be clearer about what aspect of motivation I was aiming to explore. My assessors both questioned the way that I was going to engage with research assistants which became a key aspect of my methodology.

Developing a Professional Compass

As a result of my EdD, I have been able to contribute to the development of my Professional Compass (Clare, 2008). My EdD studies have highlighted the numerous tensions that exist within my work such as whether to focus on¹ outcomes or processes, how power, accountability and authority interact and whether to aim for narrow and deep, or broad and shallow foci. I recognise that 'value dilemmas' are a feature of my work in LICs, and that these are rarely completely resolved (Barnett, 2008) and thus, have to remain held in some kind of manageable tension. The EdD has shown me the way in which critical reflections and research can operate in supportive cycles, to support a pragmatism that enables my work to remain relevant and manageable in fragile settings. It is with my evolving Professional Compass that I am able to navigate these Swampy lowlands, occasionally being directed to the harder, higher ground to consider a view of the ecosystem at large.

I agree with Power (2008), that exploring professionalism has 'made the familiar, new'. This has at times been overwhelming, but I have learnt to value, and develop skills to be, 'constantly reflexive and self-disciplining' Ball (2008), the latter being successful to varying degrees...but I am working on it! I recognise the value of remaining in "a state of perpetual self-awareness and animation" (Strathern, 1997, p.318) where habits of humility (Andrews & Edwards, 2008) and networks of knowledge keep me grounded in the context within which I am situated.

¹ I appreciate that these are not binary but referenced here to emphasise different tensions.

As a result of my EdD studies, I have been able to identify that my professional integrity and drive for ethical professionalism is fundamental to my motivation and professional development. I am eager to continue exploring different methodologies and ethical frameworks that could help to bring into light other facets of teaching communities in under-researched contexts. I will be forever grateful to colleagues in South Sudan and the IoE community for illuminating a path of inquiry that has uncovered ways of knowing, networks of knowledge, and a practical wisdom that will help me navigate messy and important problems for years to come.

Abstract

Exploring the motivation of primary school teachers in rural South Sudan: approaches and theorisation.

South Sudan is one of the most impoverished countries in the world. Its teachers face multifaceted challenges including erratic training and meagre pay. Teacher-informed educational research, along with teacher voice in education policy is almost unknown. This thesis asks, 'What is it that motivates teachers in such a context, and what are constructive approaches to answering such questions?'

I draw on a qualitative, participatory study with primary school teachers in South Sudan, 2022-24. The study aimed to both co-develop a contextual theory of teacher motivation and to strengthen the emerging research community via a grounded approach. It valued multi-stakeholder engagements, including through a close working relationship with the University of Juba and Ministry of Education.

The approach was developed iteratively, bringing a range of ethical challenges which required agility and local pragmatism. Data collection was via face-to-face semi-structured interviews and short surveys in mother tongue across six primary schools in rural Central Equatoria. It was facilitated by two local co-researchers, using a blend of face-to-face and remote research development activities.

The findings indicate that participants were motivated to become, and remain, a teacher because of their commitment to community building (Ubuntu), their enjoyment of being a positive role model and the opportunity for autonomous self-growth. They were, unsurprisingly, inhibited by a lack of resources but through self-reliance and determination, they work towards education for peace and development (Uhuru).

The study contributes both a suggested theorisation of regional teacher motivation, and enhanced understanding of ethical approaches to education research, and researcher development, in such contexts. Understanding regional teacher motivation helps policy makers build better systems and structures of support for teachers aimed at ultimately improving learning outcomes for learners. The findings have, further, made a significant contribution to the development of a National Teacher Education Policy in South Sudan.

Impact statement

Substantial research has been conducted on teacher motivation, particularly to inform retention strategies, alongside the growing evidence of a 'teacher gap' in recruitment within low-income countries such as South Sudan. While theories of motivation continue to evolve spanning various disciplines, little research focuses specifically on the motivations of teachers in low-income countries. What exists often emphasises the application of existing theories which is problematic given that many of these existing theories were developed in the 1970s in North America, a context vastly different from the realities faced by teachers in low-income countries. Limited research of teacher motivation in such contexts is generally characterised by a lack of teacher voice, a focus on urban settings, reliance on quantitative data, and data generation that is conducted in English rather than in local languages. This thesis contributes to the debate on recruiting and retaining teachers in low-income countries while exploring how data generation can be more contextually aligned with local practices.

For policymakers in South Sudan, my thesis provides some data in support of developing recruitment campaigns for teachers in rural areas, describing the benefits of joining the teaching profession that are likely to resonate with community members. Through my ongoing work with the Ministry of Education, I will be able to use my study as a reference point for decision making relating to teacher education, promoting the use of evidence and research to identify priorities for policy development and enactment. My study method benefited from multi-stakeholder engagements which subsequently enabled a greater ownership and credibility of the policy that it contributed to: The National Teacher Education Policy and Strategy (2024). This policy is a central tenet of emerging (2025) NGO programmes which draw their structure and content from the policy itself.

For researchers and research institutions in low-income contexts, my thesis presents an opportunity to engage with the benefits of an approach to local qualitative research that features developing networks of participation and a research methodology that embraces a grounded approach to theory. The University of Juba has invited me to deliver a lecture to present my methodology and findings relating to teacher motivation. This presents opportunity

for local researchers and educators to engage with an example of an iterative and exploratory study.

For the wider academic community, my thesis illuminates the challenges of adopting participatory research practices in low-income contexts, whilst urging an approach that appreciates the epistemological significance of considering local cultural philosophies. For teacher trainers, educational NGOs, and teacher training institutions in South Sudan, my thesis describes particular aspects of motivation that seem valuable to incorporate into professional development programmes including ideas of nationalism, autonomy and being a local role model. My study provides teacher trainers with the opportunity to consider the benefits of co-constructing programmes. I am already working with the National Education Coalition in South Sudan to explore this with the aim of reviewing and informing the design of their in-service programmes so that self-reliance and self-determination for example are considered within courses and communities of practice.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

AERD – African Education Research Database

BAICE – British Association for International and Comparative Education

CPD – Continued Profession Development

EdTech – Educational Technology

EFA – Education For All

EMIS – Education Management Information System

ERG – Existence, Relatedness and Growth

ESR – Education for Self-Reliance

ESSA – Education Sub Saharan Africa

FCDO – Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

GPE – Global Partnership for Education

GT – Grounded Theory

IFS – Institutional Focused Study

IoE, UCL - Institute of Education, University College London

ITT – Initial Teacher Training

LIC – Low-income Country

MoGEISS – Ministry of General Education and Instruction South Sudan

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

QTS – Qualified Teacher Status

RAs – Research Assistants

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SDT – Self-determination Theory

SPSS – Statistic Package for the Social Sciences

SSA – Sub Saharan Africa

SSP – South Sudanese Pounds

TDMS – Teacher development and Management Service

UKFIET – Education and Development Forum

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF – United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

UoJ – University of Juba

VSO – Voluntary Service Overseas

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 New beginnings

I begin by quoting two proverbs that were shared with me during my first visit to South Sudan in May 2014. They have remained with me as a narrative for my work ever since. We were running a workshop with curriculum writers who were searching for proverbs in local languages to use in Bari Language textbooks. One colleague leant over to me and said: *“Look Vikki. These two are perfect for us here. They say that we are poor but we are together. They say that there is new hope and nourishment.”*

Bari: *Nikaŋ na a kolonya ko leme.*

English: *Our home is happy with new grass. We are living in a place within reach of food.*

Bari: *Tolomeryan ti 'do köyö.*

English: *The poverty does not begin from me. If I am poor or wretched as you say, many others are like me, I am not alone, nor the first one.*

This spirit of togetherness, pragmatism and optimism is something that I have tried to embody within my thesis to offer some counter-narrative to the dominant framing of South Sudan as totally impoverished.

1.2 A critical context

Despite the optimism, there are contextual issues that cannot be ignored. Born on 9th July 2011, South Sudan as the world's newest nation faced the challenge of reconstructing, or in many areas establishing for the first time, an education system that could meet the needs of many children who had missed out on schooling due to armed groups' activity, displacement and/or a lack of infrastructure amongst other challenges. All ten states and administrative areas in 2024 remain affected by some kind of emergency, whether it is flooding, famine or insecurity caused by civil war. Women and children continue to be the most affected and 52% of all girls are married before 18 years of age. The humanitarian crisis has been further exacerbated by the

recent conflict in neighbouring Sudan (Mishra, 2024) which has led to an inflow of refugees into South Sudan. With a population of 11.5 million and 75% of the population living in rural communities, South Sudan has a median age of 19.0 years and is ranked by the World Bank as the third most illiterate country in the world. It has 64 Indigenous communities listed in the Constitution and over 50 living languages listed in the Ethnologue (SIL International, 2024).

According to a 2023 Education Census, approximately 70% of all school-age children in South Sudan are out-of-school. This is one of the highest proportion of out-of-school children globally - about 2.8 million children. 79% of primary school learners are 'over-age' in their classrooms, meaning that they attend a class that is technically designed for pupils younger than themselves. Reasons for being over-age include repeating a school year after failing an end of year exam and not being allowed to transition up to the next class or returning to school later in life having previously dropped out of primary education. The Census shows that most children drop out of Primary School at some point, with only 9% of learners progressing to Secondary School. The most common cited reason for dropping out of school is that families can't pay fees/levies, for uniforms or other costs associated which is a troubling statistic within a system that has a policy of compulsory free primary and secondary education for all children. For many rural schools in particular, where salaries for teachers are limited, families have to provide PTAs with some 'donations' which in turn is used to remunerate teachers.

Due to virtually non-existent public transport in rural South Sudan, more than 80% of teachers surveyed in the *Time to Teach* (Tarlea et al., 2021) survey explained that they travel to school by foot, with 11% of teachers taking more than 1.5 hours to travel to school during the dry season as compared to 42% of teachers in the rainy season. Heavy rain was also cited as a factor in reducing the time teachers spent teaching due to the loud noise from rain falling on iron sheet roofs. Other schools do not have classrooms with a permanent roof or walls, making teaching time susceptible to the impact of not only rain but also wind and very cold or hot days.

The Census states that only 42% of teachers are qualified, with 30% of the workforce being volunteers. The pupil to teacher ratio averages 76:1. There is a reasonably high-profile narrative promoted by the previous Minister of Education (Yai, 2023), that in South Sudan there is a need to recruit 60,000 teachers to 'fill the gap' in the workforce. 39% percent of schools are classed as

‘open air’ and in 2023 only 51% of schools provided access to latrines for pupils. Teachers often have a long walk to school,

All of these statistics place the world’s newest nation at the bottom of most comparative datasets and paint a picture of a country with an unparalleled set of challenges within which to develop Quality Education for All (2030 Sustainable Development Goal 4²).

1.2.1 Observations within a critical context

The following two pieces of writing are based on my observations of school activities during some visits to schools between September 2021 and July 2022. I created ‘Goats and streams’ as vignette for my IFS³ to highlight the multiple challenges faced by the profession. I offer these two observations here as an insight into everyday classrooms in South Sudan,

September 2021- Goats and streams

Two taxis of school ‘inspectors in training’ arrive eagerly at 7:30am at a Primary School in the heart of Juba. It’s a boy’s school of 8 classes averaging 50 students each, a typical size for urban schools in South Sudan. The Head Teacher arrives smiling as the bell goes at 8am when children also appear from all directions to stumble and skip into their classroom. She chats with us in her office lined with dusty textbooks. She explains that she tries her hardest, but it is difficult to engage teachers when salaries remain at \$6 a month.

P6 and P8 students have a teacher to work with them, but the others do not. By the end of the ‘day’, P5 and P7 have seen no teacher but have remained in their class other than during the 1-hour breakfast break at 10am when they mostly played football. The teacher in P2 copies a few words from the English textbook at 9am onto the board. With the aid of her multi-purpose stick, students chant ‘River bed’ and ‘Stream’ (pronounced ‘strem’) 37 times in various formats before learners copy these words into their books. Upon asking 9 children to subsequently read what they have written, none of them can read their tidy words to me, although their understanding of my English was limited admittedly. After this lesson, P2 have no further teaching. Meanwhile learners in P8 are learning about the continuous tense (a P3 learning objective in the national

² Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) | Education within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (sdg4education2030.org)

³ IFS – Institutional Focused Study. A 20,000 word piece of course work for the EdD.

curriculum) by reading sentences from the board and filling in the gaps. The teacher is keen to point out to me that learners are engaging when he asks them to copy his words.

At 12 o'clock, all children have another break before their last two lessons. During this break, a soupy meal of chickpeas is delivered to all classes. Some of the older learners lock themselves in their classrooms to feast while others peer through the barred windows while goats start to circle ready to mop the floors. At 12:30pm, all children leave the school, abandoning afternoon sessions. The Head Teacher congratulates her teachers for making the decision to provide breakfast at 12 rather than 10.

A short video of some of this lesson is available here:

https://youtube.com/shorts/___gR0gXMg9E

June 2022 - Toilet Paper

At Scared Heart Nursery school, or Secret Heart as it is known in the Ministry, 70 children in the Baby Class (aged 4) prepare to go to the toilet en masse. The whole process takes 40 minutes and is punctuated by 4 songs with some actions, all sung in English. "Teacher! I need some toilet paper!" is the preparation song, taking place over 10 minutes with various children taking the lead after an initial call to action from the teacher. After this, there is a kerfuffle to exit the classroom which is tolerated by the teacher remarkably well compared to the scolding she issues to the occasional child who whispers to their neighbour during the previous 30-minute alphabet lesson.

A line of boys and a line of girls is subsequently generated outside the classroom which is followed by various drills of "Stand to attention", "At ease" and "Marching foot", before the children are instructed to place their hands on the shoulders of the children in front of them. They move forward 10 metres to reach the steps in front of the toilet block. The children stand 'at ease' and the next song begins which features clinical-like hand washing actions that would surely remove all stubborn germs if only there were soap to accompany the dripping tap in the single sink opposite the toilet.

After patient turn taking, the children leave the toilet block to sit on the stone circle under the tree (Figure 1). They take it in turns to scoop a cup of water from the USAID bucket. Their

drinking song speaks of “Water in the morning brings a lovely day” but from their actions, this might have been referring to the rain.

The final manoeuvre back to the classroom begins with another coordinated line-up and song, this time to thank the teacher for their grace. The final ascent is a dash of 70 up the jagged steps through the classroom door back to their table where they promptly place their head in their folded arms on the table and go to sleep.

Figure 1 Children sit on stone circle next to the toilet block



Note: Photograph taken in June 2022. Own work.

1.3 The vast swamp in South Sudan- a context for research?

‘Sudd’, an Arabic word derived from *sadd* (سد), meaning *barrier* or *obstruction*, gives a name to Africa’s largest freshwater swampy wetland. This wetland permanently occupies roughly 3,500 square miles in an otherwise dry region of South Sudan where two branches of the White Nile spread out across flat arid land, forming a myriad of back channels as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 The swampy region of the Sudd, Bor, South Sudan



Note: From *BomaHills Tourism*: <https://bomahills.com/tour/5-days-tour-of-the-sudd-swamp/>. Reprinted with permission.

The interconnected challenges, fragile and ever-changing environment that South Sudanese teachers find themselves within could easily be represented by a swamp such as this. Schön (1983), a philosopher who theorised reflective practice ‘in-action’, promotes “Swampy lowlands to be where there are the problems of greatest human concern” (p.42), an analogy that seems fitting for a study taking place so close to the Sudd region where high quality education may seem unachievable. Schön suggests that it would be easier to step out and stand back onto the higher ground (outside of South Sudan or indeed, within urban settings *within* South Sudan) to seek apparently quick-fix solutions, but that these solutions lack contextual sensitivity resulting from a limited experience of the complexity/swampiness of the problem itself. In my study therefore, I have chosen to stand within the myriads of possibilities in the lower land, whilst learning with and through school communities who reside there. The expectation is that this approach will lead to a deeper understanding of why teachers choose to become a teacher and to remain in the profession and that a deeper understanding will in turn lead to a contextually sensitive local theorisation of teacher motivation.

1.4 The rationale for a focus on teacher motivation

Understanding what attracts teachers to the profession and to remain in the profession is crucial to informing the design of both in-service and pre-service professional development programmes for teachers (Benabou & Triole, 2003) as well as informing recruitment and retention campaigns and policies. Ursulla et al. (2015) and Zablon et al. (2016) further assert that teacher motivation is particularly important in schools that lack resources and where a teacher's energy, drive or commitment to their students, influence the quality of education by mitigating the effects of poor resources and school organisational conditions. Salzano and Labate (2016) underline that the motivation of teachers is one of the critical factors affecting the quality of education across the continent of Africa. My position is that by better understanding the motivations of teachers, we will be better equipped to nourish and sustain the workforce in these localities, attracting more people into the profession.

1.5 The rationale for a methodology which adopts a grounded approach

To gain this understanding of the motivations of teachers, a research methodology that is contextually relevant and culturally attuned is needed in order to ensure that processes and conclusions are decolonised (See Chapter 3. Section 3.5.4) to reflect of the lived experiences of teachers within their unique social and economic environments is needed. My study aims to amplify the voices of teachers to inform development of this narrative, but also through the very act of doing so, to nurture networks of support for teachers and research communities. I addressed this by setting out to develop a participatory study, co-created with local researchers who interacted with primary school teachers in local languages.

During my Institutional Focused Study (IFS) (Pendry, 2022) I explored perceived priorities for teacher education in South Sudan. One of my interviewees commented:

I am just so excited that these ideas are coming out even for me...if I really wanted to conduct other research, there are a lot of questions I would like to ask and seek answers for...(P5).

Participants in my IFS commented that it was an unusual experience to be invited to share their views and that they welcomed the opportunity to talk about and to reflect upon their role. It is this which encouraged me to design a study which would further amplify the voices of educators

in South Sudan, and fuelled by other comments from P8, I was inspired to pursue the theme of teacher motivation:

What surprises me...in terms of motivation...they [teachers] go to school and spend all day all week and then at the end of the month they get no pay. So, you ask them...why do you stay? They say...they really want children to grow up learning. They believe in education. It is actually amazing.

When asked about what it is that they think motivates teachers specifically, IFS respondents explained that there is little known about motivations to teach from the perspectives of teachers themselves:

I never ask such question to teachers in this country (P3).

We have never assessed these issues (P4).

Based upon these ideas of motivation for teachers in South Sudan, I began to explore and was quickly struck by the lack of literature on the topic that originated from comparable contexts, and that the voices of teachers were rarely present. What was also apparent was the way in which theories of motivation were applied to teachers in South Sudan, or comparable contexts rather than taking a more critical approach that took into account the diversity of the particular circumstances in which teachers find themselves within.

As explained in Chapter 2, this thesis is situated within a substantial body of research on teacher motivation and professional practice in Sub-Saharan Africa, much of which was published during the 2000s and 2010s and further amplified and augmented by ESSA within the AERD. Influential programmes such as CREATE (Lewin, 2007) and EDQUAL (Tikly & Barrett, 2011) framed teacher motivation within questions of access, equity, and capability. While I acknowledge the significance of this literature, my review deliberately gives greater prominence to research led by African and locally embedded scholars, including emerging studies from South Sudan.

It was this lack of lack of teacher voice and associated literature that mostly originated from non-comparable contexts, that encouraged me to adopt a grounded approach to the research process and to work towards an adapted theory of motivation rather than to follow an applied theory methodology. This approach also explains why the literature review is presented in two stages: an initial mapping of motivation theories, followed by an engagement with specific studies in Sub-Saharan Africa, and supplemented by Literature Interludes in Chapters 5 and 6 that respond directly to themes generated from the data.

1.6 A contextually sensitive research method

To reflect the intention to adopt a grounded approach to a study of teacher motivation, amplifying the voices of teachers in rural contexts, semi-structured interviews and short open-question surveys were adopted so that teachers were able to explain and explore their own ideas. Interviews were conducted in the chosen language of teachers (Arabic, Bari or English) to enable a fluency of response and expression. Local researchers were employed so that interviews could be conducted in these local languages and also so that the generation, interpretation and analysis of data could be conducted through a localised lens. Interviews and surveys were selected to explore this theme of motivation as it is a familiar research tool for teachers and researchers and because it was considered an effective strategy for eliciting ideas about motivation.

1.7 Boundaries and possibilities

This study is guided by a grounded *approach* rather than a full grounded theory methodology. A preliminary review of relevant literature was therefore undertaken, not to frame the analysis in advance, but to map existing and dominant themes within the field. This process supported the development of research tools and offered points of comparison during data analysis. An example of what was uncovered that I thought might be important in support of a contextually sensitive approach were references to cultural philosophies such as Ubuntu and Uhuru that seemed to have an influence on the motivations of teachers. I was interested in exploring if there was a relationship between these cultural philosophies and existing theories of motivation. In the Literature Interlude in Chapter 4, I explain how elements of these philosophies were uncovered during the data generation process.

To help me open up the possibility of different aspects of motivation featuring in the lived experiences of teachers in this study, I considered aspects set out in established theories of motivation (and highlighted in Appendix A, the Theories of Motivation Posters). Themes that were uncovered in the literature orientating from comparable contexts were also considered, and are set out in Chapter 2. These themes, and conversations with Lilly and Faith, shaped the interview schedule and framed, to some extent without offering a boundary, the data analysis process. There were inevitably themes such as teacher identity and gender disparities that were

of interest to me and were explored in the literature available, but the interview schedule was bounded by issues which Lilly, Faith and I felt were more closely related to findings from my IFS, our shared experiences of teacher motivation in South Sudan and what we were able to see explicitly identified in the literature.

1.8 Research Questions

This research is guided by one main question:

What motivates primary school teachers in rural Central Equatoria to pursue and remain in their role as a teacher?

In order to fully address this wide domain, there are six sub questions:

- What contributes to a person in South Sudan taking up a role as a teacher?
- What do teachers believe to be their roles and responsibilities? Which of those are most important to them, and why?
- What has created barriers to fulfilling their roles as a teacher? What has acted as an enabler to fulfilling those roles?
- Who, or what, has helped them develop and maintain a desire to teach? What would support that further?
- What do they think makes a ‘good teacher’? Who, or what, has helped them to be a good teacher? (and what, if anything, has been an impediment?)
- How effective do they think they are as a teacher? How is that related to their continuing motivation?

1.9 My position

I have been working with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction South Sudan (MoGEISS) and UNICEF, South Sudan, since May 2014 through my role as a consultant to the Curriculum Foundation⁴, an independent consultancy group specialising in international

⁴ The Curriculum Foundation, a not-for-profit entity, works in many countries, mostly with governments and Ministries of Education. The work in South Sudan is mostly presented here: <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/south-sudan-curriculum-documents/> Our work on Teacher Policy

curriculum development. Since then, I have visited Juba (the capital city) on 38 occasions (usually for approximately 10 days) working alongside school inspectors, teachers, curriculum developers and other stakeholders such as UNESCO and FCDO⁵. Since 2014, I have endeavoured to create trusted relationships with colleagues in Juba, but I acknowledge the dynamic interplay of power and positionality resulting from my white, Global North⁶ orientation. I humbly describe myself to be an ‘insider-outsider’ practitioner (Mullings, 1999; Acker, 2000) in South Sudan, but I acknowledge the limitations of this positionality as well as the opportunities that it affords.

In the last 10 years, my work has also taken me to Uganda, Kenya and Tonga in person, and I have worked remotely with a range of stakeholders in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Egypt, Nigeria and Afghanistan. Previous to working internationally, I was a school leader in three primary schools in England and a regional advisory teacher for sustainability education working in partnership with organisations such as Global Action Plan, The World’s Largest Lesson and Think Global. I mention these other localities and activities to illustrate the lens through which I have interrogated this theme of teacher motivation in rural South Sudan. I am aware of my comparative privilege and have worked to support progress towards social justice for teachers in South Sudan through a critical reflection of my own experiences.

1.10 A summary of the research process

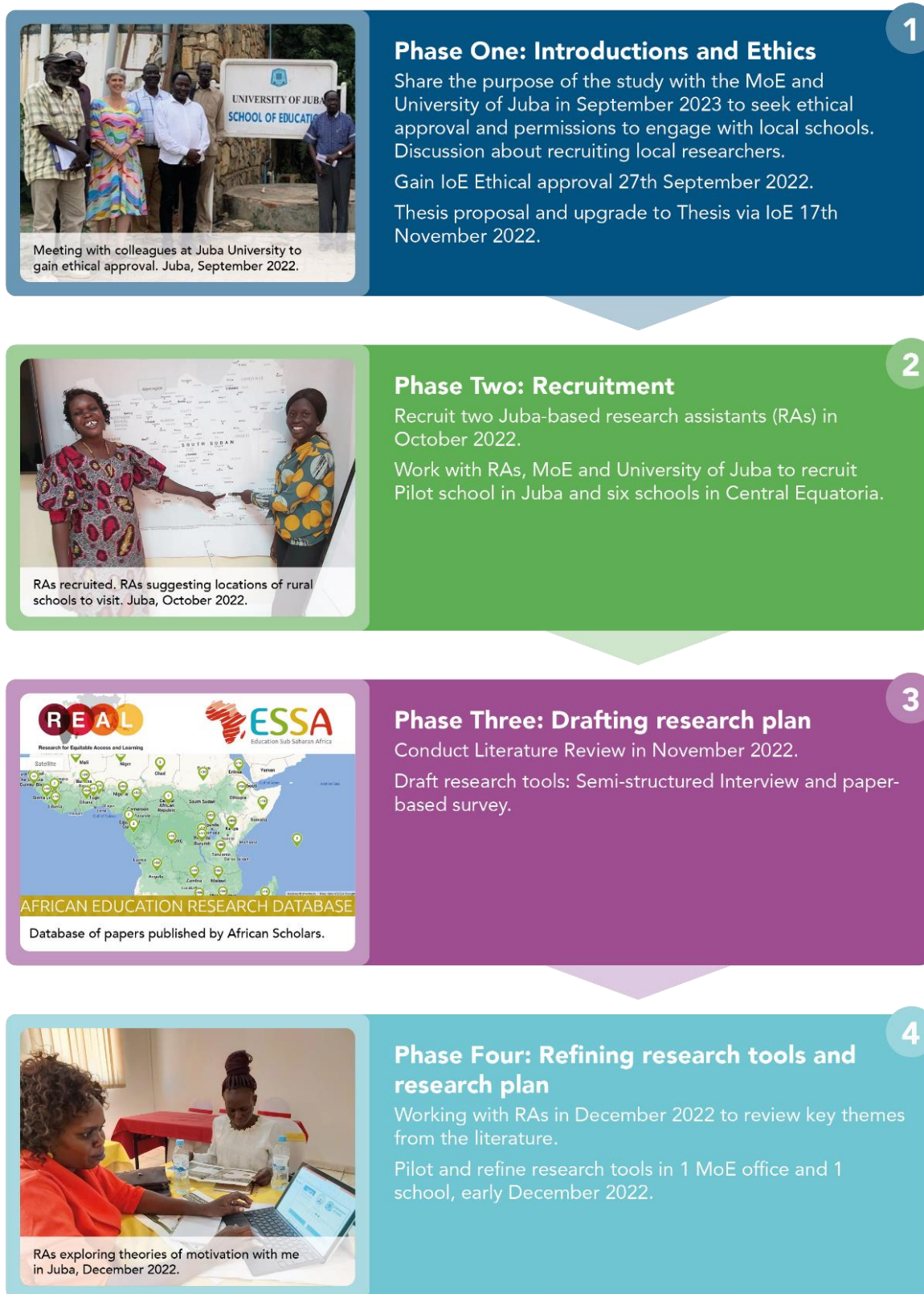
In view of finding so few studies of teacher motivation in South Sudan which adopted a grounded approach, or which amplified local voices, I set out to research this phenomenon in partnership with local actors in South Sudan. I harnessed the accounts of the lived experiences of local researchers and educators to enrich my study design and data analysis as shown in Figure 3.

in particular, is presented here: <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/teacher-education-policy-south-sudan/>

⁵ In 2020, the UK government merged the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to create the FCDO who are dedicated to ending extreme poverty within developing countries.

⁶ Distinguishing between contrasting localities is complex and contested. Throughout my thesis I will refer to Global North and South communities, and low-income countries, so as to distinguish between historically poorer and wealthier countries. This binary position does not conform to the hemispheric north-south division, however, but is used as a framework which is preferable to the use of ‘developed and developing’, and ‘first/third world’ countries.

Figure 3 Timeline of research activities





RAs with the 1st teacher interviewed. Kapuri Primary School, Luri. December 2022.

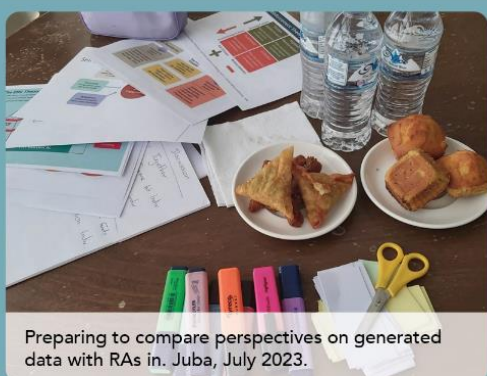
Phase Five: Data Generation

RAs generate data in six schools between late December 2022 and mid-March 2023.

After second and fourth school, VP meets with RAs to explore generated data and to review and refine research tools as necessary.

RAs translate and transcribe non-English interviews. VP transcribes English interview. VP and RAs ongoing discussion re data and the research process.

5



Preparing to compare perspectives on generated data with RAs in. Juba, July 2023.

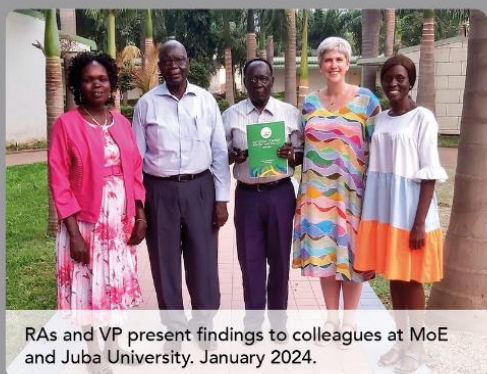
Phase Six: Data Analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis employed.

Step One: During the early stage of data analyses (becoming familiar with the data) selected codes, potential themes and short data extracts shared with RAs in July 2023 to explore and compare different interpretations of generated data.

Step Two: VP continues and finalises data analysis in light of outcomes from Stage One and an ongoing dialogue with the literature.

6



RAs and VP present findings to colleagues at MoE and Juba University. January 2024.

Phase Seven: Dissemination

VP shares findings with RAs in January 2024, providing them with a one-page visual summary to share with teachers in participating schools via WhatsApp and in person.

VP and RAs present findings to MoE and Juba University during in person meeting at Juba University.

7

Note: Timeline of activities that took place across the research process. Own work.

1.11 Thesis structure

My thesis is organised to reflect the iterative nature of the research process. The literature review in Chapter 2 highlights the limited research that has taken place in South Sudan, by local scholars, and then moves to interrogate research in comparable contexts. The review of literature is deliberately 'light' at this point to facilitate a grounded approach. During the discussions in Chapter 5 and 6, further literature is interrogated to help interpret the generated data; I present this via *Literature Interludes*.

Chapter 2 also sets out the interlinked methodological and theoretical perspectives that shape the study, before moving to a presentation of the data itself in Chapter 3.

After a discussion of findings in Chapter 5, in Chapter 6 I discuss what has been learnt during the research process which could inform the design of future, similar projects. The primary intention initially of this study was to inform an understanding of motivation for teachers, but through the research process it became apparent that challenges and opportunities around the use of research methods were a valid and important area for interrogation.

Finally, in Chapter 7, I summarise the findings which evidence the fragility of the workforce, whilst at the same time, the resilience and compassionate pragmatism of teachers.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 An introduction to the literature review

Whilst adopting a grounded approach to this study of teacher motivation in South Sudan, I have chosen to do a preliminary literature review in support of highlighting themes from related literature to demonstrate how my research fits into the field. It should be noted that this study adopts a grounded *approach* rather than a full grounded *theory* methodology. I acknowledge that some initial uncovering of emerging, existing and dominant contextual themes in the area of study has helped me to develop research tools and has provided reflection points during data analysis. The two *Literature Interludes* in Chapters 5 and 6 respond to themes that were uncovered as a result of the data analysis.

I am interested in identifying what seems to have a positive impact on teacher motivation in rural South Sudan so that we know what to nurture and develop in support of this. As Reeve (2018) puts it, “Understanding motivation offers a reliable pathway to gain valuable outcomes. To the extent that a study of motivation and emotion can tell us how we can improve our lives and the lives of others, the journey will be time well spent” (p.2).

2.2 Considering the origins of existing theories of motivation

My thesis explores what it is that motivates primary teachers in rural South Sudan to become a teacher and to remain in the teaching profession. I believe that it is difficult to apply and transfer existing established theories of motivation to teachers in rural South Sudan because the conditions that teachers are situated within are very different to the conditions within which participants existed in most of the studies which led to the establishment of dominant theories of motivation that are outlined in section 2.3 of this chapter.

Mostly, existing theories of motivation were developed by American psychologists in the mid-1900s where contrasts in conditions and lived experiences for participants to those in rural South Sudan in 2023 include regular and reliable salaries, security and living above the poverty line. Considerable progress has been made since the 1960s with regards to the study of motivation and cognitive functions including *Self-efficacy Theory* from Bandura (2000), but the

reference point for study participants remains predominantly within the Global North. Richardson and Watt (2006, p141) state that: “A significant proportion of the research into teaching motivations over the last five decades has been conducted in the United States”. Obiagu (2023) highlights this also and argues that findings from developing contexts are “inconsistent and mostly the reverse of what exists in developed countries” (p.4).

In view of this lack of contextual relevance, and so of established validity, I have adopted a grounded *approach* to theorisation in this study which attempts to “uncover what is really going on in the field and not what should be going on according to extant theory or the preconceived notions of the researcher’s worldview” (Holton, 2008, p.79). This Literature Review does not therefore set out to conduct an in depth literature review of motivational theory. Instead, I have set out key elements of existing motivational theories in support of my grounded approach to data analysis which acknowledges, but does not rely upon, existing theories of motivation as a lens through which to interpret the generated data.

2.3 Defining motivation

There are a number of theories that aim to explain human motivation. The literature highlights that motivation is far from a unitary construct with each theory emphasising different aspects of motivation (Morsella et al., 2009; Kispál-Vitai, 2016). Some of our motives to act are biological, for example seeking sustenance to stay alive (Maslow, 1943), while others have personal and social origins, such as the seeking of social approval and acceptance (Elliot, 1999). All these aspects of motivation shift and combine in different ways in different contexts, resulting in behaviours that are a particular response to our varied sociohistorical and cultural situations (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009; la Velle, 2019; Usher, 2018).

Considering some definitions of motivation, Guay et al. (2010) refer to “the reasons underlying behaviour” (p. 712) whilst Deci and Ryan (1985, p.3) define it as the “energy and direction of behaviour”. Broussard and Garrison (2004) broadly define motivation as “the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something” (p.106). Geen (1995) suggests that motivation refers to the “initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of human behaviour”. Acquah et al. (2021) explain that most psychologists believe that all motivation is ultimately derived from a tension that results when one or more of our important needs are unsatisfied. These definitions all point

to a multitude of factors which stimulate or cause a particular behaviour and that these factors not only vary in form but also in intensity and nature (Harmon-Jones et al., 2012; Richter, 2013). This aspect of intensity is particularly relevant when exploring motivation in different contexts, for example where it seems that there is less intensity with respect to accountability in rural localities which could influence commitment (Banerjee & Duflo, 2006; Adediji & Olaniyan, 2011).

It is therefore the relationship between cause (or factor), resultant behaviour and effect that predominantly drives a study of motivation (Stirling, 2013; Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013). If we know what effect we are trying to achieve, we can examine which behaviours lead to it and which motivate such behaviours to develop.

Thinking specifically about teacher motivation, Sinclair (2008) defines teacher motivation in terms of attraction, retention and concentration. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) highlight two dimensions: the motivation to teach and the motivation to remain in the profession. Their study of the related literature concluded that there are four significant components of teacher motivation:

- intrinsic motivation, closely related to an inherent interest in teaching;
- social contextual influences from external conditions and constraints;
- a sense of lifelong commitment;
- demotivating factors emanating from negative influences.

2.3.1 Content and process theories of motivation

Motivation is often organised into two distinct groups: content theories deal with *what* motivates people; process theories deal with *how* motivation occurs. This distinction is important when considering teacher recruitment and retention because understanding ‘how’ can inform recruitment campaigns for example, and ‘what’ can inform the design of professional development programmes. Major theories that sit within each of these distinct groups are as follows:

Content theories. *What* motivates a person to behave as they do?

- *Maslow's Needs Hierarchy* is a framework that helps to understand the strength of needs and how a person moves from one need to the other when the basic needs are fulfilled (Maslow, 1970).
- Alderfer's *ERG Theory* is an extension of Maslow's *Needs Hierarchy*, wherein Maslow's five needs are categorised into three categories: Existence needs, Relatedness needs and Growth needs (Alderfer, 1969).
- McClelland's *Theory of Needs for Achievement* suggests that all people are motivated by one of these factors: Achievement, Affiliation, Power (McClelland, 1987).
- Herzberg's *Two-Factor Theory* explains that there are motivators that encourage job satisfaction and hygiene factors that prevent job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1974).

Process theories. *How does motivation occur?*

- Vroom's *Expectancy Theory* suggests that people are motivated to perform activities to achieve some goal to the extent that they expect certain will help them to achieve the goal (Vroom, 1964).
- Adams' *Equity Theory* explains that an individual's level of motivation depends on the extent to which they feel they are being treated fairly, in terms of rewards, in comparison to others (Adams, 1963).
- *Reinforcement Theory* explains that people tend to repeat activities which give them pleasure and avoid the activities which have perceived negative consequences (Skinner, 1963).
- Bandura's *Self-efficacy Theory* of motivation: a person's confidence in their abilities can determine their drives and decisions (Bandura, 1977).

2.3.2 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

A second categorisation of motivational theories is proposed by Feldmann (2011). They suggest that behaviour can be explained by considering two aspects:

causal – what were the events that caused or induced the behaviour or event to happen;

goal-directed – where we do something because the perceived and expected consequence is desirable.

Linked to these aspects is the idea of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, made popular by Deci and Ryan (1985) who went further to develop *Self-determination Theory (SDT)* in 2008. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from within, whereas extrinsic motivations come from external factors. *Self-determination Theory* suggests that as individuals, we cannot help but be motivated by external sources and that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are highly influential determinants of our behaviour. They both drive us to meet the three basic needs identified by SDT: autonomy, competency and relatedness.

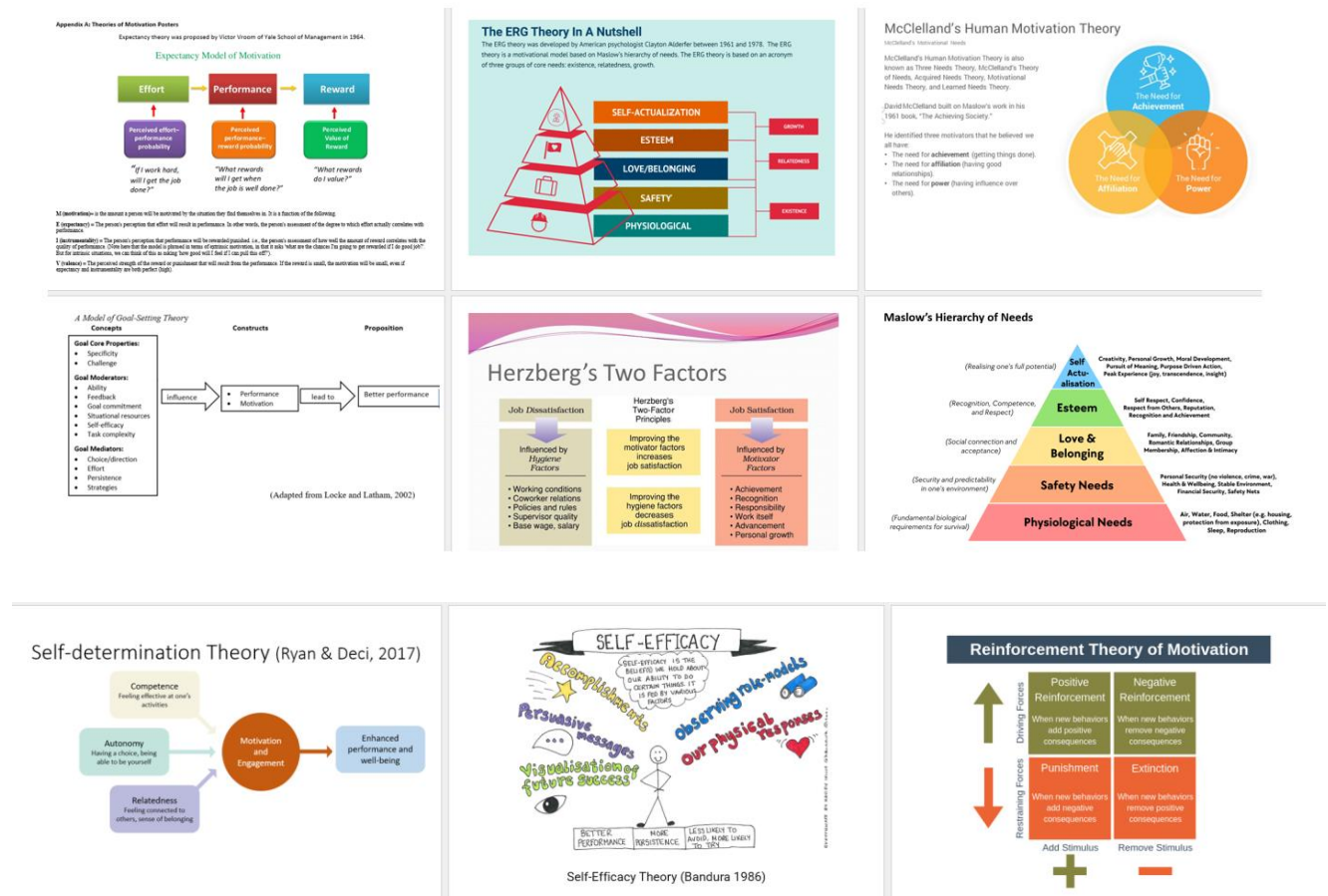
2.4 A summary of established theories of motivation

To highlight the key elements of different theories of motivation so that I would later be able to consider these in partnership with my research assistants, I searched for good visual representations of established theories. I have found that when working in multi-lingual contexts, visual representations support discussions well by highlighting key concepts and associated terms. Figure 4 below shows a set of nine posters that I created to share, which are further detailed in [Appendix A](#). These posters were selected from various sources to present each theory in an accessible format, a visual for us to discuss and compare, rather than a detailed text⁷. Key aspects of theories that are highlighted using these posters are the way that: some theories adopt a sequence or hierarchy of ideas (ERG Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs); others focus more on the relationship between certain elements which lead to particular outcomes (Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, Self-determination Theory and Goal-setting

⁷ These posters come from various sources which are shown under each poster and listed in the Reference list. Of note is that each poster was chosen for its visual impact.

theory); and others address the need for a balance of various factors to reach desired outcomes (McClelland's Human Motivation Theory and Self-efficacy Theory).

Figure 4 Nine posters to highlight different aspects of established theories of motivation



2.5 A review of literature that contextualises Teacher Motivation

The literature around teacher motivation in South Sudan and comparable low-income countries is extremely limited, especially literature based specifically on studies that engage with local researchers and those that seek to amplify the voices of teachers in rural settings. A search within the African Education Research Database (AERD), home to 3,394 articles written by researchers within Africa in August 2023, revealed only ten papers written by scholars in South Sudan, none of which relates directly to teacher motivation or the professional development needs of teachers. Indeed, a common understanding of many researchers is that there are very few peer-reviewed studies relating to teacher motivation (see Tap et al., 2022; Shephard et al., 2023; Skårås, 2018). A seminal paper by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007), *Teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia*, confirms this by noting that “very little robust evidence is presented to support the views and assertions about teacher motivation in developing countries” (p. 8).

Beyond South Sudan, however, there is a substantial body of research on teacher motivation in rural Sub-Saharan Africa published in the 2000s and 2010s, notably the Sussex CREATE programme (Lewin, 2007), Bristol’s EDQUAL programme (Tikly & Barrett, 2011), and work by Barrett (2005), Tao (2013), Milligan (2014), and Buckler (2012, 2015, 2018). These studies, many based in rural contexts and using qualitative methodologies, have significantly shaped the international discourse on teacher motivation. Lewin (2007) examined for example, how systemic equity and access issues erode teacher morale; EDQUAL linked teacher capability with broader ideals of social justice (Tikly & Barrett, 2011); Barrett (2005) explored tensions between accountability frameworks and local conditions; Tao (2013) deployed the capability approach to explain absenteeism; Milligan (2010, 2017) highlighted contrasting and sometime conflicting definitions of “quality teaching” between teachers and policy-makers. Buckler’s PhD thesis (2012) presented an ethnographic capability-focused exploration of the professional lives of female teachers in rural Sub-Saharan settings, foregrounding teachers’ lived experiences over official narratives. Her subsequent publication (2015) extended this by critiquing policy professionals’ framings of teacher professionalism and proposing actionable frameworks that center teachers’ own agency and capabilities. Bennell and Akyeampong as mentioned earlier, (2007) further provided a systemic lens, drawing attention to the way in which low pay, poor career progression, and harsh working conditions contribute to lower levels of motivation. Together, these works create a rich backdrop for situating my own research here.

While these are influential works, this review focuses on research conducted by African or more local scholars that resonates closely with the context of rural South Sudan. That decision reflects my commitment to a grounded, context-sensitive understanding of teacher motivation, and means some globally recognised but internationally authored contributions are acknowledged more briefly to situate the study in context without diluting its focus.

2.5.1 The foci of a this review

The five themes that provide a foci for this review of studies that explore teacher motivation are:

Context.

Aspects of Motivation.

Primary school teachers.

Participatory approaches.

Engaging with studies conducted by Global South Scholars.

2.5.1.1 *Context*

In order to contextualise this study given so few closely related studies, it was necessary to widen the search criteria to include Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), East Africa and other low-income countries. Within this wider geographical context, the theme of teacher motivation has been researched from a range of foci including deployment, attrition, working conditions, performance pay, professional development, teacher identity, salary, career structures, training and qualifications, school leadership and management, managing stress, job satisfaction and self-efficacy.

My literature review aims to focus on studies that were conducted in rural locations to reflect the setting of this study and to recognise the less reported, significant differences between the experiences of teachers in rural and urban schools (Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011; Buckler, 2011).

2.5.1.2 *Aspects of motivation*

As the focus of my own study is to explore what it is that motivates people to become a teacher and then to remain in teaching, the literature review features studies that explore recruitment

and retention. Job satisfaction is a key aspect of what it is that keeps teachers in the profession (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020; Njiru, 2014) and so the literature review considers this theme also.

2.5.1.3 Primary school teachers

This review focuses on primary school teachers where possible because the recruitment and qualifications of secondary school teachers are usually different from those of primary school teachers in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) (Evans et al., 2022). In South Sudan, primary school teachers are often volunteer teachers rather than salaried employees of the government. Volunteer teachers are often referred to as ‘contract teachers’ who are recruited via Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) or school Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). These teachers have rarely attended a university or teacher training college and may not have completed their own secondary education (MoGEISS, 2021). Secondary school teachers in contrast, are mostly university degree holders who are recruited and deployed via formal routes set out by the government.

2.5.1.4 Participatory approaches

Milligan (2016) describes the importance of researcher positioning to enable local voices to be heard, suggesting that it is possible for an ‘outsider’ researcher to adopt an ‘insider-outsider’ position through the use of participatory methods in cross-cultural educational research. I expand on this value of the amplification of teacher voice in my Methodology Chapter, but also try to focus in the literature review on studies that have involved participatory approaches.

2.5.1.5 Engaging with studies conducted by Global South scholars

A significant location for peer-reviewed research papers that include work by Global South scholars is the *African Education Research Database*⁸ (AERD). This database only holds papers

⁸ The online African Education Research Database (AERD) has been developed by the [Research for Equitable Access and Learning \(REAL\) Centre](#) at the University of Cambridge, in partnership with ESSA (Education for Sub Saharan Africa). The database aims to raise the visibility of African research, consolidate the evidence base for policy and practice, and inform future research priorities and partnerships. Search conducted 13th March 2024.

that include at least one scholar based in SSA and where research has been undertaken in the past decade, a period of significant educational reform in SSA (Benavot et al., 2016; Wolhuter, 2019). Exploring this database meant that I could focus on the perspectives of scholars who are located within the contexts that they study rather than - as is often the case in the Global South - from the perspectives of researchers from the Global North (Baganda, 2021; Openjuru et al., 2015). This focus does not mean that I have discounted studies that employ researchers from the Global North. It does mean that when reviewing papers, however, I have critically engaged with who, how, where and why the research has taken place.

A search for literature relating to South Sudan however within the AERD revealed only three studies relating to 'Teachers and Teaching', none of which has a focus on teacher motivation, recruitment or retention. Widening the search within the AERD to papers that match 'South Sudan' *only* as a search term, presents 10 papers which do not describe primary school teachers other than via a description of the challenges that teachers face in responding to the new language policy⁹ (Laguarda, 2013; Lubajo, 2011.). This issue of language is not insignificant in terms of its impact on the recruitment of teachers, especially in rural areas because teachers who are deployed to areas far from their home often do not speak local languages fluently, which in turn has a negative effect on their motivation and their ability to remain in the school that they are deployed to (Clegg & Afitska, 2011; Spronk, 2014). This is a 'policy and practice' issue as discussed by Manfredi and Tosco (2001) and is not uncommon in multi-lingual contexts (Owu-Ewie, n.d.; Reilly et al., 2022).

2.6 Research focusing on teachers in South Sudan written by researchers in the Global South

I identified six particularly relevant papers that were written by scholars in the Global South. Although a wider thematic review of the literature could have been taken, in light of my grounded approach, my intention to amplify the voices Global South actors and the limited number of closely related studies, I have chosen to discuss these six studies in detail so that they are not 'just part of' a thematic review, but are instead the focus.

⁹ The Language Policy states that the language of instruction from P4 should be English and that a local language ('mother tongue') for instruction should be selected by the head teachers to be used until P3.

2.6.1 Factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction and performance in selected schools in Yei Town, South Sudan (Ohide & Mbogo, 2017).

Ohide and Mbogo, both scholars from Kenya, published three papers about the experiences of teachers in private primary schools in Yei Town, South Sudan. These three papers arose from a thesis submitted by Ohide to the African International University (Nairobi) in 2017 as part of a master's programme. These papers are important because they explore job satisfaction amongst 110 teachers, a fairly large sample size for studies of job satisfaction. They are also important because although not rural in locality, these teachers are working outside of Juba which is often the site of research because of security and access issues when researching beyond Juba. It is important to note however, that the circumstances for teachers in private schools are quite different to those of teachers in government-owned schools in South Sudan which is the focus of schools in my study. Pay is generally more reliable, regular and higher in private schools, and school facilities are usually more adequate (MoGEISS, 2023).

Ohide and Mbogo discuss school leadership, explaining that teachers feel motivated by head teachers who they say understand the challenges teachers face and are able to make fair judgements. Most teachers also said that their head teachers make them feel comfortable when they visit their classrooms. It would be useful to know how these findings relate to the age, qualifications and length of service of teachers. It is also unknown as to whether these teachers have spent a particular period of time in one school or across more than one school and what impact this has on motivation.

The theoretical framework in these papers focuses on *Expectancy Theory* (Vroom, 1964), *Hierarchy of Needs Theory* (Maslow, 1970) and *Equity Theory* (Adams, 1965). Elements from these are blended and woven into survey questions for teachers.

The three papers all draw upon the same group of teachers. Different questions are analysed from the initial 39-item survey in each paper to create the four distinct themes of investigation: leadership, demographics, perceptions of professionalism and working conditions. The data lacks qualitative analysis in general however, meaning that where contradictions in the data appear to exist, there is no discussion of this. For example, of the 110 teachers, 10 are head teachers, but this is not identifiable in survey results. It is reasonable

to expect that head teachers will respond differently to classroom teachers due to different roles and responsibilities. Such differences could provide insights relating to job satisfaction and motivation.

2.6.1.1 Paper one: Demographic factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction and performance.

This paper reveals that 85.3% of respondents were female. The study findings suggest that this means that men are apprehensive about teaching as a career although it does not interrogate this theme. It is possible that the term 'apprehensive' is describing something other than a nervousness about teaching. It is problematic to conclude from a quantitative survey that generally, males are apprehensive to become a teacher as there can be many reasons that this sample included less males than females. The study does not ask any other questions relating to why this career was chosen, so it is difficult to speculate. There is no cross-analysis to explore how the age of teachers relates to when they began teaching, to how long they have been a teacher, or to what qualifications they have. This cross-analysis might have helped to better understand attrition and retention of these teachers. A contradiction appears in relation to salary: 55% of teachers agreed that they feel they are "paid a *fair* amount for the work that they do", but only 15% agreed that "my salary is competitive and *meets my expectation*". As salary is such a key contributor to motivation, it would have been useful to explore this further.

2.6.1.2 Paper two: Effect of teachers' own perception of their profession on job satisfaction.

This paper centres around what teachers think about their own professionalism rather than the profession as a whole. 50% of teachers agree that they are afraid of losing their job but as a possible contradiction, the survey results reveals that 77% of teachers agree that teaching provides them with a secure future. There is no further analysis of this, and it would be interesting to know what contributes to the fear of job loss.

2.6.1.3 Paper three: Impact of working conditions on teachers' job satisfaction and performance.

This paper concludes that an inadequacy of school facilities led to teachers' dissatisfaction with their job but that the working atmosphere also affected teachers' performance where most teachers agreed that they had a good friend at school who gives them feedback. 83% of responses agreed that they felt they had room to grow professionally at the school. This could suggest an appetite to remain in the school, but the study does not discuss this.

2.6.2 What influences a teacher's decision to leave or remain in teaching (Ajak, 2015)?

This thesis, submitted as part of a master's programme to the University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), by Ajak (a South Sudanese scholar) in 2015, explores teacher attitudes in two secondary schools in Juba County Central Equatoria State. This study contrasts with that of Ohide & Mbogo because it employs a qualitative case study approach using unstructured interviews and documentary analysis. The theoretical framework that was employed includes a reference to *Appeals Theory* (Lortie, 1975) and *Human Capital Theory* (Kirby & Grissmer, 1993).

Interviews took place with two staff from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, two head teachers, and two teachers from each of the schools chosen. In the introduction to the methodology section, Ajak explains that the study was carried out in Juba County Central Equatoria State because of issues associated with security and cost. This is relevant to my study because it helps to explain why reaching teachers in rural locations is unusual.

An interesting finding is that school leaders are seen to be a positive influence on job satisfaction. This is also found in other comparable settings, notably Mgaiwa and Hamis (2022) through their study of their relationship between school leadership and job satisfaction in Tanzania. Additionally, Ali and Dahie (2015), through their research into the effects of different leadership styles on teacher job satisfaction in secondary schools in Somalia, found that "teachers like the leader who lets them take their decision concerning their own work; the one who gives more space of freedom" (p.94). It is interesting to consider whether or not teachers feel this sense of freedom in South Sudan and why - and how head teachers (could) provide it.

Ajak explains that teachers in his study agree that school leaders provide moral support which has a positive influence on their job satisfaction, but does not go on to explain what form this support takes. There is no mention of what this moral support looks like and in particular, whether school leaders are supporting teachers to improve their teaching or to consider how well students are learning. Other related studies for example, suggest that school leaders focus more on management activities than on being a pedagogical lead, playing a largely administrative role (Bush & Glover, 2016; Ncube, 2013). There are calls for school leaders in comparable contexts to take a greater role in instructional leadership (Ngole & Mkulu, 2021; Muyunda, 2022); such calls are likely to need strategic development to avoid teachers feeling judged in other ways and thus feel less motivated. This is what was reported in South Africa

during the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System in schools for example (Mabotsa, 2012).

Ajak suggests that “more qualified teachers stand a higher risk of leaving teaching due to the difficulties they faced in finding opportunities for training meant for career advancement, when they could easily be absorbed in other fields and find such opportunities” (p.80). A lack of career progression having an impact on attrition is well documented in comparable contexts (Evans & Yuan, 2018). Adedeji & Olaniyan (2011) conclude, however, that in rural contexts, attrition is relatively low despite low motivation levels because there are few alternative employment options. In a more local study, Malok (2012) explored the relationship between leadership styles and the motivation of faculty members at two public universities in South Sudan where he concluded that faculty members strongest motivator to stay in their jobs was the opportunity to grow professionally with further studies. There is no interrogation however of how much of this is to do with salary, status and/or knowledge and skills acquisition and how this might compare to leaders in more rural contexts.

On the matter of career advancement, Soforon et al. (2023) found that most of the participants in their qualitative study across two primary schools in Juba did not have a clear view of what high quality professional development means. This could suggest that career advancement is regarded in relation to such things as being promoted to Headteacher rather than to the advancement of knowledge and skills, but this is not discussed. In an earlier more extensive mixed method study of professional development in South Sudan, Power (2012) concluded that “the quantity and quality of training required cannot be delivered through existing teacher training institutes” (p.368). A tension arises therefore when teachers recognise and value varied forms of professional development, but systemic provision does not have the capacity to deliver it.

2.6.3 Impact of motivation on teachers’ performance in public primary schools. A case study of Yei county public primary schools, South Sudan. (Peter, 2013).

This study was submitted as a contribution to a bachelor’s degree at Kampala International University (Uganda). It approaches motivation the other way round, exploring what impact different levels of motivation have on teacher performance rather than on what it is that motivates teachers, but the results still offer insights into the motivators of teachers.

The methodology for the study employed self-administered questionnaires with 285 teachers with a focus on themes associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's Two Factor Theory (Herzberg, 1957). A number of interviews also took place, but it is not clear from the study how many teachers were involved in interviews, or what proportion of the 285 teachers this represents which would be useful to understand when interpreting the data. 59% of the teachers studied were between the ages of 31 to 40, not dissimilar to the demographics in the Ohide study. Only 12% of teachers surveyed had attended a university of college but not it is not clear what proportion of these teachers had a teaching qualification which is a useful indicator to consider. The 12% figure is at odds with 2021 EMIS data which states that 42% of primary teachers are qualified in the state of Central Equatoria. Although data for Peters study was generated in 2013 as compared to the 2021 EMIS data, there still seems to be a contradiction which is worthy of further investigation.

In this survey, 100% of teachers said that they were very dissatisfied with their levels of motivation. Peter suggests that "this might be the reason why most of them are leaving the education sector looking for better jobs which could in turn lead to decay of education in the country" (p.21). This seems a logical conclusion, but 'motivation' is sometimes interpreted as remuneration only which is quite different to psychological levels of motivation, and this is not discussed. In this study, 51% of teachers said that salary was the biggest motivator, with 100% of the teachers stating that they do not receive a salary every month. These results confirm that salary is a significant challenge for teachers, and it would be logical that teachers leave the profession because of it. But data to connect these two issues is limited, especially with regards to potentially being able to compare the relationship between salary and attrition in rural and urban areas.

Linked to Ajak's (2015) findings about school leadership and career advancement, Peter concludes that:

The study, therefore, recommends that Government should train Headmasters with high quality school management and leadership; provide career advancement by providing teachers with merit-based scholarship that enable them to upgrade their credentials (p.xii).

It is interesting that the themes of school leadership and career structure occur in studies of teachers in public and private schools. These themes are worthy of further interrogation.

2.6.4 Motivation of part-time teachers on students' academic performance in private secondary schools in Juba County, South Sudan (Abui et al., 2021).

Abui et al. (2021) explore motivation amongst 105 secondary school teachers and 10 head teachers at private schools in Juba. This study is distinctive because it focuses on part-time teachers. EMIS (2023) does not disaggregate data so as to be able to distinguish between part-time and full-time teachers. Exploring what constitutes a part-time teacher in itself would be useful as in view of teacher absenteeism and the related need for teachers to have a job alongside their teaching role (described in the next paragraph here). The study employs questionnaires with teachers and semi-structured interviews with head teachers based on key aspects of Herzberg's *Two-Factor Theory*. SPSS was used to analyse survey data and thematic analysis was used to explore interview data. This mixed method approach is useful, but additional qualitative analysis of the interview data would have provided a further richness to the analysis and findings.

Abui states that the conditions for teaching in South Sudan, "have made most teachers both in public and private schools to divide their time between teaching and looking for other sources of income as such, these teachers deny the institutions the teach in their full potential" (p.6). 80% of the teachers in this study said that their 'other job' was in a school. The issue of why teachers have a second job in a school (as opposed to other professions) is not discussed but it is an important finding with respect to teachers needing additional employment. The study does not go on to compare the impact of full-time teachers to part-time teachers on student performance, which would be valuable data to consider. In relation to the comment about 'full potential', it is not clear what 'denying full potential' is actually referring to. Williams (2000) looked at the impact on learning of teachers who work in other jobs in addition to teaching in 12 Latin American countries. Williams found that children who had these teachers (who work in other jobs also) were 1.2 times more likely to have lower test scores and/or higher-grade repetition, so it is worth considering this in South Sudan.

40% of the teachers in this study said that teaching was their chosen profession because alternative employment was not available, which is potentially the case even more so for

teachers in rural areas, but this is not discussed. 34% of teachers also say that what attracted them to the profession was working conditions, which again seems contradictory to what is discussed in the other studies, although the conditions in private schools are different (arguable better) to those of government schools. The response options to this question in the survey about motivations however are potentially a limiting factor: Job security; Good salary; No job alternative; Good working conditions. I think if 'Other reason' had been an option, the figures may have been significantly different.

One question in the survey is "Who made the decision to be a teacher?" Response options included: self; parent/guardian; friend; calling from God. Only 40 out of the 105 teachers responded to this question (A low response rate in this study), of which 20 responded 'self'. Abui does not interrogate why this response rate is low. With only 50% of responses indicating that teachers themselves chose the role, there are questions about the influence of others on teacher applications, with implications for the design of teacher recruitment campaigns also.

The main finding that Abui attributes to the study is that trained teachers are more motivated than untrained teachers. The study shows that 70% of the teachers surveyed had received training to be a teacher, but it unclear how this relates to qualification status. This issue does raise the question of whether part-time teachers are more likely to be trained compared to full-time teachers.

2.6.5 Teacher attendance and time on task in primary schools in South Sudan (Târlea, Han, Nugroho, & Karamperidou, 2021).

This paper is 'grey' literature, a report produced by a team of researchers at the UNICEF Office of Research. The study helpfully includes a relatively large sample of 398 teachers in 20 schools across 10 states and represents rural, urban, state- and privately-owned schools. Lack of pay, family reasons and health are cited as the top three reasons for absenteeism, but a lack of teaching materials and pupil misbehaviour are cited to be the most common reasons for lost teaching time, a time when teachers are in school but absent from the classroom.

Of interest in this study design is the use of an adapted model from Guerrero (2012) to explore what works to improve teacher attendance in developing countries. The model highlights different levels of influence on teacher attendance: National; Subnational; Community; School;

Teacher. The model also suggests different dimensions of teacher absenteeism. This model could provide a useful framework for organising themes of teacher motivation, acknowledging different influences on motivation and the different dimensions of motivation itself.

The report does not attempt to make any correlation between teacher absences and attrition, but Chapman and Mulkeen (2005) signal this link in their book, *Recruiting, retaining, and retraining secondary school teachers and principals in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Bennell (2023) also makes this link in his study of teacher attrition in the context of mass unemployment in SSA, but also points out that attrition in SSA is comparatively low, hence the paper title of, *Dissatisfied but nowhere to go*.

Bennell has written more extensively about teacher absenteeism in SSA, *Missing in Action?* (2022). The main conclusion in this study is that the high levels of teacher absenteeism reported in many surveys are, “for a variety of reasons, over-estimated and the surveys do not adequately explain the underlying reasons for these high rates of teacher absence” (p.490). Bennell suggests that this failure to properly contextualise teacher absence leads to shortcomings in the proposed interventions for addressing this problem. This is a significant statement which confirms the need to closely interrogate related studies and to explore some apparently contradictory findings about attrition in South Sudan.

2.6.6 Factors affecting the provision of quality education in public and private secondary schools (Modi, 2015).

Modi explores the factors affecting the quality of education in Juba County, Central Equatoria State. *Choice Theory* (Glasser, 1999) was used as a framework to explore the behaviour and motivation of learners and teachers. 36 teachers and nine head teachers were interviewed from nine schools (six state and three private). 223 senior three students, 14 parents and community leaders also completed a survey as part of this study. This is an unusual but welcome data-generation strategy in studies conducted thus far in South Sudan as it offers an opportunity to compare perspectives of teachers, students and parents.

Modi discusses the influence of leadership styles on teacher motivation, concluding that teachers feel well supported by their head teachers which complement the findings from Ohide (2017). Modi also contends that teachers have a big workload which has a negative effect on

their motivations and that this is coupled with a perceived lack of time and resources to prepare for lessons adequately.

Modi also suggests that teachers have a big workload which has a negative effect on their motivations and that this is coupled with a perceived lack of time and resources to prepare for lessons adequately. Modi also concludes that a high teacher-student ratio and some indiscipline amongst students also contributed to a feeling of frustration amongst teachers, but does not give examples of where this is evidenced in the data. It is likely that these themes of ratio, indiscipline and workload are interrelated and that they are exacerbated by so many of the teachers (74%) being untrained, but Modi does not discuss this. It is important to explore further if training for teachers should support the development of pedagogies to teach large classes and to minimise student indiscipline, which might in turn might boost student and teacher motivation.

A theme that is discussed in this paper that has not been discussed elsewhere is the presence of support staff in schools. Modi comments that support staff contribute to the smooth running of the institutions. “For example, it was observed that hygiene officials were always the first to open the school doors, cleaned the offices, classes and school compound for daily activities” (p.113). From this, Modi concludes that support staff make a vital contribution to students’ education and the smooth running of schools. The influence that support staff have on teacher motivation is not discussed, and as this study takes place within secondary schools, it would be interesting to consider the roles and effects of support staff in primary schools.

2.7 Summary of studies of teacher motivation, recruitment and retention that focus on teachers in South Sudan

Of the six papers reviewed in detail here, three studies took place in Juba County, two in Yei and one across all ten states. All studies use existing conceptual and theoretical frameworks to inform their study and research instruments, rather than using grounded theory or a grounded approach. Theoretical frameworks featured references to Hertzberg’s Two-Factor model and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.

These studies all confirm that salary is a key concern for teachers, but other themes of interest for further investigation include: rates of attrition; part-time teachers; support staff; perceptions of careers and professional development; the role of head teachers; the difference in job satisfaction between trained and untrained teachers; the difference between primary and secondary school teachers' working conditions. The way in which private schools recruit teachers compared to that of government-owned schools is not discussed in these papers either, which is worthy of further interrogation.

2.8 A review of studies of teacher motivation in comparable contexts

To help me critically engage with research conducted beyond the Global South and/or with research that was conducted by Global North scholars within the Global South, I identified four publications which helped me to consider how a researcher's identity, values and biases can impact the research process.

- 1) *Thinking critically and ethically about research and education: Engaging with voice and empowerment in international contexts* (Fox et al., 2021). This book raises questions about representation, power and empowerment in the field of international educational research. It highlights the challenges of meeting ethical regulations that are created in the Global North whilst researching in the Global South in what Fox describes as 'Institutional protectionism' (p.xviii). The book also contributes to the challenges of what constitutes 'validity' in terms of creating culturally appropriate research methodologies which helped me to considering the power dynamic at play during my interviews.
- 2) *Decolonizing methodologies. Research and Indigenous peoples* (Smith, 1999). Smith challenges the notion of scholarly research, suggesting that for "the colonized, such research was often inextricably bound up with memories of exploitation" (p.xii). Smith argues that the power to define what counts as real knowledge is at the epistemic core of colonialism. Smith suggests that a challenge for researchers is to work simultaneously with both colonial and Indigenous knowledge, decentralising one, whilst bringing the other towards the centre. This was of interest to me because some study participants in South Sudan have said that they trust visiting researchers more than local researchers.

- 3) *Indigenous knowledge and education in Africa* (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019). This book promotes a grounded approach to building ideas that could lead to a transformation in the educational landscape across Africa. Ezeanya-Esiobu argues that Indigenous knowledge should be mainstreamed in curricula development and that knowledge should be adaptive, considering aspirations of development for local people. This presents a challenge for researchers she suggests, as formal knowledge in the Global North is 'de-cultured', whereas Indigenous knowledge is culture-specific, non-transferable, where assumed realities are critiqued. I am interested in this because the curriculum in South Sudan centres around 'student competencies' which are intended to be transferable which is perhaps at odds with the idea of culture-specific knowledge.
- 4) *Researching across languages and cultures* (Robinson-Pant & Wolf, 2017.) This book addresses some of the challenges of constructing knowledge across cultures, particularly with reference to power, voice and audience. The authors suggest that many researchers come from mono-lingual societies, whereas most of the world live in multi-lingual contexts, making the case for a deeper analysis of the language used throughout the research process, something particularly significant to my study due to the multi-lingual nature of the research network.

In the next section, I review in detail two seminal papers that offer rich themes aligned with an exploration of teacher motivation in South Sudan before moving on to a broader review of other relevant papers. I conclude with suggestions for further study. Throughout the section, I harness themes from these four publications (above) to enhance my critical engagement with the literature.

2.8.1. Teacher motivation and incentives in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Knowledge and skills for development (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

This paper was published before South Sudan gained independence in 2011, but many of the themes resonate with what is described in other similar contexts in more contemporary literature. 12 country case studies were generated, all of which included 10-20 interviews and a document analysis. Extended case studies were completed in six countries, five of which were in

SSA (Ghana, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia) employing surveys in 10-15 primary schools in rural and urban clusters. The contextually sensitive, multi-method, qualitative research approach adopted here strengthens the evidence, providing more confidence in the findings.

Bennell and Akyeampong acknowledge the vast array of motivational theories that exist and choose to narrow the field to explore Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* in view of the challenges faced by teachers in these contexts to have their basic survival needs met. In South Sudan, World Bank Data¹⁰ confirms that most communities are living below the poverty line which highlights the question as to why people choose the teaching profession where salary is known to be unreliable, infrequent and low. Secondly, Bennell and Akyeampong consider Hertzberg's (1966) *Motivation-Hygiene Theory*, which explains that a focus on a lack of certain incentives (achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement) results in job dissatisfaction. It is likely that teachers in South Sudan may not feel valued by society in view of low salaries. Bennell and Akyeampong suggest in addition that: "Improved pay for senior posts, for example, may not motivate eligible teachers if they have no confidence in the system of assessment and selection for such posts" (p.5). This issue of a lack of confidence in the system, also contributes to the perception that teachers have of the corruption in the system, as discussed below.

Bennell & Akyeampong contend that although the motivation of teachers in rural schools is generally described as lower than that of teachers in urban schools, in fact, teachers in rural schools often have higher levels of job satisfaction. Bennell and Akyeampong explain this to be the case because teachers in rural communities often live within their community and thus feel safe and encouraged as opposed to teachers in urban areas who often work in schools 'across town' and away from their families. They explain also that teachers in rural communities often have access to land which supports their economies and living conditions.

Bennell and Akyeampong find that there appears to be no significant difference between the motivation levels of qualified and unqualified teachers and suggest that "This is really quite worrying given that unqualified teachers are usually paid much less and many are frustrated in most countries by limited opportunities to acquire basic teaching qualifications through full-time

¹⁰ [South Sudan | Data \(worldbank.org\)](https://data.worldbank.org/)

study leave or open distance learning programmes” (p.vii). It seems reasonable that qualified teachers should be more competent and thus have higher levels of job satisfaction, but this does not seem to be the case in many low-income contexts. It would also be logical to assume that ensuring all teachers are qualified is an important way of improving levels of motivation, but Sayed & Bulgrin (2020) also report that as teachers become more aware of the need for their knowledge and skills to develop, they become overwhelmed by the task of reforming their teaching, becoming demotivated by the thought of not being able to do so. This has tremendous implications in South Sudan where so many teachers are untrained and unqualified, and where there is thus a huge push from donor agencies, the Ministry of Education and NGOs to train teachers - but if this is done insensitively, it could push teachers away from the profession.

Teacher accountability is discussed, reflecting some of what is presented in the six studies reviewed in section 2.6. Bennell and Akyeampong explain that allegations of corruption are widespread in a number of countries and that most teachers do not feel well supported by their head teachers. Bennell and Akyeampong also explain that schools owned by communities in SSA have a strong sense of accountability compared to government-owned schools. They suggest that this is because in government schools, teachers are much less connected to decision-making and policy activity, and thus feel less motivated to implement any changes or directives. This is a useful synergy to the emphasis in this study of the value of teacher voice.

Finally, Bennell and Akyeampong agree with Locke (1976), that motivation is likely to be enhanced if goals are specific, challenging, formed through employee participation and reinforced by feedback. Feedback for teachers in LICs is perhaps particularly interesting because the literature describes limited attention from school leaders to classroom practices and the professional development of teachers. This lack of teaching-focused engagement with teachers results in limited feedback and could also indicate that teachers are unlikely to be clear of their goals.

2.8.2 Teacher Support and Motivation Framework in Africa: Emerging Patterns (IICBA, 2017).

The second paper that provides a number of important themes to consider comes from the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA). This report was prepared for the Teacher Task Force Conference¹¹ in 2017. The paper is grey literature, but it presents a comprehensive literature review of research conducted in Africa associated with teacher motivation and is more recent than Bennell and Akyeampong's.

The paper suggests improving levels of motivation amongst teachers in Africa through social dialogue, remuneration and incentives, teacher professional development, community involvement and increased attention to teacher voice. The importance of teachers being involved in the decision-making process is also described by Musungu and Nasongo (2008) in their study of the way that teachers interact with school leaders in Kenya. World Teachers' Day 2024¹² also has this as its theme: "Valuing teacher voices: towards a new social contract for education" and was a timely incentive for this study!

With regards to the motivation levels of unqualified teachers, IICBA references a study in Lesotho (Urwick et al., 2005) showing that unqualified teachers have lower job expectations than qualified teachers: "good academic results may embolden teachers to have higher expectations for other aspects of the situation, such as pay, working conditions and instructional support" (p.24). IICBA suggest that in many countries, the unqualified teacher is just grateful to be employed at all, although in many rural communities there are often fewer opportunities for employment (Bennell, 2023; Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011). With reference to the difference between rural and urban areas, IICBA make an interesting comment about the age and level of experience: "Motivation levels among older teachers in rural areas in Tanzania tend to be higher since they are more satisfied with their careers than younger teachers" (p.48). One recurring explanation of this is that older teachers feel a greater connection to their communities.

2.8.3 Other relevant studies in comparable contexts

¹¹ The Teacher Task Force is a partnership of 160 organisations created in 2008 to advocate for teachers and the teaching profession around the world, hosted by UNESCO.

¹² <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/teachers>

Forson et al. (2021) explored employee motivation within basic school teachers in Ghana using surveys. The outcomes of their study suggested that more attention and support should be given to younger teachers, at the formative stages of their career. This is supported by findings from Hargreaves and Fullen (2012) in their work on professional capital, or rather that there should be a focus on teachers at emerging stages of their career rather than towards the later stages. This issue of providing more support to newer teachers could be of relevance in South Sudan, but data to describe characteristics of the workforce is limited making it difficult to identify teachers at this stage.

In a similar vein, a study of teacher efficacy via surveys in Ethiopia makes connections between increased self-efficacy, gender and the qualifications of teachers (Romel et al., 2021), concluding that higher self-efficacy beliefs were associated with higher quality teaching. Data relating to the age and experiences of teachers in South Sudan would be useful to help prioritise support for teachers, but such data is limited. There is data around qualification levels via EMIS, but the accuracy of this is uncertain and it does not describe when teachers qualified or how long they have been teaching.

Tanaka (2010) explains that key motivators of teachers in Ghana are the relationships with colleague teachers, so it would be useful to uncover the extent to which teachers feel part of the school community in South Sudan. Ifeoma and Ilyea (2015) suggest that intrinsic rewards such as self-respect, responsibility and a sense of accomplishment have a significant impact on the behaviours of teachers, and that this is likely to be supported by a feeling of belonging as described by Obiagu (2023). Mockler (2011) described that ensuring teachers develop a positive professional identity is imperative because this can impact their decisions about curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and student learning.

Evans and Yuan (2018), describe how education systems in low-income countries fail to provide basic facilities for teachers: "From work assignment to professional preparation, from teaching materials to living conditions" (p.24). Similarly, but with specific reference to teachers in rural schools across Africa, Adedeji and Olaniyan (2011) conclude that teachers in rural schools face many challenges that do not exist in urban or suburban areas, such as: "geographic isolation, poor working conditions of teachers, poor remuneration of teachers, lack of adequate resources, and poor community involvement" (p.83). The resulting challenges of recruitment and retention of teachers in rural communities is an issue which is highlighted in the medical field also.

Lehmann et al. (2008) describe the multi-faceted challenges that medical professionals face and that a multi-sector approach to solution-making is necessary which can similarly be seen for rural education contexts and that a multi-sector approach to solution making would be beneficial.

It is important to note that in many cases, existing theories of motivation are often applied to studies of motivation in SSA. That is, scholars are exploring to see which is a 'best fit'. Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* and Herzberg's *Two-Factor Theory* dominate the discourse. Giertz (2016) for example, analyses responses to interviews that explore teacher motivation in Ethiopia by applying Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs Theory* and Herzberg's *Two-Factor Theory*; Ayinselya (2020) uses McClelland's *Achievement Motivation Theory* to review literature in support of improving school management systems in Ghana; Ali (2013) also applied Herzberg's *Motivation-Hygiene Theory* to explore job satisfaction amongst teachers in Pakistan. These are just a few examples, but in all cases, there is little rationale given for the choice of these theoretical frameworks, and it seems that there is certain level of assumption that these theories can be applied to teachers in low-income contexts, something which I am challenging.

2.9 Cultural Philosophies in Sub-Saharan Africa potentially associated with teacher motivation

In view of my commitment to a grounded-approach to this study, and with a view to developing a contextualised theory of motivation, I was keen pay attention to responses from participants that might highlight aspects of motivation that are associated with 'local' cultural philosophies. *Ubuntu*, a humanist philosophy of the interconnectedness of life, has its origins in the Nguni people of 5,000BC, often associated with apartheid in South Africa. It has a strong presence in SSA as a philosophy that promotes the common good of society suggesting that: "the individual is born out of and into the community and will therefore always be part of the community. Interdependence and a sensitivity towards others and caring for others are all aspects of *Ubuntu*" (Venter, 2004). It seems that a commitment to caring for others might feature in reasons for teachers to remain in the professions.

The idea that teachers have to be self-motivated is likely in a context where a lack of support and resources is well documented. *Self-reliance* as a philosophy in Africa, was populated by

Julius K Nyerere, an anti-colonial activist, politician and political theorist who led Tanzania as president from 1964 to 1985. According to Nyerere, Education For Self-reliance (ESR) must set people free in order to encourage citizens to rely upon their own developments and realise their full potentials as opposed to *relying on* support (aid) from the west.

Uhuru (a Swahili term) is related the philosophy of ESR, extending the idea of being self-reliant, to broader ideas of *freedom* or liberation. This term came to life in the 1960s in Kenya shortly after independence in 1963. The then Vice President, Jaramogi Oginga, resigned from the government and wrote a book titled *Not Yet Uhuru* referencing his belief that even after independence from British colonialism, the oppression of opposition in political affairs in Kenya, meant that the country had still not attained real freedom.

Uhuru is a theme that is central to Ngugi's¹³ literary works where he highlights the importance of cultural identity in the quest for liberation. Ngugi's writings reflect his advocacy for social justice and national identity and provide an insight into both the extent and depth of the fight against colonialism, racism and exploitation in Africa. Also writing about *Uhuru*, Nyerere¹⁴, describes Freedom and Unity (*Uhuru Na Umoja*) to be essentially tied to equality. Nyerere (1964) maintained that *Uhuru* was not merely about independence from colonial rule, but about achieving dignity, equality, and self-reliance.

For teachers in rural South Sudan, it is possible that achieving a sense of liberation and freedom as a result of a more educated society or community, might be a motivational factor in driving commitment to the teaching profession.

2.10 A summary of studies of teacher motivation in comparable contexts

Teacher motivation studies in contexts similar to South Sudan highlight similar issues such as early attrition, the ageing teaching workforce and low rewards for teachers leading to teacher shortages. Bennell and Akyeampong's (2007) study identified that accountability, vocational commitment, pay and rural-urban differences are important themes for further study. They suggest that in rural areas, despite lower overall motivation, teachers experience higher job

¹³ Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1938 – 2025) is a highly acclaimed Kenyan author known for his novels, plays, and essays that explore themes of colonialism, postcolonialism, and cultural identity.

¹⁴ Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922 – 1999) was a Tanzanian politician, anti-colonial activist, and political theorist.

satisfaction due to their proximity to community, family members and associated, more comfortable living conditions. The motivation levels between qualified and unqualified teachers have been identified to show minimal differences, raising concerns about the effects and impact of teacher training programmes. The 2017 IICBA report suggests that social dialogue and strategies to amplify the voices of teachers and their involvements in decision-making will raise teacher motivation. Other areas highlighted by research in comparable contexts to South Sudan emphasise the need to explore intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motivators for teacher to remain in the profession.

In terms of the benefits of having a well motivated workforce, the increased performance of teachers and students is often referred to as a positive outcome. This ‘performance’ is often lacking in a description of what performance is actually referring to however in studies of motivation conducted in the Global South (exam results, safer communities, students on task etc), and the same can be said of the term ‘effective’. Both ‘effective’ and ‘performance’ are used interchangeably and often in South Sudan by Ministry officials, NGOs,¹⁵ education organisations and teachers themselves when referring to the workforce. Soforon, Sikko, & Tesfamicael (2023) unpick this in their study of *Effective Professional Development of Mathematics Teachers According to South Sudan School Context*, concluding that a framework of defined effectiveness is essential in supporting progress towards better learning outcomes for students. Conversely, where Ochan & Imbuki (2017) analysis the relationship between teachers’ qualifications and the internal efficiencies of primary schools in central Equatoria State, South Sudan, both ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ are used in various contexts to refer to different characteristics of the workforce and educational settings. In my thesis, and specifically to the reference to ‘effectiveness’ in my last research sub-question, I have used the term to generally characterise a positive impact on students, their learning outcomes, attitudes and behaviours. Teachers in my study responded to questions about effectiveness with respect to test scores which is discussed in Chapter 4..

In the case of these studies where existing theories are applied, there is some discussion in the finding’s sections about ‘whether or not...’, but these are not well developed and lack acknowledgement of the way that major theories are exploring motivation through a lens that

¹⁵ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099042623145525881/pdf/BOSIB16bf0132a0651b03113d0de461f77e.pdf Just one example of the term ‘effective teacher’ being used widely by an organisation operating in South Sudan without defining what this refers to explicitly.

was developed in contrasting contexts. My study aims to contribute to a body of knowledge that illuminates the benefits of working with local researchers to generate a localised and culturally attuned framework of teacher motivation.

2.11 Directions for future studies of teacher motivation in LIC

An important contribution to identifying the direction for current and future research into teacher motivation comes from Richardson and Watt (2010). They assert that research into teacher motivation has lacked consistency and clarity around what is meant by intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motivations. They suggest that this has made it difficult to compare findings from different studies, or across sociocultural contexts. To combat this, they created an integrated theoretical approach to the study of teacher motivation: 'FIT-Choice' (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) (Richardson & Watt, 2006). This approach is informed by *Expectancy-value Theory* (Eccles et al., 1983) which focuses on the initial motivation to become a teacher. The FIT-Choice approach considers altruistic motivations, more personally utilitarian motivations, intrinsic motivations and ability-related beliefs. FIT-Choice also explores career satisfaction and commitment through a consideration of perceptions about the demand and reward aspects of the teaching profession.

The FIT-Choice approach was developed to try and address the issue of validity across contrasting contexts and has been used within a number of countries since its development in 2001. In 2012, Watt and Richardson further explored the validity of the FIT-Choice scale through eight authors who conducted studies into teacher motivation in seven countries, concluding that using the FIT-Choice approach, there is "good construct validity and reliability across diverse samples" (p.195).

In a meta-analysis study conducted by Navarro-Asencio et al. (2021) of the reliability generalisation of the FIT-Choice questionnaire, they concluded that FIT-Choice had a good average reliability for most of the scales, apart from the exploration of job transferability, teaching as a fallback career and the idea that teachers choose to teach because it is in high demand. In addition, Asencio et al., point out that quantitative instruments can conceal cultural differences in these motivations because they assume that the ones that are dominant in western countries are in other settings as well. This is an issue identified by Klassen et al. (2011)

which also suggests a closer look at the relationship between culture, context and modes of training.

In chapters 6 and 7, I offer further reflections on areas for future study as a result of my data generation process and subsequent analysis.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 The structure of this chapter

Central to this chapter is the collaborative nature of my study. Although I take full responsibility for the research design, data analysis and subsequent findings, I acknowledge that this study is richer and more ecologically valid as a result of my engagement with local researchers and through other partnerships. Further, ongoing ethical considerations have given a vitality to the study overall. Gaining ethical consent to study was not a 'tick box' exercise but the starting point for a sensitive and responsive study that has sought to empower participants.

In this chapter I discuss my research philosophy which centres around a commitment to an interpretivist and grounded approach, participation and decolonisation. From there, I move on to describe the individual elements of the research method: the use of interviews, paper-based surveys and discussions amongst researchers and other partners. After providing further details of ethical considerations, in the last section of this chapter I write about the reflexive thematic analysis of data, explaining why and how this enabled me to contribute to the development of a theory for teacher motivation in rural South Sudan.

3.2 The Research Trio

Figure 5 Lilly, Faith and I at the start of the research process



Note: Photograph taken in October 2022. Own work.

To be able to answer my research questions about teacher motivation in rural communities, I needed to generate data beyond Juba. This posed a challenge for me as my travel beyond Juba

is restricted for security reasons by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and I am not able to converse in local languages. English is spoken reasonably well in Juba, but beyond Juba, less so. When this language issue combines with security issues, logistical challenges presented by the weather (flooding) and poor-quality roads, the result is that few teachers in rural contexts have had the opportunity to share their views and to contribute to research projects.

My study aims to contribute to the development of a community of local professionals collaborating to explore and find solutions to local problems, whilst acknowledging that being informed by knowledge from other contexts is also useful.

Given these issues of language, locality, security and a desire to support the development of a research community, I recruited two local researchers to generate the data. I had not initially set out for the research team to be all female, but the recruitment process was largely directed by the Ministry of Education and Instruction South Sudan (MoGEISS) and the University of Juba (UoJ) who suggested two females, and in the end, a female trio turned out to be a significantly positive attribute of the project because there was positive attention given to the 'all female research trio', especially by UoJ. There was also a certain 'energy' between the three of us, recognising our mutual empowerment. Throughout this chapter, I refer to Lilly and Faith as RAs (Research Assistants).

The two researchers who were recruited, Lilly and Faith, were invited to introduce themselves for this chapter, and did so as follows:

I am Lilly Bangu Elia Ladu and I live in Juba-Central Equatoria State of South Sudan. The job that I like doing is teaching and researching. I am interested in educational research because it can bring out hidden knowledge/information about education in a particular place, about teaching, about teachers as well as the students/pupils themselves. I think teachers are important because they transfer knowledge from one generation to another, they counsel, mentor, are role models, among others. The research skills that I'd like to develop are how to collect useful information, how to critically analyse information and produce useful findings.

I am Faith Poni. The job that I like doing is research. I am interested in educational research because: It allows identification of new and untouched phenomena. It can provide deeper understanding of mechanisms.

It may reveal information that would not be identified through pre-determined survey questions.

Research provides solutions for educators and policymakers to develop, evaluate and improve educational practices.

It helps teachers to know what methods work best for a particular group of students.

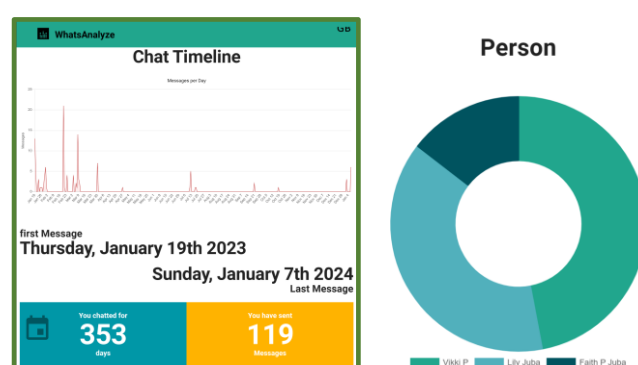
Teachers are important because they help us acquire knowledge, they are mentors, role models and offer guidance to us.

The research skill that I would like to develop is analytical skill.

It was important to me that this research process should provide an opportunity for members of the local research community to collaborate with me and with each other whilst also enabling me to learn about common research approaches within such communities to inform future research programmes. The collaboration aimed to create opportunities to compare perspectives and approaches of ‘outsider’ researchers such as myself with those of local researchers so that I could better understand Indigenous epistemologies for the sake of future, decolonised North/South¹⁶ research partnerships.

I endeavoured to establish a ‘learning together’ culture with Lilly and Faith. To help with this, I set up a WhatsApp group and Faith suggested calling us the ‘Research Trio’. Some of the details of the WhatsApp chat are shown in Figure 6 below, illustrating that many communications took place over the course of a year. These chats were complemented by in person and virtual meetings and by email exchanges.

Figure 6 Infographic of WhatsApp chats between the Research Trio



Note: Infographic generated by *WhatsAnalyze*, an open-source tool to analyse WhatsApp Chat.

¹⁶ ‘North/South research partnerships’ is a term often used to refer to research projects that involve partnerships between local researchers to marginalised communities who are often situated in the Global South and LICs.

3.3 The research process: A Summary

Figure 3 in Chapter 1 sets out the research process which is summarised below. Although the figure illustrates a linear process, the actual process was much more fluid, cyclical and flexible. There were many changes made to schedules, a frequent revisiting of literature as the research progressed and a regular review of progress with the UoJ and the MoGEISS.

Phase One: Introductions and gaining ethical approvals from UCL, UoJ and MoGEISS.

Phase Two: Recruitment of local research assistants.

Phase Three: Drafting the research plan and tools and conducting a literature review.

Phase Four: Pilot and refine research tools and plan.

Phase Five: Data generation.

Phase Six: Data analysis.

Phase Seven: Dissemination of findings.

3.4 Main ethical considerations

Shanks & Paulson (2022) assert that ethical considerations are amplified in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. They suggest that:

The power imbalances between local and international researchers are increased and the risk of harm is augmented. The research takes place in a context where appropriate safeguards are often reduced, and the probabilities of unethical research are magnified (p.2).

This reflects my experiences of working in South Sudan, and it is for this reason that ethical considerations are presented relatively early for emphasis in this Methodology Chapter rather than presenting them at the end. My Ethics application can be viewed in full in [Appendix B](#), but of note is the extent of this application and accompanying information which extends to 60 pages. This extended investment proved invaluable as I was able to more capably navigate the complexities of conducting research in conflict affected contexts. My Ethical Considerations document included for example, a research summary for research assistants, interview protocol and guidance for research assistants and a full risk assessment.

Shanks and Paulson (2022) promote equitable partnerships and a flexible, fair and transparent budget and timeline that meets the complex needs of the context. In addition, in their systematic review of ethical challenges to research in low-income countries, Steinert et al. (2021) similarly highlight the conflicts that can emerge from participants' help requests, inadequate working conditions for researchers and power imbalances within research teams. I was particularly conscious to address power imbalances across the team, made more complex as a result of needing to pay RAs, which on the one hand was respectful of their professionalism, while on the other hand created a sense of employer (power) and employees.

The main areas of ethical concern in my study are set out below and are explored in further detail in Chapter 6 where I discuss methodological challenges and opportunities in detail.

- **Language.** Participating teachers were given the opportunity to communicate with RAs in a language of their choice. 'Chosen language' was important so that teachers were able to express themselves fluently, meaning data could be richer and more reliable, and that a visible value was placed on local languages (Andreenkova, 2018; Rolland, 2023).
- **Translations.** 11 out of 25 interviews were not in English and therefore needed translating into English for me to be able to analyse them. RAs worked alongside each other and with me to explore 'sense for sense' making of interview data (Abfalter et al., 2021; Temple & Young, 2004).
- **Remuneration.** Several tensions existed with respect to giving participants any money. In South Sudan, there is an existing culture of rewarding those who participate in research through a cash donation. RAs also required some payment as, again, existing systems are in place to remunerate those who assist research. But tensions exist about how much, when, how (security) and who to pay.
- **Participation.** There are a number of definitions of participatory approaches to qualitative research. For this study I took a pragmatic approach (Lau & Stille, 2014; Huffman, 2013), recognising that there were some limitations to being 'truly participatory' and engaging participants in decision-making at every stage of the research process. I designed an approach that valued various forms of participation with all stakeholders involved in this project, but acknowledge that issues of time, costs, security and language present some challenges to this aspiration.
- **Decolonisation.** Mindful of the lack of research that has been conducted within South Sudan by local researchers, my study aimed to co-create an approach to research that

would offer the research community in South Sudan an example of a locally collaborative, participatory and qualitative study that was co-constructivist in orientation rather than being 'extractivist' (Igwe et al., 2022). This approach required critical reflexivity to adapt the research process as it progressed and to enable the uncovering of other ways of knowing in South Sudan, as compared to Global North epistemologies (Wakeford & Rodríguez, 2018; Simonds & Christopher, 2013).

- **Safety.** The safety of RAs was paramount, providing challenging ethical considerations in view of my inability to visit rural communities. The UoJ and the MoGEISS partnership here was a critical element of creating a safer study for Lilly and Faith. A formal letter from the MoGEISS and myself (endorsed by UCL) was sent to the County Education Centre to seek permission and guidance. The risk of harm to participating teachers was agreed to be minimal, but nevertheless, attention was given to this, including to their emotional state. Although researchers will not be working directly with children, because of their likely contact with children during school visits, researchers were be orientated to understand the seven Child Friendly School (CFS) principles (UNICEF, 2009).
- **Working with research assistants.** Working with local researchers makes a significant contribution to redressing the imbalance of 'outsider' interpretations of local interactions and narratives (Schatz et al., 2015; Kim, Badrinathan, Choi, Karim & Zhou, 2022). Working with an outsider also enables local research communities to consider other epistemologies whilst also sharing their own. The principle reason for employing local researchers, however, was to create a way of enabling teachers in under-researched communities to contribute to research and policy, as well as to offer an opportunity to critique a qualitative participatory and partnership approach to research (Bleck et al., 2018; Barnes & Taher, 2023; Merritt et al., 2019).
- **Working in partnership with the MoGEISS and the University of Juba.** This liaison sought to ensure that the study was recognised, understood and endorsed from the outset by key stakeholders in the teacher policy landscape in South Sudan. In this sense, the study had a 'high status' that was positive for researchers and for participants. It was important to demonstrate that the study was supportive of the development of the

teacher policy rather than being a disconnected theme of my own interest (Crawford & Mai-Bornu, 2023).

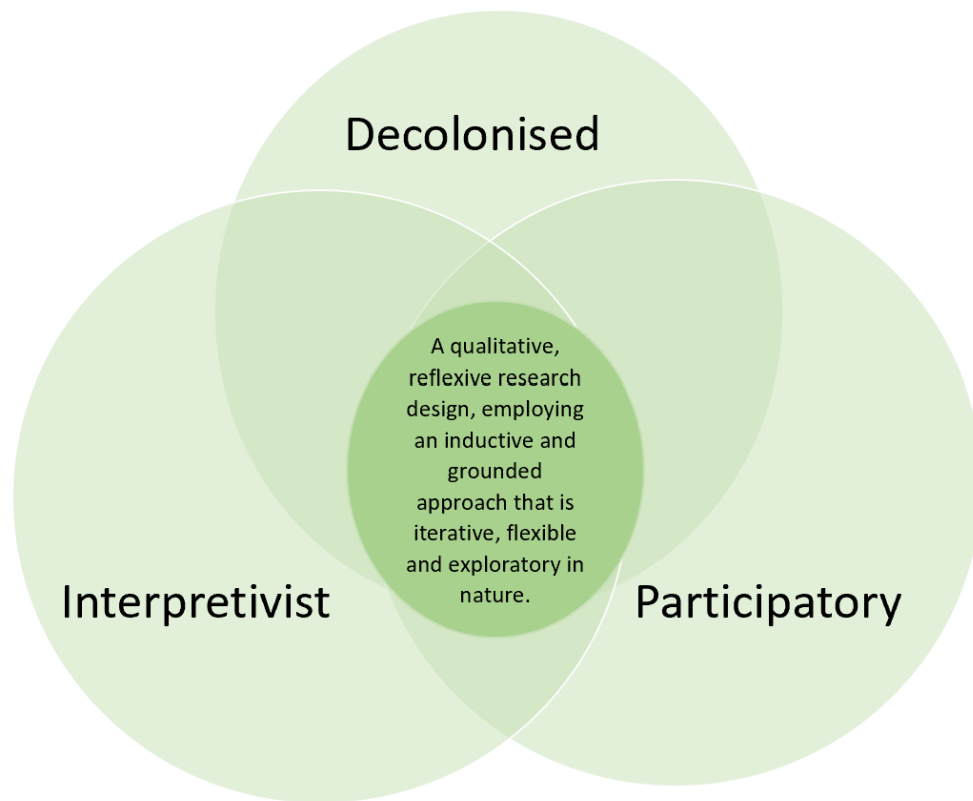
- **Gatekeepers, informed consent and anonymity.** Following UCL Ethical Approval, permission to conduct the research was granted by the MoGEISS and the Head of Education at the UoJ. All participants were provided with versions of the information sheets and Informed Consent sheet in English and Arabic ([Appendix C](#)).

3.5 The interactions between research methodologies and philosophies

My study employed an inductive, grounded approach to consider motivators, beliefs and attitudes of teachers in primary schools in rural, Central Equatoria State, South Sudan. I was committed to decolonising the research process as well as the researcher so that the dominant existing paradigm of extracting knowledge from such communities (Fournier et al., 2023) shifts to one of co-development and action research. In support of this, my study design employed a participatory and interpretivist approach through the engagement with teachers and local researchers. Data was generated in the chosen language of participants and the research design was informed by discussions with local scholars at the UoJ and the MoGEISS. The study was qualitative, flexible, reflexive and exploratory so as to be able to interrogate some of the nuances of motivation in this under-represented and minimally researched context, and to be able to respond to the novel nature of the study. I have summarised this philosophy in Figure 7.

The study employed a pragmatic approach that recognised the value of actionable knowledge, the interconnectedness of experience, knowing and acting, and, finally, inquiry as an experiential process (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). This is to say, the study set out to uncover actionable data that could drive practical action anchored in participant experiences, which could support improvements to the recruitment and retention of teachers in rural South Sudan. Kaushik and Walsh (2019) suggest that: “pragmatism has the potential to closely engage and empower marginalized and oppressed communities and provides hard evidence for micro- to macro-level discourse” (p.12). Although participating teachers are unlikely to describe themselves as oppressed, it is true that their views are seldom sought in South Sudan.

Figure 7 A Summary of the significant approaches used to shape the methodology in my study



Note: The figure highlights the interconnected nature of the three research philosophies. Own work.

3.5.1 An interpretivist approach

The underlying philosophy for my approach to this study is that in contrast to a positivist approach, I believe that researchers can also perform a role in critically observing and experiencing the world, but that this reality is unique to each observer. The uniqueness of experience is recognised by the researcher and forms a critical aspect of an ongoing reflexive approach to the research process, including during the thematic analysis of generated data to ensure that a range of perspectives contribute to the theory in development.

This interpretivist approach encouraged me to consider my positionality as a practitioner and insider researcher. Fleming (2018) suggests that key challenges for insider researchers are to minimise the potential for implicit coercion of the participants. I aimed to re-balance this somewhat by enabling local researchers to conduct the interviews.

3.5.2 A qualitative approach

Most research in South Sudan around the education workforce is led by quantitative designs. This is evidenced by the data collected for the 2021 Education Census and the *Time to Teach* study (Tarlea et al., 2021). By adopting a more qualitative study I aimed to get a fuller picture of what it is that motivates teachers. Han and Yin (2016) comment on the need for research to extend beyond numerical data from quantitative studies. They suggest that a fuller picture is achieved through the use of interviews and observations, in my study for example, to help illustrate the complexities of teacher motivation in this particular setting. Han and Yin also promote the need to explore the associations between variables rather than listing influencing factors such as those that are listed in studies that adopt the FIT-Choice model.

3.5.3 A ground-up approach

Theoretical principles of grounded theory have been adapted in my research to accommodate a study that did not seek to derive a new theory, but to contribute to the development of an adapted theory, based on characteristics of existing theories that were uncovered to be pertinent to a theory of motivation for teachers in rural South Sudan. The study was designed to allow aspects of motivation to be brought to light by the teachers themselves, which might include aspects of motivation that are not currently represented in existing theories, rather than by researchers testing which existing elements of motivation seemed to be significant.

In their paper *A pragmatic introduction to doing grounded theory research*, Timonen et al. (2018) suggest that an adaptation to classic grounded theory could be that it is more constructivist in nature, building on the work of Charmaz (2006). The researcher and participant in this case would be active in co-constructing knowledge. But in my study, researchers enabled participants to share their views (contributing to the construction of knowledge), but the construction of 'new' knowledge itself so as to contribute to a theory, took place after and away from participants. This was a pragmatic approach to accommodate the abilities and skills of RAs, and the nature of this being an assessed study where I had to analyse the data independently. Analysis of the data, however, was interpretivist rather than an opportunity report of statements, in which case, Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) is of some relevance here.

This study acknowledges that there are various existing theories of motivation and that instead of seeing this as limiting, this diversity and extent of theoretical underpinnings can be a rich resource to inform the development of a new theory for teacher motivation in under-researched communities. Prediger et al. (2008), who are attributed to establishing this concept, conclude in their 2008 paper that:

Understanding other theories and making one's own theories understandable, comparing and contrasting how theories have been conceptualized is important to networking strategies because they force the researchers to be more *explicit* on the theories' central implicit assumptions and values, their strengths and weaknesses (p. 176).

This is a useful stance for my study, confirming that theories have origins, influences and values, and that by critically engaging with these elements of existing theories, one is able to be more explicit and contextually sensitive in any theory that is developed.

3.5.4 A decolonised approach

An interpretivist approach also aligned with my aims to decolonise the research process (including the analysis of any data that is generated) where I recognise the influence of my positionality as a Global North actor. Zavala (2013) describes this attention to being a Global North actor to be a 'discontentment with knowledge production' that is perceived to be rooted in the Global North, confirming that giving a voice to those who have been historically overlooked or deliberately marginalised is imperative if we are to critically and authentically engage with Indigenous epistemologies. I agree with Tuck and Yang (2021) who suggest that decolonisation is not about rescuing communities or individuals but is rather about being accountable to Indigenous populations.

Decolonised research approaches are described in a range of ways:

- to be anti-oppressive (Mora & Diaz, 2004);
- aiming to redress scientific research that is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism (Smith, 1999);

- to decentre the focus from the aims of the non-Indigenous researcher to the agenda of the Indigenous people (Prior, 2007);
- dismantling colonial structures and relations of power, while building (re)newed ones that are accountable to the Indigenous political and legal authorities (Daigle, 2016);
- creating space for Indigenous methodologies to emerge and take shape (Kovach, 2017).

There is a need for examples from the African context that can offer authentic and nuanced suggestions to researchers of how a research methodology in these communities might be constructed.

I am mindful of the caution from Barnes (2018) that the decolonising methodologies movement may “inadvertently reinforce the systems that it critiques” (p.2). I aimed to address that through reflective conversations with Lilly and Faith, and by my grounded approach to thematic analysis where multiple theories and concepts are compared and critiqued. Barnes also suggests that the decolonised research paradigm also overemphasises how much choice researchers have in choosing decolonising methodologies, which does not address the systemic barriers to decolonisation scholarship. But as previously mentioned, Mitchell et al. (2020) confirm that there is more local decision-making about research than is often stated in SSA, and as a useful example, this study came partly as a result of conversations that I had with local actors in South Sudan during interviews for my Institution Focus Study (IFS)¹⁷.

Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021) argue that it is our “moral imperative to embrace decolonizing approaches when working with populations oppressed by colonial legacies” (p.1) and go on to suggest four practices that can be used by qualitative researchers to decolonise the approach: *Exercising critical reflexivity* which I did by adopting a grounded approach and by working within a network of local actors; *Demonstrating reciprocity and respect for self-determination* which I developed through the promotion of a non-extractivist and collaborative research method; *Embracing ‘Other(ed)’ ways of knowing* which I committed to through a critical engagement with methodologies used to research teacher motivation in varied contexts; *Embodying a transformative praxis* where I aimed to build upon Freirean philosophies of

¹⁷ The Institution Focused Study (IFS) is unique to the EdD programme and takes place during years two and three. It enables students to study an institution or organisation concerned with educational provision, organisation and support and with which they are professionally connected.

discovery as action and intellect (1996) and dedicated reflection, fully embracing notions of praxis from Wilson (2020), “if research hasn’t changed you as a person, then you haven’t done it correctly” (p.135).

3.5.5 A participatory approach

I began this section about research philosophy by describing that an interpretivist approach recognises that reality is unique to each observer and that participation is crucial to decolonising the research process. Embracing these two positions means that it is important to explore the motivations of teachers from a range of perspectives and approaches in order to be able to paint a fuller picture of what it is that motivates teachers to join and to remain in the profession. To be able to explore in this way, it was necessary to engage with a number of stakeholders in a number of ways. This is explained in more detail in the Methods section later in this chapter, but briefly, these varied participations comprised of:

- Pilot interviews in MoGEISS offices in Juba, with two leaders of education, for which I was present with Lilly and Faith.
- Pilot interviews with three teachers in one primary school in Juba for which I was present with Lilly and Faith.
- Ongoing discussions with RAs via scheduled face-to-face and remote meetings, emails, informal WhatsApp chats and via written commentaries of interviews and transcripts.
- Ongoing discussions with representatives from MoGEISS and the UoJ via scheduled introductory and progress meetings, and informal WhatsApp and email communications.

3.6 Research strategies

3.6.1 A rationale

My research strategies centre around the use of teacher voice and working with local researchers. Usher (2018) suggests more culturally attentive research strategies are required in Global South contexts, citing Nolen, Horn & Ward (2015) who state that researchers must

“acknowledge that the prominence and weight given to any particular motive must be understood in relation to systems of power, position, and privilege” (p.132). Usher confirms that contextual approaches to motivation research are more representative, recognising that the particular beliefs and values of participants are necessarily “fraught with ambiguity and sensitive to the occasion” (Bruner, 1996, p.6).

In her 2018 paper *Acknowledging the Whiteness of motivation research: seeking cultural relevance*, Usher begins with a bold statement which is aligned to my own rationale for the design of my study (see section 1.4):

The contributors to this special issue have all noted that the bulk of pages published on human motivation and learning has been written by white men (and more recently women) who have based their theories of motivation on evidence largely gathered from other White people of similar social strata (p.132).

In addition to this theme of contextualised research, Richardson and Watt (2010), in their paper *Current and future directions in teacher motivation research*, suggest that large-scale and longitudinal datasets and multiple data sources are priority approaches for further study. They suggest that there has been an over-reliance on self-report surveys in the motivation literature and that “multiple data sources and informants are required for research to engage with the full complexity of the antecedents, development, and outcomes of teacher motivations” (p.106).

For my study, I used self-reported data via surveys, but this choice was heavily influenced by the restricted opportunities to visit schools and the skills of my RAs. I would like to further explore using more creative, multi-method research methods in this context, recognising the limitations of self-reporting and observations. *Research is ceremony* by Wilson (2008) provides a particularly attractive description of Indigenous research methods, drawing upon appreciative inquiry, narrative inquiry and ethnographic approaches.

3.6.2 In what ways is teacher voice used to inform theory and policy development in LIC?

Gozali et al. (2017) conclude that: “the voices of teachers, the most important school input influencing student outcomes, continue to be neglected both in literature and in policymaking”

(p.44). In addition to this, the 2002 VSO report concludes that: “If there is one overriding message that must come from this research, it is that policymakers, education managers and donors need to do more to listen to teachers” (p.44). Binder (2012), in her work, *Teacher as lived research*, comments that: “When it comes to policymaking, teachers possess unique knowledge about the classroom that is key for successful policy formation and implementation” (p.120). It is true that teachers possess unique insights into classroom dynamics, yet Novelli et al. (2019) once again confirm that teachers in South Sudan are rarely consulted or engaged in decision-making. “Research finds that education actors at school and payam¹⁸ levels feel their voices and concerns are neglected” (p.6).

3.6.2.1 How do we define teacher voice?

Gyurko defines teacher voice to be: “the expression by teachers of knowledge or opinions pertaining to their work, shared in school or other public settings in the discussion of contested issues that have a broad impact on the process and outcomes of education” (p.4). This is a useful definition for my study which aimed to engage teachers in debate, highlighting to them the affordances that doing so can bring. Gozali et al. (2017) suggest that: “Voice can also represent individual as well as collective action”. I take this to be particularly true in rural South Sudan where individual perspectives are taken to be the result of collaborative endeavours and shared experiences, what Sande et al. refer to as “collective (or community) intelligence”. This perspective resonates with my experiences of working with stakeholders in South Sudan who describe ‘shared accountabilities’ and community well-being.

3.6.2.2 The limitations of using teacher voice

It is important to acknowledge that teachers do not always say what policymakers or reformers want to hear, and that there is a risk that it can be disregarded (Hargreaves, 1994). The reverse is also true, that teachers may say what *they think* policy makers want to hear. To address this, I analysed the data using a range of strategies, including sharing high-level potential themes with Lilly and Faith for discussion. Throughout the research process, I also aimed to mitigate the altruistic goal of ‘giving voice’ and ‘empowering communities’ which are criticised in decolonised

¹⁸ A payam is the second-lowest administrative division, below counties in South Sudan, often a rural locality.

research as it can wrongfully imply that communities are unable to achieve on their own what researchers are able to provide (Bishop, 1998). I did this by carefully addressing language used around teacher voice, limiting the use of the term 'giving' wherever possible.

3.6.3 Working with local research assistants

The use of RAs for this study was a critical element in ensuring a grounded approach. Working with Lilly and Faith, I was able to consider a number of key aspects of the study from a different (more local) perspective:

What did Lilly and Faith think about the research method and what it was aiming to achieve?

How did Lilly and Faith interpret questions presented in the interview schedule?

What research skills did Lilly and Faith perceive to be their strengths and how could we build these into the study?

What did Lilly and Faith think about the motivations of teachers? What did they already know about theories of motivation – and how would this influence the study?

These questions were weaved throughout the research process, informing and adjusting the research method where necessary. One important change that they suggested, for example, was to include recorded oral permissions for consent rather than asking teachers to sign a form. In contrast, Lilly and Faith were initially reluctant to share paper-based surveys with teachers who were not selected for interview, but after discussion and the pilot school, they decided that this was in fact a good way to demonstrate to the school community that all teachers' voices were valued.

Working with local RAs, I was also able to design appropriate strategies for engaging with schools and their teachers. Lilly and Faith knew the Central Equatoria region well, including safe routes to schools and what modes of transport to use, and when. They knew receptive head teachers, what languages teachers were mostly likely to speak and whether/how teachers should be rewarded for their participation. Lilly and Faith had a good awareness of how to approach and position interviews and engagements with schools. They knew what interview schedules would be 'too long' and 'too complicated', and how to promote collaboration. A critical element was their knowledge of what research methods teachers were likely to have

already experienced, which they cited to be interview and focus groups, and that this also reflected their own experiences and skill set. Another critical element was their understanding of remunerations for participating teachers.

Sennott et al. (2023) confirm the additional insights that are gained and the opportunity therefore to critically engage with differences in perspectives by working with local RAs. They also comment, however, that a potential burden can be placed on RAs which needs managing carefully. To reduce any feelings of 'over-burden', I ensured that face-to-face meetings were well resourced (refreshments and remuneration) and that during these meetings, Lilly and Faith had a good amount of time to share their ideas, experiences and concerns. I also used WhatsApp to encourage remotely, but again, being careful that these communications themselves were not overwhelming.

LaRocco et al. (2020) also describe a complex relationship with local researchers through their qualitative studies with communities in Botswana. LaRocco et al. suggest that interwoven contextual challenges such as language and research skills are also intertwined with personalities of a culturally diverse research team. LaRocco et al. point to researcher reflexivity not being an adequate end point and that it should instead deliberately lead to an engagement with ethical and epistemological questions of research practices more broadly. This is in tune with my notion of research projects needing to be experienced as part of a *continuum* of exploration.

Caretta (2015) also describes the complexities of personal/professional relationships experienced during qualitative research in East Africa, which Bull (2010) further discusses in relation to building authentic research relationships. Caretta suggests that by working with local RAs, one is able to shed a light on the "power geometry of situated knowledge" (p.489) and that this praxis is crucial to enhancing the validity of studies conducted in cross-cultural and cross-language environments. In this study, Lilly, Faith and I were aware of our 'all female' trio. We celebrated this dynamic, but were also aware that two female researchers visiting schools is somewhat unusual, and that Lilly and Faith should be prepared to respond to any concerns about this. Lilly and Faith did not however consider that it was likely to be an issue, although on one occasion, there did seem to be a lack of respect for a female interview team (see section 6.3).

In 2018, Bleck et al. published their paper, *Making North–South research collaborations work*, suggesting that North–South research partnerships should be mutually beneficial, which they confirm to be complex due to the distribution of power within international collaborations, exacerbated by remunerations for participants and local researchers. To be mutually beneficial however I believe, it is important to identify what is perceived to be beneficial through the eyes of local (South) actors – a discussion that Bleck et al. do not develop in any depth. Linked to this, although Bleck et al. do not address it, some attention also needs to be given to notions of ‘capacity building’, a much-contested term (Birdsall, 2014; Mormina & Istratii, 2021). I take the view that discussions of capacity building suggest starting with a ‘deficit’ which jars with a more sensitive cultural approach drawing upon appreciative inquiry.

3.7 The Research method

Semi-structured interviews and paper-based surveys were selected to help elicit from teachers what it is that motivates them to join and remain in the teaching profession. Each of these aimed to explore the lived experiences of teachers, but the discussion between our Research Trio ‘around and in-between’ visits to schools were also an important element of the research method.

All participating teachers were given a certificate and 8 USD. This was to respect and reward their participation. [Appendix D](#) shows the certificate that was co-developed between UoJ, UCL and MoGEISS and printed by a local firm in Juba.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviews were selected because they resonate with a strong oral tradition in South Sudan (Kane et al., 2016; Dafalla, 2015). Interview schedules were designed to mirror modes of communication familiar to participating teachers in community settings, encouraging them to tell stories of their experiences rather than feeling that they are being interrogated where the interviewer is ‘mining for information’ (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The data from an approach such as this proved to be rich in anecdotes and revealed unique perspectives, supporting myself, Lilly and Faith to develop a deeper understanding of the situation.

Unlike my previous study (IFS) where interviews were designed to be flexible (semi-structured) in order to enable 'known' themes (from practice and literature) to be exposed and interrogated whilst allowing new themes to be uncovered and unfold (Braun & Clarke, 2006), it was necessary for a more structured approach to interviewing to be adopted for this study. During my IFS, I conducted the interviews myself, but for this study, I employed local researchers, meaning that I was not conducting the sequence of questions and prompts used during interviews directly myself. Despite collaborating with Lilly and Faith to design a flexible interview schedule, during the interviews that I observed during the pilot phase and subsequent recordings of interviews in schools beyond Juba, it became clear that a more structured approach was necessary to give Lilly and Faith more confidence. There is some evidence in interview scripts however of them coming to adopt a more flexible approach (probing and follow-up questions) during visits to the final two schools. Lilly and Faith were able to be increasingly responsive to unanticipated answers (Scanlan, 2020). I prioritised a more structured approach to interviewing even though that probably meant omitting issues, because this was offset by the benefits of conducting interviews in the first language of teachers and/through using local researchers.

Although semi-structured interviews leave space for new topics to be explored as they arise (Rubin & Rubin, 2011), the more structured interview schedule that we designed gave enough opportunity for teachers to respond in a number of ways, something that would not have been achieved for example through a multiple-choice or Likert-scale questionnaire. Through the use of carefully structured (and piloted) questions, we were still able to explore subjective viewpoints (Flick, 2021) and to gather in-depth accounts of teachers' experiences. As a result of these discussion, interviews in conducted in a 'relaxed and open' way (Olson, 2016), reportedly resembling a 'flowing conversations' (Choak, 2012). This allowed Lilly and Faith to ask some questions which they initially feared would be 'too personal' in relation to teachers' own feelings about their role and motivations which Lilly commented are "*not the usual questions that teachers are asked*" in South Sudan.

This use of more structured interviews to gather data, still recognises interviews to be complex social and organisational phenomena rather than just a research method. Qu and Dumay (2011) and Alvesson (2003) refer to this as a 'localist perspective' which challenges the neopositivist position of interviews as a 'tool' and the romanticist perspective of interviews as only an

‘encounter’. Instead, structured interviews are positioned to be the reflective art of conversation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

3.7.2 Paper-based surveys

Faith and Lilly reported that usually during research projects such as this, head teachers or county education directors select which teachers are to be engaged. This can lead to participant bias. To mitigate this, therefore, I designed a short paper-based survey that mirrored the interview schedule. All teachers who did not take part in interviews, completed the survey and were thanked for their participation through the certificate and remuneration in the same way that interviewed teachers were.

The paper-based survey used open questions, but boxes that provided spaces for answers were deliberately not very big so as not to intimidate teachers – something that Lilly and Faith recommended. Although there was less interaction between RAs and the teachers who completed paper-based surveys, the data generated on the surveys was sufficiently detailed and provided a useful triangulation of data alongside RA observations and interviews. Paper-based survey responses, in many cases, strengthened themes generated in interviews.

3.7.3 Sampling and recruitment

Schools were selected through opportunity sampling, according to how accessible they were to Lilly and Faith, both in terms of communication and logistics. The *Sampling Framework* in my Ethical Application explains recruitment criteria for schools in detail. In summary, this group of schools has been selected because:

- this region is mostly populated by tribes that speak Bari and Arabic, languages that are well developed and accessible to both RAs;
- schools in this area are reasonably well known to the UoJ;
- it is close to Juba so travel times are not too long, minimising security risks and costs.

Four teachers in each school were selected to take part in a 30–40-minute interview and the rest of the teachers in the school were invited to complete a paper-based survey. All teachers were given the opportunity to opt out if they did not feel comfortable participating. All participating teachers were given an \$8 payment to signal that their time and participation in this study is valued.

This non-probability sampling involved the non-random selection of schools based on convenience, allowing us to generate data relatively easily. The sampling was purposive to some extent so that the sample of schools represented contrasting schools across three rural locations beyond Juba. We also tried to recruit schools where English was not likely to be the preferred language of choice for interviews in recognition of the fact that this does not often happen. We also tried to get a balance of male and female teachers to interview. Characteristics of the data is presented in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1 Table to show the number of schools and teachers that took part in the study

	Location	Number of schools	Interviews with teachers	Paper-based surveys for teachers
Pilot phase of study	Juba (urban)	1	2	0
Main phase of study	Central Equatoria (rural)	6	25	37
Totals		7	27	37

Note: The table below summarises sampling and participants by locality, phase and research method

Table 2 Table to show the languages used to generate data and the number of male and female participants

	Male	Female	Total
Arabic Interview	4	6	10
Bari Interview	1	0	1
English Interview	12	2	14
English paper-based survey	31	6	37
Total	48	14	62

Note: Teachers were given the choice of which language to use in response to interviews. The paper-based survey was presented in English at Lilly and Faiths' suggestion.

3.7.4 Data collection methods

Interviews were conducted in the local language of teachers and researchers, acknowledging that speaking in 1st (or preferred) languages allows for a greater depth of discussion. The language used other than English was Arabic and Bari, in which both Lilly and Faith are fluent. Lilly and Faith were selected on the basis that they are also able to speak English fluently, in order to be able to accurately transcribe interviews and survey data into English for me to be able to read and analyse. The interview schedule is shown in [Appendix T](#).

All interviews were recorded and transcribed into English. Transcriptions were done manually so as to gain a deeper connection to the data. I transcribed the interviews that took place in English. Lilly and Faith translated into English the Bari and Arabic interviews which were then shared with me via email. RAs cross-referenced each other's translations for accuracy, made possible by the approach to interviewing that uses one researcher to be the main (1st) interviewer and the other as the observer (2nd interviewer). After each interview, researchers who led the interview (the 1st interviewer), translated interviews from the audio recording into English and then shared this with the other (2nd) interviewer. The 2nd interviewer commented on the English translation using the comments function and also discussed any comments with the 1st interviewer in person where possible or via a phone call. RAs took it in turns to be the 1st and 2nd interviewer.

3.7.5 Data analysis techniques

Throughout the data analysis process, I adopted a constructivist position so that meaningfulness was carefully considered in comparison to the recurrence of any particular theme. In other words, when I came across certain phrases, even if only once but in some ways intriguing, I placed importance upon them. This use of latent coding reflected the exploratory and experiential nature of the study, recognising the need to try and understand the underlying meaning of the thoughts and expressions of study participants. When coding is latent, the

analysis becomes much more interpretive, requiring a more creative and active role on the part of the researcher, something I explore with Lilly and Faith also as shown in [Appendix E](#) during our ‘researcher conversations’.

I adopted reflexive thematic analysis appreciating that it considers the researcher’s interpretive analysis of the data conducted at the intersection of: (1) the dataset; (2) the theoretical assumptions of the analysis; and (3) the analytical skills/resources of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.1393).

In line with my commitment to developing a theory of motivation within the context of South Sudan, I adopted a grounded theory lite approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019) to thematic analysis, acknowledging that a more traditional thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) relates to applying existing theories to data rather than to considering (networking) a number of theories to see if they provide useful insights into motivational factors. Adopting pure grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) on the other hand is challenging, as suggested by Thomas and James (2006), explaining that grounded theory “is less like discovery and more akin to invention”.

To support me to identify themes and motivators of primary teachers in rural South Sudan, I broadly followed the six-step sequence promoted by Braun and Clark (2006), whilst making some changes to incorporate the key elements of reflexive analysis and a grounded theory lite approach that enables some elements of invention.

1. Familiarising yourself with your data:

Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.

To support this, I listened to interviews before and after the transcribing process to help identify ideas and questions that were being developed within each interview and across all interviews. I annotated printed transcripts, allocating a participant number to each teacher, anonymising the data. Interviews that took place in Bari or Arabic were transcribed by Lilly and Faith, but I listened to these interviews anyway to get a sense of the flow of the interviews and the manner in which responses were given.

2. Generating initial codes:

Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire dataset, collating data relevant to each code.

[Appendix F](#) presents an example of the development of themes as I systematically analysed each transcript. From this, I began to name and group codes under potential theme headings as shown in [Appendix G](#) in response to further reflections and conversations with RAs as theme were constructed. Because paper-based surveys were less detailed, I grouped responses by theme rather than allocating a participant number to each response.

3. Searching for themes:

Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.

Having grouped codes under thematic headings, I gathered all data relating to each code, listing them in full under each theme. This enabled a detailed analysis and comparison of data associated with each theme which shone a light on repeated phrases as well as less those that were less 'present', but nonetheless, of importance. An example of this thematic data is shown in [Appendix H](#).

4. Reviewing themes:

Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset, generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.

[Appendix J](#) shows a table of the frequency of codes within each theme that appeared across the data - my version of a 'thematic map'. Whilst recognising that a high frequency does not necessarily relate to importance, it was nonetheless helpful to identify which aspects of each theme were the most prevalent. The process of identifying and recording the frequency of each thematic element presented another opportunity to engage with the data, considering it for relevance from a different perspective.

5. Defining and naming themes:

Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.

During this stage, I returned to the literature to revisit themes and recommendations for further research. This helped me to select over-arching themes of interest which I explore in addition to the more direct responses to initial research questions.

6. Producing the report:

Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

I choose quotations from across the data that I felt best illustrated the main ideas that were uncovered through the analysis of the data. I selected quotations and extracts from paper-based surveys that offered contrasting perspectives but also, some confirmations of important themes.

3.8 Contributing to the development of a context-specific theory of motivation

‘Theory’ can be viewed as a dynamic tool not only to enable a lens through which to observe a phenomenon but also as a phenomenon in itself to be critically observed (Holton, 2008).

Because my study adopted a grounded approach to the analysis of generated data, the theoretical framework for this study represented an inductive, reflexive engagement with identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2021) in such a way that the relationship between the context and theme is fully considered.

3.8.1 Acknowledging existing knowledge

Whilst acknowledging the benefits of a grounded, interpretivist approach to data analysis, I underpinned my analysis with reference to themes that have already been shown to exist in

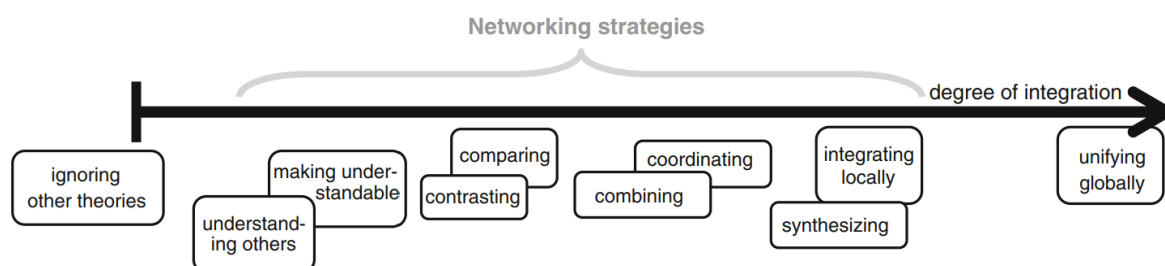
studies of teacher motivation in LICs and beyond as discussed in Chapter 2. These themes have been presented in more detail in [Appendix A](#) in the form of posters that I used to discuss theories of motivation with Lilly and Faith. Data was analysed with these themes in mind as opposed to using a completely 'blank sheet' as a starting point or trying to apply an existing theory to the field of study. This approach to analysis that does not ignore what has already been discovered is also in support of preventing a 'loss of knowledge' (Goldkuhl & Cronholm, 2010). Goldkuhl further confirms that Glaser et al. (1968) themselves explain that: "Our position, we hasten to add, does not at all imply that the generation of new theory should proceed in isolation from existing grounded theory" (p.6).

3.8.2 Bringing elements of theories together

I used a 'networking strategies' approach, presented by Prediger et al., in 2008 to help bring elements of existing theories together that became apparent in the generated data. Prediger et al., confirm the position from Goldkuhl and Cronholm that there is an existing diversity of theoretical approaches and that embracing 'only one' is a missed opportunity. Bikner-Ahsbabs and Prediger in an earlier paper (2006), suggest exploiting diversity as a rich resource for grasping complex realities. This is certainly a principle that resonates through my study of teacher motivation in South Sudan, particularly with reference to the notion of valuing Swampy lowlands (Schön, 1995), where there are multiple issues of importance that are interlinked, evolving and multi-faceted.

Figure 8 illustrates the way in which Prediger et al. suggest theories can be interrogated and connected, a strategy that I adopted to create a theory of motivation for teachers in my study. The processes involved in the networking of theories such as comparing, contrasting, combining and synthesising were particularly buoyant as a result of my discussions with Lilly and Faith because of the different perspectives that they were able to bring to the analysis.

Figure 8 A landscape of strategies for connecting theoretical approaches



Note: This figure shows the range of strategies needed to network different theories. From *Networking strategies and methods for connecting theoretical approaches: First steps towards a conceptual framework* by S. Prediger, A. Bikner-Ahsbahs, and F. Arzarello, 2008, *Zdm*, 40, p.170.

3.9 Dissemination

Dissemination was a valued aspect of the research process. This was confirmed in a meeting with the head of education from UoJ who commented that his students ‘never return’ to the sites of their study. Dissemination was wide and varied in terms of approach, which I set out in the concluding Chapter.

3.10 Gaining ethical approvals

In response to the appropriate ethical application forms being completed satisfactorily, the UCL Data Protection Registration Number was issued to me on 30th July 2022 (Z6364106/2022/07/170 social research) and ethical approval from UCL to conduct the study was granted on 27th September 2022.

The ethical considerations that I set out in my application, followed guidelines developed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) for ethical behaviour and research in education settings as set out in their fourth edition (2018). Ethical approval from UCL was confirmed to my colleagues in South Sudan through a letter written by both of my supervisors ([Appendix L](#)). This

letter was presented to the MoGEISS Director of Teacher Education and the Head of Education at the University of Juba.

Permission to conduct the research in schools in Central Equatoria was granted by the Director of Teacher Education who subsequently requested permission from the state education director to conduct the research in their schools via a letter on MoGEISS headed paper ([Appendix M](#)). Permission was granted, and the state education director developed a letter (on state education directorate headed paper) for RAs to take with them to schools, informing head teachers that they should allow the research to take place ([Appendix N](#)).

3.11 Methodological limitations

The sample is necessarily small because of the scale of the research needing to sit within the limits of the criteria for this assessed study. The research is focused on a discrete population, therefore it cannot provide generalisable data.

There may be some bias in the selection of schools due to local researchers accessing their own networks to invite schools to participate in the study.

The nature of the assessed study being conducted in an area where FCDO ‘advises against all travel’, meant that my contact with RAs and study participants was limited to times when I was working in country only. More time in country to work alongside RAs, the UoJ and the MoGEISS could have resulted in a more detailed, and co-constructed analysis of the data.

3.12 The impact of funding on the design, scale and scope of the study

This study was self-funded which had some impact on what was possible to resource. More funding in this case could have facilitated explorations of other research methods, for example, and/or a wider sample of teachers. [Appendix R](#) lists the associated costs of this study which I offer as comparable data for future similar research projects. Financial information such as this is commercially and politically sensitive and thus mostly unavailable, making it extremely difficult to develop budgets for new projects. Negotiating payments for this project presented one of the

most significant research design challenges. Some of the tensions included: the need to balance individual/institutional expectations; security and infrastructure realities/situations on the ground; personal circumstances; fragile communications (unstable cell and internet connectivity); relationships between institutions and individuals; timescales; scope and scale.

The influence of the source of funding is also important to consider, which links to notions of 'Who decides what is researched and how?' (Stein et al., 2020; Engel & Keijzer, 2006; Lewin, 2021). In my case, the status of this being an examined study influenced how I engaged with RAs because I needed to remain accountable for decisions made. As previously discussed, my ECR status and the ethics approval process also influenced when and where I was able to conduct research.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 The structure of this chapter

I begin this chapter by stating the themes that were uncovered through this study. Following this, I present findings in two subsequent sections.

The first section summarises and explores responses to the main research questions: *Why/How did you become a teacher? Why stay in the profession? What are your roles as a teacher? What are the challenges to fulfilling your role?* The second section describes the intersecting themes that evolved from responses to these main research questions. These intersecting themes present meaning-based patterns of the experiences of teachers, their perceptions, and views of their role and status.

A note about the characteristics of the data and quotations: The letter 'P' is an abbreviation for 'participating teacher' and the number after it simply distinguishes between one participant and another. As the sample size is relatively small, I have not disaggregated the data other than to state the number of male/female participants and the languages used for each interview as shown in tables 1 and 2. Survey responses were less detailed and quite repetitive, so I have summarised survey data and referred to the 'Survey Response'. To confirm the common characteristics of participants; all are primary school teachers in rural localities in Central Equatoria, South Sudan.

Whilst this chapter presents the findings of my study and a discussion of critical elements follow in Chapter 5, it is important to note that there are discursive elements of criticality and reflection in this chapter also due to the rich nature of the generated data. As each of these responses to questions are presented in this chapter therefore, it is important to note that as the data was subsequently analysed, we carefully considered what we felt might be important to take as face value and what we felt would benefit from a more critical engagement. Lilly, Faith and I discussed for example that interviewees often unconsciously tailor their responses to align with the perceived expectations of the researcher, potentially distorting the authenticity of reported lived experiences.

4.2 Themes that were uncovered during this study

4.2.1 Themed responses to each of the main research questions in summary

Why become a teacher?

- For the sake of the nation and/or community. Altruism.
- For my personal and professional development.
- For the sake of the children.

Why stay in the profession?

- Not my choice.
- I want to be a professional.
- The enjoy the school community of teachers and learners.
- It is of benefit to communities.
- It is of benefit to me.

What is the role of the teacher?

- Administration.
- To be a role model.
- To have certain character traits.
- To engage students.
- To work with colleagues.

What are the challenges to the role of being a teacher?

- Logistical.
- Certain characteristics of teaching and learning.
- Problems with parents.
- Challenges to professionalism.

How do you overcome the challenges of being a teacher?

- External support.
- Self-determination

4.2.2 Intersecting themes that arose from responses across the main research questions in summary

- Teachers are altruistic and feel a strong sense of responsibility to pass on knowledge.
- Teachers believe that education is liberating and transformative.
- Teachers enjoy the recognition they get for being a teacher and see that being a role model is an important part of their job.
- Being a teacher is an opportunity for self-growth.
- Providing counsel and support for students is important.

4.3 A description of thematic responses to the main research questions

1) why teachers might feel the need to convey that they are highly motivated through the interviews and how – as a researcher committed to centring teachers’ voice – you balance taking their comments at face value, and critiquing them. And 2) teachers talking about beating the children – this doesn’t seem to have been analysed (not highlighted in Appendix F), i.e., a critical reflection on decisions about what data to include for the analysis and what not to?

4.3.1 Why become a teacher?

(Linked interview and survey questions: *Can you tell me why you decided to become a teacher? What would you say to somebody to encourage them to become a teacher? Do you have anything else you’d like to add about what encouraged you to become a teacher?*)

4.3.1.1 For the sake of the nation and/or the community

A sense of altruism was the most common sub-theme under the wider theme of motivations to become a teacher. The following two quotations are indicative of this sub-theme:

I became a teacher to bring up or educate the children for our country to move forward (P5).

I teach so that children will have a bright future and tomorrow they will also help the coming generation, so that our country will have a bright future (P3).

Participants spoke about wanting to help, and sometimes 'save' the nation now and in the future, and that they felt there was a responsibility to do so as participant 21 said, *"We must offer ourselves to the nation"*. They talked about lifting the younger people and the nation up, moving and liberating communities towards more prosperous and peaceful futures. They said that the nation deserves education.

Participants spoke of children in their classes as if they were part of their own family – *"my brothers and sisters"* – and that, as such, they should be nurtured and supported. Participants spoke about citizenship and *"good people"* that would grow because of good teaching and that this teaching is motivated by a sense of: *"We have the heart of the nation (P21)"*. Some survey respondents commented that there was a need to develop a new generation of thinking individuals which was complimented well by P5 commenting that: *"The pupils are reflecting also that I am their eye opener, the one who made them who they are now"*.

A second element of altruistic motivation was a strong sense of responsibility and desire to give knowledge to communities and students. Many participants talked about the way in which knowledge must not remain with them but must instead be shared to fill the minds of learners. Many participants referred to *"the next generation"* and their need for knowledge.

What I have in my mind, I can't sit at home with. It's better I share it with children (P21).

Linked to the notion of the importance of sharing knowledge and a pride in doing so, was an acknowledgement of the way that teaching would lead to the development of other professions, such as those in the medical and security services. This was seen to build stronger communities, paying forward, as described by P5: *"It is better with the little we have let us help the children so that they go ahead and tomorrow they will also help others"*.

The final significant element that I will highlight in this sub-theme is that many participants explained that they saw a shortage of teachers in their community, and that they felt this was

not acceptable, so they decided to fill the gap, “*serving my people*” whilst also caring for children.

It pains me seeing them around and no teacher to teach them, so I decided to help them (P2).

I cannot leave the children in the village without anything. I came to teach them (P3).

4.3.1.2 Personal development is important

A second sub-theme was a common belief that being a teacher provided good opportunity to grow and renew one’s own knowledge which exists from one’s own schooling. A number of participants described teaching to be an opportunity to revise what they had learnt themselves in school and that you would “*learn more than anyone* (P19)”. Combined with this was a recognition that teachers could learn from their students also and that students would help teachers not to forget what they have. This element of the opportunity for personal development seemed a strong motivator to teach, with one participant talking about this in terms of psychological problems caused by society that can be solved and soothed by having a busy mind as a teacher.

Teaching will also help us psychologically; you will always be busy. You will not care about the issues of society (P14).

Receiving respect and recognition from the community was also a key element that motivated teachers within this sub-theme of personal development. Many participants talked about being recognised in the street and by students after they had left school, and how much they appreciated this. Participants described the opportunity through teaching to be “*known globally*” and, equally, to be valued by the community.

When I just go from here, people see me and they say, “master, master!” and when I see them, they come and welcome me. I am so glad that I am respected (P18).

Many teachers commented on their reasons for being a teacher by talking about “*their interest*” in the profession, a phrase which was repeated frequently across interviews. Teachers also commented that they wanted to be like their own teacher, a role model who inspired them to

teach. Linked to this inspiration from another person, was the high-profile nature of teaching being referred to as a religious calling. *"I believe that God Almighty is the one who bless me with this profession if not so I should have not been as a teacher with these challenges (P9)."* Within descriptions of a religious calling, as is mentioned here, there was also a belief from many that God would make things better: *"God will change the situation (P6)".*

4.3.1.3 Professional development is important

As a sub-theme, there was not a huge number of references to motivation linked to the value of professional development, although many teachers did mention the value that they place on *"being in the profession"*. Nine teachers, however, described a lack of other jobs available to them and, for some, they regarded this as a signal to communities that teachers are not to be taken seriously.

Because a teacher, as all of us know in South Sudan, people say a teacher is just somebody who has nowhere else to work – according to their understanding, not like in other countries (P13).

This community doesn't respect the teachers in this school, they look at them as people lacking what to do (P3).

Linked to comments about there being little other opportunity for employment, some teachers explained that they were a teacher because it was a useful tool for moving on into other professions. They also explained that being a teacher is possible (when there is little salary) because you have time for another job on account of usually teaching for half a day only.

4.3.1.4 Providing a role model for children is important

The final sub-theme of what it is that motivates teachers to become a teacher is related specifically to wanting to help children, as opposed to being recognised in the community more widely as a role model, as referred to in sub-theme 1a). Ten teachers during interviews talked about wanting children to be like them, to be good, educated people. Teachers talked about the importance and responsibility of being a good role model.

You became intelligent because there was someone who taught you, you have to try to make other people to become like you (P4).

Children will copy what you are doing so you must behave well in school (P21).

The reasons for becoming a teacher for many participants were motivated by a desire to help communities, combined with a strong sense of the responsibility to share their knowledge. Teachers enjoy the respect that they receive from community members and see that being a teacher is an important job in support of developing the nation. Although not explicitly stated, teachers seemed to link being a role model with being effective so that if they were able to provide a good role model for students, then they consider that they have done a good job.

4.3.2 Why stay in the profession?

(Linked interview and survey questions: What makes you want to stay in the profession of teaching? What do you enjoy the most about being a teacher? What did you do last week as a teacher that you really enjoyed?)

4.3.2.1 No choice but to stay in the profession

As mentioned previously in 1b), many teachers explain that it is a calling from God which appears to compel them to stay in the profession. This is a significant theme as it does not appear as a strong theme in the existing literature around motivational theory. Religion plays a central role in South Sudanese communities (predominantly Christian, but also Muslim and traditional animist religions), shaping social values and fostering a sense of identity, resilience, and communal belonging (Rothfus & Joseph, 2015; Bedigen, 2022). It seems likely that the sense of a 'calling from God', will influence community members to become teachers, or to offer some other service to the community.

Not being able to identify another job also creates a sense of not having much choice but to remain in the profession. Some teachers explained that they could indeed see other jobs, but that they could not access these because of a lack of qualifications or too much competition for the role. Although I've listed this as a sub-theme to remaining in the profession, across all interviews, although teachers described in detail many challenges that they faced, overall there was not a sense of teachers having "*no choice but to stay*". In fact, one participant explained

that he is happily resigned to remaining in the profession despite wanting to follow another career path.

I cannot get that job for accounting. Of course I have applied several times...others occupy the jobs. I love teaching – I really love it – I remain with the knowledge in this field (P13).

4.3.2.2 The community of teachers motivates me

Across interviews in particular, there were some significant responses about the way in which teachers enjoy and value being part of a community of teachers within their school. Teachers talked about how they help other teachers in various ways, including sharing ideas for lessons and topics, distributing tasks and administrative roles. Teachers said that they enjoyed advising colleagues when things did not seem to be going well. One participant commented that other teachers encourage them to “*stick in this profession (P14)*”. Other teachers explained that the cooperation and a sense of collegiality between teachers means that they know what to do and that they feel confident that they will be able to fulfil their role. Participants described sitting together under trees to tell stories and enjoying making tea and breakfast together.

4.3.2.3 The community of learners inspires me

A key element of the way that being with learners inspires teachers was described to be the opportunity to help learners to solve their problems – social, emotional and academic. Many teachers explained that they enjoyed a role as a guide and counsellor, and that giving advice is an important role, linked to 1d).

If a child gives a wrong answer, you help them think different. How you handle children is important (P21 MEF).

A teacher should build a relationship between children and must have love for them and talk to them so that the children will be able to tell their problem freely (P8).

Teachers explained that they are motivated by the success of their students. They said that when learners are eager to participate, it makes them very happy as it helps them to feel like they are doing a good job and, importantly, that the next generation is rising up. A few survey

responses included the phrase: *“Seeing learners progress makes me proud”*. Teachers explained that as much as they are committed to supporting learners who find it difficult to understand, it is the learners who are *“sharp and intelligent”* that they enjoy working with the most.

4.3.2.4 I stay in teaching because of the benefit to the community

Just as a key motivator for becoming a teacher was for the benefit of the community and the wider nation/society, this element was a key motivator for remaining in teaching.

*The salary that I get doesn't help but I just work because it's my nation (P6).
If all of us leave teaching and start doing other work, how will this country go ahead and change, meaning if there is no education will become a problem (p8).*

A significant quote from this study is from a male teacher who was interviewed in English. He said:

Teaching is a humanitarian work, it's like a doctor. Suppose all the teachers put down their pens – what would happen? For God's sake – let them continue with their teaching (P14).

This sense of teaching being a solution to the challenges that the nation faces resounded across participants and links well to perceptions of effectiveness. Teachers stated in many interviews that teaching can change the nation and that through education, *“tomorrow will be great”*. This sense of purpose and the opportunity for change making, seems to be a significant motivator for teachers to remain in the profession. Participants in this study see teaching as an important career, a role in society that makes an important contribution to development and peace. Some teachers were quite specific about the knowledge that they have a responsibility to pass on:

I must give information about modern ways of living – diseases, promote literacy, fight poverty (P21).

4.3.2.5 *I stay in teaching because of its benefits to me*

Gaining respect from the community was once again an important element of how it feels to be a teacher. Participants explained that being noticed in the community and in public spaces encouraged them to continue in their role, and that feeling valued by the community encouraged them to keep helping children. Teachers talked about having a “*lasting impression*” on learners and that this was a very pleasing aspect of being a teacher. Survey responses stated: “*Your knowledge will remain forever*” and “*learners will remember you. We are going to miss each other*”.

An element that was discussed by a few teachers was of their need to be creative in the profession, and to be self-determined and self-reliant. Teachers said that this was what they enjoyed because it gave them some freedom to achieve in ways that suited them and that they enjoyed the challenge. A teacher said they liked creating “*colourful opportunities*” for children to learn, including taking them outside of the classroom, playing games with them and singing songs together. Although the point about being self-reliant was linked to challenges of a lack of support from the government, there seemed to be a sense of fulfilment from the self-determination that is required to be a teacher in South Sudan.

For many teachers, the opportunity for self-growth is a motivator for staying in the profession, just as it is for becoming a teacher in the first place. Many teachers talked about the “double learning” that takes place between teacher and student. Teachers talked about their learning in the classroom being “*for free*” in the sense that by doing a job for others they are also developing for themselves. Teachers described the skills and talents that they were keen to develop through teaching, such as communication and cooperation, and that by “*giving knowledge*” to learners, they were refreshing their own. Self-growth and the benefits to one’s own wellbeing of being a teacher were described by P18, who explained that:

Even if I come from home with a stress, when I reach here in the compound and I see other teachers and the learners I feel better. This teaching is one of the ways you can release your stresses and then you can be free (P18).

This sentiment was also described by P14, who said: “*Teaching will also help us psychologically, you will always be busy. You will not care about the issues of society*”.

In summary, teachers explained that they are motivated to stay in the profession out of a sense of responsibility to communities for a brighter future, because they enjoy interacting with other teachers and learners, and because they see the opportunity for self-growth and development.

4.3.3 What is the role of the teacher?

(Linked interview and survey questions: *What do you think makes a good teacher? Do you think you are an effective teacher? How do you know? Is there a teacher who has been a role model for you – when you were a child or one of your colleagues? What characteristics did they have? What are your roles and responsibilities? Which of these are the most important and why?*)

Understanding what teachers perceive to be their role is important because if they are able to fulfil that role, then they are motivated to continue. If challenges to fulfilling that role are too great, then they lack motivation and are less inclined to continue in the role. This section explores what teachers say about their own perceived effectiveness, but this is limited to whether they say they are not, rather than characteristics of effectiveness.

4.3.3.1 Administrator

For many teachers, their first response to the question about role, was to explain their administrative duties, such as register keeping, planning a lesson and administering exams. A number of teachers (5) referred to roles associated with being a class master, but it was not clear from their answers how this might differ from a 'regular' class teacher. There were frequent mentions of ensuring good attendance of pupils, including visiting student homes and making phone calls if students were missing. *"The most important role is to encourage pupils to study well and not to let them drop out from school (P1)"*. This comment from P1 also highlights that the number of pupils dropping out of schools is a concern and that by encouraging learners to attend school regularly they are less likely to drop out. P2 also commented that *"this area"* is not encouraging of attendance at school which confirms comments about the challenges some teachers said they faced with respect to parents not being very cooperative.

4.3.3.2 Role model

Being a role model for learners was important to many teachers. Aspects of providing a good example to learners included dressing smartly, *“not getting drunk, being punctual and respecting oneself as well as the learners themselves”*. For many teachers, the aspect of being a role model extended to the wider community. *“You have to be a good example to children and to all people (P8).”* Many teachers promoted the idea that being a role model would result in learners having high aspirations.

Also the teacher must take care of their appearance; your appearance (your smartness, behaviour) should be good so that the pupils will say I want to be like a teacher so and so (P9).

An additional detail around dress was added by P9 later, demonstrating an awareness of how learners respond to teachers in many ways.

He/she should dress well. You should not put on clothes with colours because some learners will end up concentrating on your clothes instead of concentrating in the lesson (P9).

4.3.3.3 Student engagement

Many teachers described the way in which it is their role and responsibility to give learners knowledge by engaging them, often replying to the question “What is your role?” with a short response: *“To teach”*. Some teachers made an additional response to further explain that finding out who is participating in class and who is understanding is very important, but the focus for most teachers was on “giving” knowledge which is likely to connect with a feeling of being effective.

Being a teacher is our role so that we are helping those who do not have anything. You come to the small kids, and you help them to learn to read or write something (P22).

A response from R6 is initially alarming in relation to giving punishment, but I think it is more focused on explaining the need to treat learners equally, as a few other teachers mentioned also.

My role is to give equal education. We give punishment equally. (P22).

This comment about punishment is also linked to a common description of the issue of discipline in the classroom and around school. Many teachers explained that it is their role to ensure good discipline, and that this extends to the behaviours of teachers.

Many teachers talked about their role as ‘caring counsellors’, helping students to solve problems (academic, social, emotional, physical health and practical/logistical) and to “*make them happy*”. Sometimes teachers referred to “*good outcomes for students*” and this was supported by the belief in the value of “*getting to know students*”. A few teachers talked specifically about taking care of girls and that promoting gender equity was part of their role. Helpfully, in relation to the previous comment about punishment, P12 explained that guiding learners meant counselling, “*not beating*”. P21 described the way in which a teacher should listen rather than lecture (my interpretation): “*Sometimes you find that children have a stress. You should not be a chalk board teacher, you should be a class teacher.*”

4.3.3.4 Working with colleagues

A few teachers talked about the need to work with colleagues as part of their role, but it was not a feature of what they talked about here as compared to the value they placed on working with colleagues as to why they enjoy being a teacher. Some teachers mentioned the importance of working with other teachers to plan lessons and to share ideas. “*A good teacher is the one who consults his/her colleagues when he/she has difficulties in understanding something in syllabus* (P6).” A number of teachers described the way in which they followed guidance given to them by the head teacher and that it was important for there to be good relationships across the teaching community in each school.

4.3.4 What are the challenges to being able to fulfil your role? How do you overcome these challenges to be able to fulfil your role?

(Linked interview and survey questions: *What challenges do you face as a teacher? What helps you to fulfil your role as a teacher? Does any other person help you to fulfil your role? How? Why did you move schools?* Note: There was no direct question about overcoming challenges. These responses emerged from teachers as they described their challenges.)

4.3.4.1 Logistical barriers

By far the most common response to the question about what challenges teachers face was that teachers are not paid enough, or regularly or reliably. This was in fact the most commonly referred to issue across the whole dataset.

A descriptive response from P13 highlights challenges faced by teachers associated with a lack of salary:

As a household leader and responsible person, people are depending on you so at the end of the day you need to satisfy their needs. You can be not happy if you cannot satisfy their needs – this is a very big challenge. Because a teacher, as all of us know in South Sudan people say a teacher is just somebody who has nowhere else to work – according to their understanding, not like in other countries. Now although you love to teach ... but when you are faced by other problems, it will bring some confusion you will not teach with whole hearted. Maybe it is not me alone. Of course it is low salaries. I am paid by collections from communities (P13).

This response highlights a number of concerns around the status of teachers in communities, the impact that this has on the way teachers feel about their role and their related motivations to teach “whole hearted”. This description also describes the multiple responsibilities that community members have (in this case teaching and being the head of the household) and that sometimes these can be in conflict with each other.

It is difficult to get a clear sense of how much exactly a teacher is paid because ‘salaries’ come from various places including the government, the community and the church, but P5 explains that: “We will be given 10,000 SSP per month but if their number reduces then we will receive 5,000 SSP per month”. The reduction here in ‘their number’ is likely to be the number of

community members who contribute to the salary¹⁹. P3 explained that a lack of salary made her “situation” as a teacher uncomfortable and demoralising: *“Sometimes you teach when you are hungry; your clothes are dirty because there is no money to buy soap in order to wash your clothes”*.

Transportation issues were also frequently cited to be a challenge. Challenges mostly resulted from a long distance to travel, which is time-consuming and practically impossible in the rainy season. P11 commented that: *“I am effective, but in the rainy season I have to skip hours because roads are not good”*. Transportation was also cited as a reason not to get a job in other schools because they are too far to travel on foot. A long journey to school is also costly, with some teachers citing it to be 1,000 SSP a day, which out of a total salary of 10,000 SSP a month is problematic. Some teachers said that they only come to school a few times a week because of transport issues. A long distance to school and travelling by foot also presented a security challenge for some teachers, especially in the most remote schools.

Other logistical challenges that teachers talked about were a lack of accommodation, the poor infrastructure of the school building itself and a lack of maternity regulations, meaning that after having a baby, your job may be filled by somebody else. One teacher also explained that the time needed for teaching impinged on other household duties.

The time we are leaving the work here is too late in the evening, so like for me who is having a family, you will not be able to help your family for example by going to the farm to dig will be very late (P2).

4.3.4.2 Some aspects of teaching and learning are challenging

With regards to teaching and learning, the two most frequently cited challenges were associated with a lack of teaching and learning materials, and the difficulties of teaching learners who “lack discipline”.

The new curriculum required new materials and new approaches. P13 talked about the challenges faced because of this.

¹⁹ For reference, at the time of writing: 10,000 SSP has a value of £10 and a cup of coffee from a street vendor costs 300 SSP. The government (as distinct to the community) pays teachers 25,000 SSP month, which is a 400% increase as of June 2023, but government-contracted teachers have not been paid for eight months.

We don't have enough materials. We only have one copy of the new syllabus. We are supposed to have enough copies for each child. And there are no charts. Changing the system from Arabic to English has been hard – pupils cannot keep up and understand.

P19 also commented on the new textbooks, explaining that he feels they are “*shallow and it does not even contain grammar*”. Another teacher said that they have to buy materials themselves. P16 also explained that pupils do not speak English well which is a barrier to understanding the new curriculum²⁰.

With regards to discipline, teachers explained that pupils are disruptive in lessons by moving furniture, arriving late, not paying attention, leaving lessons without permission and by fighting. Of these, not paying attention was the mostly frequently mentioned. There were also several comments about a lack of respect from pupils, in some cases from older pupils in classes where they are older than their peers because they have repeated a year or returned to school after dropping out when they were younger. The reaction from parents is linked to difficulties with discipline in the classroom also.

There are challenges of pupils. We are putting the punishment to go ahead to the pupils. When they run home, and their parents will come immediately – and they say “why you cane my child? Use your mouth and words only” (P16).

This quote highlights the issue of the use of corporal punishment, which was described twice during interviews, but the word “*punishment*” was used in three other responses by teachers, and it was not always clear what form of punishment was being referred to.

P21 explained that student disabilities were difficult for many teachers to manage.

Teachers run away when learners are too hard, like when pupils have disabilities.

Other teachers said that they “*did not cope with very well*” when learners had disabilities, and that when “*some pupils do not understand*” it makes it difficult for teachers to be able to teach the rest of the class. P23 explained that: “*I can't do anything to help them understand but I keep teaching so they will get you eventually*”. Other teachers said that they gave students more time, however, and that students who are struggling to understand should sit at the front of the

²⁰ The Curriculum Policy states that English should be the language of instruction from Class 5.

class. A sense of not being able to do very much to help learners who are struggling was also commented on by P10, who said:

In class there are learners who don't understand the subject, you will try explaining to them in different ways, but they will still not understand.

4.3.4.3 Parents cause us a problem

Many teachers mentioned parents in their descriptions of their role and the challenges that they face as a teacher. They commented that parents do not generally help too much with promoting education and that they are not serious and show a lack of respect to the school and its teachers. P18 explained that in their experience: *"The tradition and the habit in this community is that they don't understand the need to pay and respect teachers"*. Some teachers linked this to parents seeing that schools are poorly resourced, and that the government does not support education, demonstrated by their lack of investment in teachers. P18 explained that for some teachers, the challenges of dealing with parents is too much.

The parents ... I don't know what they are trying to show. They come to the office if you send the children home then parents come and complain, and they are abusive. Some teachers will not put up with this. They just leave.

P1 also said that they do not teach well because they are afraid of parents, and P3 said:

This community don't respect the teachers in this school, they look at them as people lacking what to do.

Other challenges relating to parents included the way that some parents push to have their children skip years and to get high grades in exams by *"pressurising"* teachers. This tension between what teachers believe to be important and what parents perceive to be 'good teaching' and a 'good education' is demotivating for teachers. This is further exacerbated by a fragile commitment from some families to send their children to school in view of a perceived loss of earnings because children are not available to work at home and by a lack of trust in the education system itself.

4.3.4.4 Other professional challenges

Other challenges that teachers faced centred around a lack of training and a lack of clarity about their role. P10 said:

I wish teachers should be given trainings so that they know their role as a teacher, because here in our school there are teachers who have not attended trainings. MoE should offer courses and trainings to teachers, because there are teachers who are not from the Department of Education”.

This is an important element of the challenges that teachers face both with respect to a lack of coherent training and a lack of understanding of the role of a teacher.

4.3.4.5 External support helps us

With respect to how teachers overcome these challenges, most teachers referred to the way that their family, friends, the church and/or community contribute to their salaries. Some teachers also said that the government provides incentives and that they help with school feeding programmes. Many teachers also mentioned the way that their head teachers help them to fulfil their role.

Teachers frequently cited that “*other organisations*” help with salaries and that they provide some materials such as textbooks from Uganda and sometimes accommodation. Teachers said that other organisations, including “*the inspectors*”, also help with teacher training, sometimes sending them to other places such as Nimule (a town 200km south of Juba on the border with Uganda).

4.3.4.6 Self-determination is what I need

Many teachers talked about the way that they have to work on their own, bringing their own resources and determination to help them succeed as a good teacher. They talked often about bringing their own knowledge, as discussed in 1a), in relation to the responsibility they feel to pass on to others what they have learnt. P8 talked about this in relation to the inspiration they gained from seeing their own teacher teach.

He just come with a chalk but without a book, because the knowledge is in his head. And it made me surprised, and I said I want to become like him.

Teachers talked about the need to be devoted and to trust in themselves, not relying on others for help. P22 said that: “*We must not give up even though our salary is little*”. P3 said that teaching was the profession chosen with all their heart, and that “*despite all the challenges, I will work*”. This determination was echoed by P5:

If we teachers are to wait until something good happens then we will remain behind, so it is better to continue teaching despite all these.

Teachers said that the challenges they face are mostly as a result of having a low and unreliable salary. A secondary impact of a low salary is the lack of respect this seems to generate within the community. A lack of teaching and learning materials also made it difficult for teachers to fulfil their roles, exacerbated by students who they perceive to “*lack discipline*”. Strategies to overcome these challenges arise from community groups, **including parents** and a sense of self-determination.

4.3.4.7 Character traits that help with your role

A number of teachers initially replied to the question about their role with a description of what they perceived to be important character traits of teachers during interviews. Within this, most responses centred around the need for teachers to be creative, sociable and communicative. Being patient, kind and tolerant also features in answers and links back to the need for teachers to be a counsellor for students.

P16 commented that: “*Appearance of the person is important. They must not be gloomy!*” This seems to be a comment about maintaining a happy and positive demeanour, which was further confirmed by P16 in a later comment: “*If I can come to school with problems from home with your wife or mother, you have to take steps to be hard*”, which I interpret to mean that no matter what troubles a teacher is facing beyond school, they must adopt a positive outlook whilst in their role at school as a teacher.

I now turn to a consideration of intersecting themes which highlight some significant motivators for teachers across the study.

4.4 Intersecting themes

4.4.1 Teachers are altruistic and feel a strong sense of responsibility to pass on knowledge

Comments about passing on knowledge out of a commitment to caring for others and communities, occurred the most frequently across the data generated. P14 explained for example that *“Since an early age I have wanted to help people”*. Many teachers said that they were driven to teach by a feeling that they have a responsibility to give knowledge away, because *“keeping it”* is *“greedy”*, as described by P1:

You don't need to be greedy with knowledge. You cannot keep it for yourself, you need to forward.

In response to most questions, teachers talked in some way about supporting their community by helping them to learn, giving them tools for the future and helping them to develop as *“thinking individuals”*.

4.4.2 Teachers believe that education is liberating and transformative

By sharing their knowledge, teachers believe that children will be given the best start in life and that this education will lift the nation to *“better futures”* and peace. Teachers refer frequently to the new or next generation and to the power of education for the *“betterment of tomorrow”*, which should be the focus, rather than on the *“challenges of today”*.

We know that we are raising people up because tomorrow these children will be great. Today we are simple but tomorrow we will be great in front of God. This is free work (P9).

When you don't teach, the nation will become down. The nation deserves an education (P19).

As part of this belief in the power of education to transform communities and the nation, teachers recognise the value of ensuring that children attend school and that teachers should do everything that they can to keep children in school, widening ideas of being an effective teacher. Teachers say that they need to *“follow”* and *“chase”* learners when they do not come to school and that this is sometimes in conflict with what parents want for their children.

Teachers spoke frequently about the value of engaging students in their learning and that this requires good discipline of both the giver and receiver of knowledge. Teachers did not talk about

the link between children experiencing success and wanting to keep coming to school, however. Teachers did talk about having the power to create other professions, as P20 puts it:

When I was at school my teacher used to advise me to be a teacher or a doctor. I chose a doctor, but he said to me, but who will teach them to become a doctor?

4.4.3 Teachers enjoy the recognition they get for being a teacher and see that being a role model is an important part of their job

Despite comments from some teachers about the disrespect they get from some parents and students, teachers more commonly referred to enjoying the respect that they do get from members of the school community and beyond (“world-wide” was cited by three teachers!). P21 sums it up well: “*I get respect from the community. Whenever I am moving, they give me respect. I feel proud*”. Many teachers connected respect to their belief that you will “never be forgotten” as a teacher and that your impact on learners is long-lasting.

You will be remembered, and you will be proud. Some of the children you teach will become president (P21)!

Teachers enjoy being a role model and talked frequently about learners “*being like me*”. P3 for example, said: “*As a teacher you will find all ways to help these learners so that they become like you in future*”. P21 explained further that to be a teacher you should:

Move in the community so you are a role model. Children will copy what you are doing so you must behave well in school. Even children will praise your name.

Linked to the idea of being a role model, teachers talked about the solidarity amongst teachers because of this shared commitment to setting an example for students.

4.4.4 Being a teacher is an opportunity for self-growth

Teachers recognise that as a result of teaching, you are building your own knowledge as well as passing it on to others. Teachers spoke frequently about the “*dangers*” of not sharing your knowledge which could result in losing it. They described that being a teacher means that you can also “*gain*” from the students. They described refreshing, revising and expanding their

knowledge through teaching. P1 explained their concerns about “*keeping*” knowledge and the enjoyment they get from “*taking it out*”.

I need my knowledge not to end in the middle, but it has to come out, that is what I enjoy the most.

4.4.5 Providing counsel and support for students is important

For many teachers, the role of caring for and counselling students is very important, which includes ensuring that they achieve success academically. Giving advice to students and being “*there for them*” was described by many teachers to be a crucial aspect of being a “*good teacher*” and many teachers said that they enjoyed this aspect of their role very much.

I like advising them when they are breaking for holidays (P6).

I enjoy ... I also advise them on how to be smart and how to behave well (P9).

But what I really enjoy most is advising them to how live a religious life (P10).

Many teachers also focused their description of counselling on the need to provide guidance to girls. P9, for example, said: “*The most important role and responsibility are the counselling of the girls and the health and hygiene of the school*”.

4.5 Summary of findings

The data generated through this study provides an insight into the experiences of 62 primary school teachers in rural Central Equatoria. The final words in this presentation of findings relate to the perceived value of the research activity itself as explained by a number of teachers at the end of their interviews:

Only a word of thanks to you. This is something good for teachers and education (P5).

I just want to say thank you. Thank you so much for visiting us (P8).

I am happy for your coming, this work is very important (P7).

I am pleased that you are doing this. You know the challenges of being a teacher – let us actually promote education (P3).

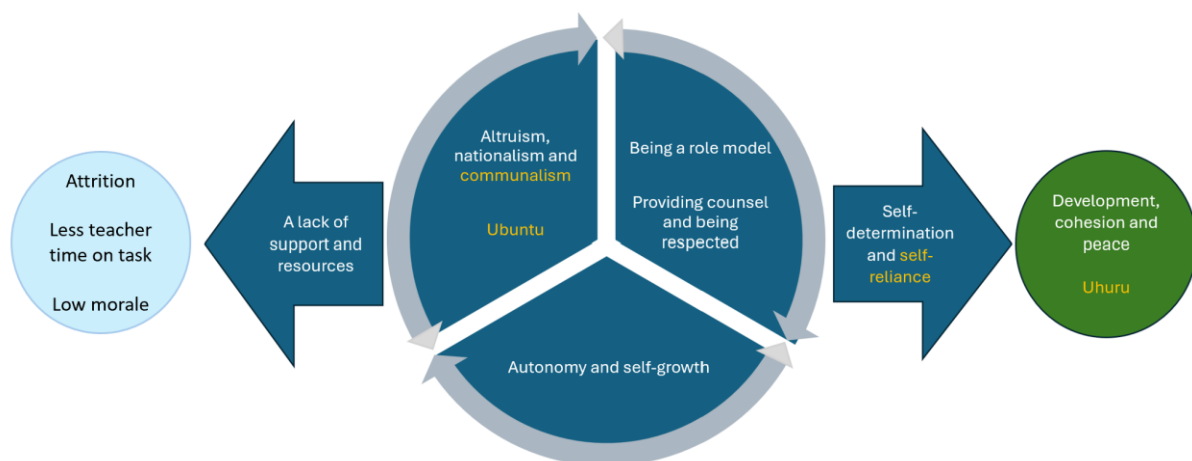
Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents a reflexive interpretation of the research findings, in dialogue with both the literature and my own experiences of education in South Sudan. It discusses the key motivators of teachers who participated in this study, with the aim of highlighting potential themes to support the enactment of the Teacher Education Policy and the development of the wider Teacher Policy in South Sudan, with particular regard to recruitment and retention campaigns and strategies.

To represent the key findings that facilitate an understanding of teacher motivation for primary school teachers in rural South Sudan, I created a framework shown in Figure 9. The structure and elements within the framework are explained throughout this Discussion chapter and are aimed at providing a framework within which to think about a contextually sensitive theory of motivation.

Figure 9 Elements of motivation for teachers in this study

Towards a theory of motivation for primary school teachers in rural South Sudan



Note: This framework outlines what was uncovered during this study with respect to particular elements of motivation and how they relate to each other and to well-known cultural philosophies in Africa, shown in yellow text. Own work.

5.1 The structure of this chapter

The discussion in this chapter interrogates the most critical findings that arose as a result of the reflexive thematic analysis of all interview and survey responses, situating that within the key elements of the research questions: *Why become a teacher? Why stay in the profession? What are your roles as a teacher? What are the challenges to fulfilling your role?* To facilitate this discussion, I present a summary of the literature review that I conducted in light of what were uncovered to be the critical findings. This *Literature Interlude* in section 5.2 provides a backdrop for the discussion that follows, outlining relevant concepts, philosophies and comparative research.

In section 5.3.1 I interrogate the perceptions that teachers have regarding the value of their role through an exploration of altruism, nationalism and patriotism. This discussion will relate explorations of this ‘purpose’ to Ubuntu and Uhuru, (as signalled in Chapter 1) African cultural philosophies that promote freedom and community building, celebrating the interconnectedness of society, the environment and cultural heritage. Linked to teachers’ ideas about the purpose of their role, in 5.3.2, I discuss the value that teachers place on being a role model and how much ‘satisfaction’ (enjoyment) they get from being respected in their community.

In sections 5.3.3. and 5.3.4 I discuss the more individual aspects of teaching that research participants described. Exploring sub-themes of self-determination and self-reliance, I discuss the challenges that teachers face, and that a commitment to ‘transformation’ and nation building results in teachers finding ways to work in a way that they believe has a positive impact on students, despite a lack of resources. Within these two sub-themes I explore the influence of ‘Education For Self-reliance’ (ESR), an African cultural philosophy made popular by Julius Nyerere (President of Tanzania between 1961 and 1985) that encourages citizens to rely upon their own developments to realise their full potentials as opposed to *relying* on support from international agencies in support of achieving freedom (from colonial rule). I explore how ESR relates to communalism, an ancient African philosophy focused on a similar process of self-reliance that promotes care and collaboration, and which values the notion of extended families. Sub-themes of autonomy and self-growth link to self-determination and I discuss ways in which teachers say that they endeavour to grow their knowledge, and why perceived autonomy

provides teachers with opportunities to succeed, providing motivation and boosting commitment.

In section 5.3.5 I interrogate the way in which teachers enjoy and place considerable value on providing counsel and support to students. I link this to a discussion of what training and support teachers need themselves to be able to fulfil this role and what *need* there is in communities for students to be counselled.

The final critical theme that I discuss in this chapter centres around the challenges that teachers face with regards to salary. I discuss the way in which these impacts on teachers' abilities to work (no money for transport for example), their interpretations of the value that the government places on education and their related perceptions of the respect that communities have for education.

The final section of this chapter focuses on using a network to bring together these critical sub-themes towards a theory of motivation for primary school teachers in rural South Sudan. I conclude by describing the implications that these findings have on recruitment and retention strategies that MoGEISS and other stakeholders could adopt to address the crisis within the workforce.

5.2 Literature Interlude

5.2.1 Altruism

Altruism is a prominent feature of the data in my study. Feigin et al. (2014), define altruism to be “an intentional and voluntary act performed to benefit another person as the primary motivation and either without a conscious expectation of reward (altruistic approach) or with the conscious or unconscious expectation of reward (pseudo-altruistic approach)” (p.1). Teachers in my study repeatedly explained that they had a real sense of purpose and are committed to serving their community.

Participating teachers also spoke repeatedly about their desire to share knowledge - their act of altruism. This finding echoes the work of Jessop and Penny (1998) who suggested that there are two distinct frames of understanding teaching in SSA. Their study explored primary teacher

voice and vision in rural South Africa which resulted in the discovery of teachers seeming to see their job to be either 'instrumental' or 'relational'. If teachers saw their job to be about instruction, then their motivation focused on sharing (or transmitting) knowledge. If they saw their job to be more about building relationships and being a role model for students, then their motivation focused on providing students with a community within which they could develop as responsible citizens. The data in my study seems to highlight that both instrumental and relational motivations are at play, a helpful indication that 'this theory or that theory' is difficult to apply in this context.

The literature discusses in some detail the way in which many teachers appear altruistic, wanting to serve society through their roles as educators. A study of 600 pre-service teachers in Malaysia, for example, revealed altruism to be the main motivational factor for joining the profession (Bakar et al., 2014). This finding is similar to that of the findings from Saban (2003) who also found that student teachers in Turkey rated altruistic factors as more important than intrinsic and extrinsic factors when deciding to choose teaching as their profession. An emphasis on this trait of altruism in teachers is also echoed by research by Watt and Richardson (2012) using their FIT-Choice scale. A survey conducted amongst 300 first-year BEd students in Ghana (Haruna & Sackey, 2023) revealed that student teachers' sense of caring and compassion for others, coupled with a lifestyle that involves service to others, is what drives them to become a teacher.

These examples from Ghana, Malaysia and Turkey centre around pre-service or student teachers. There is less in the literature that explores altruism amongst practising teachers in SSA, possibly due to it being *easier* to reach student teachers (in universities or teacher training institutions (TTIs)) than it is to engage with practising teachers. In South Sudan, the instances of qualitative studies conducted amongst teachers in schools are limited, let alone within schools in harder to reach localities. This issue of access to study participants is discussed further in the next chapter, Discussion of the Methodology.

Michaelowa (2002) explores teacher job satisfaction in Francophone SSA and found that teachers with very high educational attainment are generally less satisfied and poorly motivated by their job and often prefer to leave. She observes that: "teachers face a mismatch between their professional expectation and realities" (p.12). This has implications for teacher training in South Sudan where so many teachers are currently unqualified. As teachers become aware, or are trained on 'better', 'other' and 'more impactful' ways of teaching, it is possible that they

might feel concerned about their own existing skills, worrying that they are doing harm rather than building more educated communities. This concern could shake their confidence, reduce their motivation and ultimately lead them to seek other professions where they feel more secure in their capabilities. This has important implications for training programmes in South Sudan – to ensure that training activities and expectation are sensitive in that, they recognise what skills teachers have, and build from there carefully rather than presenting something totally new. This links to a discussion of appreciative enquiry (set out in section 6.1 and 6.4.4).

5.2.2 Nationalism and patriotism

A dominant discourse from the government is to promote nation building which participants in my study also often talk about, describing their desire to help build a nation. Aligned to this, Jok (2011), a previous undersecretary in the government of South Sudan's Ministry of Culture and Heritage between 2010 and 2011, and a fellow of the Rift Valley Institute²¹, concluded that: "All can gain from promoting an inclusive sense of national belonging, rallying around national symbols, practicing citizen-centred national policies, and building a citizenry devoted to the concept of citizenship in the nation" (p.15).

It is concerning then that Bentrovato and Skårås (2023) conclude that the current national curriculum history textbooks offer conflicting stories of nationalism compared to the narratives that teachers hope to achieve through their teaching. Bentrovato and Skårås state that textbooks, "speak relatively little of these societies' many commonalities, such as culture and heritage" (p.1052), and that the history books have "an unsettled narrative whose key focus on unity undergoes repeated rupture" (p.1041). It would be interesting to explore what teachers themselves feel that textbooks promote or hinder with respect to communalism and nationalism in light of the emphasis that this theme receives in the generated data of my study.

There is limited literature about the way in which a sense of patriotism and nationalism influence the motivations of teachers in SSA, but Melike and Avci (2020) believed it to be an important indicator of teacher quality. They conducted surveys amongst pre-service teachers in Turkey aimed at revealing the extent of teachers' patriotic attitudes. They concluded that male,

²¹ The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, non-profit organization, founded in Sudan in 2001, currently working in eastern and central Africa, including in South Sudan. The RVI works with institutions in the region to develop and implement long-term programmes that combine action-oriented research with education and public information.

social studies teachers were the most patriotic, but this has limited relevance to my study because teachers in rural primary schools in South Sudan teach all subjects and there is no clear link made in this paper between ‘the most patriotic’ and ‘the most motivated’ teachers. It is more interesting that being patriotic might be perceived to be a key indicator of good teaching. Sidikovich (2023) also discusses the importance of patriotism amongst teachers in higher education in Uzbekistan, stating that patriotism is a key disposition of effective teachers. In both cases, however, recognising the distinctive characteristics of these localities needs careful consideration with respect to evaluating what relevance these have on teacher motivation in South Sudan.

5.2.3 Ubuntu

Participating teachers in my study described a strong connection and commitment to their community, mostly in terms of village (payam) life and family responsibilities. It seems likely that Ubuntu is a cultural philosophy that resonates through the motivations of teachers.

Brock-Utne (2016) explores how philosophies of Ubuntu can be maintained in schools where languages of instruction vary in order access international landscapes. This is discussed also by Higgs (2012) who reflects critically on the way in which Ubuntu can provide a useful philosophical framework for the construction of knowledge that will enable communities in Africa to participate in their own educational development. Ubuntu is widely discussed as a philosophy for freedom through education by scholars such as Abdi (2022), Mthimkhulu (2024) and Omodan & Diko (2021) who explore for example a learning environment where everyone feels empowered through a decolonialised pedagogy with ‘liberating potentials’.

5.2.4 Being a role model and being respected

Being a role model, was often described by participating teachers to be an essential element of their role. There is some literature that supports this idea. In a study conducted across secondary school teachers in rural Zimbabwe for example, Gomba (2017) suggested that teachers knowing that they are making a difference, having a positive impact and effect on students was a source of motivation which had a positive impact on teacher retention, but

‘making a difference’ is not the same as aiming to behave in such a way that students will ‘do well’ if they were to copy your behaviour.

Kirk & Winthrop (2004), in their study of Home-based school teachers in Afghanistan, also suggest that teachers are aware of their modelling role, consistently creating trusting, care-filled classroom environments that reinforce positive community values. They suggest that as local community members, many teachers possess ‘alternative qualifications’ (p.878) that make their relational presence especially meaningful and influential. This is an interesting theme of ‘qualifications’, especially in South Sudan where so many teachers are unqualified, but have been teaching for many years and so have perhaps gained an ‘alternative qualification’ by the very act of contribution to school communities for so long.

Madhavan and Crowell’s (2014) research explored the idea from a slightly different perspective, identifying that students’ choice of role models are influenced by a “balancing strategy to reconcile individual and group identity development” (p.1). This is something which is important in South Sudan where cultural diversity is characterised by 60 Indigenous languages, 64 ethnic groups and a strong tribal tradition. Young people who previously (traditionally) remained in mono-cultural communities, are increasingly finding themselves in mixed ethnic groups as infrastructure continues to evolve, making travelling between localities more accessible, as well as digital technologies revealing images and stories of ‘other’ cultures within South Sudan and beyond. For many young people in South Sudan to form their identity, they must navigate these multiple realities and, thus, benefit from a role model who can provide a stable character with whom they can identify. To further emphasise this point, Zambakari (2015), in his paper, *Sudan and South Sudan: identity, citizenship, and democracy in plural societies*, warns that: “Without reordering society to accommodate the multiple nationalities within the nation, building a more inclusive political community, violence will continue to be a response to the politics of exclusion, worsened by lack of development” (p.71).

Similarly, Kagoda’s 2011 study across 310 undergraduate and postgraduate students in Uganda revealed that students value “teachers that are intelligent and have good knowledge of the subject matter, approachable, morally upright, approachable/accessible, honest, who guide students and who are smartly dressed and presentable” (p.56). Kipchumba et al. (2021) conducted a similar study in Somalia which involved identifying role models in the community and then training them to provide some inspirational speeches to children in primary schools.

They found that female role models had a longer-lasting impact on both male and female students than male role models, particularly if these role models were from neighbouring communities. It is difficult to draw too much from this research however in view of the number of variables that must have existed across the study when measuring the impact of the role models on students.

5.2.5 Self-determination, self-reliance and uhuru (freedom).

Many participants in my study commented on their need to be self-determined and to rely on their own efforts. This is also a theme in the 2023 Education Sector Analysis (IIEP-UNESCO, 2023) which revealed that:

Schools are severely under-resourced, with no funding being received from MoGEI for the maintenance of school buildings or the purchasing of learning materials.

Almost no funding was allocated to capitation grants in 2020-2022, suggesting schools lack the funding necessary for materials and upkeep (p.113).

This under-resourcing means that teachers have to find ways for themselves to make classrooms 'tick' (Bennell, 2004).

The literature on self-determination in Africa often links to the notion of self-reliance, a humanist concept linked to socialism and anti-capitalism in response to nations in Africa becoming independent of colonial rule (Mthembu, 2021; Crosby, 1976; Farah, 2010). Nwoke (2020), in his paper, *Rethinking the idea of independent development and self-reliance in Africa*, suggested that the path to follow to achieve a dignified African approach to development, is self-reliance. David and Joseph (2022), in their paper, *Julius Nyerere's notion of education and its relevance to South Sudan*, suggested that: "The educational system in South Sudan should be redesigned using Nyerere's educational philosophy" (p.50).

ESR and self-reliance as a broader concept gained considerable attention in Tanzania through Nyerere. Importantly, the underpinning philosophy of communalism has its origins in ancient Africa which focuses on a similar process of self-reliance, promoting caring, collaborative, critical and creative endeavours so that together, people work out what really matters, what's possible, and what they can do (as an individual) for the good of the community. Waghid (2016), Horsthemke (2017) and Evans (2012) agree that the philosophy of communalism empowers people in any context to be active citizens and to generate ideas at a grassroots level. In their paper exploring philosophies of education in Africa and potential links to school leadership, Ashu et al. (2023) posit that: "African educational systems are in dire need of radical reforms to

decolonise them and make them relevant to the socio-cultural values of the local populations” (p.32).

Zambakari (2013), in their paper, *South Sudan and the nation-building project: Lessons and challenges*, also comments about the importance of community:

South Sudan has just completed a referendum on self-determination. The challenge that lies ahead for the new republic is that faced by all African states: it must reform the colonial state inherited at independence, build a more inclusive political community that effectively manages diversity, upholds the rule of law and practises democracy in governance (p.5).

Kuyok (2019) explains that *Uhuru*, (freedom and liberation), is not yet felt in education in South Sudan due to an education system that “is struggling to rid itself of the colonial education system” (p.82). The Honourable Dr Kuyok Abol Kuyok (cited here about Uhuru) is the current Undersecretary of Education in South Sudan²² (in post since 2019), and thus, these views potentially reinforce efforts by the MoE and teacher workforce to become self-reliant. Badru (2012) also speaks of the “unfinished revolution in Africa” which is further highlighted by Shivji (2009), who suggests that Uhuru is suffocated by elitism in Africa, sustaining power through association and dependence on foreign aid. This sense of seeking freedom is related to nation building as discussed in section 5.2.2).

Linked to self-reliance and self-determination is self-efficacy. Increasing attention is being paid to the relationship between cultural values and motivation in school settings, and how this relates to what teachers feel to be the strength of their own capabilities. The influence of culture on motivation has recently been labelled “one of the most important issues in educational psychology today” (Zusho et al., 2004, p.142).

5.2.6 Autonomy

The literature outlines a number of positive correlations between perceived autonomy and high levels of motivation. Levesque et al., (2004) indicate that the influences of competence and autonomy on psychological wellbeing are comparable across cultures. Much of the literature around the link between motivation and autonomy explores the benefits of autonomy to student wellbeing and achievement (Spratt et al., 2002; Chang et al., 2017; Okumus, 2021), but

²² At the time of writing thesis amendments, Dr Kuyok is now the Minister of Education, appointed in March 2025.

there is less literature which interrogates the link between teacher competency and autonomy, especially in SSA. Interestingly, teachers in my study did not mention many concerns with respect to their own competencies, but rather, that through being a teacher, they could continue to grow and that they could grow knowledge in others by sharing their own.

The literature suggests that teachers can become demoralised as a result of losing their autonomy through ill-aligned training. This supports what has previously been described in section 5.2.6. Santoro (2021) suggests that when teachers are pushed ‘intensively’ to improve their teaching they develop low morale. Badroodien (2018), Westbrook et al. (2013), Power (2012) and Younger (2014) all confirm the need for in-service teacher training, confirming that it should be needs-based, contextually sensitive and should “put an emphasis on teachers’ recognition of their own professional developmental needs and as such, teachers become collaborative agents in their own development rather than simply as passive participants” (Badroodien, p.210). The quality of in-service training, however, is notably variable in SSA. This is partly as a result of the ‘NGO-ization’ (Sayed, Mogliacci & Badroodien (2018) of training, meaning that priorities are often less aligned to local needs and more aligned to the interests of donor agencies implemented by NGOs.

Potentially exacerbating this issue of teachers feeling concerned about their own competencies as a result of ill-aligned training, in South Sudan there is a School Inspection Framework²³ that is currently being rolled out across the country. Within the Framework is a Lesson Observation tool and a School Evaluation toolkit. If School Inspectors and school leaders, and teacher are trained well with respect to the intentions and format of the Inspection Framework, then there should be positive outcomes. The reverse is also true of course, that if School Inspectors make poor judgements or provide insensitive feedback and evaluations, then what is designed to a developmental intervention, becomes a source of demotivation and fear. At the time of writing, there is also a substantial programme to re-operationalise Country Education Centres so that they provide increased support to schools. It will be important that education officers are suitably well trained to be able to provide appropriate support and guidance.

As a counter argument to concerns about attrition, Bennell (2023) explains that attrition rates for teachers in SSA are low primarily due to a lack of other employment opportunities, which

²³ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/School-Inspection-Framework-booklet-Primary-and-Secondary-FINAL-VERSION.pdf

could suggest a limited attrition despite lower morale. Bennell's study considers 30 countries in Africa but does not include South Sudan and with little or no salary for teachers in South Sudan, it is difficult to see that reduced morale would not result in at least some teachers leaving the profession. Bennell further suggests that in most countries in SSA, the output of teacher graduates from universities and colleges of education far exceeds the fiscal capacity of the state to recruit them all. But in South Sudan, whilst acknowledging that recruitment processes could be strengthened, the fact remains that there are nowhere near enough graduate teachers to meet the demands of the education sector. The previous Minister of Education in South Sudan, Deng Deng Hoc Yai, was well-known within the Ministry for championing the statistic that the country needs to recruit and train 60,000 teachers to fill the gap in the system. The 2023 Education Sector analysis confirms that the pupil to teacher ratio averages 76:1.

5.2.7 Self-growth

Spear et al. (2000) suggest that teachers need an intellectual challenge to remain motivated, but Bennell and Akyeampong (2007), in their seminal paper on teacher motivation in SSA and South Asia, do not list the idea of teachers building their own knowledge as a determining factor for teacher motivation. This is challenged *frequently* by what teachers said during interviews for my study. They emphasised their understanding of the need to *continue to build* their own knowledge. The literature around self-growth centres around its associations with self-actualisation, exploring innate curiosity (Silvia, 2017). Berlyne (1954) and Jain et al. (2015) describe self-growth to be: "a desire to become a better version of oneself every day. A timeless pursuit, self-growth refers to a life-long process to improve one's own performance through formal and informal approaches" (p.41). Similarly, Maslow (1943) placed an individual's fulfilment of growth needs, or self-actualisation, at the top of his five-level 'Hierarchy of needs' pyramid

5.2.8 Providing counsel and support for students is important and enjoyable

The data in my study suggests that teachers feel the need to offer considerable counsel and support to learners and that they enjoy this aspect of their role. The Census Report from the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (2023, p16) reveals that over 62,000 learners dropped out of their primary schools in 2023 which demonstrates a need for teachers to find ways of engaging with students to try and redress this issue. The causes of dropout are listed in

Table 3. The data does not distinguish however between rural and urban schools or between different regions in the country, but it is likely that dropout rates are higher in rural localities. Sabates et al., (2010) also confirm that dropout rates are the result of a number of issues, or a sequence of events rather than one single determinant as suggested by this table which strengthens the argument for more sophisticated data collection.

Table 3 Reasons for learners dropping out of primary school in South Sudan

No	Reason for Dropout	Primary			
		Male	Female	Total	Share of dropout
1	Unknown reason	7,494	6,791	14,285	23%
2	Couldn't pay fees/levies, uniforms or other costs	6,515	6,607	13,122	21%
3	Long distance to school	6,049	5,382	11,431	18%
4	Family problem	5,195	4,379	9,574	15%
5	Displaced	2,354	1,898	4,252	7%
6	Marriage	554	2,020	2,574	4%
7	Insecurity on the way to school	1,219	879	2,098	3%
8	Pregnancy	-	1,782	1,782	3%
9	Personal problem	870	648	1,518	2%
10	No teaching	352	245	597	1%
11	Prolonged illness, sickness	280	255	535	0.9%
12	Looked for or found a job/work	236	125	361	0.6%
13	Bad school result	120	92	212	0.3%
14	Disability	20	34	54	0.09%
15	Corporal punishment	19	21	40	0.06%
16	In prison	7	-	7	0.01%
17	Other reason (specify)	-	-	-	0%
		31,284	31,158	62,442	100%

Note: From South Sudan National Education Census Report 2023,

In view of the high proportion of learners dropping out of primary school due to pregnancy, Ajak (2021) explored determinants of adolescent fertility in South Sudan, finding that across a dataset of 1,050 adolescent girls aged 15–19, being married AND being uneducated was the most significantly associated with adolescent fertility. Interestingly, in this paper, Ajak also discusses that access to media was statistically significant, a finding in line with studies by Nwogwugwu (2013) in Zambia and Nyarko (2012) in Ghana who found that access to media was associated with adolescent fertility. Although not explored in my study, interrogating a link between access to the media and the motivations of teachers would be interesting. Perhaps there is a link between better access to resources and communities via the media and increased teacher motivation, or alternatively, more access to the media resulting in a desire for teachers to explore other professions.

5.3 Critical sub-themes identified in the data

In the Findings chapter, I identified and summarised the main points that teachers made in relation to different elements of the research questions. As the table in [Appendix J](#) reveals, the data analysis generated a list of sub-themes that I identified from the data during analysis. For this chapter, I have selected a number of sub-themes to focus on due to their particular relevance to policy and practice in South Sudan, and because in each case they offer a less travelled path of research themes in this field of study as identified in my preliminary literature review and subsequent, Literature Interlude.

The data generated by the interviews conducted by Lilly and Faith generated a vast amount of themes that were of interest to us. Some themes although ‘interesting’ and even alarming (such as the use of physical punishment) did not form a focus for subsequent analysis. There were a number of reasons for this including whether or not there were enough comparable instances within the data that mentioned these themes for us to be able to agree that the data was substantial enough, but also the extent to which these themes featured in existing literature relating to teacher motivation. Another deciding factor was whether the participants themselves recognised these themes to be significant, evidenced by the detail provided in their responses. Another example of a theme that was presented by participants but not subsequently analysed in any detail was the issue of PTAs providing support for teachers in the form of crops from their farms by way of compensating for a low/no salary. This theme is of relevance because of its link to one reason for families not sending their children to school, instead preferring them to stay at home to work on the family or community farm.

In each section of this chapter, I begin (in green font) with a copy of the related section of the Findings chapter.

5.3.1 Altruism, nationalism and Ubuntu

Findings:

Teachers are altruistic and feel a strong sense of responsibility to pass on knowledge. Teachers believe that education is liberating and transformative, and several mentioned the wish to “*serve my people*” whilst others said things such as:

The reason why I became a teacher is because I want to help my brothers or the coming generation (P7).

I tell people that they must offer themselves for the nation – we must not leave our children (P21).

I want to serve my people (Surveys).

5.3.1.1 Altruism

Altruism is reflected through multiple comments from participants in my study who state that they are motivated by the desire to help and serve others.

I am interested in this sub-theme because classrooms and schooling in South Sudan are often reported through ‘deficit’ headlines that highlight the challenges of large classes, limited resources and impoverished communities (see examples in [Appendix P](#): Education Headlines in South Sudan). Even when headlines appear positive (‘Government vows to improve teachers’ salaries’) they are still promoting the need/crisis/poverty that lies within the education sector. Whilst I am not diminishing these challenges and I acknowledge that there are genuine ‘good news’ stories also, the prevalent narrative in reports of teaching in South Sudan is that it ‘must be a difficult job to do’. Teachers in my study contradict this narrative, explaining that they have a real sense of real purpose and are committed to serving their community. Teachers seem very focused on the need to provide students with knowledge, the ‘act’ associated with their altruism. Teachers combine the need to be instrumental (transmitting knowledge) with the need to be relational, as this quotation demonstrates:

I teach so that children will have a bright future and tomorrow they will also help the coming generation, so that our country will have a bright future (P3).

Teachers in South Sudan have low educational attainment, meaning that their desire to ‘serve’ and to teach could be impeded if training resulted in them also feeling a disconnect between professional expectations and what they are able to achieve in the classroom.

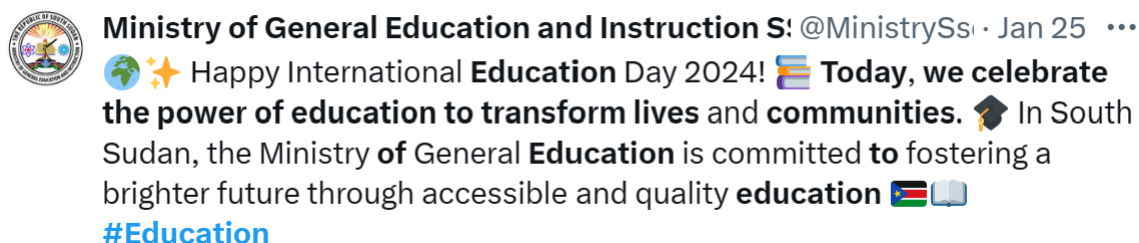
5.3.1.2 Nationalism

This desire to build a nation could be viewed as nationalistic and patriotic and is perhaps driven by the relatively recent independent status that South Sudan has achieved which has fuelled a desire to ensure that the new country can thrive independently after a long-fought war.

President Salva Kiir Mayardit in 2021 (Sudan's Post, March 22, 2021) in his speech to examination candidates, for example, in support of this, stated that: "With the return of peace, I would like to urge all South Sudanese to embrace the pursuit of education because our ability to move our country forward lies within its transformative power²⁴".

The government uses a range of media sources to generate a discourse about what is important, language that is reflected in many of the quotations from teachers such as 'transformation', 'brighter futures' and 'the power of education' via Facebook²⁵. It is likely that teachers will have picked up these terms and phrases judging by the repetition of these phrases in the data. This is notable because there is a strong theme within this study revealing that teachers feel that there is a *lack of government support*, which is a contradiction to the way that they are perhaps paraphrasing messages from the government. No teacher in this study for example said anything like: "The government says one thing...but then it does another". Figure 10 shows a post on X (formerly Twitter) which demonstrates the use of language that teachers used to describe the value of education.

Figure 10 Post on X in January 2024 to celebrate International Education Day.



Note: Image of the X post in full to show the emphasis on particular words.

The importance of developing a sense of national belonging is described by many teachers in my study and the messaging from the government via the media. Although teachers did not talk specifically about explicitly *teaching* nation building and patriotism, it is something that they clearly hope to achieve *through* education. The desire to use education to build a nation is a strong motivator for teachers in this study. This is likely to be influenced by messaging from

²⁴ [Kiir urges students to contribute meaningfully by embracing education – Sudans Post](#)

²⁵ Facebook is zero-rated in South Sudan which means that it is free to access. It is a popular platform for MoGEISS and teachers. Reportedly 7% of the population use Facebook and 54% of those who access the internet use Facebook. Source: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-south-sudan>

government but also founded upon a genuine belief amongst teachers that education is transformative and that it can alleviate poverty and bring about peace.

5.3.1.3 Ubuntu

Linked to the idea of altruism, patriotism and nationalism being motivators for people to take up the teaching profession in South Sudan, there are also cultural philosophies that support the desire for community building. Here are just a few examples of this sense of being at one with the community that were provided by participants in my study:

This is your community – you need to help them (P12).

It's what I believe is important for our community (Survey).

I became a teacher so that I want to help these children of ours, it's from my own interest (P6).

Although teachers did not use the term Ubuntu, it is important to explore further the way in which teachers feel a sense of responsibility to their communities and the extent to which this is something innate and culturally ingrained or whether it is something that people feel they 'must' do because there is a demand or need. ("It pains me seeing them around and no teacher to teach them, so I decided to help them (P2)"). Interviews clearly show that many teachers believe that education can transform communities and prospects for the nation. This could indicate that motivations to teach centre around the belief in an urgent need to 'improve' rather than the *obligation* to support communities, but that this is also founded on a belief that serving one's community is a central tenet of citizenship.

5.3.2 Being a role model and being respected

Findings:

Teachers enjoy the recognition they get for being a teacher and see that being a role model is an important part of their job.

I enjoy the respect from the community. Whenever I go they call me 'teacher, teacher!' and I feel motivated (P15).

These quotations demonstrated that teachers value the recognition that they receive within communities and that this drives them to be a role model of 'good citizenship'.

Being a role model for learners was mentioned a total of 41 times by different teachers who commented on the way that community members celebrated their status and that this made them feel motivated and proud because they had been effective', having a positive impact on leaning,

Because being a role model is important to some teachers in my study, it seems important on the other hand, to explore who students consider to be their role models and why. Some teachers interviewed said that their own teachers were their role models. If being a role model is so important to teachers, it is important to ask students who their role models are within and beyond their school, and then to consider in what ways teachers could respond to or reflect this. Outcomes from a study such as this would reveal some useful insights into what ambitions young people in South Sudan have, and what characteristics and traits teachers could usefully seek to embody if they are to be the inspiration to students that they need to be.

Many teachers promoted the idea that being a role model would result in learners having high aspirations. There was a strong sense that if teachers worked hard, spoke well and dressed smartly, then students would follow. It would be helpful to identify how students respond to different models of teaching and how that could subsequently shape the role model that teachers need to create. An added benefit of teachers presenting themselves as strong role models is that it can be a powerful influence on students' choice of teaching as a career in Africa (Munthe et al., 2022) where the recruitment of teachers in South Sudan at least, is well below what is needed (MoGEISS, 2023).

In summary, being a role model was an important motivator for many of the teachers in this study. They described their deliberate attempts to be a role model in the community and that they enjoyed the feeling of elevated status. In view of this importance, it is also valuable to examine what students consider to be the key characteristics of role models, especially in view of the complex nature of identity forming for young people in increasingly pluralistic societies in South Sudan.

5.3.3 Self-determination and self-reliance

Findings:

As a teacher you have to be self-determined. You have to bring your own knowledge. You can't rely on the government.

We don't have enough materials – we only have one copy of the new syllabus. We are supposed to have enough copies for each child. And there are no charts (P11).

Nobody helps me. It's only me alone (P19).

5.3.3.1 Self-determination

This is an important sub-theme because the level of support and resources that teachers have access to is limited, especially in rural localities. Most teachers in rural South Sudan have to fend for themselves. They have to be resourceful and self-determined if they are to meet the challenges of teaching children in overcrowded, under-resourced classrooms in schools that mostly lack latrines and are temporary structures.

The Education Sector Analysis (ESA) states that across the country, only 10% of children have access to a textbook and very few teachers (less than 5%) have teacher guides. Other curriculum materials (such as supplementary readers, reference materials and practical equipment) are barely available, making the job of teaching 'complicated' with so little to share with students. A lack of classroom resources is exacerbated by teachers who have received very little, and poor quality²⁶ training. TTIs are unable to meet the demands of the workforce, a persistent and longstanding challenge for the sector, meaning that the quality of pre-service training is poor and that in-service teachers get very little training at all from national resource centres, evidenced by P19 who commented that 'nobody helps me'. This is a multi-faceted crisis (my interpretation) with 45% of teachers being unqualified, of whom 30% were volunteers in 2023 (MoGEISS). There is a large presence of NGOs²⁷ in South Sudan who provide in-service teacher training, but there is no central monitoring of geographical coverage, the characteristics of

²⁶ Poor quality training is characterised by trainers who lack qualifications themselves, institutions that equally lack resources and a Teacher Training Syllabus that, until 2023, did not meet international standards.

²⁷ <https://nec-ss.org/about-us/membership/> The National Education Coalition in South Sudan lists 160 partner NGOs working to "promote accessible, inclusive and quality education through Advocacy, Coordination and Networking with all education stakeholders in South Sudan".

teachers who are served or of the quality of components, so it is difficult to monitor the impact of their collective endeavours or to identify priority areas for development.

Self-determination is a resource that teachers need to develop in order for them to be able to sustain their teaching. Teachers did not use the word 'sustain', nor did they mention resilience and perseverance directly, but there is a sense that this is what is achieved as a result of their self-determination and own resourcefulness as alluded to in these three quotations:

I continue to teach like that without stopping teaching because at the end we want to achieve something even though things are not going well (Survey).

You need to trust yourself – so I am going to do what has to be done (P13).

5.3.3.2 Self-reliance

Based upon this premise of seeking cultural relevance and to be free from colonial ideologies, it is possible to suggest that the self-determination teachers talked about in my study, could be as a result of prevailing narratives of 'self-reliance' from Nyerere (2020), and a deep-felt and deeply rooted commitment to communalism. Rather like Ubuntu as previously discussed, teachers recognise the role they have to play in building communities and that this requires self-determination in order for it to be achieved. It seems possible that this self-determined ethos of seizing the opportunities presented by becoming an independent nation, could reasonably seep into the attitudes and behaviours of teachers across the nation.

The self-efficacy of primary teachers in rural South Sudan is less discussed by participants in this study despite clear links to ideas of self-reliance and self-determination. Instead, participants mostly refer to what students can achieve more than the belief that teachers hold for themselves about their own capabilities.

Self-determination makes a strong contribution to the way that teachers engage in their professional duties. This self-determination is linked to the *need* for teachers to be resourceful and self-directed as a result of limited support from the government and other agencies. Cultural philosophies of communalism, self-reliance and the search for Uhuru further fuel teacher determination so that their efforts are felt to be in support of community development and nation building.

5.3.4 Autonomy and self-growth

Findings:

Being a teacher is an opportunity for self-growth. Many teachers talked about the way that they have to work on their own, bringing their own resources and determination to help them succeed as a good teacher.

You need to trust yourself – so I am going to do what has to be done (P13MEL).

I also like the teaching profession because every time you are teaching your knowledge keep renewing but if you are not teaching the knowledge will go (P6).

5.3.4.1 Autonomy

Based on the high number of responses which describe a lack of government support and training, it is important to interrogate whether this presents teachers with some perceived freedom (some autonomy) which might contribute to higher levels of motivation. Teachers *did* talk about feeling abandoned by the government, which would naturally result in demotivation (although they did not actually say that), but does ‘being left alone to get on with things’ also bring some satisfaction and increased motivation? As we have seen, Deci and Ryan (2016) in their descriptions of self-determination theory, suggest that autonomy, relatedness and competence are the key components of self-motivation. Relatedness is apparent in the way that teachers in this study feel they are supporting communities, although it should be noted that this is distinct from data about being supported *by the community* which is less compelling. Teachers mostly described themselves to be competent, even if they attributed that mostly to student exam results rather than other aspects of what might describe teacher effectiveness. With respect to autonomy, it is not clear whether teachers recognise that they have *comparative* autonomy or whether they see their perceived autonomy as a positive contributor to their levels of motivation and general effectiveness.

What is important for teachers in rural South Sudan, is to understand the *extent to which* their autonomy is linked to their commitment to remain in their role. This is important because

teachers in my study describe high levels of autonomy. So, when²⁸ the Inspection Directorate for example begins to roll out their inspection schedule across the country, the County Education Centre officers expand their support to more rural schools and TDMS boost engagement in their accredited courses, there is a risk that teachers might feel that their autonomy is reduced, which could lead to lower levels of motivation and an increase in attrition. I believe that teachers need training and support, but that this training must be sensitised so that teachers believe that the training they are receiving is related to their needs, relevant to their circumstances and is of clear benefit to the communities they serve.

This proposed co-development of teacher training is crucial if teachers are to retain their sense of autonomy and, thus, levels of motivation and commitment to their profession.

In summary, teachers in my study seem to value their autonomy, which leads to increased levels of motivation, but this autonomy is potentially fragile. The urgency of training for teachers should be balanced by a sensitive approach so that teachers are not stripped of their perceived autonomy and, thus, their motivations to remain in their role.

5.3.4.2 Self-growth

This initiative is very important – when you are a teacher you will learn more than anyone (P19).

Linked to the previous discussion of autonomy and professional development, it is important to note that many teachers commented on the value they place on developing, sustaining, revising and renewing their own knowledge. There were 36 comments about gaining knowledge through the act of teaching and being able to grow as an individual. It is not clear whether teachers were meaning professional knowledge or subject/content knowledge, but due to the references within these comments about what teachers learnt themselves in school, it seems likely that they are referring to growing content knowledge. For teachers in my study, it is clear self-growth is important to many, so this is something to potentially emphasise in recruitment campaigns.

²⁸ This list of interventions is set out in the 2024 South Sudan Partnership Compact, a pathway to priority reforms, developed as a result of the multi-stakeholder Enabling Factor Analysis (EFA) across 2023. Interventions set out here will be funded by the Global Partnership for Education upon the successful submission of a development plan from MoGEISS and their grant managers (UNICEF), which at the time of writing, is due to take place in February 2025.

Teachers feeling that they are building their own knowledge is an important motivator. The desire for own knowledge building in this case, however, is slightly at odds with other themes that highlight the community and relational motivators for being a teacher. The 'self' here is a strong thread which could indicate a link to Alderfer's (1989) *ESG Theory* that binds existence, relatedness and growth together as 'core needs' for human development.

5.3.5 Providing counsel and support for students is important and enjoyable

Findings:

Giving advice to students and being 'there for them' was described by many teachers to be a crucial aspect of being a 'good teacher'. Many teachers said that they enjoyed this aspect of their role very much.

I enjoy...advising them on how to be smart and how to behave well (P9).

I like advising them when they are breaking for holidays (P6).

There were 40 comments that related to the way that teachers provided guidance to students. Some of these were associated with helping students to overcome or better understand learning objectives, but where teachers used the term 'enjoy' to describe the guidance that they provided, it was most often associated with providing students with social or emotional guidance or general advice about 'behaving or living well' at school or in their wider community.

This is an important sub-theme because it highlights the value that teachers place on their contribution to the personal development of students. As previously discussed, teachers see that a significant aspect of their role is to 'build the nation' through education. But when teachers talked about what they enjoy, it is related to the 'less academic' side of education. When teachers talked about the purpose of education to transform societies, it is not clear whether they placed more, less or equal value on the academic aspects of education as compared to the need for students to develop personal strengths and characteristics. It is likely, however, that if asked, teachers would refer to students gaining 'knowledge' (substantive) as being the most

important aspect of education on the basis that teachers referred frequently to the need to “pass on their own knowledge”.

It is important to consider what it is about providing counsel that teachers enjoy because it is often described as a motivator. Is it because teachers recognise the value of personal development to societal transformation or is it something that teachers feel confident to do, providing them with some self-assurance that they are ‘making a difference’ to the lives of students? Perhaps the guidance and counsel that teachers provide resonates with their own experiences and thus teachers are compelled (through personal conviction) to help students succeed and/or overcome adversity.

Whether providing counsel to students was part of their motivations to become a teacher in the first place or whether they found this to be something enjoyable once they had begun is not clear, but highlighting the opportunity ‘to make a difference’ to the personal development of students could be a useful element of teacher recruitment campaigns. Teachers in this study enjoy the opportunity to support and guide students which is undoubtedly related to their perceived role, identity and success.

In view of the number of comments that related to the desire to ‘help the nation’, it is clear that teachers feel that there is a *need* to address certain issues. Many of the issues mentioned related to health and hygiene for girls, and other problems such as excessive drinking.

As a teacher you need to encourage learners. You call them – talk to them slowly to advise them in a good way. Not drinking [sic](P22).

Teachers did not mention the trauma that their students might have experienced associated with conflict, gender-based violence and displacement. These themes are often associated with communities in rural localities in low-income countries (Moshi, 2018; Yatham et al., 2018). The interviews, however, did not ask about these issues specifically (or the need to provide counsel) and it is possible that with further probing, teachers might have explained in more detail the reasons for the need to provide students with guidance and advice.

This issue of ‘need’ can hardly be underestimated in South Sudan, particularly for girls, of whom: 28% (of 20 – 24-year-olds) have given birth before they are 18²⁹; 52% are married before they are 18; more than 1,150 (per 100,000 of live births) will die in childbirth³⁰ (one of the highest rates in the world). Such data around these issues is clearly related to illiteracy amongst women (Mugo et al., 2015; Madut, 2020; Adala, 2016; Shimeles & Verdier-Chouchane, 2016), leading to multi-dimensional poverty for women and never-ending circles of inequality (Lacko, 2011; Shimeles, 2016; Ballon & Duclos, 2015).

Themes of teenage pregnancy and child marriage may initially seem inappropriate for primary pupils, but the 2023 Education Census for South Sudan reports that 34% of pupils were over the age of 14 in primary schools, 1,782 students in primary schools dropped out because of pregnancy and 2,020 dropped out because of marriage. An important consideration in view of these statistics relating to teenage girls, and the enjoyment (and desire) that teachers have for offering related guidance, is what support teachers are given so that they are able to adequately guide and inform students on these issues.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers shown in [Appendix Q](#) (MoGEI, 2021, pp. 20–21) includes three statements that direct teachers to develop their role in support of guiding personal development:

1.1 Teachers must be knowledgeable of the development needs of the learner including physical, psychological, socio-economic and intellectual development (p.18)

6.3 Teachers are exemplary and service a model of good citizenship for their learners and the community (p.20)

6.5 Teachers are aware of the importance of psychological issues such as child abuse, forced labour at home, rights of learners, and take account of these in teaching (p.20).

These standards are reflected in the Initial Teacher Training syllabus (ITT)³¹ and the related in-service Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme leading to Qualified Teacher

²⁹ <https://data.unicef.org/country/ssd/>

³⁰ <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/economies/south-sudan>

³¹ <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/SS-New-ITT-Primary-and-Pre-Primary-Syllabus-and-Guidance-1.pdf>

Status (QTS) ³². But these statements are not elaborated upon within the ITT syllabus and the number of teachers who have accessed the ITT syllabus, let alone these specific aspects of them, is unknown. The Professional Standards themselves should shape programmes more generally for teachers, but in my experience, many teachers, school leaders and NGOs have not come across these standards that were initially developed in 2013. The 2023 Quality Framework for Teacher Education that forms part of the Teacher Education Policy³³ aims to address this lack of alignment to Professional Standards, but it still does not give specific directions for stakeholders to design training programmes that would support teachers to adopt effective counsellor/guidance skills.

Training courses for teachers (in-service) from NGOs and government facilities such as Country Education Centres could provide teachers with the training that they need in this area, but an ongoing concern in the field of education in South Sudan is a lack of alignment and mapping across projects and policies as previously discussed. It is very difficult because of this, to compare and analyse the content of educational projects to see where training for teachers related to their role as a counsellor might occur. The literature confirms that a lack of alignment and mapping of educational programme content is common across SSA (Hardman et al., 2011; Junaid & Maka, 2015; Haßler et al., 2021), and that this exacerbates the challenges of monitoring the quality and relevance of training for teachers, and in this case, what and whether they have received training around counsel and guidance.

In rural South Sudan, teachers play an important role in communities, providing a role model for children, as they themselves explain and as previously discussed.

You can move in the community if you are a role model. Children will copy what you are doing (P21).

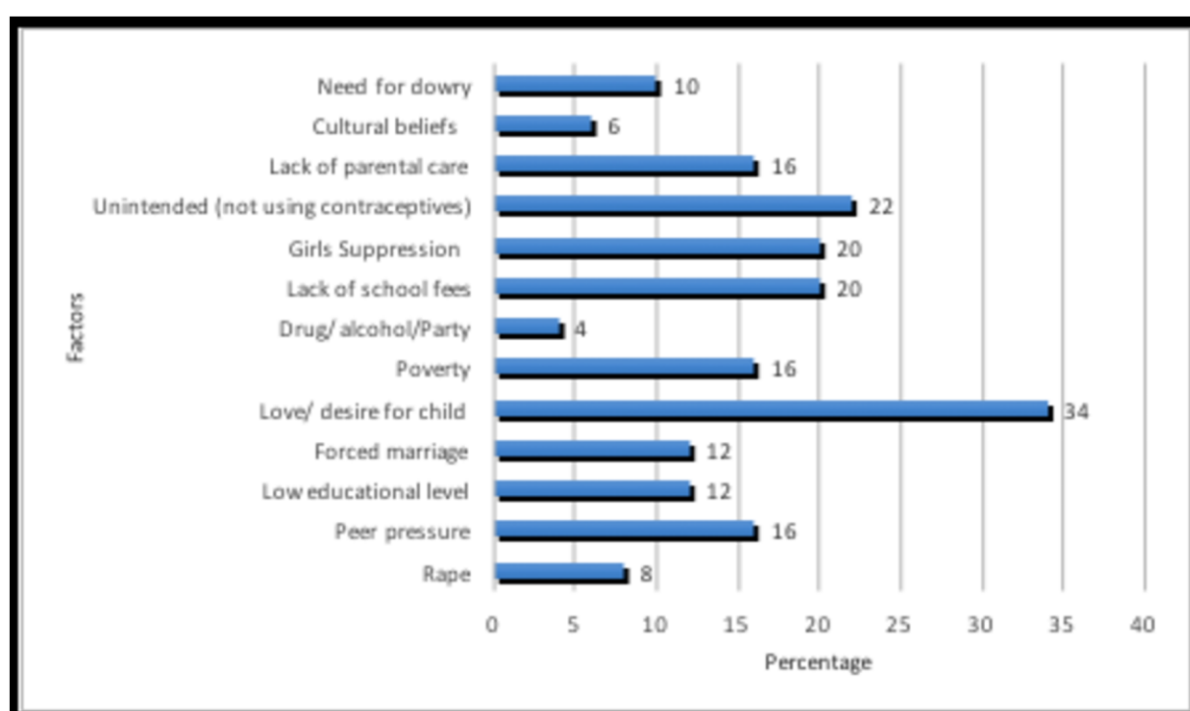
Teachers have to draw upon their own experiences and any training to help them structure and ‘deliver’ support. In this case, the experiences of the teacher are likely to influence *what* a teacher shares with children. Although of course it could be assumed that teachers are likely to offer ‘good guidance’, it should also be noted that there is also likely to be bias and some potential conflict of interest. In a study of factors, for example, which contribute to teenage pregnancy (amongst 50 pregnant teenage girls in Juba), Vincent and Alemu (2016) explain that

³² <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/CPD-Implementation-Guidance-Booklet-1.pdf>

³³ <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/National-Teacher-Education-Policy-2023-2030-South-Sudan-March-2023.pdf>

local societies place a high value on motherhood and that teenage girls state that they positively linked having a child to: “the possibility of making one’s ‘own home’”. Vincent and Alemu discuss that: “In the difficult and uncertain context they live in, for many girls, having a child and making a home appeared as one of the few means to be happy”. Table 4 presents the respondents’ responses on factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in Juba. This further explains that most girls said that they wanted a child because they wanted (loved) children. The other contributing factors are worryingly similar in proportion, however, including a lack of school fees and the need for a dowry.

Table 4 Factors contributing to teenage pregnancy in Juba and the percentage of girls affected



Note: From Factors contributing to, and effects of, teenage pregnancy in Juba, South Sudan Medical Journal, 9(2), p.28-31.

Similarly, in 2020, Madut, whilst researching determinants of early marriage and the construction of gender roles in South Sudan, concluded that: “Child marriage is influenced by social and economic factors and is perceived as an acceptable social norm. This practice is further complicated by the effects of everlasting conflict, poverty, and high illiteracy rate in the society” (p.1).

It is possible therefore, that although teachers are likely to try and prevent girls from becoming pregnant, they might also inadvertently describe motherhood as a strategy towards achieving

stability and security. In a similar vein, Kane et al. (2019), in their paper, *You have a child who will call you 'mama': understanding adolescent pregnancy in South Sudan*, recommend that:

Instead of simplistically problematizing adolescent pregnancy in South Sudan, it is important to take into account the experiences and standpoints of adolescent girls, and to recognize that in choosing to become mothers, they are in many ways exercising agency despite being severely constrained by complex, insecure and unfair social circumstances. (p.1)

In this sense, female teachers may in fact offer a role model for girls that reinforces social norms of early marriage, confirming that choosing to be a mother is a valuable freedom. Mossa and Bhana (2019) extend this by considering whether male teachers offer a positive role model for girls, in particular, by exposing girls to alternate, non-violent and caring masculinities. Male teachers in this study did not mention specifically being a role model for girls (or boys in fact), but it would be useful to further explore this potential.

Moosa, S., & Bhana, D. (2019). Troubling the male role modelling theory: male teachers as role models for girls?. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 27(6), 888-901.

Teachers face many challenges if they are to have an impact on girls remaining in school and not becoming pregnant or married early. The 'social norm', their own experiences, the media and the attitudes of girls themselves have a significant bearing on adolescent fertility, a complex situation for teachers with no training in this area (or indeed at all) to navigate and influence effectively.

In summary, teachers in this study place considerable value on the need to offer students counselling and guidance. For any teacher, this can be a challenge ... making good judgements about the boundaries between professionalism and 'personal', navigating complex issues appropriately and being able to access suitable resources to help navigate sensitive issues, some of which can be of legal significance. But for primary teachers in rural South Sudan, they are faced with little or no training in this area and have limited support to guide them through the complex narratives and situations that students in rural South Sudan may face. The urgency and importance of guidance and support for their students cannot be underestimated, yet teachers say that they enjoy this aspect of their role. This enjoyment suggests that they feel they are making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of students with whom they engage, but the question remains as to whether they are also inadvertently reinforcing societal norms of teenage pregnancy and other related practices.

5.3.6 Teachers experience a lack of support from the government and from some community members.

Findings:

By far the most common response to the question about what challenges teachers face was that teachers are not paid enough, or regularly or reliably. This was in fact the most commonly referred to issue across the whole dataset.

No help – not really from parents. There is no other help from outside. As teachers we help one another (P13).

The tradition, the habit in this community they don't understand the need to pay and respect teachers (P18).

Sometimes you teach when you are hungry; your clothes are dirty because there is no money to buy soap in order to wash your clothes with (P3).

The literature documents well the challenging conditions that teachers in low-income countries work within. The findings of this study confirm that a lack of transport, an unreliable and small salary, and a lack of teaching resources (including training) make remaining in teaching a *seemingly* relentless, demoralising and demanding endeavour. All these conditions are exacerbated by the related perception that the government does not 'care' for teachers. Some teachers in this study commented that this obvious lack of resourcing by the government makes community members feel that education is not important which is in conflict with the narrative from the government about the power of education to transform societies.

The important issue to consider here is whether this lack of resourcing and support will push teachers out of the profession, despite the fact that teachers are mostly well motivated and committed to their role by a sense of Ubuntu and a belief in the power of education. More research in this area needs to be undertaken to explore why teachers have left the profession and why community members would not consider becoming a teacher. These two research areas would help to better understand the extent of the potential crisis with regards to the stability of the teaching workforce. Teacher recruitment remains low, and as more children are persuaded to attend school through a continued focus on EFA³⁴, then it is possible that a lack of

³⁴ The *Education for All* (EFA) movement was a global commitment initiated by UNESCO in 1990 aimed at providing quality basic education for all children, youth and adults by 2015. The movement has evolved since

teachers in classrooms could reverse the good progress with student enrolment if students become disengaged through large classes, the lack of a teacher and/or teachers who are untrained. (See Bold et al. (2017) for example. *Enrolment without learning*.)

In summary, the fact that there are over 150 comments from teachers describing a lack of ‘support’ in its many forms from the government and some community members, means that this theme cannot be ignored, *despite* what is otherwise a very positive set of findings from teachers about their resilience and determination to succeed in their profession. By discussing this sub-theme, I am amplifying the fragility of the education workforce in rural communities where teachers confirm their commitments to ‘building the nation’ through the transformative power of education, but at the same time describe a clear feeling of abandonment from the government in particular. This is summarised well by P20:

There is no one paying attention to us teachers – and they do not fulfil our needs. Not administration and the government. They pull teachers down – I don’t understand why (P20).

5.4 Towards a theory of motivation for primary school teachers in rural South Sudan

Throughout this Discussion chapter, I have highlighted what I feel to be aspects of the teaching workforce that is less often interrogated. Teacher motivation is most often described to be ‘low’ or in ‘crisis’ in SSA (Kadzamira, 2006; Matoke et al., 2015; Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). But teachers in my study describe a joy and persistence which is fuelled by their belief in the power of education to transform society and to bring peace and prosperity to their country. Teachers explained that they value their autonomous role as providers of knowledge and that they appreciate how this in turn helps them to build their own knowledge. Providing counsel and guidance to students is prized by teachers who enjoy the opportunity to support and nurture students as they progress through their education. Mostly, teachers feel respected by members of their community, and this motivates them to remain in their role. Teachers particularly enjoy seeing former students in their community who seem to be successful, or current students in the street who cheer and champion their name:

2015, but EFA has remained as a term used to describe the intention for all children, youth and adults to be able to access quality basic education.

Tomorrow what I have given them – they will give reflect it back. Tomorrow at least when they get me on the street – they know that I am their teacher. I am a mark on them (P15).

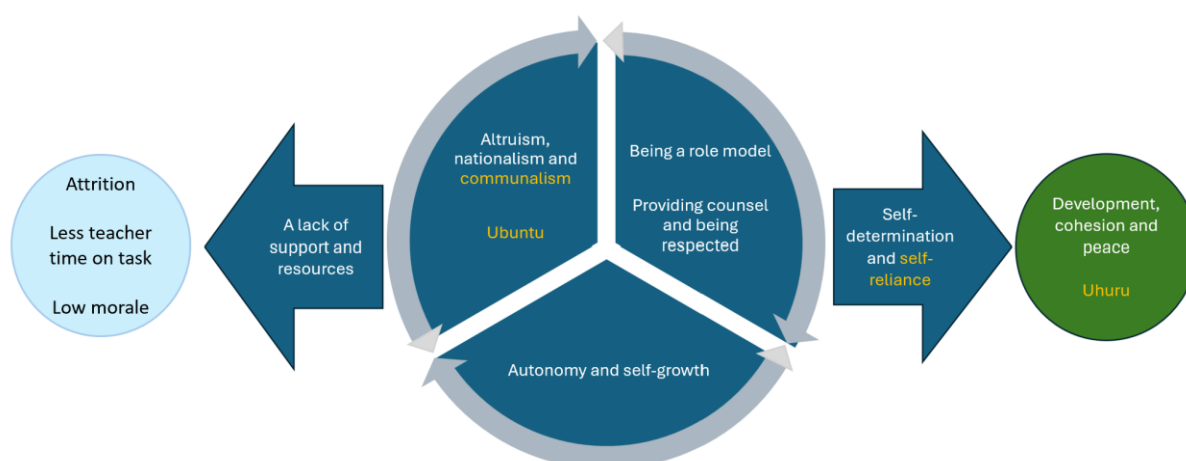
I enjoy the E4 respect from the community. Whenever I go, they call me teacher, teacher – and I feel motivated (P14).

The important elements of motivation for *these* teachers that have arisen from *this* study are those that are less often ‘voiced’. The way that teachers have been engaged in discussions of motivation through semi-structured interviews via local researchers has meant that the dataset presented here is rich in nuance, contextual relevance and cultural significance. Thus, the framework that I have developed (Figure 9) does not comprise a ‘full’ description of what it is that motivates teachers in rural South Sudan but instead offers an important contribution to further theorising.

Whilst emphasising the unique collection of voices presented in this study and the way in which these voices have been critiqued to organise and offer a theory of motivation for teachers in rural South Sudan, it is acknowledged that teachers in this study are likely to have felt some desire (consciously or unconsciously) to convey what they think the researchers want to hear and that this might include demonstrating high levels of motivation. A review and analysis of the data took this into account, adopting a pragmatic view that what teachers said on the whole should be taken at face value. The benefit of the research trio however was such that, as we met to discuss the data, there was an opportunity to highlight any responses that seemed particularly exaggerated or biased. During our discussions, I did mention this potential for data to be at odds with the lived realities of teachers, but Lilly and Faith felt that teachers did in fact offer responses that were genuine, and if unconsciously they were adapting their ideas, it was not possible to identify these instances. Lilly and Faith repeatedly told me that in fact, teachers were grateful for the opportunity to talk about their motivations because it was not something that they had discussed before.

Figure 9 A framework to show the elements of motivation for teachers in the study (repeated from section 5.1)

Towards a theory of motivation for primary school teachers in rural South Sudan?



The framework aims to show that there are three intersecting groups of motivators for teachers: their enjoyment and progress they feel from being a role model; from self-growth; from their contributions to nation building.

The arched arrows that frame these three centre segments aim to highlight the dynamic nature of these motivators so that, for example, the self-growth teachers value is encouraged by the sense of community building that they feel from their altruism and vice versa.

Either side of these motivators are ‘push and pull’ influences (arrows) that take teachers towards or away from their goal of development and societal transformation through education. A lack of support from the government and **ill-aligned training** pulls them away from their goal and weakens their strengths of self-determination and self-reliance. Conversely, when their self-determination and self-reliance is strong (perhaps for example because they have received praise from community members), they are able to push forward towards development, despite the negative impact of limited resources and support.

The framework shows that development, cohesion and peace are the potential outcomes of high levels of motivation, bringing about *Uhuru* (freedom) which highlights the many, many comments from teachers about the need for education to transform societies. The orange text refers to African cultural philosophies that appear to underpin much of what teachers talked about in this study. With respect to the recruitment of teachers, highlighting the opportunities for people to develop the three elements in the centre in order to achieve *Uhuru*, seems likely to encourage community members to want to teach. If these elements can be sustained, then it seems likely that the retention of teachers could be strengthened also.

The framework in Figure 9 shows multiple aspects of what teachers in this study described to be the contributing factors to their motivations to become and to remain as a teacher in South Sudan. Each individual aspect presented here is described in existing literature around motivation as highlighted in Chapter 2. What is unique here however is the way that these factors interact, and indeed, which factors combine from the various aspects of motivational theory shown in Appendix A. It is this combination of motivational factors and the way in which these factors are networked, interacting dynamically (pull, push etc) that makes this model of motivation a significant contribution to the field of both motivational theorisation and the education workforce in South Sudan. This is specific to this context and underlines the uniqueness of the situation.

It is hoped that this framework could encourage policy makers to consider what weakens 'pull' influences, weakening the workforce also, slowing down progress towards transformation and sustainable development in education. The framework highlights that self-determination and self-reliance are pushing progress forwards, but that this can only be sustained if influences on 'pull' issues do not reduce feelings of autonomy, respect and altruism.

Table 5 sets out how aspects of motivation generated through this study interact with existing theories of motivation. As explained in my Methodology chapter, I did not set out to identify *which* existing theory is reflected the most closely in my data, but it is important to acknowledge the framing and reference points that existing theories provide in order to help with the reflexive thematic analysis and resulting framework. Thus, the framework that I offer has not only networked certain elements of existing theories (Prediger, Bikner-Ahsbabs & Arzarello 2008) but has, in addition, woven in contextual themes that were uncovered during an analysis of the data.

Table 5 Table to show the relationship between themes from this study and existing theories of motivation and the relationship to African cultural philosophies

Theory as a dynamic concept		
Themes from the data	African cultural philosophies	Theories of motivation and key elements within them
Altruism	Ubuntu	Alderfer's ERG (relatedness) Growth, relatedness, existence
Nationalism		
Being a role model and being respected	Ubuntu	Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory Job dissatisfaction via policies and satisfaction via recognition Alderfer's ERG (relatedness) Growth, relatedness, existence
Self-determination	Self-reliance and communalism Uhuru	Self-determination Theory Competence, Autonomy, Relatedness, enhanced performance and well being. Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory Job dissatisfaction of conditions and wage and satisfaction of personal growth
Autonomy		
Self-growth		
Providing counsel and support for students is important.	Extended Family	Alderfer's ERG Growth, relatedness, existence Self-determination Theory Competence, Autonomy, Relatedness, enhanced performance and well being.
A lack of support from the government and from some community members		Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory Hygiene factors that limit motivation. Alderfer's ERG (relatedness) Growth, relatedness, existence

Chapter 6: Methodology Discussion

6.1 The structure of this chapter

In this chapter I will discuss components of the research process that presented ethical tensions in relation to my intended methodological approach. This is an important chapter as it sets out different aspects of the research process that are worthy of consideration for future research in South Sudan, where so little research has been conducted to date, and where capacities for research are emerging rather than being well established, as explained by Kuyok (2024).

I am focusing on two themes for inquiry that have arisen from my reflections on the enactment of the research methodology.

1) The effectiveness of semi-structured interviews.

2) Research partnerships and participation.

It is tempting to describe this Methodology Discussion chapter as 'Limitations of the Study', but I prefer to position this discussion through a positive lens of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2003) which sits more respectfully within an evaluation of a study that was supported by a range of stakeholders in education in South Sudan. Appreciative Inquiry, however, is handled delicately here in response to criticisms of the approach concerning the dynamics of positionality and power (Grant, 2006; Clouder & King, 2015). To help with this, I have adopted a 'critical' Appreciative Inquiry approach. This recognises the fluid and iterative nature of my insider/outsider positionality (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and the value of being conscious of my own *developing* understanding of the multi-faceted layers of challenging contextual issues. At the same time, I have focused on 'sources of vitality' (Banaga, 1998) that could support developments in approaches to future research in this area.

Before I discuss critical components of the research methodology, I begin with a second Literature Interlude which explores some of the key themes that were uncovered as a result of my reflections on the research process.

6.2 Literature Interlude

6.2.1 Exploring ways of knowing

Much has been written about the value of understanding epistemological diversity. Vavrus and Bartlett, in their study of teaching in Tanzania (2012), for example, conclude that “teachers’ views of knowledge production are profoundly shaped by the cultural, economic, and social contexts in which they teach” (p.634). This is supported by the work of Huaman (2019), who developed the term *comparative Indigenous education research* (CIER) by creating conceptual frames for research with Indigenous communities and researcher observations that reflect an epistemological commitment to Indigenous peoples. *Research is ceremony* (Wilson 2020), promotes a similar framework, confirming that Indigenous populations have tried to adapt dominant (western) research tools by including their own perspectives into the research processes, but that: “The problem with that is that we can never really remove the tools from their underlying beliefs” (p.13). This underlying theoretical position means that research tools cling on to initial design characteristics which often centre around extractive approaches to knowledge generation.

Breidlid (2013) discusses the dominance of western epistemologies in the shaping of education systems in the Global South, linking this to the theme of decolonising research methodologies. This is amplified by scholars such as de Sousa Santos and Meneses (2020), and Fataar and Subreenduth (2015) who discuss ‘ecologies of knowledge’ which they argue offers a radicalising space for the inclusion of African-centred epistemologies.

As explored in Chapter 5 of this thesis, dominant cultural philosophies in South Sudan include Uhuru, Ubuntu, Education for Self-reliance and Communalism. It is important to investigate what influence these have on perceptions of knowledge production in South Sudan, and thus, research methodologies that are culturally attuned to these epistemologies. A study from South Africa in 2022, *Transformative research in context* (Omodan), suggests that participatory research, participatory action research, community-based research and art-based research should be explored because of the way that they recognise power issues and social change, as well as a desire to create research that is more relevant to the lives of those who are under study.

6.2.2 Alternative research strategies?

In their paper, *Improving the conditions of teachers and teaching in rural schools across African countries* (2011), UNESCO-IICBA does not refer to the need to explore alternative research methods in support of identifying priority areas for development. Du Plessis and Mestry (2019), who explored the challenges facing teachers in rural schools in South Africa, similarly, do not recommend exploring alternative research methods. Whilst exploring the recruitment of teachers in 'hard-to staff' schools (rural schools often fall into this category) in low-income countries, Evans and Acosta (2023) recommend that *more* research needs to be conducted but they do not suggest an exploration into the effectiveness of different research methods. It seems important to systematically review other studies that explore teaching in low-income rural communities to identify examples of alternative research methods and their effectiveness. This is supported by my literature review which revealed the dominance of interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and surveys with few recommendations relating to the need to explore alternative research methods.

A special issue of the *Comparative Education Journal* (2011) explores this theme of alternative research methods with articles that engage with the ongoing debate about the significance in the postcolonial era of the power and inequality that lie at the heart of the research process. The introduction to the journal explains that there is a need to understand the significance and complexities of 'bringing cultures and traditions' (p.1) of research practices. In a related paper, Tikly and Barrett (2011) confirm the value of 'voice' and related approaches to research: "Through emphasising the importance of participation and voice in defining what a good quality education might entail, it also chimed with our concerns to forefront the voices and experiences of marginalised groups in Africa" (p.2).

Furthermore, Tikly and Barrett conclude that the framework for researching the quality of education is *evolving* and:

It is also to acknowledge the need to continue to seek innovative approaches and methodologies that can actively include the voices and perspectives of the marginalised ... if our understandings are to better reflect the experiences of these groups and to begin to shift discourse and policy in a way that more accurately reflects their interests. (p.19)

This references to the value of amplifying the voices of local actors should be an important aspect of 'calls for further research'. Challenges of translation, security, communication, remuneration etc as previously discussed in this chapter should be addressed in order for

research to best reflect and represent communities in target populations. This would align with features of the Teacher Education Policy³⁵ that has been co-developed in South Sudan between the MoGEISS, UoJ and NGOs with support from my consultancy group across 2023. The Teacher Education Quality Framework (MoGEISS, 2023) states that:

Teacher education programmes should adopt a number of design principles:

- *Promote the need to engage meaningfully with teachers when designing teacher education programmes and material*
- *Be evidence-informed and supported by research*
- *Commit to engaging with stakeholders in various ways to strengthen the system of teacher education* (p.19)

Fox et al. (2021) offer critical reflections from researchers, reviewing the methodologies they used in their studies and the ethical implications of these in theory and practice. Drawing upon these global case studies, they highlight the decisions researchers made with respect to their research design and enactment with a consideration, for example, of tensions arising from meeting the obligations of Ethical Research Boards (ERBs) in fragile research contexts and their strategies to empower and amplify the voices of participants. This is a compelling collection, offering a diversity of methods for consideration. As the authors note, these studies are mainly from the position of researchers in the Global North, even if researching within the Global South, and so it continues to be important to both uncover and develop studies that are generated in the Global South so as to gain a deeper understanding of methodological decision-making.

6.3 What were the characteristics of using semi-structured interviews to explore the lived experiences of primary school teachers in rural South Sudan?

³⁵ <https://www.curriculumfoundation.org/blog/teacher-education-policy-south-sudan/>

6.3.1 Working with local researchers

The choice of semi-structured interviews in this study was largely influenced by practical decisions associated with the need to access rural communities. I had to recruit local researchers, and navigate the process of doing so, so that interviews could be conducted in local languages and so that a local and authentically contextual interpretation of responses from teachers was possible. I was able to draw upon my existing networks to recruit local researchers, but I can see the challenges of this process where lead researchers may not have access to such networks.

The use of a local language and interpretations were in support of my intentions to decolonise the research process and to sustain contextual sensitivity. But this is an area that was worthy of far more attention than I was able to give. Even the notion of 'research' itself is something that would be fascinating to explore across different cultures in South Sudan, exploring interpretations and views of its significance.

6.3.2 Using familiar research tools

Due to the nature of ethical clearance that I was able to achieve through BERA/UCL as an ECR, face-to-face training was limited to times when I was in Juba for working purposes. We (Lilly, Faith and I) used WhatsApp messaging well to support the research development process, but video/voice calls were not very successful due to poor internet connectivity. The use of a familiar research tool was essential in enabling the research process to be designed quickly enough within the time that was available – and this is not an uncommon situation for research projects in LIC. The research tools that were most familiar to Lilly and Faith were interviews and focus group discussions which is also the case for research conducted more widely in SSA as noted by Ngulube (2012). This issue of *needing* to use familiar tools, however, begs the question of how to explore alternative methods in order to further an understanding of what research methods *might* more effectively elicit contextually sensitive theoretical frameworks.

6.3.3 Co-developing research tools

The process of co-developing interview questions and the paper-based survey was very positive. Lilly and Faith had considerable experience in conducting interviews. They were confident to

challenge proposed questions in early stages that they did not feel would be appropriate. An example of this was the question about what teachers did recently that they enjoyed. Faith said that the question needed to be more direct, so we changed it to 'last week'. Lilly also suggested inserting a question early on about how participants became teachers. She suggested that this was a more straightforward question than later questions about motivation and so would put participants at ease.

This confidence to challenge and change questions was partly in response to the trusted and respectful relationship between the three of us that we endeavoured to create through formal and informal interactions and clearly set timelines and expectations as the research processes developed. For both Lilly and Faith, this was helped by my existing positive professional relationship with their line managers. My positionality as recruiter, remunerator, white, Global North actor is not insignificant here, but on balance, the working relationship felt reasonably equitable in terms of sharing and critiquing ideas.

Lilly and Faith translated questions from English into Bari and Arabic – discussing with me when they wanted to check interpretations. They explained that 'word for word' translations were not possible as one word in English often translated into a phrase (or two) in Arabic. A good example of this is the word 'motivation' itself. Lilly explained that for many in South Sudan, *motivation* refers to remuneration, so questioning had to make the distinction between remuneration and the psychology of motivation.

6.3.4 Developing interviewing skills

Across the interviews, Lilly and Faith asked more and more probing questions, and sometimes picking up on a theme that I might not have considered³⁶ worthy of doing so. That element of interviewing was an example of how the research process was decolonised because it was the lived experiences of Liy and Faith that shaped the discussion. What was particularly encouraging to see, however, was the way that Lilly would ask a probing question on occasion when Faith was leading the interview, and vice versa, demonstrating a critical engagement during the interviews from both Lilly and Faith. In the interviews that I observed, and reading through transcribed

³⁶ An example of this is where Faith asked the teacher to explain what they mean when they referred to a 'loan', which in fact turned out to be knowledge rather than money.

interviews, I can see that participants responded positively to the interview process. That is to say, no teacher said they did not want to be interviewed and all teachers in general offered responses to all questions in good detail. In one interview, the teacher cried as she explained how challenging it is to fulfil her role. Lilly offered appropriate support, offering to halt the interview, but the participant said that she would like to continue. Lilly explained (in discussion with me in our debrief after the visit to the second school) that she proceeded with the remaining questions cautiously and missed out one question that she felt would trigger another negative emotion for the teacher. Such agility was good to see, and Lilly said that she felt increasingly able to work like this, evidencing the *development* of interviewing skills.

Lilly and Faith used probing well, but the transcripts reveal more of a 'Q&A' than a discussion which would have been more useful in the context of exploring motivation. An interview places the 'power' in the hands of the interviewer, especially where interview schedules are more structured than not. This positionality undoubtedly has an impact on responses (Kim, 2023; Merriam et al., 2001), potentially encouraging a response that participants think interviewers want to hear rather than responding honestly (Josselson, 2013; Kallio et al., 2016). Interviews can present a sense of there being a 'right answer' (Scoboria & Fisco, 2013; Westby, Burda & Mehta, 2003; Camfield et al., 2009), rather than there being a genuine (authentic) inquiry into experiences and attitudes. Pugh (2013) argues, however, that interviews create multiple opportunities for nuance and experience to be explored through an interpretative approach to interviewing. Although interviews of this nature require researchers to be trained and suitably experienced, I am confident that Lilly and Faith created an environment where teachers were able to speak freely, but that undoubtedly, more training would have enabled unexpected responses to have been explored more thoroughly.

6.3.5 'Incentivising' participation

I was aware that remuneration for taking part might bias who was selected for the interview and that participants might respond positively on the basis that they were receiving some money for their participation. Hence, the money provided to teachers was called 'remuneration' to shift the focus towards being paid for their contribution rather than being incentivised to contribute. Providing an 'incentive' is common practice in low-income countries to encourage and reward

participation in research projects (Mduluza et al., 2013; Zutlevics, 2016; Abdelazeem et al., 2022). But to support a participatory approach (see section 6.2.2 of this chapter), I wanted to move away from 'incentive' which has power connotations and suggests a lack of motivation to otherwise take part (Kim, 2023). By providing all teachers in the school with some remuneration for either completing the survey *or* being interviewed, I was also aiming to mitigate against selection bias. It is still likely that head teachers selected teachers who speak more fluently than others, but at least one layer of selection bias was removed via the 'remuneration for all' approach.

The recent edition (Fifth edition, 2024) of the BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research states that:

13. Researchers' use of incentives to encourage participation should be commensurate with good sense, such that the level of incentive does not impinge on the free decision to participate. (p.20)

These guidelines suggest that providing too much incentive might hinder the ability of potential participants to decide whether or not to take part. In other words, not taking part could be a missed opportunity for funds or, conversely, taking part 'is not really worth it'. As I stated earlier, negotiations around payment were incredibly complex in this study, which included the issues of incentives. Following the BERA guidelines with respect to incentives being 'commensurate with good sense' is not easy with very little transparency and research 'data' on the amounts to be provided in South Sudan and similar contexts. Although there is some literature on the issue of the impact of incentives on participation (Singer & Ye, 2013; Dickert & Grady, 2008; Wertheimer 2014), it appears that more research on this issue, specifically in South Sudan, is necessary.

6.3.6 Alternative methods for exploring the lived experiences of teachers in rural South Sudan

Gaillard (2010) explains that in low-income countries, government spending on research and development is less than 1% of their GDP. This is perhaps unsurprising when you consider that LICs are still struggling to meet the necessities of food, clothing, security and shelter of their communities, leaving the government with only a few surplus resources to invest in research and development. In a recent UCL seminar (June 2024) focusing on Higher Education and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Dr Kuyok, the Honourable Undersecretary for Education in South Sudan, confirmed that:

There is no culture of research in South Sudan.

With regards to considering what research methods and tools could be used to help understand priorities for research and development amongst teachers in rural South Sudan, I believe it is necessary to firstly explore what research methods *have* been deployed before moving on to exploring other methods via related literature. A useful starting point for this exploration could be by engaging with the UoJ and the Rift Valley Institute³⁷ who have some insights into research methodologies in South Sudan. The AERD³⁸ and the South Sudan Medical Research Journal³⁹ also holds valuable insights into research methodologies.

6.3.7 Recommendations of alternative research methodologies?

The characteristics of using semi-structured interviews to explore the lived experiences of primary school teachers in rural South Sudan centred around the need for pragmatism⁴⁰ to accommodate the circumstances that the research community in South Sudan find themselves within. Features of my approach included an iterative and flexible research design to be able to adapt to changing research processes, environments and timeframes. In particular, the research method had to accommodate the dynamic characteristics of the schools that we engaged with, including their distance from central locations and the need for translations. Moving forward, it is important then to work with research colleagues across South Sudan to explore other approaches that may have proved effective in similar research contexts, as well as to highlight other strategies and tools that might prove effective. This collaborative approach in search of 'sources of vitality' (Banaga) also promotes a position of Appreciate Inquiry and is thus able to make a positive contribution to demonstrating the value of Indigenous knowledge. My professional experiences working with colleagues within the Ministry of education, suggest that collaborative and more creative ways of working (with minimal resources) are entirely possible as shown in Figure 11.

³⁷ The Rift Valley Institute (RVI) is an independent, non-profit organisation, founded in Sudan in 2001, currently working in eastern and central Africa.

³⁸ The AERD is a curated collection of research undertaken in the past decade by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa.

³⁹ The journal is published quarterly by the Health and Social Sciences Research Institute - South Sudan (HSSRI-SS) in February, May, August and November.

⁴⁰ Pragmatism with respect to a way of dealing with problems or situations that focuses on practical approaches and solutions.

Figure 11 Working Collaboratively and creatively with colleagues from the MoGEISS



Considering how drama and everyday resources can enact important curricular themes.



Using natural resources collaboratively to celebrate key aspects of training.



Discussing how collections of natural resources can create opportunities for problem solving.



The team photo, in one form or another, is always a feature of workshops.



Exploring how everyday resources and group practical tasks can reinforce key concepts.



Exploring how creative approaches (collage and poetry) can simulate thinking in new areas of learning.



Considering how representing key concepts by creating models and maps can strengthen understanding of complex issues.

6.4 What were some of the characteristics of developing research partnerships in small-scale qualitative educational studies in rural South Sudan?

6.4.1 A participatory approach

There were a number of actors in this research project, all of whom had a different influence upon the study design and enactment. The table in [Appendix S](#) sets out the role of each actor, their professional responsibilities, their links with other actors and their subsequent influence on the research process. It is important to set out and highlight these connections because it illustrates the range of *related* participations which were such a strong contributor to the success of my research.

The ‘participatory’ approach adopted for this study was not a linear relationship and activity between the researcher and participants. Instead, it was an evolving network of critical (specific and evaluative) participations that enabled contextual data to be generated and analysed authentically. A participatory approach is often defined to include the researcher and participants (or subjects of the study) rather than the team of actors who work together to develop and enact the study. If the focus of this study had been to try and engage teachers in the co-development of theory/knowledge and/or the research design only, then I believe that the overall outcomes would have been limited. This is not to say that interactions with teachers were extractive only, but it is to recognise the power of the network to generate high-quality data and the value of developing and learning about a network to do so.

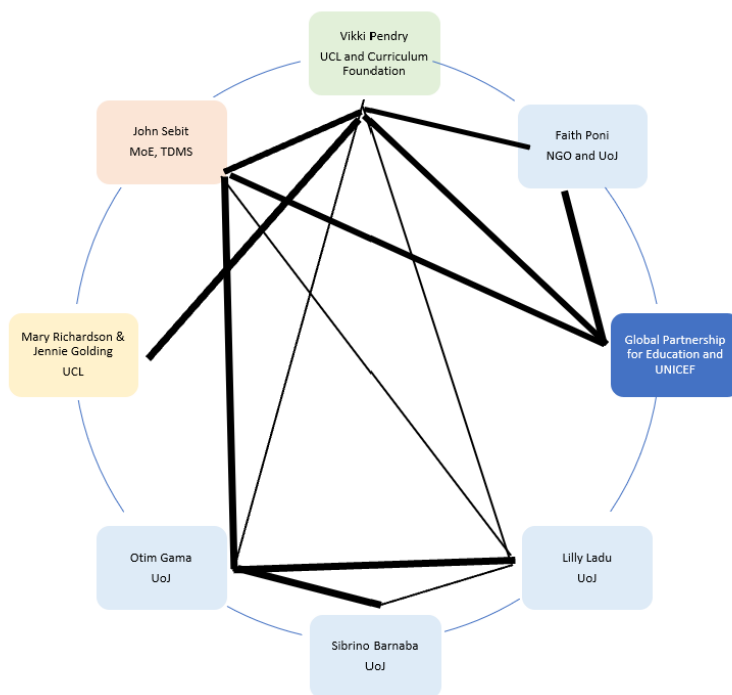
6.4.2 Creating a network of actors in support of generating high-quality data

The two figures below illustrate the network that was created as connections were made between organisations and individuals who participated in this research project. The figures show who was connected to who, before and after the project took place.

Figure 12 below shows the connections that existed between actors before this study took place. The second figure (13) shows the connections between actors or as a result of this study taking place. In both figures, a narrower line⁴¹ signifies a less developed connection, rather than the dynamics of power which I discuss separately later in this section.

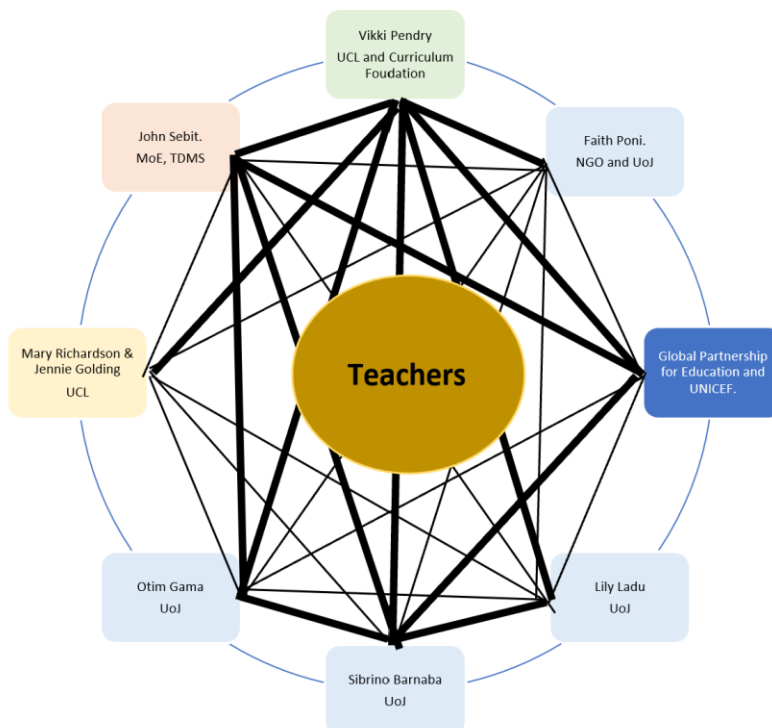
⁴¹ I acknowledge that this is a weak measure in terms of accuracy and that there are many variables that could contribute to defining the strength of a connection, but it is used here simply to highlight the development of connections as well as the different types of connections.

Figure 12 Connection between actors prior to the study commencing



Note: Own source

Figure 13 Connections between actors developed during the study



Note: Own source

It is important to note that Figure 12 shows that I hold the most connections as compared to Figure 13 which shows that as a result of the study, although strengths of connections vary, all actors are connected to each other in some way. My suggestion here is that *because of* the extended network of various participations created during this study as shown in Figure 13, teachers were well supported, felt safe and thus motivated to participate. They were demonstrably valued and were able to participate in such a way that was appropriate to their circumstances. This led to high-quality data being generated that not only authentically amplified the voices of teachers, but also highlighted the value of working in partnership. I have illustrated this point by placing teachers in the centre of the figure, in a ‘cradle’ of support, reflecting what multiple studies explain to be value of support in participatory studies such as this (Reitman & Karge, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

I’d like to promote the fact that opportunities such as this to develop active networks of researchers are buoyant across education communities in South Sudan, but that they need igniting, nurturing, coordinating and funding. This buoyancy is evidenced by the National Education Coalition South Sudan⁴² for example, who presently have 180 educational organisations working in South Sudan, and have as their mission: “To promote accessible, inclusive and quality education through Advocacy, Coordination and Networking with all education stakeholders in South Sudan”. The need for enhanced partnership and coordination is further evidenced by its dominance as a key component in the GPE 2024 Partnership Compact⁴³ for South Sudan which has as outcome 4, to: “Improve Service Delivery and coordination of general education”. Likewise, the upcoming FCDO project, Education for All South Sudan⁴⁴ (EFASS), has a focus on system strengthening and coordination. This focus on improved coordination and the development of stronger and more diverse networks is noteworthy because despite its potential, partnership working at present does not translate into substantial system strengthening and improved outcomes in education.⁴⁵

⁴² <https://nec-ss.org/about-us/about-nec/>

⁴³ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/south-sudan-partnership-compact-2024>

⁴⁴ file:///C:/Users/Vikki%20Pendry/Downloads/Education%20for%20All%20South%20Sudan%20summary.pdf

⁴⁵ More could be said about educational outcomes and their links to networks and system strengthening, but for the purposes of my thesis, it is sufficient to state that Global Partnership for Education (GPE) PE and FCDO Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office) are investing in strengthening coordination because they recognise weak coordination to be a limiting factor of progress.

6.4.3 Power dynamics within networks

In relation to the power dynamics that exist within these networks, it would be impossible to say that every connection has equal power and influence on the research method and subsequent findings. It is also important to consider that 'power' comes in many forms: financial, accountability, status and hierarchies, legacies, political. In this study, although I sought to rebalance power dynamics by employing local researchers so that outsider, Global North actors did not dominate the research process, it is also important to acknowledge that Global North actors could signal a higher value or status of the research project. I sought to address this through the provision of an invitation letter (Appendix M and N) and a certificate of participation (Appendix D) that included logos from UCL, IoE to signal an association with Global North actors and institutions.

Network gatekeeping theory (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008) is of relevance here also, whereby people and processes are included or excluded in the network, showing the key role of the network's gatekeeping capacity to be the enforcement of the collective power of some networks over others. Network gatekeeping theory suggests that some actors may establish their power position by developing a network that accumulates valuable resources and then by exercising their gatekeeping strategies, they bar access to those who they do not perceive to add value to the network. This is of significance to research networks in South Sudan where power is associated with remuneration which is desirable in a context of extreme poverty. So, it is important that networks are developed sensitively so as to attempt to maintain a balance of distributed resources. Network power (Grewal, 2008) similarly, suggests that 'development' involves social coordination between multiple networked actors, and that this can result in sustained progress and collective accountability.

The gatekeeping presented in my own study is not straightforward ... as there are multiple gates to open! Gates that provided access to individual schools for example were different to those that provided permission for researchers to operate in this particular county. Financial gatekeepers (such as GPE and UNESCO) in South Sudan are often institutions that are beyond the localities that are the focus of a particular study which leads to multiple and complex 'applications' (Pilon & Lanoue, 2016; Bradley, 2017; Ishengoma, 2017). In this study, I was the financial gatekeeper which undoubtedly had an influence on the way members of the network interacted with me. I tried to mitigate this effect by creating multiple opportunities for collective

review/reflection and decision-making and ensuring that I was well-informed with regards to acceptable costs for the various resources that were required of the project.

It is important to mention once more, that at the time of writing, many teachers across South Sudan continue to receive little or no salary and that as a consequence, many have walked out of school on strike or have threatened to do so.⁴⁶ Therefore, it would be naïve to say that ‘despite’ my power in terms of remuneration, actors would build the research network independently. Crucially, it is likely that in the foreseeable future, remuneration for research projects is likely to come from donor agencies beyond South Sudan, and so co-developing a framework for research networks in South Sudan with local actors is crucial if agenda setting is to be representative, need-based and authentic.

This idea of networks and the power dynamics that exist within them in South Sudan is worthy of further research. It is also important to recognise the alignment between networks and coordination to the characteristics of cultural philosophies of communalism and Ubuntu as discussed in Chapter 5.

6.4.4 Networks of participation in comparable contexts

Just as the Teacher Education Policy for South Sudan (developed across 2023 through a network of participation) has a Quality Framework to help the design of teacher education programmes coordinated by TDMS, a framework for research networks would also be helpful. This framework for research networks in South Sudan should promote a multi-actor and participatory approach based on principles of non-extractivist research (Kouritzin & Nakagawa, 2018; Igwe et al., 2022) that seeks to develop appreciative inquiry and would provide the opportunity to develop more culturally attuned research methods, as mentioned in section 6.3.6.

The experiences of partnerships within my small-scale study are reflected well in a recent blog published by the What Works Hub for Global Education⁴⁷ (2024), which highlights lessons

⁴⁶ There are multiple reports of strikes, so I have selected three contrasting articles to illustrate the point here:
<https://www.everadio.org/aweil-teachers-demand-salaries-deducted-in-july-before-schools-reopen/>;
<https://sudansupport.no/2024/07/21/thousands-of-pupils-sent-home-in-juba-as-schools-shut-over-salary-arrears-eye-radio/>;
https://www.sudanspost.com/south-sudan-teachers-threaten-strike-over-unpaid-salaries/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR26AaQJhoRGp4qm8w3ysl8if-0uDsn7Gc3KFPVfp9kQoS6XUEdigcigiOk_aem_a5F-wyeCE_cVn_reUD3_Pw

⁴⁷ The What Works Hub for Global Education is an international partnership working out how to implement education reforms at scale, with the ultimate goal of increasing literacy, numeracy and other key skills in low-

learned from partnerships between the Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE).⁴⁸ The article describes the three qualities of partnerships, initially developed by Georgalakis and Rose (2019) as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14 Three qualities of effective research and policy partnerships



Note: *Three qualities for effective research and policy partnership (adapted from James Georgalakis and Pauline Rose, 2019).*

The opportunity to exploit the differences and expertise across a network was well developed in my study which I have highlighted in the right-hand column in the table in [Appendix S](#). The rest of the different aspects of the '3 Qualities' were situated securely in my study, particularly the notion of building on pre-existing relationships (middle column of table in [Appendix S](#)) and

and middle-income countries. The Hub is a collaborative partnership between the Blavatnik School of Government (University of Oxford), the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the British Council, Building Evidence in Education (BE2), the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel (GEEAP), the Learning Generation Initiative, USAID, UNICEF Innocenti, UNESCO-IIEP, and the World Bank.

⁴⁸ <https://riseprogramme.org/>

adapting to changing environments (the iterative nature of the study). What I would add to these '3 Qualities' in light of my experiences, would be that to sustain interactivity well and to contribute authentically to 'lessons learnt', there needs to be the nurturing of a culture of critical reflection in order to build self-efficacy and increasing agency. Reflective practice is not something that teachers in my study described. Instead, they preferred to seek the opinion or judgements of others. Developing a culture of critical reflection would support research projects to adopt a more transparent orientation and, once again, create opportunities to identify 'sources of vitality' which are likely to incentivise further inquiry and strengthen research skills.

6.4.5 Working with research assistants

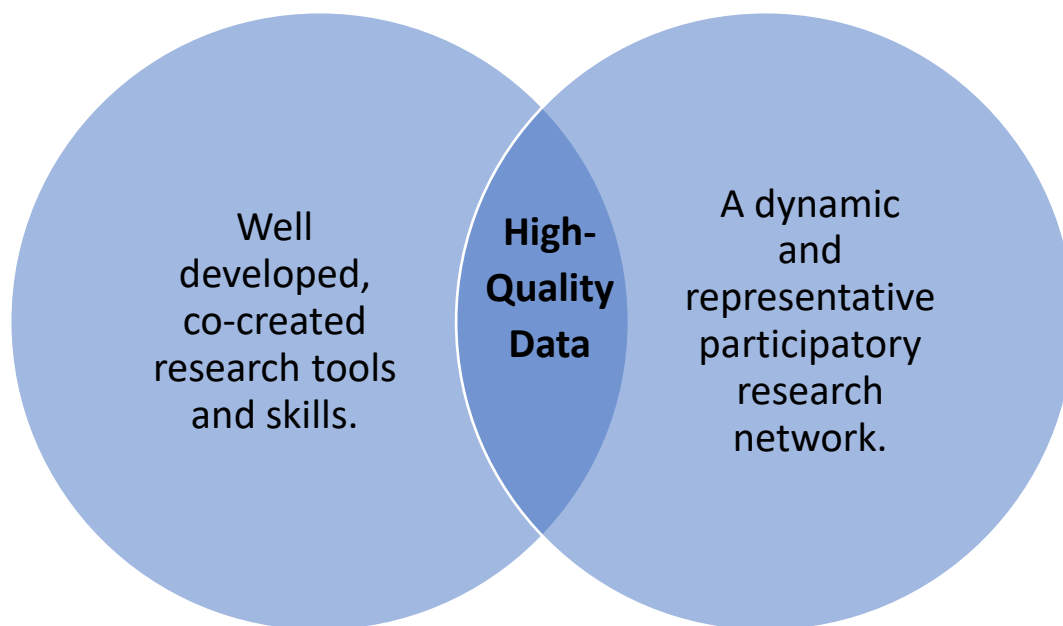
The importance of RAs as cultural navigators (Ozano & Khatri, 2017) and the necessity of embracing their situated knowledge as both an insider and outsider is a key finding of this study. Lilly and Faith were able to conduct interviews sensitively and leverage their networks and resources to help recruit schools. Their language proficiencies enabled informed discussions as we interpreted the data. Lilly and Faith were able to make practical arrangements also, making effective use of taxi firms that they had used previously for example. By working with local researchers, it was possible to decolonise the lens through which data was interpreted. Lilly and Faith did not talk about decolonisation in great detail, and I was only able to discuss it in broad terms. But our trio did agree that a research team comprising of local and 'visiting' researchers meant that the research process was enhanced by this combination of skills, knowledge, understanding and experiences of research and motivational theory.

6.5 In summary: A framework for generating high-quality data in rural, fragile contexts

My research highlighted that as well as developing a dynamic participatory research network, the people who will actually conduct the research need adequate support and training otherwise the project will bring low quality results, despite all the effort that went into building the network. Research partnerships in small-scale educational studies that take place in rural and fragile contexts need to be agile enough to withstand the dynamics of the situation whilst retaining features of authentic research that will result in meaningful, high-quality data. I have represented this in figure 15. Research networks that are participatory across every connection

to some extent and that are pragmatic in their approach, have the power to sustain the development of research that is in support of transformative education. The skills and systems that are co-created through the participatory research process must be aligned to existing policies and should seek to leverage the strengths of existing partnerships, navigating power dynamics skilfully to ensure equitable experiences for all.

Figure 15 The two enablers of high-quality data in my study



Note: This framework summaries the two main approaches to the design of this study which led to high quality data. Own source.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Much has been written about the 'North-South divide'⁴⁹ with respect to the need to decolonise approaches to research, critiquing the cultural relevance of established educational theories (Usher, 2018; Graham, 1992; Tikly & Barrett, 2013; Moosavi, 2020). My study aims to contribute to this critical discussion by providing an example of a network of participation that can be used to generate a contextually sensitive theory of motivation for teachers in rural South Sudan.

Whilst acknowledging that the scope of this study means that outcomes cannot be generalisable, it is hoped that in view of a lack of data around teacher motivation in South Sudan, my findings can provide a discussion point and an indication of possible further research in support of recruiting and retaining more teachers in South Sudan.

There are a number of themes which resonate throughout this study with respect to what it is that motivates teachers to become and to remain as a teacher in South Sudan. These are presented in Figure 9 in Chapter 5, and are summarised as:

Altruism, nationalism and transformation – *I am motivated by the opportunity to contribute to developing the nation.*

Being a role model and being respected – *I am motivated by the enjoyment and satisfaction I get from being respected in the community and by the opportunity to be a role model. I believe that I make a difference.*

Self-determination, autonomy and self-growth – *I am motivated by the opportunity I get for personal development.*

Providing counsel and support for students is important – *I am motivated by the way that I feel I am able to make a difference to the lives of individual students.*

Teachers experience a lack of support from the government and from some community members - *My motivation is challenged by a lack of support from the government and sometimes from community members.*

⁴⁹ The Global South is a term that broadly comprises countries in the regions of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia (without Israel, Japan and South Korea) and Oceania (without Australia and New Zealand), according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Most of the countries in the Global South are characterised by low income, dense population, poor infrastructure and often political or cultural marginalisation.

7.1 Significant findings that make a contribution to new knowledge

- a) Teachers in this study are generally quite highly motivated - a contradiction to the dominant narrative of teachers lacking motivation in LIC.
- b) Higher motivation levels could be linked to a lack of awareness of what changes are needed and training for teachers should take this into account.
- c) Teachers have admirable social capital, mutual empowerment, resourcefulness and resilience in the face of significant challenge.
- d) A theory of motivation for teachers in rural South Sudan embraces a number of elements of established motivational theory, but these are dynamically entwined in a unique relationship reflecting the position of participants in this study.
- e) Decolonising research is significantly enhanced by working in partnership, authentically with local actors. A commitment to this, makes it possible to generate more meaningful data in the Global South.
- f) Participatory research approaches enable the generation of contextually relevant theoretical models and frameworks that are enriched by prevailing cultural philosophies.
- g) Adopting a light grounded approach allowed the research to be helpfully 'informed', but to also remain flexible and responsive to local realities.

The findings from my study highlight that despite limited resources and support, participating teachers are generally quite highly motivated. This is an encouraging premise for teachers in South Sudan who are expected at present to implement several new policies and practices. Sayed and Bulgrin (2020) comment that multiple changes for teachers can be demotivating as they are perceived to be unmanageable, and can be ill-aligned, so it is encouraging that teachers in this study have a positive mindset although this *could* be linked to a lack of awareness of expected changes or a lack of awareness of the extent of changes needed.

As a contradiction to the dominant narrative of teachers lacking motivation in LIC, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) suggest that there is an absence of adequate information relating to teacher motivation in LIC. They suggest that:

Incidences of poor teacher motivation and misbehaviour could well be seriously over-exaggerated mainly because of the pervasive negative stereotyping of teachers (especially by the media) in many countries. On the few occasions when teachers and school managers

have been directly asked about teacher motivation, reported levels of morale have generally been quite high (p.8).

This is an interesting proposition that challenges much of the literature around teacher motivation by suggesting that teacher motivation is higher than is generally reported in low-resourced contexts and I believe that my study confirms this.

Teachers in LIC are often painted to be 'lacking' (negative stereotypes) with regards to a lack of payment, infrastructure, security etc. Swanson (2012) addresses this by drawing on what she calls a notion of 'humble togetherness' inspired by the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Tavernaro-Haidarian (2019) further explains that Swanson defines development to be a "collective re-sourcement towards non-impooverishment and healing which presents a somewhat more optimistic view of changes to/in educational contexts" (p.20).

Whilst acknowledging the challenging situations that teachers in rural South Sudan face, my study makes way for the potential uncovering of the admirable social capital, resourcefulness and resilience of teachers in this context. As Tavernaro-Haidarian (2019) puts it, perhaps there is a "freedom, humble togetherness, mutual empowerment and constructive resilience" (p.32) that could be embraced in rural South Sudan to inform future policy and practice around teacher recruitment and retention.

Working with local researchers, and co-developing a network of actors to support research in rural localities in contexts such as South Sudan is a significant aspect of this study also. Attempts to decolonise research is significantly enhanced by the integration of experiences of local actors to help shape data generation activities and to subsequently interpret and present data sensitively. Balancing interactions between actors and paying attention to positionality and power dynamics is complex, but it is only through a commitment to doing so that research projects such as this will be able to begin to shift the dial towards more authentic, meaningful and high-quality data generation in the Global South.

In addition, this study highlights the importance of methodological humility when conducting research in fragile or under-researched contexts. Adopting a light grounded approach allowed the research to remain flexible and responsive to local realities, rather than being constrained by external frameworks. A further lesson is the value of time: partnerships and networks showed promise but require sustained engagement to take flourish and remain impactful. For Global North researchers, the key takeaway is that meaningful research in the Global South is less

about exporting established models and more about co-creating knowledge, strengthening local capacity, and committing to longer-term collaboration that extends beyond the life of a single project.

7.2 Dissemination for impact

As explained in my Methodology Chapter, dissemination and feedback to research participants was an important aspect of this study as it is a path less travelled. The findings of this study were firstly shared with colleagues at Juba University and the MoGEISS. From there, after a review from MoGEISS, an A5, four-page booklet was prepared ([Appendix K](#)). This booklet was printed in Juba and given to Lilly and Faith to distribute (in person) to teachers in the schools that participated in the study, as well as to colleagues in the MoGEISS Teacher Development and Management Service (TDMS). Once the findings booklet had been shared with TDMS, it was disseminated via other related networks in South Sudan, such as the NGO Forum, UNICEF and the Education Cluster Group. Alongside dissemination in South Sudan, I presented a methodology-focused paper at BERA 2022, which won the Best ECR Presentation award. In 2025, abstracts have been submitted for the ANGEL conference (June) on decolonising research approaches and UKFEIT (September) on supranational partnerships in education. I also aim to publish a paper with UoJ colleagues through the Rift Valley Institute, focusing on the framework of teacher motivation developed in this study. I have not been able to return to Juba myself since July 2024, but I have remained in contact with members of the network to strengthen the potential for future research collaborations. During a visit made by my colleague to Juba in July 2025 where he met with MoGEISS colleagues, the Minister of Education commented that he is looking forward to welcoming Dr Pendry to Juba soon, commenting that it will be good to celebrate that teachers in rural South Sudan have contributed to motivational theory.

7.3 Professional Development

This research has reshaped my own sense of professionalism. In Wilson's (2020) terms, the experience has indeed changed me: not just in what I know, but in how I think, relate, and act in research, development and education communities. Engaging deeply with theories of

motivation, grounded approaches to inquiry, and the ethics of decolonising research required me to move from practitioner to reflexive researcher. The experience of co-constructing this study with South Sudanese co-researchers challenged me to critically revisit my insider-outsider positionality. I came to see myself not as either, but as what Taylor (2007) terms “an in-between”, a role that demands humility, adaptability, and continuous ethical reflection. Working collaboratively with co-researchers demanded that I listen more deeply, let go of control, and trust in a shared professional curiosity. This not only sharpened my methodological awareness but also deepened my respect for contextual knowledge and teacher agency. Ultimately, the research has given me a clearer Professional Compass anchored in integrity, guided by networks of knowledge, and attuned to the complexity and fragility of educational ecosystems in low-income settings.

7.4 In hindsight...

Whilst reflecting upon my own professional development, I am drawn to compare the initial research design for this study, to what form this study eventually took. My initial research questions were largely addressed well via the interview process, but I am aware that further probing through the use of less-structured interviews would have offered further insights into various aspects of teacher motivation, which I have listed below under ‘Areas for further research’. My presence in the interviews themselves would have enabled this more detailed exploration, made possible by my advanced interviewing skills, enhanced by my analysis of related literature. Lilly and Faith were undoubtedly able to conduct the interviews fluently, but with more time for the three of us to work together, they would have been able to gain deeper insights into the literature and to progress their interviewing skills. In addition to the insights gained from these interviews, I am aware also that observations of classroom practices and more creative and collaborative discussions with teachers would have resulted in more nuanced and ‘authentic’ data. I would love for example, to have explored teacher motivation through the use of role play and storytelling activities.

The initial research design did not ultimately differ a great deal from what eventually took place due to timescales, financial and security constraints. But this correlation is a limitation rather than a strength because had it been possible to revisit schools for example or to compliment interviews with group discussions, it would have enabled themes that seemed to be important,

more time and space to evolve. All research questions were addressed, but themes that explored perceptions of 'good teaching' and 'effectiveness' in particular were somewhat stifled and would have benefitted from repositioned questions and alternative research methods to explore different perspectives. The research process enabled teachers to articulate well, their understanding of what prevents and enables them to fulfil their role, but in terms of what teachers perceived their actual role to be, the interviews resulted in a narrow description of this.

In hindsight therefore, there is much I would repeat, particularly the emphasis on partnership working and a ground-up approach. With more time and resources, and drawing on the lessons of this study, I would seek to deepen these partnerships through more varied and sustained engagements such as through the co-development of Learning Circles. Many of the activities such as building connections between stakeholders and directorates and facilitating ongoing dialogue, I realised were relatively new. These processes are more likely to take root if they were to be given additional time to develop the structures and relationships needed to sustain the network.

7.5 Areas for further research

An encouraging outcome of this study is that much has been uncovered which is worthy of further research:

In what ways do professional development programmes reduce and/or improve self-efficacy and perceived autonomy amongst teachers?

What effect do school leaders and other stakeholders have on the way that teachers feel about their role? How does accountability to others interact with self-determination and self-reliance?

What role and impact does access to the media have on teacher efficacy and resilience?

What do students perceive to be the characteristics of 'good role models' in their community? How does this compare to what teachers perceive to be their role? And how are both of these linked to 'effectiveness' and improved outcomes for students?

What are the characteristics of education networks in South Sudan and how do perceptions of participation interact with thee?

What is perceived to be 'effective research' by education stakeholders in South Sudan and how can this be embraced to further develop a culture of research in South Sudan?

What are the characteristics of research methods that can enhance the quality of data generation in this context? A systematic review of other studies that explore teaching in low-income rural communities.

7.6 Final remarks

This study has provided valuable insights into the motivations of primary school teachers in one rural area of South Sudan emphasising their resilience and commitment despite significant challenges. It has highlighted the complexity of teacher motivation, the Swampy lowlands of the greatest human concern, revealing themes such as altruism, personal growth and the desire to be 'effective' role models within their communities. These findings challenge prevailing stereotypes about low teacher morale in fragile and emergency contexts, offering an encouraging foundation for the implementation of educational reforms.

Outcomes from my study underscore the importance of participatory research approaches in generating contextually relevant models and frameworks that are enriched by prevailing cultural philosophies. It is hoped that these contributions will spark further dialogue and action towards building a resilient, motivated teaching workforce in South Sudan, improving outcomes for students and paving the way for bright futures across the nation. In the words of P9:

Teaching is a profession that opens people's heads, it's the light of maturity, and it is a foundation that brings changes and development to our beautiful country.

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Appendices

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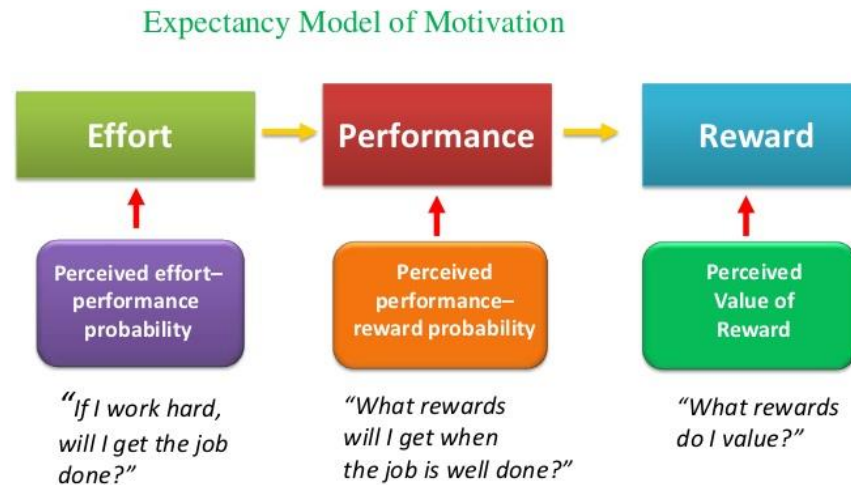
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Appendix A: Theories of Motivation Posters

Expectancy theory was proposed by Victor Vroom of Yale School of Management in 1964.



Note: Vroom's *Expectancy Theory Model*. Reprinted from *Vroom's expectancy theory: Making employee performance easier*, by Mind Tools Content Team, n.d. (<https://www.mindtools.com/alld6355/vrooms-expectancy-theory>). Copyright n.d. by Mind Tools.

M (motivation)= is the amount a person will be motivated by the situation they find themselves in. It is a function of the following.

E (expectancy) = The person's perception that effort will result in performance. In other words, the person's assessment of the degree to which effort actually correlates with performance.

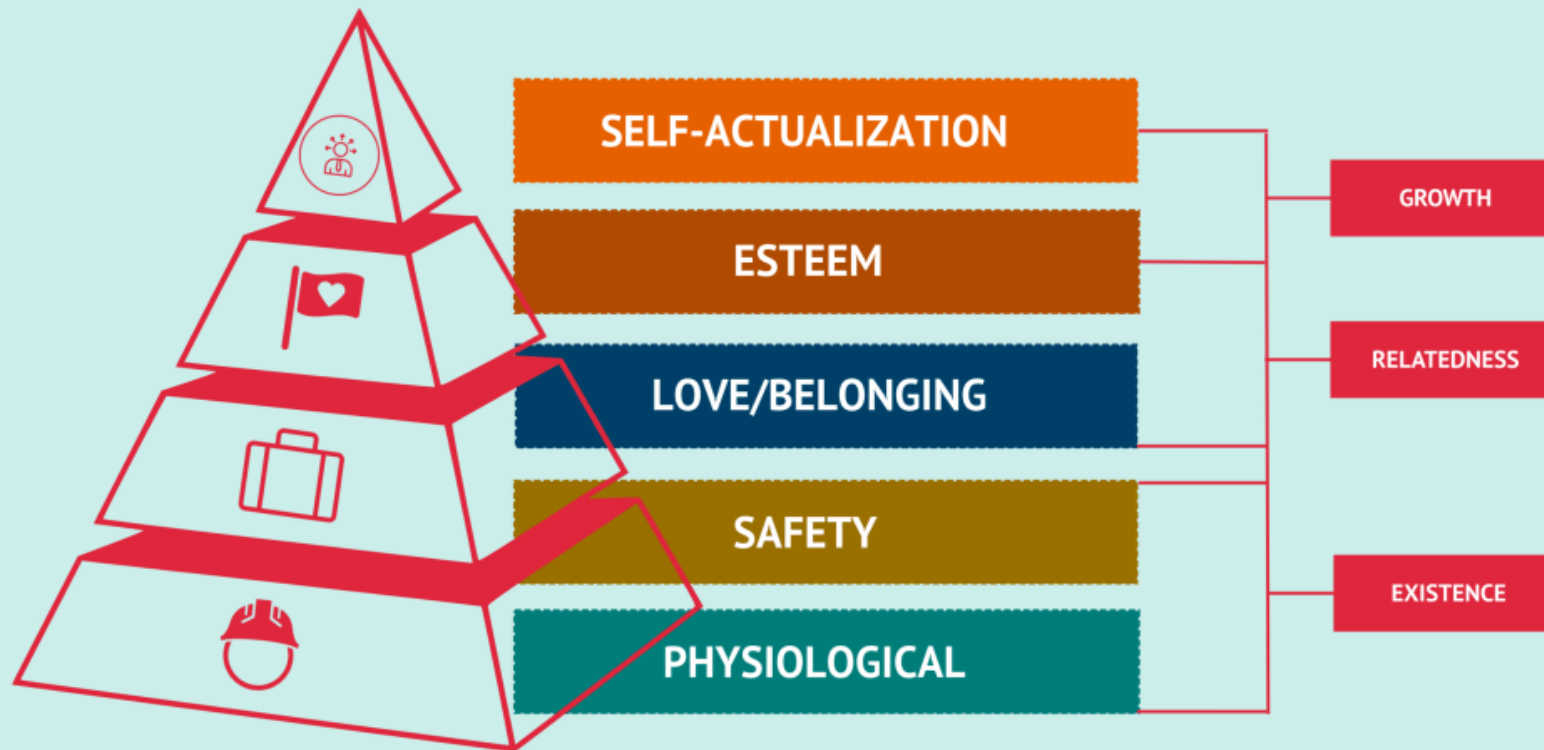
I (instrumentality) = The person's perception that performance will be rewarded/punished. i.e., the person's assessment of how well the amount of reward correlates with the quality of performance. (Note here that the model is phrased in terms of extrinsic motivation, in that it asks 'what are the

chances I'm going to get rewarded if I do good job?'. But for intrinsic situations, we can think of this as asking 'how good will I feel if I can pull this off?').

V (valence) = The perceived strength of the reward or punishment that will result from the performance. If the reward is small, the motivation will be small, even if expectancy and instrumentality are both perfect (high).

The ERG Theory In A Nutshell

The ERG theory was developed by American psychologist Clayton Alderfer between 1961 and 1978. The ERG theory is a motivational model based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The ERG theory is based on an acronym of three groups of core needs: existence, relatedness, growth.



ERG Theory Diagram. Reprinted from *ERG theory in a nutshell*, by G. Gallo, 2023, <https://fourweekmba.com/erg-theory/>. Copyright 2023 by G. Gallo.

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory

McClelland's Motivational Needs

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory is also known as Three Needs Theory, McClelland's Theory of Needs, Acquired Needs Theory, Motivational Needs Theory, and Learned Needs Theory.

David McClelland built on Maslow's work in his 1961 book, "The Achieving Society."

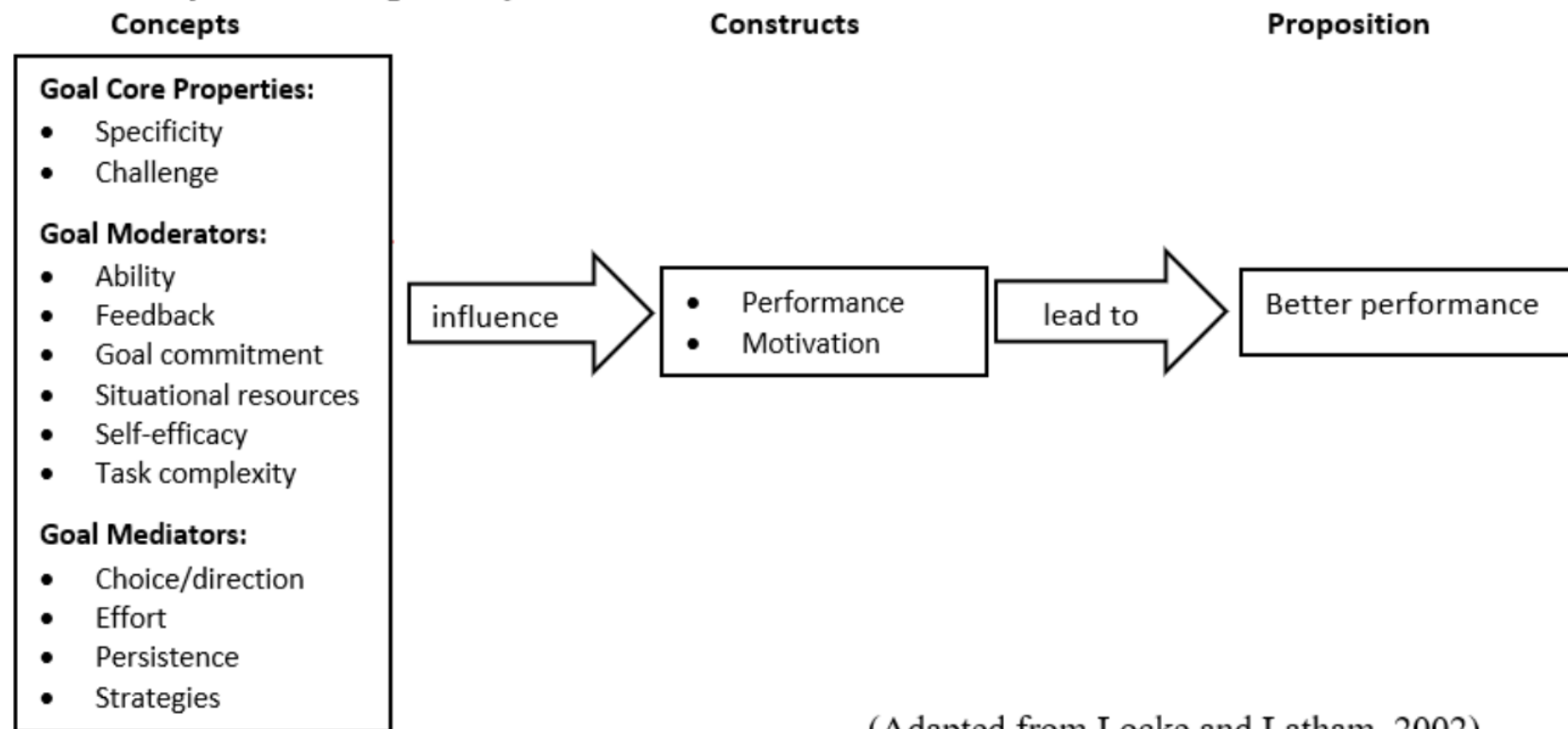
He identified three motivators that he believed we all have:

- The need for **achievement** (getting things done).
- The need for **affiliation** (having good relationships).
- The need for **power** (having influence over others).



McClelland's Human Motivation Theory Diagram. Reprinted from *McClelland's theory of needs* – Google Slides template, by SlideSalad, n.d. (<https://www.slidesalad.com/product/mcclellands-theory-of-needs-google-slides-template/>). Copyright n.d. by SlideSalad.

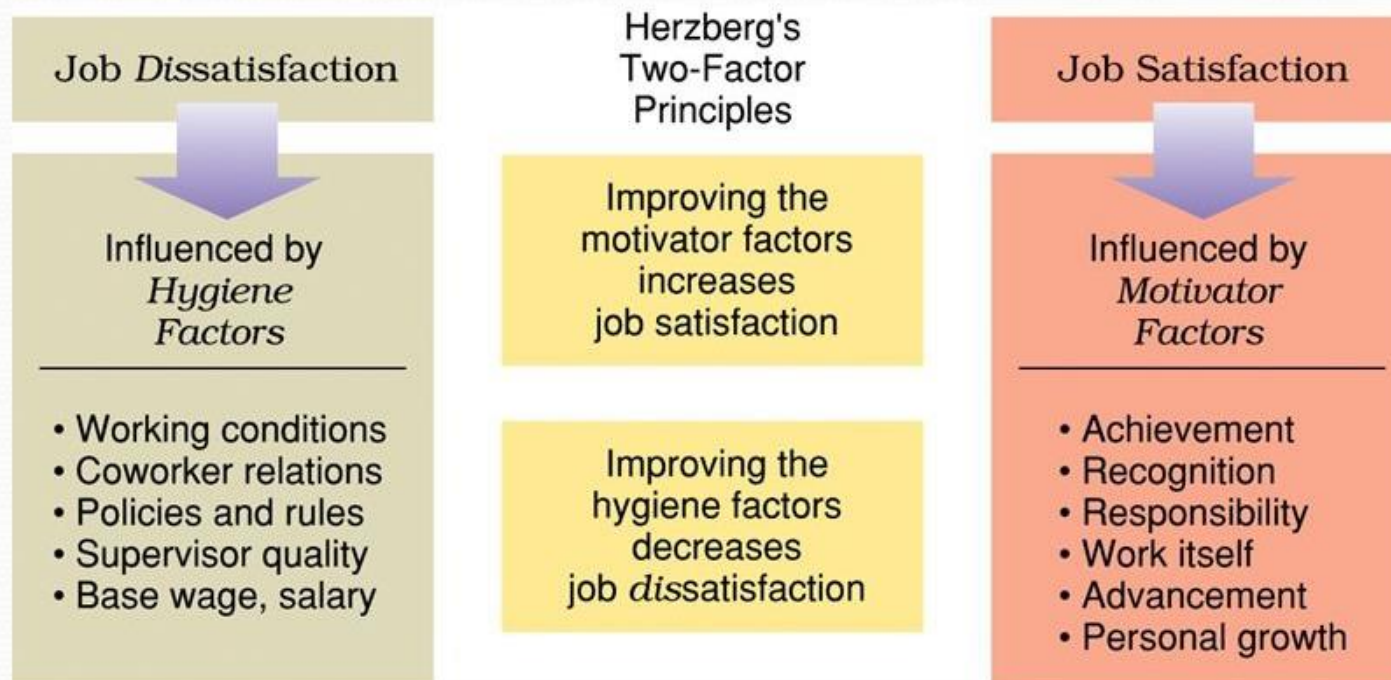
A Model of Goal-Setting Theory



(Adapted from Locke and Latham, 2002)

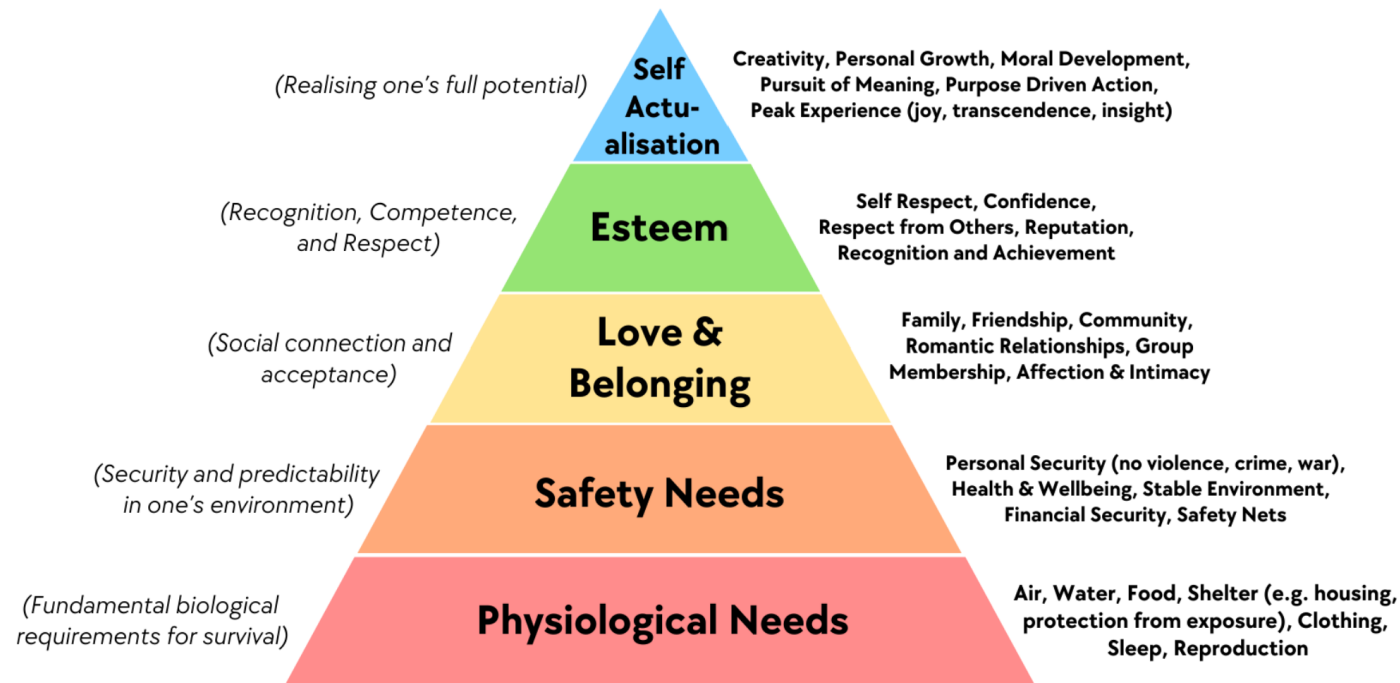
Goal Setting Theory Diagram. Reprinted from *Goal setting theory*, by T. Trachsell, in T. A. Wild (Ed.), *Theoretical models for teaching and research*, n.d., Washington State University (<https://opentext.wsu.edu/theoreticalmodelsforteachingandresearch/chapter/goal-setting-theory/>). Copyright n.d. by the author. Reprinted under a Creative Commons license.

Herzberg's Two Factors



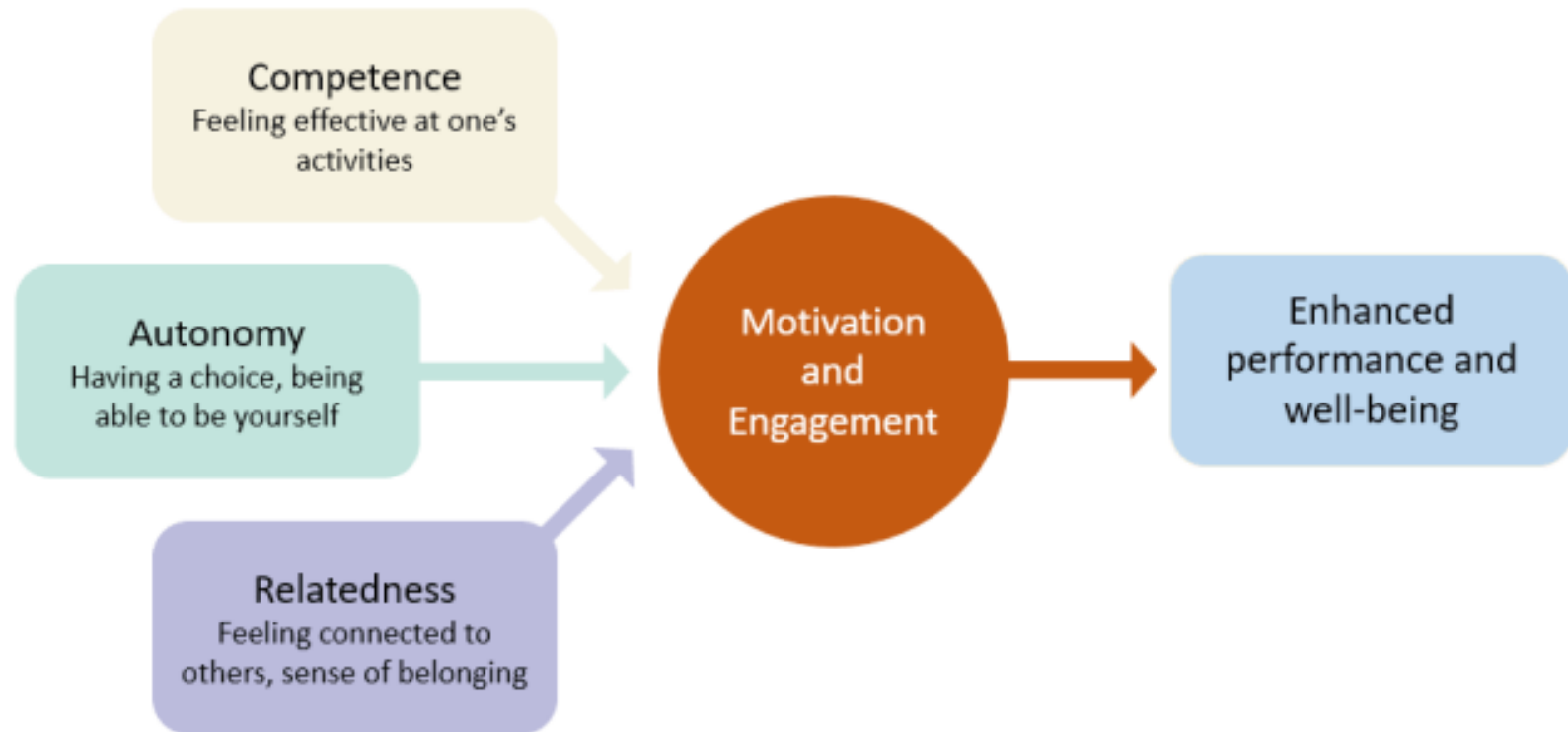
Herzberg's Two Factor Theory Diagram. Reprinted from *Theories of motivation: Herzberg's motivation-hygiene model (two factor theory of motivation)*, by MBA Knowledge Base, 2010 (<https://www.mbaknol.com/management-concepts/theories-of-motivation-herzbergs-motivation-hygiene-model/>). Copyright 2010 by MBA Knowledge Base. Reprinted with permission.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



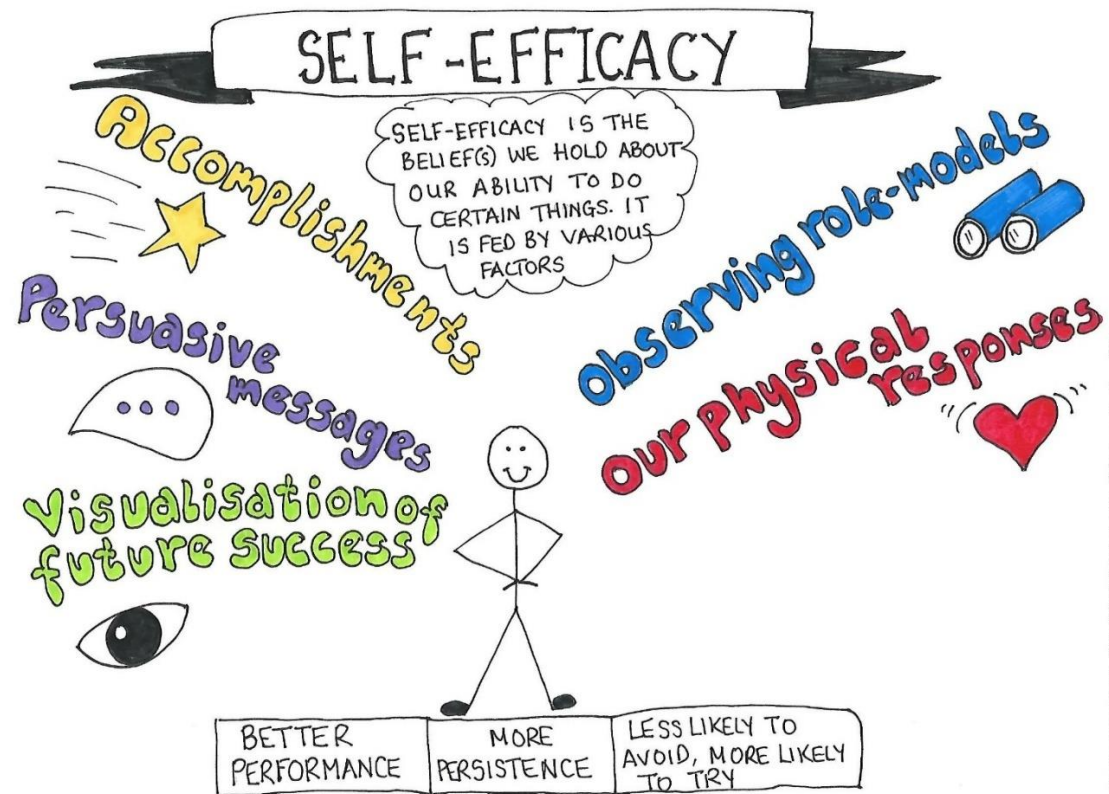
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Diagram. Reprinted from *Maslow's hierarchy of needs diagram*, by FireflySixtySeven, 2018, Wikimedia Commons (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maslow%27s_Hierarchy_of_Needs_Diagram.png). Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0.

Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017)



Self-Determination Theory Components (Autonomy, Competence, Relatedness). Reprinted from *Self-determination theory: Why intrinsic motivation matters in the classroom*, by J. Brook, 2022, <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/self-determination-theory>. Copyright 2022 by Structural Learning. Reprinted with permission.

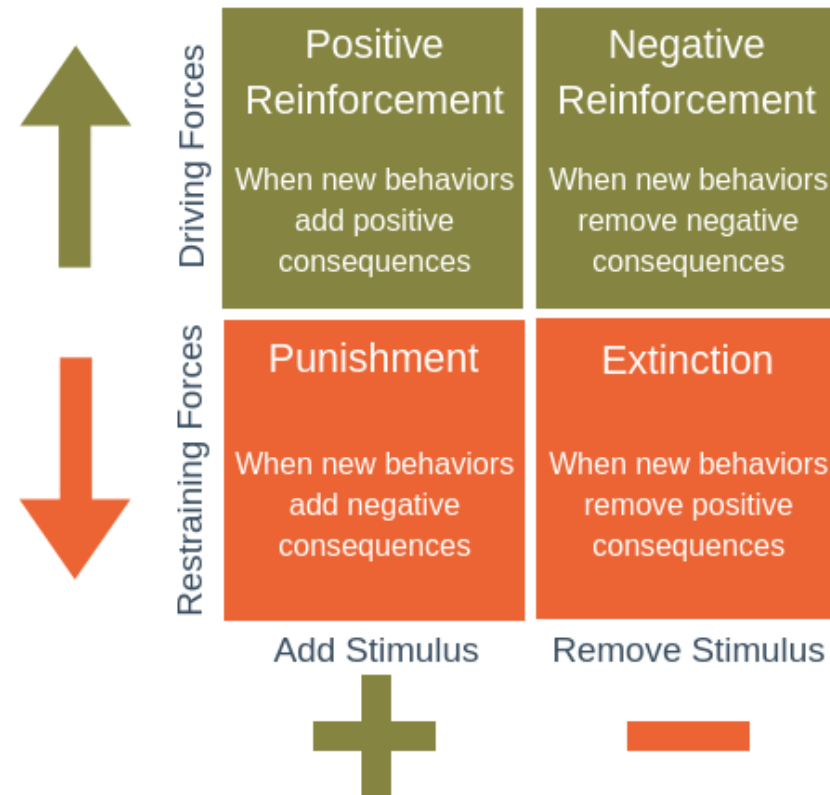
Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura 1986)



Self-Efficacy Theory Sketchnote. Reprinted from a tweet by H. Lewis (@Haypsych), November 12, 2021,

<https://x.com/Haypsych/status/1459174209234604048>. Copyright 2021 by H. Lewis.

Reinforcement Theory of Motivation



Reinforcement Theory Model (Based on B.F. Skinner's Work). Reprinted from *Reinforcement theory of motivation*, by D. Haughey, 2018, <https://expertprogrammanagement.com/2018/10/reinforcement-theory-of-motivation/>. Copyright 2018 by D. Haughey.

Appendix B: Ethics Application

Doctoral Student Ethics Application Form

Anyone conducting research under the auspices of the Institute of Education (staff, students or visitors) where the research involves human participants or the use of data collected from human participants, is required to gain ethical approval before starting. This includes preliminary and pilot studies. Please answer all relevant questions in simple terms that can be understood by a lay person and note that your form may be returned if incomplete.

Registering your study with the UCL Data Protection Officer as part of the UCL Research Ethics Review Process

If you are proposing to collect personal data i.e., data from which a living individual can be identified **you must be registered with the UCL Data Protection Office before you submit your ethics application for review.** To do this, email the complete ethics form to the [UCL Data Protection Office](#). Once your registration number is received, add it to the form* and submit it to your supervisor for approval. If the Data Protection Office advises you to make changes to the way in which you propose to collect and store the data, this should be reflected in your ethics application form.

Please note that the completion of the [UCL GDPR online training](#) is mandatory for all PhD students.

Section 1 – Project details

Project title: [Voices from the Field](#)

Student name and ID number (e.g., ABC12345678): [Victoria L Pendry 19182077](#)

***UCL Data Protection Registration Number:**

Date Issued: [30th July 2022](#) UCL GDPR Reference: **Z6364106/2022/07/170 social research**

Supervisor/Personal Tutor: [Dr Mary Richardson](#)

Department: [Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment](#)

Course category (Tick one):

PhD ☐

EdD ☒

DEdPsy ☐

If applicable, state who the funder is and if funding has been confirmed.

- a. Intended research start date: [September 23rd 2022](#)
- b. Intended research end date: [September 2023](#)
- c. Country fieldwork will be conducted in: [South Sudan](#)
- d. If research to be conducted abroad, please check the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) and submit a completed travel risk assessment form (see guidelines). If the FCO advice is against travel this will be required before ethical approval can be granted: [UCL travel advice webpage](#)
- e. Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?

Yes ☒

External Committee Name: [Juba University, South Sudan. Ministry of Education South Sudan.](#)

Date of Approval: [These applications are being submitted in parallel to this application.](#)

No ☐ ***go to Section 2***

If yes:

- Submit a copy of the approval letter with this application.
- Proceed to Section 10 Attachments.

Note: Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the [National Research Ethics Service](#) (NRES) or [Social Care Research Ethics Committee](#) (SCREC). In addition, if your research is

based in another institution then you may be required to apply to their research ethics committee.

Section 2 - Research methods summary (tick all that apply)

- ☒ Interviews
- ☐ Focus Groups
- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☐ Action Research
- ☐ Observation
- ☒ Literature Review
- ☐ Controlled trial/other intervention study
- ☐ Use of personal records
- ☐ Systematic review – **if only method used go to Section 5**
- ☒ Secondary data analysis – ***if secondary analysis used go to Section 6***
- ☐ Advisory/consultation/collaborative groups
- ☐ Other, give details:

Please provide an overview of the project, focusing on your methodology. This should include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, data collection (including justifications for methods chosen and description of topics/questions to be asked), reporting and dissemination. Please focus on your methodology; the theory, policy, or literary background of your work can be provided in an attached document (i.e., a full research proposal or case for support document). *Minimum 150 words required.*

Purpose and aims of the research:

This study aims to make a contribution to the development of a National Teacher Policy in South Sudan, which is part of the Ministry of Education's 2022 to 2025 Sector Plan. It aims to do so by co-creating a well-founded and theorised account of what motivates primary teachers in rural South Sudan. Understanding teacher motivation 'in context' will help policy makers to build better systems and structures of support for teachers aimed at ultimately improving learning outcomes for learners. The study also contributes to global knowledge because there are few theories of motivation developed within and by actors in low-income countries and even fewer that are built on the perspectives of teachers.

This study builds upon my own professional experiences of working with the Ministry of Education and donor agencies in South Sudan since 2012. My work has featured developing materials for

teachers and teacher trainers to support them improve the quality of education across schools in South Sudan. Alongside specific programmes of support for teachers, I have worked with the Ministry of Education to develop Policy and Guidance Documents to support the implementation of the new National Curriculum for Schools. These have included guidelines for National Assessments, for schools working in clusters and for the implementation of subjects that do not have textbooks such as PE and the Arts. My work in South Sudan has adopted a blended approach where I visit the capital city of Juba approximately once every six weeks, for a one week stay.

There are multiple studies and campaigns which argue for an understanding of what motivates teachers if we are to improve teaching practices and subsequent learning outcomes for learners. Teacher motivation is a feature of the #TeachersTransform campaign for example from the International Task Force on Teachers for 2030. There are some studies relating to teacher motivation in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and low-income countries (LIC) in general, however and there are no studies to date exploring the motivations of teachers in South Sudan. Even within the literature exploring teacher motivation in SSA and LIC, there is a tendency to analyse findings through the lens of theories of motivation developed in high-income countries, even if the study itself is with (or rather, 'on') actors in LIC. Throughout the course of the study, I aim to co-develop a theory of motivation for teachers in South Sudan by collaborating with teachers in six rural primary schools in Western Equatoria. Teachers will take part in semi-structured interviews or by completing a short questionnaire in their own language. Teachers will be invited to be co-researchers and active participants in the study so that there is a sense of learning together. It is acknowledged however, that some teachers may feel more comfortable remaining in role as an interviewee and sharer of information rather than as a co-developer. This role and type of participation will be established during initial visits to schools, requiring researchers to navigate these preferences for roles carefully.

In-country research support

I will recruit two researchers from Juba, one from Juba University and one from a Research and Development NGO known to me since 2014. We will refine a research methodology that will be submitted to Juba University and the Ministry of Education for ethical approval that complements the UCL ethical application procedure. These researchers will be selected on the basis that they are able to speak Zande (preferably as their first language) and English fluently in order to be able to communicate authentically with participating teachers and to be able to accurately translate interview and questionnaire data into English for me to be able to analyse. I have chosen to recruit in-country researchers so that my research contributes to capacities of South Sudanese researchers. My study aims to engage with teachers in rural areas also whom are rarely engaged and speak little English, so a local language need to be used for communication which I do not possess. The Research Design section explains more about this approach.

A theoretical framework

Throughout the course of the study, particular aspects of motivation will be determined which will provide a focus for the study. What it is that teachers are motivated to do for example? And what is it that motivates them to do this? My initial ideas are around what it is that motivates teachers to enter into the profession (Teacher Recruitment) and to stay in their role (Teacher Retention). This is of interest because conditions (salary, resources, status, infrastructure, security) are poor and thus, would seem to be an undesirable environment for teachers to work with. There is also a lack of data as to whether or not teachers in South Sudan see the need to change or improve their practice, and if so, what it is that motivates them to do so? Why they perceive there to be a lack of 'need' to change their practice if this is the case conversely. These ideas are based upon my own observations of teachers in schools in Juba, through conversations with Ministry of Education Officials, NGOs Education leaders through my IFS Study, the literature around professional development in SSA (Iliukhina and Ratteree, 2009; MoGEISS, 2017; Tikly, 2013; Tabulawa, 2003; Sayed, 2018) and the data around teacher recruitment, retention and professional development held by the Ministry of Education on their Human resource Information System, South Sudan (HRISSS). The literature around teacher motivation in South Sudan and comparable low-income countries is extremely limited. Bennell & Akyeampong (2007) in their paper, Teacher motivation in sub-Saharan Africa and

South Asia, comment that 'very little robust evidence is presented to support the views and assertions about teacher motivation in developing countries.' In addition, when exploring who has informed the development of any such theories, in their paper entitled, Teacher Voice in Global Conversations, Gozali et al., (2017) conclude that, 'the voices of teachers, the most important school input influencing student outcomes, continue to be neglected both in literature and in policy-making.' A search within the [African Education Research Database](#), home to 3394 articles

written by researchers within Africa, reveals only 9 papers from South Sudan, none of which relate to teacher motivation or the professional development needs of teachers. Across the whole of the database, only 4 papers address the theorisation of teacher motivation specific to countries in Africa.

Understanding what attracts teachers to the profession, to remain in the profession and to improve their practice is crucial to informing the design of both in-service and pre-service professional development programmes for teachers. (Benabou and Triole, 2000; Davidson, 2007; Steiner-Khasami, 2013). The conditions for teachers in South Sudan are characterised by limited and unreliable remuneration; limited classroom resources; erratic and inconsistent training; a very high pupil to teacher ratio; insecurity and temporary or damaged school buildings (Akuey, 2018). These factors combine in different ways in different communities, but where most teachers (83%) are described to be untrained, there are only 181 teachers currently registered in Initial Teacher Training Institutions across the entire country (EMIS, 2018) and South Sudan is listed to be the 3rd most illiterate country in the world (UNESCO, 2020), it is imperative that efforts to motivate teachers are relevant and contextual (Traianou, 2019) if they are to be effective in retaining teachers and improving professional practice.

Understanding teacher motivation 'in context' will help policy makers to build better systems and structures of support for teachers aimed at ultimately improving learning outcomes for students. Capturing and reflecting upon the voices of teachers in rural settings is particularly important, as most of the population in South Sudan (85%) live in rural communities. Teachers are rarely consulted at policy level (Sayed, 2018) despite their role in implementing and enacting policies and procedures and their unique perspectives upon the learning environment. Policy development benefits from engagement with a range of stakeholders and I will refer to the 4R's Framework (Novelli et al., 2014)

for sustainable peace building, an important consideration in South Sudan, to support this throughout the study. (Redistribution (addressing inequalities); Recognition (respecting difference); Representation (ensuring participation); Reconciliation (dealing with the legacies of the conflict).)

This study also aims to offer an opportunity for the research community in South Sudan to consider an example of a participatory approach to qualitative research and analysis. To do this, the study will engage with the University of Juba and the Ministry of Education regularly to co-develop the methodology and research method, ensuring that there is an agreed purpose for the study which uses co-developed language that is understood by all stakeholders.

Main research questions

Main question: What are the factors that motivate primary school teachers in rural Western Equatoria to pursue and remain in their role as a teacher.

Sub questions:

- What do teachers believe to be their roles and responsibilities? Which of those are most important to them, and why?
- What has created barriers to fulfilling their roles as a teacher? What has acted as an enabler to fulfilling those roles?
- Who, or what, has helped them develop and maintain a desire to teach? What would support that further?
- What do they think makes a 'good teacher'? Who, or what, has helped them to be a good teacher? (and what has been an impediment?)
- How effective do they think they are as a teacher? How is that related to their continuing motivation?

Research design

Appendix A sets out a summary of the Research Method.

A qualitative, participatory study will be developed with primary school teachers in rural Western Equatoria, South Sudan. The study will be inductive, employing ethnographic, exploratory and interpretivist approaches to uncover motivators, beliefs and attitudes of teachers through the use of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The study will seek to decolonise the research method and subsequent data analysis by valuing indigenous knowledge and enabling teachers to tell their own stories, thus, shifting the balance of knowledge creation towards local actors and away from alien researchers. Participants in the study will be interviewed using a semi-structured interview approach which will be complemented by a short questionnaire for teachers who are not interviewed. Grounded theory lite will be employed in support of developing a richer understanding of the phenomenon under study and making findings accessible to a wider range of audience.

Semi-structured interviews will explore the lived experiences of teachers. This approach was selected because it reflects the strong oral tradition in South Sudan (Lorins, 2016), and thus uses a mode of communication which is familiar to many teachers, focusing helping teachers to tell stories of their experiences rather than using a series of direct questions. The data from an approach such as this is likely to be rich in anecdotes and aims to reveal unique perspectives, supporting researchers to develop a deeper understanding of the situation that teachers find themselves within. The study aims to give a voice to marginalised populations whose perspectives are not often sought, in this case, teachers, in rural communities.

Two local researchers will be recruited from Juba University and a Juba based NGO to support this study. Their rates of pay will be determined by recommended rates in conversation with CGA and the University of Juba. Costs for local researchers to travel to Western Equatoria and accommodation etc will also be negotiated transparently. The purpose of recruiting two local researchers is to ensure that interviews can take place in first languages as far as possible and that Juba University are an informed and supporting partner in this research

project to support their research and development strategies. Although it is possible for me to travel to schools beyond Juba, the British Embassy do not recommend that this at present and are not able to offer extra security detail for such an activity. Using local researchers however, the study is able to offer schools

interviewers who can speak the local language and who are familiar with cultural norms. There is some discussion amongst NGOs at present that western researchers offer communities some additional security and that they are in fact more trusted than government representative, but for the purposes of this study, local researchers will be recruited to sustain a focus on capacity building at Juba University, to demonstrate the value placed on local languages and to gain access to use a research method that allows us to access nuanced and detailed data.

Juba University researchers will be provided with some face to face and virtual training from myself which is informed by UNICEF guidelines for working in the field. The training will include guidance to:

- conduct semi-structured interviews;
- collect data systematically;
- adhere to data protection protocols;
- know and understand the principles of Child Friendly Schools;
- be able to identify and follow procedures if harmful behaviours are witnessed or disclosed;
- communicate effectively with the school community about this study.

Much of this training will take place during a face to face pilot study with two schools in Juba selected by the Ministry of Education in partnership with the Juba University and the NGO, CGA. Local researchers will observe teachers and other activities within the school compound, reflect upon and evaluate their interview techniques. They will co-develop with myself some protocols for ethical research in line with guidelines from UCL, Juba University and the Ministry of Education.

Researchers will collect questionnaires and record interviews. All recordings and questionnaires will be translated and transcribed into English by the researchers themselves. This is aimed at limiting circulation of identifiable data and to also provide an opportunity for further reflection after interviews I particular have taken place? Transcriptions will be 'cross referenced' so that researchers check each other's transcriptions for accuracy – another opportunity for a critical engagement in the data. It is likely that some words or phrases will not translate directly from Zande into English. In these instances, I will work closely with the researchers to agree upon an English translation,

checking this back with teachers if possible. It is possible that these instances will be of particular interest in view of cultural nuances relating to motivation.

During the main research phase in schools in Western Equatoria, I will remain in regular contact with the local researchers via WhatsApp, SMS or phone calls. This is aimed at both gathering initial observations and reflections as the researchers progresses and ensuring that the research protocols are followed as closely as possible.

Sampling and participants

Six schools will be selected to take part in this study. They will be selected so that the group of schools has similar characteristics in terms of location, funding, size and language. Some attempt will be made to ensure that schools are not selected who regularly take part in studies such as this. In Juba there are a number of 'go to' schools who appear in most blogs posts from NGOs and Ministry reports for example who are selected because they are felt to best represent the system. I'd like to avoid this kind of bias and visit schools who are potentially more representative of the education community.

Teachers from Primary Schools are a target population for this study due to their low levels of qualification compared to secondary teachers (EMIS, 2021) and their status as predominantly volunteer teachers rather than teachers recruited and employed by the Ministry of Education. These two factors present interesting questions around their motivations to remain in teaching and to why they volunteered in the first place.

In each of the schools selected, four teachers will be interviewed by both researchers (one as lead interviewer and one as an observer and note taker). All the other teachers volunteering to be involved in my study will be invited to complete a short questionnaire that asks similar questions to those presented during interviews. A total of four teachers has been selected for interview as it is anticipated that each interview will take approximately 40 minutes. Four interviews therefore will take up nearly two and a half hours during the day, which will leave another hour within the school day to collect and distribute questionnaires.

Schools will be contacted via SMS, a phone call or via email in advance of the main research visit and will also be visited in person on one occasion before the main research phase begins. This will mainly be to share the focus of the study and to promote the study as a joint inquiry into teacher motivation in South Sudan. During this initial visit, information sheets will be presented to all teachers in the school so that the researcher is available to explain this study and answer any questions to mitigate teachers refusing to take part due to a lack of understanding of the process and purpose of the study. All teachers however will have the choice to participate, but it is hoped that a small financial incentive will motivate participation, an expectation from many teachers who take part in studies such as this. Questions around consent will be discussed informally during this visit, but then presented to teachers at the beginning of each interview, which will be recorded and thus confirm permission for data to be collected and anonymised. Teachers who complete paper-based questionnaires will be provided with the consent paper to complete in addition to the questionnaire.

To mitigate schools dropping out of the study, six schools will be contacted and recruited initially. If only five schools agree to participate, then the study will continue, but if less than five schools participate, two further schools will be recruited.

Data collection

Data collection will take place in the first language of teachers and researchers as far as possible. Interviews will be recorded and translated into English. Local researchers will cross reference each other's work for accuracy, made possible by the approach to interviewing that uses one researcher to be the main interviewer and the other as an observer.

Data collected will be analysed by myself in an ongoing, iterative review in support of a Grounded Theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1965, 1967). I will adopt a 'Grounded Theory-lite' approach, suggested by Braun & Clarke (2016) to acknowledge that pure Grounded Theory is difficult to achieve as there are no standard rules to follow for the identification of categories in Grounded Theory, and that this study is likely to produce a lot of data which might benefit from a thematic analysis approach also. Ongoing analyses will be shared with researchers to shape some of the interview questions in response to emerging themes. The literature relating to teacher motivation will be reviewed throughout the study in order to offer some insight into responses and developing themes. Charmaz (2006) suggests that using Grounded Theory for example means researching with 'an open mind but not an empty head'. Ongoing thematic analysis will be used to uncover the main themes that will enable me to develop a theory of Teacher Motivation in South Sudan. A first draft of the final analysis will be shared with researchers for their feedback before a final report is submitted to stakeholders.

Local researchers will also be supported to keep a reflective journal to document their observations such as what they see taking place in the school compound, ready to share and discuss with myself during the main research phase and during the analysis stages of the research. Strategies for completing this journal will come through discussions of its purpose and structure during the pilot phase in Juba. The journals will not form part of the data that is collected instead aim to support local researchers to be reflective and to also provide myself with a little more contextual narrative.

Paper questionnaires will be collected by researchers and stored securely in a locked bag or box after photographing and uploading images to files on a data encrypted USB stick. The two sets of audio files and questionnaire image swill be stored on two separate encrypted USB sticks to be stored separately in case one is damaged or lost. A dedicated, password protected email will be set up for the duration of this study for use

between researchers and participating school. Communications will be in person or via telephone calls rather than via WhatsApp and SMS where possible to limit breaches in data protection.

Reporting and dissemination

Reporting of the findings of this study will be firstly shared with the ethics committees at Juba University and the Ministry of Education. From here, after comments and review, a Policy Brief will be prepared for the Teacher Development and Management Service (TDMS) within the Ministry who are responsible for developing the Teacher Education Policy. This policy brief will be presented via a blended meeting between researchers (myself and the 2 researchers recruited from Juba University), TDMS and representatives from Juba University. Once the Policy Brief has been shared with TDMS, it will be further disseminated via other related networks in South Sudan such as the NGO Forum, UNICEF and the Education Cluster Group. After this dissemination in South Sudan, a paper will be written for BAICE and BERA and abstracts will be submitted to take part in the CIES and UKFIT conference in 2023/2024.

Teachers at participating schools will be provided with a copy of the Policy Brief, translated into Zande. (The Ministry Policy for education materials and training is for them to be written in English, but in this case, it is more appropriate to report back to school in the language that was used during interviews.) The Policy Brief will be given to school during a return visit to each school. During the initial visits, we will discuss what form of 'celebration' if any, should take place during this final visit.

Section 3 – research Participants (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Early years/pre-school
- ☐ Ages 5-11
- ☐ Ages 12-16
- ☐ Young people aged 17-18
- ☒ Adults please specify below
- ☐ Unknown – specify below
- ☐ No participants

Teachers at six rural schools in Western Equatoria, South Sudan. Pilot study to include teachers from two primary schools in Juba.

Note: Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) or Social Care Research Ethics Committee (SCREC).

Section 4 - Security-sensitive material (only complete if applicable)

Security sensitive research includes: commissioned by the military; commissioned under an EU security call; involves the acquisition of security clearances; concerns terrorist or extreme groups.

- a. Will your project consider or encounter security-sensitive material?

Yes* ☐ No ☒

- b. Will you be visiting websites associated with extreme or terrorist organisations?

Yes* ☐ No ☒

- c. Will you be storing or transmitting any materials that could be interpreted as promoting or endorsing terrorist acts?

Yes* ☐ No ☒

* Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues**

Section 5 – Systematic reviews of research (only complete if applicable)

- a. Will you be collecting any new data from participants?

Yes* ☐ No ☐

- b. Will you be analysing any secondary data?

Yes* ☐ No ☐

* Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues**

*If your methods do not involve engagement with participants (e.g. systematic review, literature review) **and** if you have answered **No** to both questions, please go to **Section 8 Attachments**.*

Section 6 - Secondary data analysis (only complete if applicable)

- a. Name of dataset/s: HRISSS Human Resource Information System South Sudan

- b. Owner of dataset/s: Ministry of Education South Sudan

- c. Are the data in the public domain?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If no, do you have the owner's permission/license?

Yes ☐ No* ☐

- d. Are the data special category personal data (i.e. personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data,

biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation)?

Yes* ☐ No ☒

- e. Will you be conducting analysis within the remit it was originally collected for?

Yes ☒ No* ☐

- f. **If no**, was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis?

Yes ☐ No* ☐

- g. **If no**, was data collected prior to ethics approval process

Yes ☐ No* ☐

** Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues***

Section 7 – Data Storage and Security

Please ensure that you include all hard and electronic data when completing this section.

- a. Data subjects - Who will the data be collected from?

Primary School Teachers in Western Equatoria, South Sudan.

- b. What data will be collected? Please provide details of the type of personal data to be collected

Using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, data will be collected about teachers' experiences of becoming a teacher, their perceived roles and their experiences of professional development activities.

Teachers will be asked about their perceived roles and responsibilities and what they believe to be an 'effective' teacher. Some discussions of self-efficacy are likely to take place.

Is the data anonymised? Yes ☒ No* ☐

Do you plan to anonymise the data? Yes* ☒ No ☐

Do you plan to use individual level data? Yes* ☒ No ☐

Do you plan to pseudonymise the data? Yes* ☒ No ☐

** Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues***

- c. **Disclosure** – Who will the results of your project be disclosed to?

Pseudonymised results will be disclosed to UCL; Juba University; Ministry of Education South Sudan; teachers who participated in the study; a range of professional development providers in South Sudan including state and ministry education departments and Non-governmental Organisations operating in South Sudan; The

Education Cluster Group in South Sudan, the NGO Forum in South Sudan, Teacher Development and Management Service in

South Sudan; International Teacher Taskforce; BAICE, BERA, UKFIET, CIES. My thesis will also be made publicly available through UCL.

Disclosure – Will personal data be disclosed as part of your project?

No

- d. **Data storage** – Please provide details on how and where the data will be stored i.e. UCL network, encrypted USB stick**, encrypted laptop** etc.

Encrypted USB stick used on encrypted laptop belonging to all researchers that are password protected.
Data will also be stored via an s: shared drive & UCL email accounts

*** Advanced Encryption Standard 256 bit encryption which has been made a security standard within the NHS*

- e. **Data Safe Haven (Identifiable Data Handling Solution)** – Will the personal identifiable data collected and processed as part of this research be stored in the UCL Data Safe Haven (mainly used by SLMS divisions, institutes and departments)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

- f. **How long will the data and records be kept for and in what format?**

Ten years. Word document, audio files and questionnaire images will be stored on my own encrypted laptop that is password protected.

Will personal data be processed or be sent outside the European Economic Area? (If yes, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protections in compliance with GDPR and state what these arrangements are)

No

Will data be archived for use by other researchers? (If yes, please provide details.)

No. Researchers from Juba University and the Ministry of Education will have continued access to the data during the study, but will sign a confidentiality agreement not to disclose any personal data, and once the research is completed, will no longer have access.

- g. **If personal data is used as part of your project, describe what measures you have in place to ensure that the data is only used for the research purpose e.g. pseudonymisation and short retention period of data’.**

Pseudonymisation of all participant data in all translated transcripts. A key will be developed to enable all researchers to identify teachers from particular contexts. Survey and interview questions will have limited questions relating to demographics data to further protect anonymity, but it is likely that some issues relating to demographics will come out during interviews.

Data sharing. Will data be shared with other organisations, e.g. research partners or collaborators, funders, contractors or government departments?

Yes* ☒ No ☐

If yes to the above:

What is the name of the organisation (or type, if name not known) that data will be shared with:

The Ministry of Education, South Sudan

Juba University, South Sudan

UNICEF South Sudan

FCDO

The Education Cluster Group in South Sudan

Save the Children South Sudan

Girls Education South Sudan

NGO Forum South Sudan

SIL South Sudan

Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA)

Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, University of Cambridge

Centre for Education and International Development, UCL

International Teacher Taskforce;

BAICE, BERA, UKFIET, CIES.

Please provide a brief purpose for the data sharing:

The purpose of the data sharing has three key purposes:

- 1) To share knowledge about what it is that motivates teachers in South Sudan to teach and to remain in Teaching. This is to support agencies using what is uncovered in the study to inform the design of their teacher training programmes in South Sudan and other, similar contexts.
- 2) To present an example of co-developed, qualitative research to the Research Community in South Sudan. It is hoped that this might stimulate discussions around the use of and value of qualitative methodologies as well as the value of co-developing theoretical models with local people.
- 3) To present an example to the wider research community within the field of Comparative Education, an example of a qualitative study conducted in a Low-income context. There are certain political, logistical and ethical challenges to researching in contexts such as South Sudan that I hope can be usefully discussed as a result of the outcomes and described methodologies presented in my study,

Please clarify whether you will be the data controller or data processor:

I will be the data controller.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Will a data sharing agreement be put in place?

Yes X No ☐

** Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues***

Section 8 – Ethical Issues

Please state clearly the ethical issues which may arise in the course of this research and how will they be addressed.

All issues that may apply should be addressed. Some examples are given below, further information can be found in the guidelines. *Minimum 150 words required.*

This section:

Methods

Sampling and recruitment

Gate keepers

Informed consent

Risks to participants and/or researchers

Confidentiality/Anonymity

Insider researcher

Methods

I will be using semi-structured interviews and short open-ended questionnaires for my study.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in the first language of the participants. This is aimed at:

reducing the barrier to clear descriptions and reasonable interpretations of teacher's experiences;

building trust and respect between researchers and participants;

promoting the value of local languages with research communities.

In order to ensure that the research method maximises opportunities to engage with teachers in rural communities, research tools will be piloted in two schools in Juba. This will be primarily aimed to developing interview questions and questionnaire that draw out rich responses from participants. The pilot study will also be an opportunity for the two researchers from Juba University to develop their research skills. This will focus particularly on probing for further insights during interviews, something cited to be challenging in a current NGO qualitative study with teachers. The pilot will also be an opportunity for researchers to practice translating then transcribing interviews and offering feedback on these transcriptions to their partner. The Reflective Journal will be piloted during the interviews with schools in Juba also to ensure that journals have a clear focus, adding value to interview transcriptions.

To support my own interpretation and analysis of the interviews, I will transform transcriptions into audio files through 'Sound of Text'. By listening to these files, I hope to mitigate the loss of transcribing interviews myself. I will also listen to excerpts of the actual interview recordings. Although I will not be able to understand the narrative, I will get a sense of the interview through listening to pauses and rises and falls of pitch and rhythm. I may be able to pick up some sense of enjoyment, motivation and hesitation or fear also. Although this activity

will have limited impact of my understanding of what teachers are saying, it will add to my picture building of the interview process and environment to help with my analysis.

To support local researchers conduct interviews, during the pilot phase we will co-develop a protocol for asking questions and responding to participants. It is likely that each question developed for the interview for example will be accompanied by some extra prompt questions. Key phrases to support and encourage participants will also be developed so that ongoing feedback to participants is positive whilst remaining specific. (e.g.; 'I like what you said about xxxxx' rather than, 'That's good.')

We will also consider some aspects of body language and intonation so that participants feel comfortable and encouraged to participate. It is likely that there will be some cultural considerations here such as whether to make eye contact, what preferred names participants wish to be used and how close to sit to participants. We will discuss positioning also so that we explore with participants how they would like to participate. We will ensure that participants do not feel 'cornered' for example and that as far as possible, each interview is felt to be private yet just within sight of other teachers if that seems to be the most appropriate during piloting.

Researchers will practice conducting interviews during the pilot phase and will develop a useful protocol for providing feedback to each other (because interviews are always conducted in pairs). Feedback to co-researchers is likely to be based on a simple model of 'two stars and a wish' for example where one suggestion is made for improvement and two comments are made about useful strategies for improvement. Feedback will be recorded in the research journals as the research progresses so that researchers can reflect on their developing skills as an interviewer.

Sampling and recruitment

I intend to collect data from all teachers in six primary schools in the state of Western Equatoria. The **Sampling Framework** explains recruitment criteria in some detail. In summary however, this region has been selected because:

- this region is mostly populated by the Azande tribe, the single most populous ethnic group in South Sudan and is therefore relatively representative of the wider population.
- the language spoken in Western Equatoria is mostly Zande, the third most prevalent national language spoken across South Sudan and is therefore relatively representative of the wider population. Importantly, the 2 researchers that have been recruited, speak Zande as their first language also. The researchers also have high levels of English Language proficiency which will support translations into English for this study.

- it is close to Juba so that travel times are not too long, minimising security risks. the roads from Juba to the Western Equatoria region are known to be both secure and permanent (as opposed to dirt tracks) minimising security risks.

Four teachers in each school will be selected to take part in a 30 - 40 minute interview. These teachers will be selected by the Head Teacher, guided by the research team to suggest that teachers who teach P1 and 3 should be selected and then three additional teachers who are from higher year groups who teach different subjects. This guided selection criteria from the researcher will limit the bias here that Head Teachers may have related to who they select. All teachers will be given the opportunity to opt-out however if they do not feel comfortable participating. It is hoped that the \$8 payment however and the initial orientation visit to schools will prevent teachers from feeling that they do not want to participate. This will be an important aspect of the initial visit to school, to prepare both the Head Teacher and selected teachers for the study, maximising the likelihood of their participation. It will need to be made very explicit that the study is a collaborative activity and is not an opportunity for visitors to make judgements about the teachers or the school in general.

Teachers who are not interviewed, will be provided with a one-page questionnaire, with open ended questions, similar to the questions used in interview. These will be in Zande also and will be explained to teachers during a short introductory meeting during the main research phase visit. Teachers who complete the paper questionnaire will have a single sheet consent form to complete, equivalent to the consent questions that are read to teachers who participant in interviews.

All teachers will be remunerated for their participation in the study, just as researchers will be for their participation in the study. This is to promote the collaborative nature and aims to demonstrate a respect for the teachers who provide their time and narratives. The remuneration is likely to be \$8 per teacher (Interview and Questionnaire) which is the rate used by most NGOs when working with teachers in this way, known as a DSA (Daily Subsistence Allowance.) This will be distributed to teachers in cash at the point of interview or upon completing the questionnaire and each teacher will be provided with a short letter confirming that this payment has been made to them as a result of participating in this research. This letter is both to reassure teachers that they have evidence should they need it to confirm the payment and is also to support researchers in the case of teachers subsequently demanding payments.

By paying all teachers to participate, whether they are being interviewed or completing a questionnaire, it is hoped that this might also mitigate some bias from the Head Teacher to select teachers who they would like to be paid.

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), or adults classed as vulnerable, you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through UCL.

Although researchers will not be working directly with children, because of their likely contact with children during school visits, researchers will be orientated to understand the 7 Child Friendly School (CFS) principles (UNICEF, 2004), a child rights-based approach to public services. This will be combined with Child Protection training from UNICEF also, which will support researchers to understand how to conduct themselves whilst amongst children and what behaviours of both adults and children are in conflict with the CFS. Researchers will be provided with clear guidelines as to what they should do if they see behaviours that are concerning, and this includes the use of corporal punishment in schools which although is now illegal in South Sudan, is still quite prevalent according to the NGO educators interviewed for my IFS, and my own observations during visits to schools in Juba during 2021/22.

Gatekeepers

Approval and permission to conduct this study will be sought via the University of Juba and the Ministry of Education. At the school level, Head Teachers will be asked to agree to their teachers taking part in the study and will be encouraged to speak with their teachers about this purpose of this study after the initial meeting with researchers. PTAs will also be consulted if the Head Teacher feels it to be appropriate.

Informed consent

All of the interviewees will be participants on the basis of informed consent, having been asked specifically to take part in this research through the initial visit from researchers and in communication with the Head Teacher. During the interviews, participants will be asked questions to gain their consent to use the data. These interview questions will include a statement relating to their right to withdraw at any point during the research phase.

Participants who complete a questionnaire will be asked to indicate their agreement via a consent cover letter that they will be asked to sign. The consent letter will include a statement relating to their right to withdraw at any point during the research phase and will mirror the questions that were asked of teachers who participated in interviews.

During the initial stages of the interview, participants will be asked for their consent for researchers to use their data to inform this study. Participants will be reminded at this stage that use of their data does not mean that

they will be identifiable however and that they are also free to decline answering any questions should they wish to do so.

Risks to participants and/or researchers

Interviews will be conducted within school compound so there is unlikely to be increased risks to the researchers or teachers. The presence of researchers may attract some negative attention from the wider community however, so researchers will be trained to notice such activities and to descale any potential conflict. Researchers will be trained for example to minimise the risk of personal abuse or attack by maintaining open and relaxed body language and by ensuring questions (particularly secondary probing questions) are not lacking in cultural sensitivities that may cause offence. The topics to be researched are not sensitive and so are unlikely to present any emotional distress although it is possible that some teachers will feel uncomfortable talking about what they find to be demotivating, so researchers will be guided to respond supportively to such disclosures. Religious or personal matters may come up during interviews. In this case, researchers will be trained to recognise when this becomes a confidentiality issue and what to do in response to that, as well as how to respond sensitively during such discussions.

In order to limit potential anxiety in view of the phenomenon of 'interview as interrogation', researchers will be supported to ensure that interviewees feel comfortable and will practice strategies during the pilot phase to notice and respond to signs of fatigue or other stress. Participants will also be given the option not to answer a question that either makes them feel uncomfortable or that they feel unable to answer.

There is some risk to researchers as they travel to schools Western Equatoria. To mitigate this, researchers are being recruited who are familiar with routes and who can speak the local language. Researchers will both be issues with data and extra charging devices for their phones to ensure that communication is possible in an emergency. Radio sets will also be allocated to the vehicle used to transport researchers to school.

There is some risk to researchers of illness in the field resulting from insect bites for example, plant materials which cause allergic reactions or foods that cause stomach upsets. To mitigate this, researchers will be encouraged to drink only bottled water, to be vigilant around plants and animals and to wear insect repellent. Researchers will be supported to disclose any illness before the main research phase begins in order for me to consider rescheduling school visits or to recruit a replacement researcher. Medical and travel insurance will be purchased for researchers with procedures for responding to medical incidents being discussed during the initial training phase.

To comply with good practice recommendations from UNICEF in relation to Child Protection, researchers will not be left alone with children. Head Teachers will be made aware of this. This action is aimed at protecting

researchers from accusations of misconduct and should reassure (and provide a model to) Head Teachers that issues of Child Protection are taken seriously

Confidentiality/Anonymity

Interviewees will be informed that data relating to this study will be pseudonymised and that they will not be identifiable when findings are published. Interviewees will be reassured that their school will not be named either or any other participant in the study. Participants in the study however will also be notified that there are limits to confidentiality if a teacher, community member or child discloses information that indicates harm. During the pilot stages of the research, we will consider what impact issues of anonymity have on teachers.

Schools will be invited to consider whether they would like to take part in a celebration event at the end of the main research phase. This is not an uncommon cultural practice when schools, teachers and other stakeholders have contributed to a study or project. This would have some impact on the anonymity of the report however, so schools will be asked to consider this carefully. To help them in their decision making, they will be provided with a draft final report in order to be able to see key themes and a summary of findings.

Insider researcher

This research relates directly to the area of my own work. This means that I have an intimate knowledge of the context of the study. When designing questions for the interview and questionnaire, I will pay attention to any bias that I may have in relation to my research questions in order to maintain objectivity. Potential conflicts of interest therefore will need to be outlined to recruited researchers, and I will make it clear that this research is not being sponsored by an industry or organisation who stand to benefit from generating certain results.

Please confirm that the processing of the data is not likely to cause substantial damage or distress to an individual

Yes ☒

Section 9 – Attachments.

Please attach your information sheets and consent forms to your ethics application before requesting a Data Protection number from the UCL Data Protection office. Note that they will be unable to issue you the Data Protection number until all such documentation is received

- a. Information sheets, consent forms and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research (List attachments below)

Yes ☒ No ☐

VP Thesis Consent form IoE UCL

VP Thesis Information Sheet IoE UCL

VP THESIS IOE risk assessment form IoE UCL

VP Thesis Proposal Summary IoE UCL

VP Appendix A Research Method Summary

VP Sampling Framework IoE UCL

- b. Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee Yes ☐
- c. The proposal ('case for support') for the project Yes ☒
- d. Full risk assessment Yes ☒

Section 10 – Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information in this form is correct and that this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of this project.

I have discussed the ethical issues relating to my research with my supervisor.

Yes ☒ No ☐

I have attended the appropriate ethics training provided by my course.

Yes ☒ No ☐

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:

The above information is correct and that this is a full description of the ethics issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Name Victoria Pendry

Date 24th September 2022

Notes and references

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). (Mis)conceptualising themes, thematic analysis, and other problems with Fugard and Potts' (2015) sample-size tool for thematic analysis. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(6), 739–743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1195588>

Professional code of ethics

You should read and understand relevant ethics guidelines, for example:

British Psychological Society (2018) *Code of Ethics and Conduct*

Or

British Educational Research Association (2018) *Ethical Guidelines*

Or

British Sociological Association (2017) *Statement of Ethical Practice*

Please see the respective websites for these or later versions; direct links to the latest versions are available on the Institute of Education Research Ethics website.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as Schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) CHECK, before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through at IOE.

Ensure that you apply for the DBS check in plenty of time as will take around 4 weeks, though can take longer depending on the circumstances.

Departmental Use

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, the supervisor must refer the application to the Research Development Administrator via email so that it can be submitted to the IOE Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A departmental research ethics coordinator or representative can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application

should be referred to the REC. If unsure please refer to the guidelines explaining when to refer the ethics application to the IOE Research Ethics Committee, posted on the committee's website.

Student name: Victoria Pendry

Student department: Curriculum Pedagogy and Assessment

Course: EdD

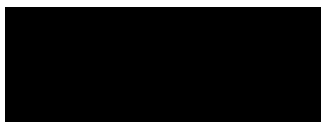
Project Title: Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan

Reviewer 1

Supervisor/first reviewer name: Professor Mary Richardson

Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research? No

Supervisor/first reviewer signature:



Date: 27/09/22

Reviewer 2

Second reviewer name: Dr Cosette Crisan

Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?

NoSecond reviewer signature:



Date: 27/09/2022

Decision on behalf of reviewers

Approved ☒

Once it is approved by both reviewers, students should submit their ethics application form to the Centre for Doctoral Education team: IOE.CDE@ucl.ac.uk



Institute of Education

UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee Risk Assessment Form - Fieldwork

1- Please enter the risk assessment fieldwork applicant details:

Name(s) of Researcher (s) submitting this risk assessment:	Victoria Louise Pendry
Name of Supervisor (if applicable):	Mary Richardson
Research Project Title:	Voices from the field. Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan
Brief Description of Project (including Fieldwork Location):	This project aims to contribute to the development of a theory of teacher motivation in South Sudan. This will in turn, contribute to the development of a National Teacher Education Policy. Victoria Pendry (VP) will be referred to as the Principal Researcher. Two local researchers will be recruited in Juba who will be referred as Local Researchers. Six rural primary schools will participate in the state of Western Equatoria, South Sudan in this study. Four teachers in each school will participate in semi-structured interviews which will

take approximately 40 minutes each. All other teachers (expected to be approximately 11) in the school will be invited to complete a short questionnaire about teacher motivation. The study will be piloted in 2 primary schools in Juba (Capital City which VP is based during field visits) before visiting schools in Western Equatoria. All teachers who participate in this study will be awarded 4000SSP (approximately \$8) to recognise their commitment and time given to the study. This

award is common practice in South Sudan for teachers who contribute to research and is referred to as an 'incentive'.

Victoria (VP) will lead this study. She has been working partly remotely and in country since 2014, conducting approximately six, 1-week long visits a year to South Sudan, working directly with schools and teachers, the Ministry of Education, South Sudan and UNICEF partners. VP has experience of working in Uganda and Kenya in country also as well as Sudan, Zambia, Bangladesh and Sierra Leone remotely since 2014 and is thus experienced in relation to working in Low-income countries.

VP will recruit 2 South Sudanese research assistants from the University of Juba and an NGO (CGA, with whom she has worked since 2015 and who have been working in (South) Sudan since 2009) to conduct this research with schools in Western Equatoria. Recruiting South Sudanese researchers (the 'Local Researchers') is aimed at gaining access to interviewee responses in mother tongue to support authentic narratives, but is also in view of security risks for non-native researchers, especially of a white ethnic background, to travel beyond the capital of city of Juba.

All in-country work for VP will be combined with work that VP is already doing in South Sudan through her company, The Curriculum Foundation. The study aims to follow the following work plan:

Sept '22. During a work visit, Victoria will meet potential local researchers and begin to liaise with Juba University and the Ministry of Education to gain ethical approval for the study.

September '22. Remotely recruit two local researchers.

September '22. During a work visit, meet recruited local researchers to refine research method and research tools. Plan visit to schools to pilot research tools. (VP working in South Sudan for 1 week)

November '22. Conduct a remote training session with local researchers to explore key theories of motivation as identified by VP through her Literature Review. Refine research tools.

December 5th and 6th '22. Pilot research in 2 Juba primaries – Local Researchers and VP. (VP working in South Sudan for 1 week)

December 8th and 9th, '22. Local researchers conduct initial visit to schools in Wester Equatoria without VP.

December 12th to 16th, '22. Main research phase – data collection in 6 schools. Local Researchers in School without VP.

	December 8th to 16th, '22. Local Researchers and VP communicate via WhatsApp and skype to discuss experiences of schools visits and data collection. January '23. Local researchers transcribe interviews and translate questionnaire answers. Virtual meeting to discuss the observations made by local researchers of what they noticed during school visits. Review transcriptions also. (VP remote) February '23. VP conducts data analyses and prepares a draft summary report of findings. (VP remote) May '23. VP shares summary during a virtual meeting with local researchers to gain feedback. Paper is refined. Local researchers share summary report with participating schools in Juba and Western Equatoria. (VP in country for work) June/July '23. Final report is presented to Ministry of Education, Juba University and other stakeholders. This will take place face to face during a week where VP is visiting South Sudan for work purposes. August/September '23. Full Thesis is written and submitted.
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2- Please enter your IOE Department/Research Centre details:

Faculty	Faculty of Education
Department	Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment.
Centre / Unit (if applicable)	

3- Please tick below the categories of people potentially at risk from any activities covered by this risk assessment:

Researcher(s) x		Disabled persons	
Doctoral students (PhD, MRes, EdD) x		Inexperienced workers/Trainees	
Postgraduate Taught students (Masters)		Women of Child-Bearing Age	
Undergraduate students		Young Persons	
Members of the Public		Other Vulnerable Persons	
Other: Teachers x			

4- Please refer to the appendix on hazards and risks and enter details of potential hazards

5- Please confirm the steps you will take to mitigate risks from any activities covered by this risk assessment (see appendix on control/mitigating measures for details):
such as food poisoning, allergies, dehydration):

In general, the risk assessment is **informed by guidance from the UN Security Council in South Sudan, UNMISS and the MoE Research and Evaluation directorate.**

Personal attack/abuse whilst working. The research has been designed for pairs of local researchers to work together. This is aimed at increasing safety as well as improving the quality of the research. Whilst conducting interviews with teachers and liaising with school leaders and possibly PTAs.

Personal attack/abuse due to misunderstanding of a phone number or a speaking smart interview as well as teachers and liaising with school leaders and possibly PTAs. Communication will be to ensure that safety protocols are adhered to as well as to enable VP to identify aggressive behaviour from participants. The research from members of the school community of whilst traveling which may result from the collected information of judgement from researchers or a result of criminal activity. Agency or security services should they need to, and contact details will be provided accordingly.

Causing offence whilst working within unfamiliar schools, potentially by researchers unknowingly behaving in such a way that is in conflict with their participation in this study. This will be stored securely as directed by UNMISS and CGA/University of Juba protocol so as not to create an opportunity for theft. Spare cash will also be given to researchers in order for the to be able to pay for services or commodities in unexpected circumstances.

Local researchers will only be **accommodated** (if necessary) in hotels that meet the safety standards described by the UN Security Council in South Sudan, UNMISS and the MoE Research and Evaluation directorate.

Local researchers will be selected who speak the **same language** as the school communities which they will be working within. This is aimed at limiting unintentional offence and conflict that could result from behaviours that may be in conflict with cultural norms.

Interviews will be conducted with school compounds so there is unlikely to be increased risks to the local researchers or teachers during interview stages. The presence of the two local researchers may attract some negative attention from the wider community however, so researchers will be trained to notice such activities and to descale any potential conflict.

Local researchers will be trained by the safety officer from Charlie Goldsmiths Associates for example on how to minimise the risk of **personal abuse or attack** by maintaining open and relaxed body language and by ensuring questions (particularly secondary probing questions) are not lacking in cultural sensitivities that may cause offence. The topics to be researched are not sensitive and so are unlikely to present any **emotional distress** although it is possible that some teachers will feel uncomfortable talking about what they find to be demotivating, so local researchers will be guided to respond supportively to such disclosures. Religious or personal matters may come up during interviews. In this case, local researchers will be trained to recognise when this becomes a confidentiality issue and what to do in response to that, as well as how to respond sensitively during such discussions. Protocols for identifying and reporting disclosure of harm will be outlined during the training in Juba during training led by Victoria Pendry using guidance from UNICEF (Ethical Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis 2021).

In order to **limit potential anxiety** in view of the phenomenon of ‘interview as interrogation’, local researchers will be supported to ensure that interviewees feel comfortable and will practice strategies during the pilot phase to notice and respond to signs of fatigue or other stress. Participants will also be given the option not to answer a question that either makes them feel uncomfortable or that they feel unable to answer.

There is some risk to local researchers as they **travel** to schools in Western Equatoria. To mitigate this, local researchers are being recruited who are familiar with the routes and who can speak the local language. Researchers will carry official documentation with them from the Ministry of Education to validate their work.

There is some risk to local researchers of **illness in the field** resulting from insect bites for example, plant materials which cause allergic reactions or foods that cause stomach upsets. To mitigate this, local researchers will be encouraged to drink only bottled water, to be vigilant around plants and animals and to wear insect repellent. Local Researchers will be supported to disclose any illness before the main research phase begins in order for me to consider rescheduling school visits or to recruit a replacement researcher. Medical and travel insurance will be purchased for researchers with procedures for responding to medical incidents being discussed during the initial training phase.

To comply with good practice recommendations from UNICEF in relation to **Child Protection**, neither local researcher or VP will be left along with children. Head Teachers will be made aware of this. This action is aimed at protecting researchers from accusations of misconduct and should reassure (and provide a model to) Head Teachers that issues of Child Protection are taken seriously. During the virtual training session in November and during the pilot study in Juba, research assistants will consider in various aspects of Child Protection according to UNICEF, MoE and UCL guidelines.

UCL GDPR Reference: **Z6364106/2022/07/170 social research**

6- Risk Level – please refer to the matrix below and confirm your assessment of risk level with existing mitigating measures:

GUIDANCE FOR NON-SPECIALIST RISK ASSESSMENTS					
SEVERITY - Minor Injury - Lost time injury, temporary disability or illness - Permanent disability or major injury - Fatality, multiple serious injuries/illnesses - Multiple fatalities	LIKELIHOOD				
	Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Certain
	A	A	B	B	C
	A	B	C	C	D
	B	C	C	D	E
	C	C	D	E	E
	C	D	E	E	E
RISK LEVEL A: Very Low / Trivial B: Low / Tolerable C: Medium / Moderate D: High / Substantial E: Very High / Intolerable					
A – Very low risk	X	B – Low risk			
C – Moderate risk		D – High risk *			
E – Very high risk *					

9 - Declaration: All persons carrying out this work declare that they have read, understood and agreed to abide by the safety instructions and control measures stated in the appendix in this generic risk assessment form. This assessment must be reviewed if there is a significant change to the project. * A full project specific risk assessment must be carried out with the UCL Safety Team if the project risks are deemed high/very high. Please contact ioe.researchethics@ucl.ac.uk for details.

Researcher's Signature/Name:	Victoria Pendry 
Date:	23 rd September 2022

APPROVAL (REVIEWERS' AREA):

Approval decision (<i>Approved/Rejected</i>)	
Approver's Name: (<i>Application Reviewers' Names</i>)	

Appendix - Safety Information on hazards, risks and control measures which may apply:

(Source: UCL Social & Historical Sciences Fieldwork Risk Assessment)

1) Hazards associated with *Lone Working*

Lone working is defined as working out of the eyesight of other colleagues. These hazards apply to generic fieldwork where you carry out interviews or questionnaires alone, as well as travelling to and from the research site alone. Many of the control measures are common sense and apply to everyday life as well as research.

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures
<i>Lone Working-</i> Miscellaneous Hazards	Difficulties in summoning help when required; risk of abuse/attack	• Where possible work, as a minimum, in pairs. • Where possible carry a radio or mobile phone. • Leave details of the field site and a work plan (include contact name and address) with colleagues in the department or at home prior to any trip. • Specify dates and times of departure and return. If your plans change, inform someone as soon as possible. • Do not carry valuables or large sums of money unless you need to. • Carry a personal alarm

		• Instigate a "check-in" system with a colleague or supervisor - Phone in at regular intervals. If you do not phone or return at a certain time arrange for suitable action to be taken. • Trust your intuition - If you feel scared or uneasy, do not ignore it.
Lone Working- Travelling alone	On foot - risks of personal attack/abuse	• Whenever possible avoid walking alone at night. • Keep to busy, well-lit roads. • Avoid poorly lit or rarely used underpasses. • Walk facing on-coming traffic to avoid kerb-crawlers. • Do not use a personal stereo - you will be unable to hear anyone approaching from behind. • Plan your journey in advance - tell someone which route you mean to take and estimated time of arrival at your destination. • Walk with confidence and purpose - try not to look as if you are not sure of where you are going. • Make sure wallets, cameras, jewellery and expensive watches and other valuables are not on display. • Dress appropriately - try to fit in without attracting attention.
	By Car	• Make sure the vehicle is in good working order before setting off. • Make sure you have change for a telephone in an emergency. • Plan your journey in advance - tell someone which route you mean to take and estimated time of arrival at your destination. • Do not leave valuables visible in the car - even when you are in it. Keep bags etc. out of reach of open windows. • When parking in daylight, consider what the area will be like after dark. • When returning to the vehicle, quickly look around it to make sure there is no one waiting for you. • If you are forced to stop by another car, stay in the car, lock the doors and speak through a slightly open window. • Make sure you know what to do if the car breaks down. (i.e. who to phone; where to phone from etc.)

Lone Working Staying in Hotels	Risks to personal safety	• At reception, try to avoid letting other people overhear your name and room number. • Do not go into other people's rooms unless you know it is absolutely safe. • Do not allow people into your room unless you know who they are. • If you hear a disturbance, stay in your room and phone for help.

2) Hazards associated with *Dealing with Other People* Research often involves dealing with other people. Most research is carried out without problems, but it is important to be aware of the guidelines for good practice in dealing with the public, and especially entering other people's homes.

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures
Dealing With People - Other People's Homes	Associated Risks	• See also <i>Lone working</i>.
	Risk of personal attack/abuse	• Do not enter the house if the appropriate person is not available. • Wait to be invited in or at least ask to enter. • Acknowledge that it is their territory; let them lead the way. • If the person is drunk or aggressive, do not enter. • Ensure you can get out quickly if necessary. • If you feel threatened at any point, make an excuse to leave.
	Causing offence, leading to abuse/attack	• Try not to react to dirty or smelly surroundings. • Do not spread your belongings around. • Take care with documents you may not want them to see, but avoid being "secretive". • Let them know how much of their time you will need.
	Other People's "Pets" - risk of injury, allergy, etc.	• Be aware that not all pets are "friendly" • If entering a house with a dog or cat, ask that the animal be put in another room if you feel uncomfortable.

		• If you are "wary" of a dog, do not enter the house unless the owner is prepared to remove the animal from the room you are going to be in. (Be polite and tactful when asking!) • See also <i>allergies</i>
Dealing With People - Unexpected Behaviour	Risk of personal attack/abuse due to misunderstanding of nature of work.	• Be aware of any delicate issues involved with discussions or interviews e.g. before asking a farmer questions regarding his land management, explain why you need to know. • Ensure landowners and their employees know who you are and what you are doing.
	Aggressive Behaviour	• Do not underestimate the importance of body language. • Talk yourself out of problems; placate rather than provoke. • Do not turn your back on someone who is behaving aggressively. • Stay calm, speak gently and slowly. • Do not be enticed into an argument. • Avoid an aggressive stance. Crossed arms, hands on hips or raised hands will challenge and confront. • Keep your distance. • Never try to touch someone who is angry - this will not calm the situation. • Keep your eye on potential escape routes
	Physical attack	• Try to get away as quickly as possible. Move towards a place where you know there will be other people. • Carry a personal alarm - set it off as close to the aggressor's ear as possible and then throw it out of reach. • Shout and scream - shout something practical like "call the police!" or "Fire!" • If grabbed and unable to break free - pretend to vomit. This will often have the desired effect!
Dealing With People -Dealing with Strangers	Causing offence , leading to abuse/attack	• Seek training in good interview techniques. • Where possible "vet" interviewees first over the phone. • Conduct interviews at neutral locations or public spaces or where neither party could be at risk. • Where possible conduct any interviews with an observer. • Seek advice and support from local groups. • Do not wear clothes that might cause offence.

Dealing With People - Public Places	Causing offence , leading to abuse/attack	• Do not stand in places where you will be causing an obstruction. • Always carry your ID card and be prepared to identify yourself. • Seek training in good interview techniques. • Consider your dress carefully - is it suitable for the location? • Make sure you have sought permission from relevant authorities to work in your chosen location.
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3) Hazards associated with different *Environments* Different environments will involve different hazards, and it is important to plan for these.

Hazards	Risk	Control Measures
Environment - Location	Risk of causing offence , which may lead to personal attack/abuse.	• Respect must be paid to local customs and problems, and advice taken from local contacts, embassies etc. • Dress appropriately. • Consult Foreign Office for advice before travelling overseas
	Working within other establishments , businesses, laboratories	• Ensure establishment has their own safety guidelines in place. • Whilst on the premises follow their guidelines.
	Working beside major roads	• Wear brightly coloured, conspicuous clothing. • Avoid having your back towards the traffic flow.
Environment - District	Risk of attack/abuse and personal injury	• Avoid areas known to be "unpleasant" • Seek information on areas before setting out. • Consult Local Community groups, Local Authorities, Police etc. for information and possible contact names before setting out. • Do not enter unfamiliar neighbourhoods alone. • Walk with confidence and purpose - try not to look as if you are not sure of where you are going. • Do not carry more money than you need to. • • • • •

		• Dress appropriately - try to fit in without attracting attention.
	Risk of getting lost - this may lead to straying into high risk areas.	• Study maps of the area before setting out. • Plan your route carefully. Ensure you know of a second route should the first be impassable. • Ensure you have a means of raising alarm if you are lost.
	Loosing data collection devices	• Each researcher will record each interview and store their devices separately in a secure (locked) bag or container. Having two devices reduces the risk of losing all data if one device is stolen or gets broken.

4) Hazards linked to *General Health and Fitness* There are additional hazards to do with general health associated with working in the field, accidents and problems with allergies are most common in unfamiliar environments. The following should be used as a guideline.

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures
Health - Accidents	Risk of injury	• For joint projects in remote areas ensure that one of the fieldwork team is trained in First Aid, and carry a First Aid kit • Be aware of where medical Supplies or treatment can be bought or received if there is an accident • Have plans of action and be aware of where help can be sought should an accident occur in a remote location. • <i>Remember that it is essential to fill out an accident report and return it to the Departmental Safety Officer (Health and Safety office) on return. It may help to make notes as soon after the incident as is possible.</i>
Health - Medical Conditions and General Fitness	Risk of illness whilst in the field	• Ensure any necessary medication is carried at all times • Ensure someone else is aware of the medical conditions and will recognise signs and symptoms. They should also be informed of the location of medication. • Diabetics should ensure sufficient food is carried in case there is a delay in returning.
	Fatigue leading to lack of concentration, accidents and risk of injury	• Do not try to do too much in one day, especially if the work is to be followed by a long drive home • Lack of sleep can lead to accidents - ensure sufficient rest is taken.

	Lack of Physical Fitness leading to risk of personal injury/illness	• Know your limitations - do not be forced to over-stretch your limit. • Do not be afraid to tell someone if you feel unwell or cannot carry on with a task. • Plan your work within your limits. • If you feel unwell - stop.
Health - Allergies	Insect bites and some plant material may cause allergic reactions - Allergic reactions can cause discomfort and in severe cases anaphylactic shock	• If aware of an allergy, carry any necessary medication. Be aware that some forms of anti-histamine can cause drowsiness. If affected do not continue with fieldwork. • Be cautious of the first signs of allergic reaction and DO NOT ignore them. • Seek medical attention immediately for suspected anaphylactic shock.
Health -Phobias		• Individuals who have phobias relating to e.g. wasps and bees, should be "buddied" with others who do not. The • • • • buddy should help to calm the individual and frighten off the insect if necessary. • Try to avoid situations which may bring you into contact with the object of your phobia. • Ensure at least one other member of the group is aware of the problem.
	Alcohol - Risks of dehydration; inability to work due to hangover; in cold weather, alcohol consumption can lead to hypothermia	• Avoid drinking excessive amounts of alcohol on the evening before going into the field. • Avoid drinking alcohol during fieldwork • Be aware that alcohol can impair judgement and will remain in the system for several hours after consumption.
	Miscellaneous Risks - Food poisoning, dehydration, allergies	• In remote/overseas locations - Be wary of accepting ice in drinks. • In remote/overseas locations, be careful of eating food prepared by other people - particularly meats or fish and salads. • Try not to drink contaminated water • Caffeinated drinks (coffee, Cola etc.) can enhance dehydration - avoid drinking them in hot weather

		• Be cautious of the first signs of allergic reaction and DO NOT ignore them.
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Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan

with Victoria Pendry (VP)

September 2022 to June 2023

A Research Summary for Local Researchers

- 1. What is this research about?**
- 2. Why are we doing this research?**
- 3. Ethical approval**
- 4. Information and Consent**
- 5. Theoretical Frameworks**
- 6. Teachers as co-researchers**
- 7. Research Methods**
- 8. Data analysis**
- 9. Guidance for visiting schools**
- 10. Questions for teachers**
- 11. Techniques for interviewing**
- 12. Reporting and dissemination**
- 13. Contact for further information**

Welcome to this research summary, which highlights key features of my doctoral study which aims to uncover what it is that motivates teachers in South Sudan to ... teach! This summary document will be used to help us develop a fuller Research Manual which I explain in more detail below. I look forward to your feedback and to working with you in Juba very soon.

Many thanks for your commitment to supporting the development of the teaching workforce in South Sudan.



What is this research about?

This is summarised in the *Information Sheet* and on the *Teacher Motivation in South Sudan Poster*, but for a more detailed description, please read the *Thesis Project Proposal*. This will give you further information about the rationale for this research, the methodology, methods and ethical considerations.

The research questions are:

Main question: What are the factors that motivate primary school teachers in rural Western Equatoria to pursue and remain in their role as a teacher?

Sub questions:

- What do teachers believe to be their roles and responsibilities? Which of those are most important to them, and why?
- What has created barriers to fulfilling their roles as a teacher? What has acted as an enabler to fulfilling those roles?
- Who, or what, has helped them develop and maintain a desire to teach? What would support that further?
- What do they think makes a 'good teacher'? Who, or what, has helped them to be a good teacher? (and what has been an impediment?)
- How effective do they think they are as a teacher? How is that related to their continuing motivation?

Why are we doing this research?

This study aims to make a contribution to the development of a National Teacher Policy in South Sudan, which is part of the Ministry of Educations 2022 to 2025 Sector Plan. It aims to do so by co-creating a well-founded and theorised

account of what motivates primary teachers in rural South Sudan. Understanding teacher motivation ‘in context’ will help policy makers to build better systems and structures of support for teachers aimed at ultimately improving learning outcomes for learners. The study also contributes to global knowledge because there are few theories of motivation developed within and by actors in low-income countries and even fewer that are built on the perspectives of teachers.

You may know that the 2021 Education Census Data for South Sudan showed that 49% of teachers were trained, compared with 23% in 2018. This figure would suggest that many teachers still lack the tools they need to be effective in the classroom, which is likely to have an impact on their motivation to remain in the profession. When this lack of training is combined with unreliable and low salaries and limited classroom resources it seems that understanding what it is that motivates teachers to teach at all could help us to shape future training programme for teachers and to inform the Teacher Education Policy in particular.

This focus on teachers and their motivation is supported by the #TeachersTransform⁵⁰ campaign from the Teacher Task Force which is a highlight of the UN Transforming Education Summit⁵¹ in September 2022. The recent GEAR (General Education Annual Review) held in Juba from 28th August to 2nd September in 2022, also confirms that the Government of South Sudan are committed to ‘investing in the teacher as primary pillar of quality education.’⁵²

Ethical approval

Ethical approval for this research project has been received from UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee and the Ministry of Education in South Sudan. Please carry the official *Ethical Approval Letter* with you at all times as it will give some authority should you be asked to present evidence of your role. You will see that your name is stated at the bottom of the Letter. Please also carry some *Official Identification* such as your passport in order to be able to confirm your identity.

This project entails many ethical considerations which can be read in full in the *Ethics Application*. In summary however, the following principles should guide your practice:

Do not harm. Be open and honest. Uphold privacy, anonymity and confidentiality.

Respect participants’ right to withdraw. Follow guidelines for disclosures.

Store and share data securely. Know how to stay safe and to keep others safe.

⁵⁰ [Transforming Education Summit 2022 | Teacher Task Force](#)

⁵¹ [Transforming Education Summit | United Nations](#)

⁵² Taken from, ‘The 2022 GEAR Report. The Year of the Teacher.’

Full security details (including travel arrangements), child protection and safety guidelines will be co-developed during our initial meeting in September and the following development workshop in November. Building on this summary document, full research guidance will be developed and will be presented in a *Research Manual* for us to use during the study and will be shared with Juba University, the Ministry of Education, CGA and UCL.

Information and Consent

All participating teachers will have been provided with an *Information Sheet* and will have read and completed a *Consent Form* to signal their willingness to participate in this study. Please familiarise yourself with these two documents so that you are 'in tune' with the information that has been shared with participants. (Both are copied at the end of this protocol document.)

Please do not take any photographs without asking the permission of the Headteacher and any persons who will be in the photograph.

When we have developed a final version of the *Interview Schedule* (the list of questions and prompts for teachers), there will be a short script for you to follow (to read aloud) which will help teachers to feel comfortable taking part. This script will include a confirmation question so that you can audio record their consent to participate. This same short script will be for you to read to individual teachers to complete the questionnaire. In the case of questionnaires, teachers will sign the questionnaire to give their consent instead of being recorded via the audio recording device.

Theoretical Frameworks

To guide this study, we will look together at some research relating to:

Theories of motivation that relate to recruitment and retention in developing countries

Grounded Theory-lite and thematic analysis

Semi-structured interviews

There are many theories of motivation, but in summary we will explore the theories listed below to build our understanding of potential key themes of motivation for teachers in South Sudan. This methodology will reflect

our employment of a Grounded Theory-lite approach where a theory of teacher motivation in South Sudan will emerge and evolve from aspects of existing theory rather than 'making new':

McClelland's *Theory of Need for Achievement* suggests that all people are motivated by one of these factors: Achievement, Affiliation, Power.

Herzberg's *Two Factor Theory*: motivators that encourage job satisfaction and hygiene factors that prevent job dissatisfaction.

Deci & Ryan's Self-determination Theory: people need autonomy, competence and/or relatedness.

Bandura's Self-efficacy theory of motivation: a person's confidence in their abilities can determine their drives and decisions.

Semi-structured interviews' will be used to support interviewers and interviewees to uncover key themes of motivation for teachers in South Sudan. Semi-structured interviews will create a space for teachers to raise their voices and share their concerns and ideas. Extended responses to questions will be encouraged through affirming prompts and probes.

We will aim to 'decolonise' our research approach. This means that we will aim to embrace other ways of knowing and to co-construct knowledge. We will do less 'inspecting of others' and more of 'finding our together'. Semi-structured interviews will demand of you very active listening and clarification skills, reflecting back to participants to check that there is a shared understanding of key concepts.

We will aim to be:

Action and participatory orientated

Collaborative and compassionate

Critically reflexive using an inductive, exploratory and interpretivist approach

Ethnographically orientated

Teachers as co-researchers

Building on an approach that features participation, this research project aims to encourage teachers to see themselves as co-researchers. Literature tells us that this will help teachers to feel valued and thus motivated to

share their knowledge. It may be that some teachers are more comfortable ‘just providing answers’, but key principles of our approach are:

- Mutual respect and kindness
- Working in partnership
- Encouragement and empowerment
- Equity and equality of opportunity.

Research Methods

A summary of the Research Method is presented in Appendix A. Significant aspects and time-points of your work as a researcher however are:

- Initial Meeting in Juba with VP: 28th September
- Remote Research development Workshop: 7th and 8th November
- Pilot in Juba Schools with VP 5th and 6th December
- Main Research Phase with VP remote: 8th to 16th December

The team at CGA are working in partnership with Juba University and in consultation with the Ministry of Education to recruit eight schools for our study: six in rural Western Equatoria and two in Juba. We are aiming to recruit state schools where the dominant language of the community is Zande. The sample of schools we are hoping to recruit is summarised in the *Sampling Framework*.

During our Research Development workshop in November, we will refine research methods and prepare to:

- collect data systematically
- adhere to data protection protocols
- know and understand the principles of Child Friendly Schools
- identify and know how to follow procedures if harmful behaviours are witnessed or disclosed
- communicate effectively with the school community about this study.

The interview schedule and questionnaire will be piloted in two primary schools in Juba in December 2022 which I will be present for. We will use this opportunity to trial our questions and to practice our interviewing techniques.

All teachers will be invited to take part in the study within the two Pilot Schools and additional six rural schools. Four teachers in each school will be interviewed and all remaining teachers will be provided with a short questionnaire to complete. The reason for engaging with all teachers is that it reduces the chances of the Headteacher offering a biased selection of teachers. Related to this, by engaging all teachers in each school as far as possible (considering their desire or not to take part also), we are demonstrating a commitment to valuing all views and experiences of teachers in that setting.

All interviews will be recorded (with the teacher's permission) via an audio recording device that you will be provided with.

All interviews and questionnaires will take place in Zande, the first language of most teachers in the schools selected. We are grateful for your contribution to this research as a Zande speaker also which we hope will make the data collection as authentic as possible.

I'd like you to transcribe in English (word for word!) all audio recordings of interviews. We will 'cross reference' transcriptions so that you read each other's transcriptions to check for accuracy. By transcribing interviews, yourselves, we are limiting circulation of identifiable data and also adding an important layer of reflection to the research process. You will need to translate completed questionnaires also. It is likely that some words or phrases spoken in Zande will not have an equivalent word or phrases in English. We will discuss these instances to develop a suitable representation in English but will signal this special translation in the transcript using an agreed code. Where possible, we will refer back to the teachers to check our interpretations as these instances.

All teachers who participate in this study (via interview or by completing the questionnaire) will be provided with an incentive of 4,000 SSP. This is to thank them for their time and effort in sharing their knowledge and ideas about the motivation of teachers in South Sudan.

Throughout the data collection period in Western Equatoria, I will remain in contact with you via WhatsApp messaging and video calls where possible. We will agree a schedule for regular catch-up meetings (every day if possible!) in order to refine our approaches to data collection as we progress.

During the data collection period (both during Pilots and the Main Research Phase) I would like to encourage you to keep a *Research Journal* that describes your experiences. This will help me to understand your visits to schools and some of the lived experiences of teachers. We will develop a structure for this journal during our training session in November.

During the Research Development workshop in November, we will develop a structure for follow-up activities and communications with schools. It is important that schools are not 'abandoned' after the research.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will be completed by myself as part of my doctoral studies at UCL. My first full draft will be shared with you however for any initial comments. The final research paper will also be shared with you and your organisation as well as schools and teachers who participated in the project. My data analysis will be greatly enhanced by our communications during the pilot and main research phase. Your *Research Journal* will remain as your private property, but I hope it will prompt you to share some pertinent information with me

Guidance for visiting Schools

All schools who have agreed to take part in this research will receive a phone call from myself in addition to email communications from CGA during the recruitment stage before any visits to the school take place. *Information Sheets* and *Consent Forms* will be shared via email, but it is acknowledged that it may not have been possible for schools to access/open these emails and documents in advance of your visit.

You should aim to visit each school once before the Main Research Phase. The purpose of this visit will be to explain to the Headteacher and the Board of Governors the purpose of this research and to develop with them a timetable for the day when you will visit the school. This initial visit should feature thanking the school for taking part in this research and to reassure them that all data collected will be anonymised.

Questions for teachers

Questionnaire and interview questions will be developed during our initial meeting and during the development workshop. These questions will be further refined during the Pilot Phase and then during the main data collection phase if necessary. We will keep referring back to our research questions...we may even change our research questions slightly if we uncover new and exciting themes of teacher motivation as we go along! Based upon literature relating to teacher motivation in developing countries and my experiences in the field, questions are likely to include some of the following:

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?

Why did you decide to become a teacher? How did you get a job at this school? Who, or what motivates you to remain as a teacher?

What have you done as teacher that has made you feel proud? What have you achieved that has made you really happy?

What do you think are the main roles and responsibilities of a teacher?

What parts of your job are the most important to you? Why is that?

What aspect of your job do you find the easiest and what role do you find the hardest to fulfil? Why is this the case?

What do you think it means to be a good teacher?

What do you think helps you to be a good teacher? And what gets in the way of this? Is this the same for other teachers?

Do you think you are a good teacher? Why do you think that? How does it make you feel?

How long do you think you will stay in this school as a teacher? Why?

Techniques for Interviewing

The interviews to be conducted during this study are based on the method of using semi-structured interviews. This means that we are encouraging teachers to share their stories about their lived experiences. The questions above are designed to stimulate some in-depth response but it is likely that you will have to ask additional question for purposes of clarity. During our initial meeting in September and the subsequent training in November, we will explore some techniques for semi-structured interviewing such as:

Prompting, probing and checking for understanding.

Being positive and encouraging including through your body language.

Prompting and probing questions might include:

Can you tell me why you did that?

How did that make you feel?

Was there anything else that helped you?

Have you changed your mind since....about....?

Has that always been the same for you?

Why was that so important?

What did your friends/family/colleagues think about that? Or...how did they respond?

Both researchers will be present during interviews. One researcher will observe and take notes and the other researcher will ask questions. This 'double' approach is aimed at ensuring consistency of questioning and to enrich the data collected via observations of the conversation/interview. It will also support a situation where a teacher discloses something that may be on concern. We will discuss this aspect of disclosure carefully during our development workshop in November.

Reporting and dissemination

Reporting of the findings of this study will be shared firstly with the ethics committees at Juba University and the Ministry of Education. From here, after comments and review, a Policy Brief will be prepared for the Teacher Development and Management Service (TDMS) within the Ministry who are responsible for developing the

Teacher Education Policy. This policy brief will be presented via a blended meeting between ourselves as researchers, TDMS and representatives from Juba University.

Once the Policy Brief has been shared with TDMS, it will be further disseminated via other related networks in South Sudan such as the NGO Forum, UNICEF and the Education Cluster Group. After this dissemination in South

Sudan, a paper will be written for BAICE and BERA and abstracts will be submitted to take part in the CIES and UKFIT conference in 2023/2024.



Teachers at participating schools will be provided with a copy of the Policy Brief, translated into Zande. (The Ministry Policy for education materials and training is for them to be written in English, but in this case, it is more appropriate to report back to school in the language that was used during interviews.)

Contact for further information

Should you wish to contact me directly, please email me via victoria.pendry.19@ucl.ac.uk or contact me by phone on

+xx xxx xxxxx

Contact details of my supervisor: Dr Mary Richardson, UCL Institute of Education,

Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan

September 2022 to June 2023

Victoria Pendry

Sampling Framework

CGA will work in consultation with myself, the MoE and Juba University to recruit schools and to make initial contact. *Information Sheets* will be shared initially via email.

The study aims to recruit rural primary schools in Western Equatoria where the dominant language is Zande. Western Equatoria is approximately a two-hour drive from Juba on roads that are reportedly safe. Rural schools have been selected because most schools that take part in studies reported by NGOs in particular are based in Juba so this study would allow us to find out about schools less commonly surveyed. In addition, 80% of the population live in rural areas, so by exploring teachers who teach in rural areas the findings are likely to be more representative of the workforce.

The target population is teachers from Primary Schools, due to their low levels of qualification compared to secondary teachers (EMIS, 2021) and their status as predominantly volunteer teachers rather than teachers recruited and employed by the Ministry of Education. These two factors present important questions around their motivations to remain in teaching and why they volunteered in the first place.

Zande has been chosen as the language for this study as it is a prevalent national language spoken across South Sudan and is therefore relatively representative of the wider population. The two researchers that have been recruited to conduct this research from CGA and Juba University, speak Zande as their first language also.

The table below indicates the key criteria for the selection of schools to participate in this study.

Ideally, participant schools will be state-funded, not have participated in other MoE or NGO research projects, have near-average teacher:student ratios, and offer at least ten participating teachers (four via interviews and the rest via questionnaires). Within these criteria, a variety of contexts, size and performance statistics will be sought. These will include how many years participants have worked in their schools, the age range and gender. The distance that participants have to travel to school and their mode of transport will also be considered as well as the structure and available facilities (drinking water, toilets and school feeding programmes) within the school. The study will also look at school performance data and drop-out rates. Ideally participants will have been teaching for at least a year so questions around motivations to remain in teaching are relevant.

	Primary School Code	State funded or other?	Western Equatoria or other?	Rural Y/N	Zande Language or other?	Number of Teachers on roll	Number of students on roll	Previously involved in MoE or NGO Research projects? Y/N	Number of teachers who complete questionnaires	Number of teachers who participate in interviews
Pilot Phase										
Main Research Phase										

Data will be collected in schools via a questionnaire and via semi-structured interviews.

We will aim to visit eight schools in total, where two schools are in Juba for convenience in the Pilot phase and six schools are in Western Equatoria.

In each school we will aim to interview four teachers and for all other teachers in the school to complete a paper-based questionnaire. All interviews and questionnaires will be written, explained and conducted in Zande. Census data for 2021 reveals that Primary Schools in Western Equatoria have on average 15 teachers on role. During the main phase of this study therefore, we anticipate interviewing 24 teachers and collecting approximately 66 paper-based questionnaires from teachers.

Pilot interviews are scheduled to take place on 5th and 6th of December. Pre-visits to schools (for orientation purposes) in the main phase will take place on 8th and 9th of December. Data collection in schools will take place from 12th to 16th December (one school a day). It is possible that teachers will not be available, or that the school closes or that a Headteacher or Governing body changes their mind about participating in this study. In this case, if five schools have been visited, the study will rest at that size. In the unlikely case that only four schools or less are visited, one or two additional schools will be recruited to participate in late January 2023.



UNIVERSITY
OF JUBA

Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan

Information sheet for participants

Thank you for your considering being involved in this research study about teacher motivation in South Sudan

My name is Victoria Pendry and I am an English doctoral student at the Institute of Education, University College London. I am also an education consultant specialising in educational programming in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular interest in South Sudan. Lilly Bangu and Faith Poni are my research assistant visiting schools to conduct the research on my behalf.

What is this research about?

I am interested in what motivates teachers to become a teacher and to stay in schools as a teacher.

I am interested in how teachers are recruited and what entices them to take up a post as a teacher.

I am interested in what teachers enjoy about their job and what teachers find challenging. I would like to find out what support teachers think they need if they are to remain in teaching and what is it about their job that they find the most rewarding.

Why am I doing this research?

Teachers in South Sudan face many challenges, yet many teachers volunteer to teach and many teachers work in schools with very little training. I'd like to find ways of helping teachers to remain in the profession and to

continue to improve their teaching so that children can continue to make progress in their learning, becoming more literate and more able to become life-long learners.

What will happen if you are willing to participate in this research project?

You will either take part in a short interview or complete a short paper-based survey about your experiences as a teacher. Interviews will be in a local language with two local researchers and will be recorded with your permission to make sure that we don't forget what you tell us. These recordings will later be written up in English for me to read as I do not speak local languages of South Sudan unfortunately. 😊

Will anyone know you have been involved?

What you tell us will be anonymised so that when the research is shared with other people, nobody will know that it was you who told us these things. Any writing relating to this study will be shared with you before publication in order for you confirm that you are happy for the information to be shared.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice:

For participants in research studies, click [here](#)

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

The lawful basis that will be used to process your personal data is: 'Public task' for personal data.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this, and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

Contact for further information

Should you wish to contact me directly, please email me via victoria.pendry.19@ucl.ac.uk or contact me by phone on +xxx xxx. This contact information can be used should you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

Contact details of my supervisor: Dr Mary Richardson, UCL Institute of Education,

If you have any questions about the above research project or wish to make a complaint, please send an email with details to the UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee on ioe.researchethics@ucl.ac.uk so that we can look into the issue and respond to you.

You can also contact the UCL Institute of Education Research Ethics Committee by telephoning +44 (0)20 791154

Exploring Teacher Motivation in South Sudan

Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in this study, please complete this consent form and return to Victoria Pendry in person or at the address below.

	Yes	No
I have read and understood the information leaflet about the research.	☐	☐
I agree to be recorded during interviews.	☐	☐
I agree to a transcription of my interview being stored for ten years.	☐	☐
I agree to the transcription of my interview being re-used for appropriate research purposes within a 10-year period.	☐	☐
I agree for what I say to be anonymised through pseudonymisation in related reports and presentations.	☐	☐
I understand that I can withdraw from the project and interview at any point.	☐	☐

Name_____Signed _____

Date _____

Optional contact details of participant:_____

Contact details for Researcher Victoria Pendry, UCL Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way London WC1H 0AL,
victoria.pendry@ucl.ac.uk.

Contact Details of the Supervisor of the Researcher:

Dr Mary Richardson, UCL Institute of Education



UCL
Institute of Education
University College London



THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION



UNIVERSITY
OF JUBA

**Participation Certificate on Qualitative Research Study of
Teacher Motivation in South Sudan.**

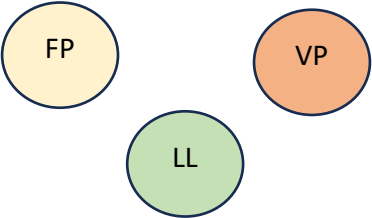
This is to certify that Teacher _____ had participated
in a qualitative survey /interview.

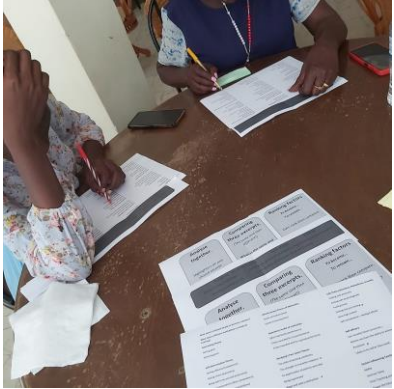
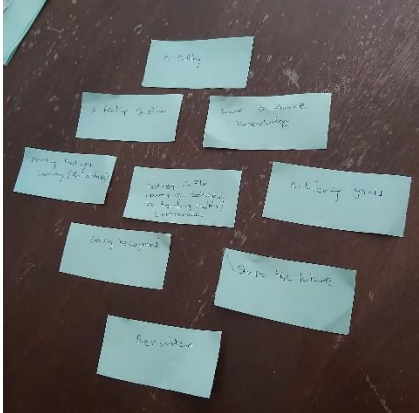
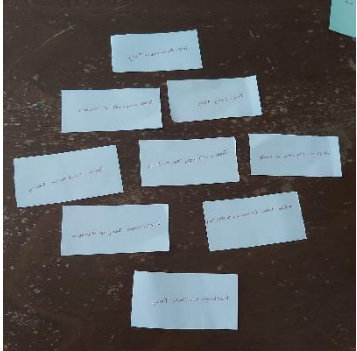
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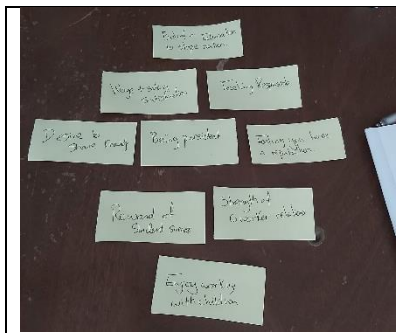
Certified by: _____ (Researcher).

Appendix E: Researcher Conversations in Juba 20th July 2023 – Vikki, Faith and Lilly

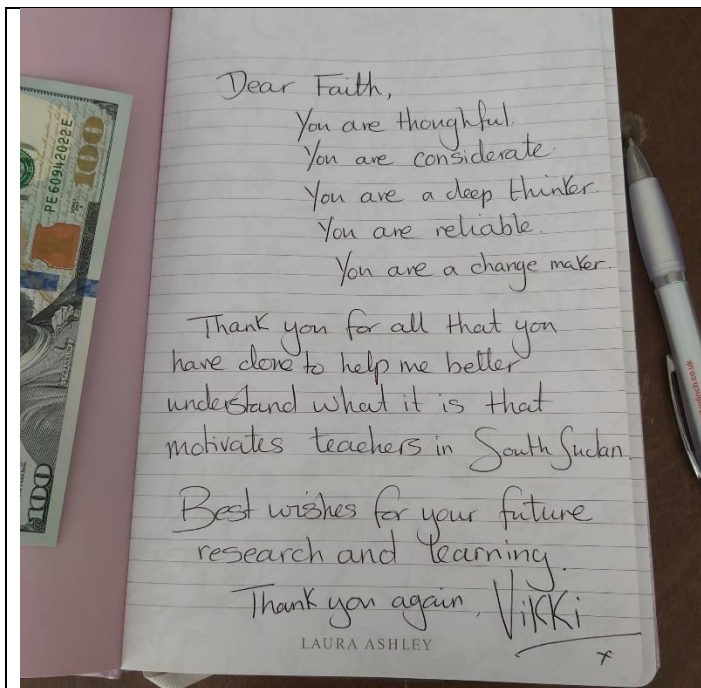
	All set up. Refreshments and resources are scarce, so I wanted our conversation to be a bit of a treat for L&F – without it being overwhelming. We talked solidly for 2.5 hours – so the refreshments really helped. The room was airconditioned too and we had a nice round table in a reasonably quiet part of the hotel.
	We began with a general discussion about our research together and I explained that I had analysed the data at a 'high level' to get some initial ideas for themes and that I was interested to see how my analysis compared to what L&F identified to be themes. We re-looked at the Motivation Posters (appendix A) relating to major theories of motivation. L&F commented that 'Self Determination Theory' seemed like a good 'fit' for the teachers they had spoken to – but that some elements were less strong there including having control/competence. A few interesting point related to negative re-enforcement coming from parents and that teachers appreciate the space/time that teaching gives them but that equally, time with students is often interrupted
	I had selected one transcript for us to review together – one that was fairly rich in indications of what motivates teachers to remain in the profession. We read it together – L&F highlighting what they noticed relating to motivation and then together we decided on a title/theme for each and I listed these in a Key. Of interest during our discussion was the fact that teachers do not seem to reflect on their teaching – their effectiveness in particular. This could be linked to a lack of mentoring/feedback from HTs or anybody else. Also – I interpreted 'smaller than you' as 'less important than you', but L&F said it mean 'younger than you'. 'Purpose' and 'interest' also had different interpretations. In these situations where Lilly and Faith had different interpretations of phrases, we discussed together whether these differences related to

	translations and/or conceptual understandings. Where Lilly, Faith and I reached different conclusions about what a teacher was trying to say, in most cases, I deferred to what Lilly and Faith had suggested. There were not a huge amount of discrepancies, but this was partly due to the limited time that we had together to discuss this. With more time and a more detailed analysis of the data, I think we would have uncovered a wider range of interpretations. As this was an assessed study for me, I was also aware of the need for me to be aware of how responses from teachers might be interpreted differently, but that ultimately, it was my role to analyse and draw conclusions. As a side note, I did find that spending time analysing data in Juba was more productive than doing it from my desk in England. Being 'in situ' definitely sharpened my attention to decolonising the analysis process as best as I could. We also discussed what happened when you, Lilly and Faith reached different conclusions about a piece of data – what was your role here and how did you manage this in the moment and when translating these sessions into the thesis write-up? (i.e., balancing valuable commitments to co-working, with the doctorate's requirements of independence/originality). This could be here, in one of the later chapters when you reflect on the partnership, or in Appendix E where you discuss a collaborative analysis activity.
	We then took a second transcript – the same for each of us - but reviewed it at separate tables. We then came together and compared our key/themes. Of interest here was the way that Lilly commented that 'advising them' was an indication of tchrs enjoying the freedom to do so. Faith suggested that 'chatting' and 'enjoy being with the learner', was an indication of tchrs appreciating a sense of belonging.
	As a final transcript activity, we each took a different transcript to review then compared what we had found. Across three different transcripts, we picked up themes of: Achievement/goal setting; self-determination; Nation building; having time/freedom; little salary; teaching as a profession; renewing own knowledge; being a role model 'too'; a commitment to communities; enjoying status/respect; belief in the role.

	We then talked about the fact that we had identified a great number of themes and that it would be useful to begin to identify which aspects of motivation seemed to be the most significant for teachers in South Sudan. I explained that one way to do this is use a diamond ranking exercise. L&F were not familiar with this method, so we practiced using ‘favourite foods’.
	To prepare for the diamond ranking exercise, we looked through a ‘Motivation List’ which I had prepared highlighting key ideas from the theories we had looked at on the Motivation Posters. In addition to the listed ideas, I had listed 7 themes that I had identified in my high-level data review (shown in the dark box in this photo). We worked individually to identify 9 themes that we felt were significant.
	Each of us then arranged our 9 themes into the Diamond formation. This is from Lilly – who placed ‘A Calling’ at the top and ‘Persistence’ as the 9th theme.
	This is from Faith. Faith misinterpreted the task – and instead of ranking individual themes, she ranked overall themes. By this point in the morning, we were starting run out of time and were moving quite quickly – so this is likely to have affected how Faith interpreted the task. She placed Self-determination Theory at the top and Hertzberg Two Factor theory as the 9th theme. Faith placed Goal setting theory and Expectancy theory as the 2nd and 3rd theme.

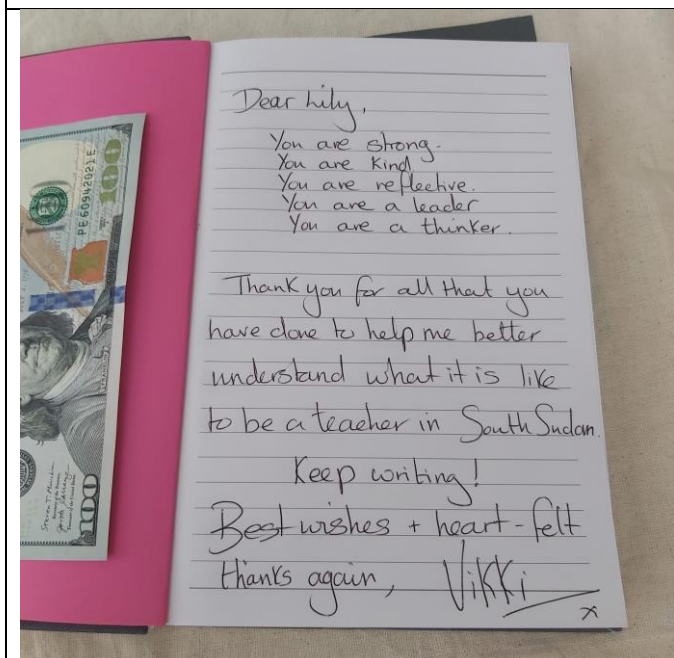


This is my Diamond 9. It is interesting to see that I did not list 'A Calling' but that Lilly and I had identified similar themes otherwise – although ranked slightly differently.



To conclude the research conversation, I gave L&F a jute bag each with a hardback 'attractive' notebook inside it. Inside the notebook I wrote a letter of thanks. These notes included a short/simple poem - which I explained was a tradition in my family. I felt it was important to signify my personal thanks using something traditional in recognition of the way that traditions in South Sudanese cultures play such a significant part of everyday life.

In addition to the bag/book, I gave L&F \$100 each as a final remuneration for their research work. This was to capture our previous catch-up meeting, the session today and a return visit to the Primary School in Juba which we used to pilot the Research Interview Schedule in November 7th 2022.





Our final conversation related to re-visiting schools/teachers who had participated in this study. L&F both said that this was important. They commented that some teachers had told them they participate in studies but that they never find out 'the end of the story'. It is possible that L&F have an interest in returning to school due to the likelihood of receiving addition remuneration, but the literature suggests that this is important yet rare and my own view is that ethically, it is inconsistent and disrespectful not to provide participants with a summary/conclusion of the study.

The main barrier to this however is the addition cost which I estimate to be \$500 (taxi, L&F time and printed/designed materials). I am investigating however via IoE any my own organisation.

Appendix F: Example of the development of themes

BORI Interview A1

TRANSCRIPTION

BORI BASIC SCHOOL

TEACHER INTERVIEWED IN ARABIC

Done by Madam Lilly

Q1-why did you become a teacher?

Actually, I studied primary and secondary school, nevertheless during my secondary level of education, I use to practice teaching. Therefore, the teaching profession I did not just start now, when I was in secondary school, the teachers usually tell us that if you are a student, if the teacher teaches you, try to teach others. With this encouragement, when the teacher leave the class we can also stand up to start teaching my classmate, the topics that they did not understand well; so that they will also understand and we go all together. Thus, when I finish my senior four secondary school, I left Juba because I know there is a school in the village and I want the children in the village here also to learn something as I had learnt. Hence, I cannot live the children in the village without anything, I came to teach them.

Q2: How did you become a teacher?

When I finish my secondary school, I came and stayed for around three months in the village here. Conflict broke out here in the village between the Mundari and most of the teachers here in the school were from this tribe, this cause most of the Mundari teachers to flew away from the village and as well as the school. Therefore it causes reduction in the number of teachers in this school. There was a headmistress in the school here during that time, so she announces that they needed teachers, luckily, I was in the village here during the conflict. Thus, because I am happy with the teaching profession, I show that this profession is good, as you are teaching people to become good people like you, that is why since had that they need teachers so immediately I applied for it then I start to teach.

Q3: What do you enjoy the most about being a teacher?

What makes me to enjoy really in this school are, you really found that you as a teacher usually respect is given to you everywhere, in the residential area children will call you teacher. Also their parents will give you respect too even though they see you are smaller than them but they know that you have something that you give to their children. Another thing, not basically salary, salary is something else, things that make us to be happy in this school because we are seeing our country is not going well, it needs more education. And if you do something with purpose you do it with interest immediately. It means when I am teaching I need something at the end of the day, that is why I teach with interest because I need my knowledge not to end in the middle but it has to come out, that is what I enjoy the most the most.

Q4: What challenges do you face as a teacher?

The challenges we face here are enormous, you will find that there are children that basically cannot listen as well as not paying attention. Especially here in the village, as this school at the beginning belong to the community. So the children take this as an advantage because they thought that because it is a community school they cannot be punish. And there are other parents who have not understood school because of illiteracy. Therefore this causes a lot of problems, e.g. If you give punishment to a child in the school here they will run home and tell their parents that they were beaten, the parents will run furiously to the school, wants to fight the teachers. Like last year, it was much difficult; we resolve this challenge by conducting a lot of meetings in the school here with the parent teacher association (PTA). Sometime, we involve chiefs from residential area to come and listen to the issues and also to talk with their people. These are the things that disturb us so much, because you find that you are teaching but you don't teach well because you fear. Usually when you do something in fear you cannot perform well.

Another challenge is that, you will find that our salary as teachers is so little and even so it still cannot come on time. And you find some times it will take one month and a half. And it is paid by the community not the government paying because we are volunteers and we are paid by the community. But the community sometime don't bring the money on time; it can wait until the fifteen of the next month. But because it is a profession that I like I continue to teach like

that without stopping teaching because at the end we want to achieve something even though things are not going well.

Q5: What or who helps you to fulfil your role as a teacher?

Basically in my family, we don't have educated people, people that I get something/advice from are mostly teachers that taught me. Even now those teachers in the primary I have connection with them. So the time I told them that I am a teacher now in another school they were very happy with me. They advise me on how to teach; usually I go to meet them and they tell me if you are a teacher you should do this and that even though you are still young like this. You have to take anger away when teaching even though when the children did something wrong to you, you have to be patient. Also head teacher and other teacher in the school here who had got more experience in teaching can advise us on how you can be in teaching and so on.

Q6: What makes you want to stay in the profession of teaching?

Basically what keeps me in this teaching is that as you know if you come there is something you want to do, even though this thing has problem but at first you have it in your heart and want to do it because always if you have set a goal you must try to achieve the goal you set by all mean. So am teaching because at the end I want some of the students I taught to become good. Because I was taught by a teacher so I can express myself and if there any work I can do it. So I also want to teach someone so that in future like now I remember my teachers because if I found them I call them teacher they will be very happy. Also I want in the future the children am teaching to know that am their teacher and let them also be good people.

Q 7: What would you say to somebody to encourage them to become a teacher?

Basically am still working with the logic that other people were telling us to put our interest to become a teacher. There was a teacher who tells us that always if you have taken a loan from someone, you have to return it. It means someone have given you something but this person had given this thing not to keep it for yourself also you have to give it not to him but you give it to someone else. So what I tell people is that you became intelligent because there was someone who taught you, you have to try to make other people to become like you. Because

their a say that you don't need to greedy with knowledge or knowledge you cannot keep it for yourself you need to a forward.

Q8: what else do you want to add that we did not ask you?

For me basically teaching is not the profession I intended to be, up to now am waiting, I will be leaving the job because I will be going to study in the university the coming January 2023. At first I have that interest in teaching but what I applied for is different that is the school of medicine. But I don't know even if I went to study another field will I come back to the teaching profession?

Transcription

Nyuwa basic school

Teacher interview in Bari language

Done by Madam Lilly

Q1: Why did you become a teacher?

I became a teacher because there are no Bari teachers who can teach Bari language in the school and also the church here use Bari language for prayers. So the authority decided that Bari had to be taught, so we were selected and taken for a workshop where Bari used and also how to teach Bari. Those teachers teaching in English were also taken for a work shop. So that we will be able to help our community as well as the school pupils..

Q2: How did you become a teacher?

I became a teacher because of my choice and it is something inside my heart, that is why am helping. We the teachers of Bari language we are volunteers and we are not given salary and it is only the community that pays us small money (incentives).

Q3: What do you enjoy the most about being a teacher?

This is the profession God had blessed me with, so that is why I am helping the pupil here with teaching. So what I enjoy the most about being a teacher is the teaching itself. If you are teaching you teach with faith so that the student will enjoy and love themselves. If you teach without interest or badly the student will not understand the knowledge you are giving them.

Q4: What challenges do you face as a teacher?

The challenges we encounter here is that the time we are living the work here is too late in the evening, so like for me who is having a family, you will not be able to help your family for example by going to the farm to dig will be very late. Another challenge is the lack of teaching aids for example chalks, red pens for marking and papers/books for lesson preparation. So these are few difficulties I thought of. Hence, the pupils are respectful not like the one in Juba

Q5: What or who helps you to fulfill your role as a teacher?

The only help comes from the community in terms of small money inform of incentives. There are also some advices from my fellow teachers such as how to deal with the pupil. The administration of the school also helps us to fulfil my role.

Q6: What makes you want to stay in the profession of teaching?

I have to stay in this profession because it is something that God had blessed me with as I said previously, that i should be teaching our children. You will not be able to quite the job. Because also when you are tired and old they will be the one to teach the coming generation.

Q7: What would you say to somebody to encourage them to become a teacher?

I will be able to tell others by asking them to come and help us in teaching profession because the teachers are few and the classes are more that is to say from primary one to eight. I can also encourage them that there are many challenges but there are some incentives will be given. However, someone cannot force them to come and teach.

Q8: What else do you want to add that we did not ask you during the interview?

If it were like the previous years where the NGO can visit us here and listen to our challenges, it should have being of help. Because here the students and us the teachers are staying far from the school and the distance is very long, for example others were staying far like 10 kilos to reach the school. Also when you come here to the school you will spend the whole working

hours from (8:00 - 2:20) without taking anything, again you will start going back home, which we find it as really a challenge to us the teacher and the pupils also.

Appendix G: Grouped codes under potential theme headings

Why teach? M

M1 **be a leader.**

M2 **give your knowledge**

M3 **grow as individuals** and gain knowledge

M4 **no any other job**

M5 **to earn something,**

M6 help the nation now and in the future – growing knowledge and peace

M7 **help the community**

M8 not for the money

M9 learners need knowledge

M10 **shortage of teachers**

M11 **my interest**

Encouraging other to be a teacher En

En1 **good for the community**

En 2 **it must be of interest to you**

En3 *we need teachers for the sake of other professions*

En4 **a calling/gift from god**

M7 **help the community**

What do you enjoy? E

E1 Being with learners and their participation

E2 meeting people

E3 teaching learners who get it and succeed

M2 giving the knowledge.

E4 respect from the community.

E5 lasting impact on pupils

E6 self reliance – creative

E7 want children to be like me

M3 grow as individuals.

E8 enjoy elements beyond teaching

E9 community of other teachers

E10 enjoy teaching topics

Why stay in the profession? S

S1 useful tool for moving on

S2 Can't get the job I want

S3 it's the job I can do well

M4 not any other job

S4 I like it

E5 lasting impact on pupils

M2 giving the knowledge.

S4 things will get better

S5 Other teachers

S6 pupils encourage me

S7 like the holidays

S8 I'm committed so I stay

S9 be a professional

What makes a good teacher? G

G1 Good time keeping

G2 good planning

M2 giving knowledge

G5 make learners happy.

G6 Listen to students and get to know them

G7 Patient, kind, tolerant

G8 co-operative

E5 lasting impact on pupils

G9 smartness

G10 Be happy

G11 take care of students

G12 Be creative

G13 Have respect

G14 help students solve problems and gave advice

G15 good communicator

G16 Like the job or subject

G17 working with colleagues

G18 not be drunk

G19 be a role model

Role Model? R

R1 no

R5 yes

R2 I admired them

R3 a good person

R4 polite

R6 aimed for equality

Are you an effective teacher? EF

EF 1 Adults tell me I am

EF2 I can not say

EF3 students say if I am effective

EF4 I get on with my job

EF5 I have been trained so, yes

EF6 yes – and I can compare myself to others

EF7 outcomes of my students are good, so yes

Roles and responsibilities R

R1 Class master

R2 officer or administrator

R3 discipline

R4 I don't have any responsibilities

R5 ensure attendance

R6 teaching and learner engagement

R7 planning

R8 counsellor / carer

R9 health

R10 Head of a subject/area

R11 promoting equality

R12 exams

What or who helps to fulfil your role? W

W1 don't rely on the government

W2 we create our own

W3 trust/devote yourself – self determination

W4 other teachers

W5 other organisations

W6 community

W7 administration

W8 have an additional job

W9 support from HT or school leader

M6 for the sake of the nation

M8 not for the money

W11 the government

W12 students

W13 training

W14 parents

Challenges to the profession. C

C1 Rain

C2 lack of pay

C3 lack of materials – books and charts

C4 changing from Arabic to English

C5 discipline

C6 change of syllabus

M4 **no any other job**

E5 lasting impact on pupils

C7 lack of transport and long distance

C8 difficult parents and lack of respect

C9 student disabilities

C10 lack of clarity over roles

C11 lack of training for teacher

C12 lack of gov or admin support

C13 pupils do not understand

C14 too big time commitment

C15 no food

C16 poor infrastructure

C17 parents push – skip years

C18 Lack of accomodation

Overcoming challenges OC

OC 1 Inspectors come and then send you on training if needed

OC2 Paid by community/church

OC3 no challenges with discipline

OC4 bring own knowledge

OC4 support from HT

OC5 support from family

OC6 school administrators

OC7 side/additional job – or part time in another school

OC8 part time teachers

G14 explaining to pupils and helping them

M6 raising up the nation

W3 own commitment self determination

OC9 no fees from students but allow them

How did you become a teacher? B

B1 had training formal (qualified?)

B2 contacted/ applied to MoE

B3 approached a/the school

B4 other training in SS

B5 training beyond SS

B6 I'm a volunteer teachers

B7 started teaching whilst at school

B8 I am a professional teacher

How many schools have you taught in?

Why did you move schools?

MV1 war/security

MV2 transport

MV3 lack of support

MV5 lack of salary

MV6 after maternity – role taken

MV7 admin moves you

Appendix H: An example of all data under each code

Interview Questions

1) Can you tell me why you decided to become a teacher? M

P11MEL the teaching profession has motivated me. It is a very good job. Lots of qualifications have motivated me and my time in Uganda. I am qualified – certificate and degree.

P12MEF It's been my dream because I want to M1 **be a leader**. You gain experience first of all and then M2 **give your knowledge**. Since 2002. Because people M3 **grow as individuals**.

P13MEL I love my work. I am happy to share with you! At fist I did not study education – I studied accounting in Khartoum. When I came here – there was M4 **no any other job**. Many teachers did not want to teach – they left their school. So I started to teach part time. Then the minister of education came to see us and saw we are all part time and he made us full time.

P14MEL Actually, I like teaching from the very beginning and secondly I wanted M5 **to earn something**,

P15MEF I became a teacher because I saw other teachers. I also wanted to M6 help the nation through to be educated.

P16MEF I have to come a teacher because when you are teachings you M3 **are also revising** – like you are in school. I need to keep my knowledge and at the same M2 **time give my knowledge** so they can be M6 **good citizens in the future**,

P17MEL My interest – since when I was in primary school. I have in my mind I want to come and help the young kids before I enter university because I want experience before I enter university.

P18MEL when you look at the general perspective of our country and the literacy read – we have really been affected, the perspective of those who have gone to school and vey few. Oly 50%. This is what inspired me that I should come up and M6 **help my people**. I am also working at the airport – and i go with the booda.

P19MEL I am teacher for quite a long time. This initiative is very important – when you are a teacher you M3 **will learn more than anyone**. I like to be a teacher because the M2 **knowledge will go to the next generation** – they will go ahead with it.

P20FEL I would like to M6 lift up the younger children I am a professional.

P21MEF It is my love. I must M6 contribute to the nation by bringing the kids up.

P22FEF I want to M6 help the nation - the children have empty minds. But M2 **what I have I want to give to the learners**. And I can also M3 **gain knowledge from the learners**.

P23MEF

P24MEL I choose teaching as my career.

Why teach? ESL

- M10 Helping because of lack of teachers.
- M10 teachers are few and the classes are more
- M10 it pain me seeing them around and no teacher to teach them, so I decided to help them (pupils)and En4 I believe God will reward me. P2
- M10 I cannot leave the children in the village without anything, I came to teach them.
- B7 I used to teach when at secondary school: , the teachers usually tell us that if you are a student, if the teacher teaches you, try to teach others. With this encouragement, when the teacher leave the class we can also stand up to start teaching my classmate, the topics that they did not understand well; so that they will also understand and we go all together
- I show that this profession is good, E7 as you are teaching people to become good people like you,
- M2 don't need to greedy with knowledge or knowledge you cannot keep it for yourself you need to a forward. P1
- M2 don't stay home with your knowledge, it's better for you to share it
- M2 M3 because I need my knowledge not to end in the middle but it has to come out, that is what I enjoy the most the most.

- M7 help our community as well as the school pupils..
- En4 This is the profession God had blessed me with,
- E7 my brothers and children that am teaching now, I want them to become like me.
- M6 Children will have a bright future and tomorrow they will also help the coming generation, so that our country will have a bright future P3
- M6 I like to teach because these children of South Sudan are ours and they need teachers,
- **M4 I stay in this profession of teaching because there is not any other option**, I only have high school leaving certificate
- M8 come to teach even if there is no proper payment, M6 so that we will help these children and raise the level of education in South Sudan
- M7 I became a teacher so that I want to help these children of ours, its M11 **from my own interest**. P6
- Sincerely if it's not **M11 from my interest** M8 I would have left as I said because of money, P6
- M6 I become a teacher to bring up or educate the children for our country to move forward. P5
- M6 The reason why I became a teacher is because I want to help my brothers or the coming generation.p7
- **E1 I love staying with learners and cracking jokes with them. P7**
- **M4 Even if I try to apply to any other job apart from teaching am not taken**, but when I apply any teaching sector of education immediately am accepted.p8
- **RM2 when I was a student there were teachers whom I love so much when they are teaching that is why I choose to become like them p9**
- En4 I believe that God Almighty is the one who bless me with this profession if not so I should have not being as a teacher with this challenges. P9
- **M6 education is important because it is the profession of humanity p.10**
- M2 I want to develop them so that tomorrow they can become better people p.10
- **M2 For you to be a good person you must try to bring other people up so that they become like you or any other better person. P.10**
- **M2 Because I don't want other people to remain uneducated while am educated. P.10**

- M2 Because I have ambition that I want to develop any person who is not educated to become educated, so that they become better people in future or in his/her life p.10
- M2 Human life will require you to be a teacher because there are other things that you are already doing or telling to people p10
- M4 At first I have that interest in teaching but what I applied for is different that is the school of medicine.

2) What do you enjoy the most about being a teacher? E

P11ME I enjoy E1 **being with the learners** – the interactions.

P12ME It's all about what you are dealing with pupils. E1 You are happy with what you are teaching. Time is limited though.

P13ME It is enjoyable. E2 **You meet many people** – disable, those who do not hear well. You learn how to deal with them. The way they reason and understand it is different so you need to know modalities. You model for students how to become in the end. In the class it is not totally enjoyable – they come from other background. They come from other schools and they are promoted any how. E3 **When you get the ones who are very sharp, I enjoy it.** I work here part time – the rest of time I am in a secondary school. When I get sharp pupils they are going faster with me. They understand. It is the cooperation between teacher and pupils that makes learning smooth. When they cooperate with the teacher, the teacher will exert more effort, even more than he known.

P14MEL What I enjoy the most is M2 **giving the knowledge.** Tomorrow what I have given

them – they will give reflect it back. **Tmw at least when they get me on the street – they know that I am their teacher. I am a mark on them.**

P15MEF I enjoy the E4 respect from the community. **Whenever I go they call me teacher teacher – and I feel motivated.** I enjoy the E1

participation of the pupils in my classroom.

P15MEF **E1 I enjoy explaining to pupils**, if there are other words to explain, there I can find that they are able to know like in the future. Being a teacher is like being an artist. E5 You teach for years – those people will not forget you. Once when teacher teaches, tmw and next tmw I will not be there, but the children will still remember me.

P17MEL I get experience even though I am not qualified teacher.

P18MEL E1 **I enjoy interacting with the learners. Even if I come from home with a stress, when I reach here in the compound and I see other teachers and the learners I feel better. This teaching is one of the ways you can release your stresses and then you can be free.**

P19MEL You manage your family – food, shelter, water without the help of somebody. I like teaching because E6 it is a self-reliance job. The environment is good – the shade is good. What attracts me in the class is the discipline of the pupils. If you inside the class –**E1 if you don't ask and they don't also answers your question it will be dull, so the discipline is for the teacher and the pupils.**

P20FEL I enjoy teaching because E7 I lift children to be like me. **E1 I like the cooperation between the pupils and me – and they pay attention when I am talking.** I teach English to P5.

P21MEF E4 I get respect from the community, Whenever I am moving they give me respect. I feel proud.

P22FEF E4 I enjoy in school is to be respected by the learners – and when you go their areas they say 'oh madam'

P23MEF E1 **I like it when they capture what I am saying.**

P24MEL I will help people. So M3 **there are skills that you can get as a teacher – you can learn communication.**

What do you enjoy? ESL

- E3 What I enjoy last week was when I gave my pupil examination and they all pass it so I became very happy
- E4 as a teacher usually respect is given to you everywhere
- E3 when learners are understanding my topics
- E4 Own teacher is now proud of new teacher
- **M3 I will not forget the knowledge that I have.**
- E3 what I enjoyed was these learners when am teaching they are very attentive
- E9 I like chatting with my colleagues in the school specially when we sit in the office during lunch time p6
- G14 I like advising them when they are breaking for holidays p6
- E1 I enjoy being with the learner specially when in class p6
- E1 I interact with the pupils. G14 I am like a counsellor to them. P5
- I enjoy teaching any class where the teacher is absent or did not come. P5
- E9 I also enjoy making tea and breakfast to the fellow colleagues. P5
- E9 I also enjoy distributing the administrative work to the fellow teachers p5.
- E3 I cane them make sure that I correct them until they learn how to read and right and that makes me happy. P7
- E3 what I enjoy the most is when the learners understand what I am teaching then then I become very happy. P8
- R5 the learners reported in good number (after the Christmas break) and I became happy p8
- E3 all of them were participating in answering the questions. P8
- E3 my children because they bring good results in their school and that's what encourage me to teach. P8.
- G14 I enjoy...I also advise them on how to be smart and how to behave well. P9
- **E9 I also enjoy - I do advise my colleagues in the school here if I saw that there is something not going well. P9**
- G14 But what I really enjoy most is advising them. P10

- G14 enjoy advising the learners and also teaching them how to live religious life.p10

3) What did you do last week as a teacher that you really enjoyed? E

P11MEL I enjoy lesson preparations. The most important is the practical work.

P12MEF I was on duty – **E8 I needed to sweep around the compound.** I enjoyed that. I like teaching too.

P13MEL Nothing enjoyable last week – pupils are not reporting or they are here as it is just after Christmas. There is nothing very big that I enjoy here. Only when E9 **we go and chat together – we go under the tree and tell stories.**

P18MEL yesterday and today I taught P7 today mathematics. E1 **I interact with them,** some of them are good - exactly what we did yesterday and then today I gave them something and they are doing good. E1 **They are picking things up.**

P19MEL I am working hard even on Saturdays – and if I do my scheming then after that I can do for prayer. If you mean the topic – the topic I enjoy **E10 ‘part of speech’ and the subtopic of nouns.** In mathematics I take P7, and yesterday I was teaching about squares – and I enjoy that very much.

P20FEL I enjoyed E10 **the topic of Atlas** and they understand it and I can teach faster. E9 **I share with teachers** with teachers the topic that I likes and they enjoyed it too.

P21MEF I took the learning outside the classroom – E6 we play it was so wonderful and colourful.

P22FEF Last week I introduced a topic in P4 cRE – we talked about Easter and E1 **the learners participated very well which made me very happy.**

P23MEF E8 **I was on duty – I see them come on time. I like it when they answer me.**

P23MEL We were playing football with the pupils. E1 **Like when you are teaching the respond to your questions – and they can understand.**

4) What makes you want to stay in the profession of teaching? S

P11ME M11 One of my best professions – I like it the most!

P12MEF S1 **It is good to have experience so that when I go somewhere else.** I want to do a masters.

P13MEF S2 **I can not get that job for accounting.** Of course I have applied several times – and you see these probation to work as an accountant..but it's too easy and others occupy the jobs. I love teaching – I really love it – I remain with the knowledge in this field.

P14MEL M11 I like teaching since my youth – I used to coach.

P15MEF I am committed to myself to be a teacher. S3 It is a profession that I can do well.

P17MEL When I completed my secondary education – I stay at home without any work, so I think I write an application and now I am teacher. M4 **There is no work at home.**

P18MEL S1 **I will not stay as teacher for long.** I am already concluded my degree – then I will conclude my research then I will go into my profession of accounting in another place. But if time allows me to come and teach as well as my job – but a good job with good money is what I need as I am not married and I want a family. I have done my part – I have done 6 years, but it is not my profession, but if I get the opportunity, I will take my profession. But I keep coaching at home a group .

P19MEL When I compare myself to those from the university – I am practical and M3 **I am gaining knowledge.**

P20FEL M11 This profession of mine – I like it.

P21MELF It M11 is my love and interest to make me stay in the field of teaching. M2 **What I have in my mind – I can't sit at home with it – I better share it with children.** E5 I want my name to be praised later - they will remember me.

P22FEF this is a career that makes me to teach. Even though there are challenges I continue. M2 **I want to give to the little ones who have nothing in their minds.** I want to help them.

P23MEF S5 Because of the cooperation of the school – the HT tell you what to do. I

Why stay in the profession? ESL

- I have to stay in this profession because it is something that En4 God had blessed me
- because when we leave teaching even the learners will drop out of school which is not good.
- Too many challenges but we just continue like that and pray that one day En4 GOD will change the situation. P6
- M6 The salary that I get doesn't help but I just work because it's my nation p6
- S7 I like this profession because I have enough holidays p6
- M3 I also like the teaching profession because every time you are teaching your knowledge keep renewing but if you are not teaching the knowledge will go. P6
- En4 It is like someone whom God has called for this job. M6 So that I can help this generation. P8
- S8 Any work that you have chosen really you will not be able to leave it even if there are challenges because this is what you have chosen to develop anyone who is not developed. P10

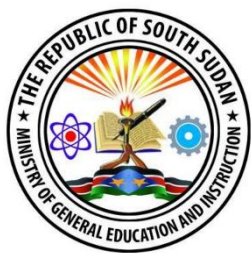
Appendix J: Frequency of codes						
A			Intrvws	Surveys		
Why become a teacher?	For the sake of the nation and/or community. Altruistic.	M2 give your knowledge	29	7		
		*M6 help the nation now and in the future – growing knowledge and peace	30	45		
		*En3 <i>we need teachers for the sake of other professions</i>	2	1		
		*M7 help the community *M10 shortage of teachers	0	6		
			8	1		
	My personal development	M1 be a leader.	1	0		
		**M3 grow as individuals and gain knowledge	19	17		
		E4 respect from the community.	10	7		
		M11 my interest	10	9		
		RM2 I want to be like my teacher	2	0		
		En4 a calling/gift from god	12	6		
	My professional development	S1 useful tool for moving on	3	3		
		OC7 you have enough time for a side job	6	1		
		M4 not any other job	9	1		
		M5 to earn something	2	0		
	For the sake of the child	E7 want children to be like me – role model	10	0		
		E3 success of pupils is necessary	10	0		
Why stay in the	Not my choice	En4 a calling/gift from god	12	6		
		S2 won't/won'y get the job I want	1	6		
		M4 not any other job	9	1		

	Being a professional	S9 be a professional	0	2		
		S8 I'm committed so I stay	1	0		
		S3 it's the job I can do well	1	0		
		M2 give your knowledge	29	7		
	The school community of teachers	S5 Other teachers (sometimes specific individuals)	2	0		
		E9 community of other teachers	8	0		
		E2 meeting people	1	0		
	The school community of learners	E8 enjoy elements beyond teaching but being part of a school	2	0		
		G14 help students solve problems and give advice	22	0		
		E1 Being with learners and their participation	17	8		
		E3 teaching learners who get it and succeed	10	2		
		S6 pupils encourage me	1	4		
		R5 ensure attendance	9	1		
	It is of benefit to the community	M6 help the nation now and in the future – growing knowledge and peace	30	45		
		E5 lasting impact on pupils	7	1		
		E7 want children to be like me	10	0		
	It is of benefit to me	S7 like the holidays	1	0		
		M3 grow as individuals and gain knowledge	19	17		
		M11 my interest	10	9		
		E4 respect from the community.	10	7		
		E6 self reliance – creative	2	0		
		E10 enjoy teaching topics	2	1		

What is the role of the teacher?	Administration	G1 Good time keeping	5	0		
		G2 good planning	5	0		
		R7 planning	1			
		R2 officer or administrator	4	0		
		R5 ensure attendance	9	1		
		R1 Class master	5	0		
		R12 exams	1	0		
	Role model	G9 smartness	9	0		
		G19 be a role model	3	0		
		G18 not be drunk	2	0		
	Character traits	G7 Patient, kind, tolerant	7	1		
		G8 co-operative and polite	3	0		
		G13 Have respect	2	0		
		G12 Be creative and communicative	6	5		
		G10 Be happy	2	0		
		G16 Like the job or subject	1	0		
	Student engagement	G20 Give them knowledge	2	0		
		R6 teaching and learner engagement	14	1		
		G3 use good discipline	5	0		
		G14 help students solve problems and give advice	22	0		
		EF7 outcomes of my students are good, so yes	1	0		
		G6 Listen to students and get to know them	6	0		
		G11 take care of students	3	0		
		R8 be a counsellor / carer	7	2		
		R11 promoting equality	3	0		
		G5 make learners happy.	2	0		
		R9 promoting good health	1	0		
		R10 Head of a subject/area	1	0		

	Working with colleagues	G17 working with colleagues R12 collaborate with colleagues	2 1	0 1		
Challenges to the role of being a teacher	Logistical challenges to being a teacher	C1 Rain	2	0		
		C2 lack of pay MV5 lack of salary	23 3	36 0		
		C14 too big time commitment	2	0		
		C7 lack of transport and long distance MV2 transport	17	7		
		C15 no food	2	0		
		C16 poor school infrastructure	2	4		
		C18 Lack of accommodation	0	1		
		MV1 war/security	1	0		
		MV6 after maternity – role taken	1	0		
	Challenges to teaching and learning	C4 changing from Arabic to English	2	0		
		C6 change of syllabus	2	1		
		C3 lack of materials – books and charts	13	10		
		C5 discipline	13	5		
		C9 student disabilities	3	1		
		C13 pupils do not understand	2	1		
	Problems with parents	C8 difficult parents and lack of respect	8	2		
		C17 parents push – skip years	0	2		
	Professional challenges	C10 lack of clarity over roles	1	0		
		C11 lack of training for teacher	3	4		
		C12 lack of gov or admin support	1	0		
Overcoming	External support	OC1 Inspectors come and then send you on training	1	0		
		OC2 community/church	11	10		
		W11 the government	2	3		

		W5 other organisations	6	2		
		W13 training	4	2		
	Self-determination	W2 we create our own	2	0		
		OC4 bring own knowledge (HT)	9	3		
		W3 trust/devote yourself – self determination		3		
		W1 don't rely on the government	2	3		



UNIVERSITY
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University College London

Voices from the Field.

A study of Primary Teacher Motivation

in rural South Sudan.

December 2022 to January 2024.

Research Question:

What are the factors that motivate primary school teachers in
rural Central Equatoria state to pursue and remain
in their role as a teacher?

Thank you for your participation.

Data generation in 6 Primary Schools

in rural Central Equatoria state

plus 1 pilot primary school in Juba.

Research was conducted between December 2022 and January 2024.

Research was conducted by Victoria Pendry from University College London (UCL) and Lilly Ladu and Faith Poni from the University of Juba.

The research employed a grounded approach to uncover motivators, beliefs and attitudes of teachers in rural primary schools.

The participatory study design was flexible, exploratory and interpretivist.

Research Method

37 **paper-based surveys** completed by
31 male and 6 female teachers in English
and
25 interviews in Arabic, Bari and English.

Interviews	Male	Female	Total	
Arabic	4	6	10	
Bari	1	0	1	
English	12	2	14	
Total	17	8	25	

Main question to teachers:

“Why did you decide to become a teacher?”

Summary of Findings

Teachers are generally **proud to be a teacher** and value the status that it gives them within their community.

Many people become teachers **because they see that there are no teachers**, and they want to provide education for children in their community.

“Somebody has to do it!”

Most teachers feel **that education is an urgent and essential aspect of development in South Sudan**. Teachers believe that through quality education, learners will make better futures for themselves and the nation. They try to secure good attendance of learners because of this.

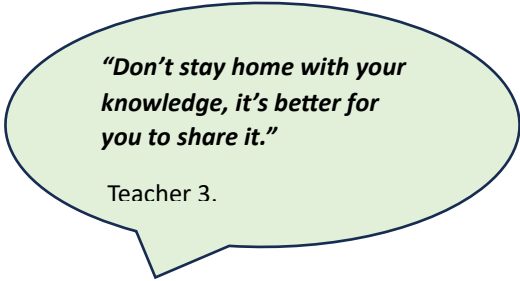
Most teachers feel that they **have a responsibility to pass on what they know to the next generation** and that by doing so, **their own knowledge grows also**. They enjoy seeing that learners gain new knowledge because of their teaching.

Teachers **value the school community of teachers** that exist within their school.

Many teachers **enjoy being a counsellor and role model for learners**, but that the behaviour of learners is a challenge in some classes.

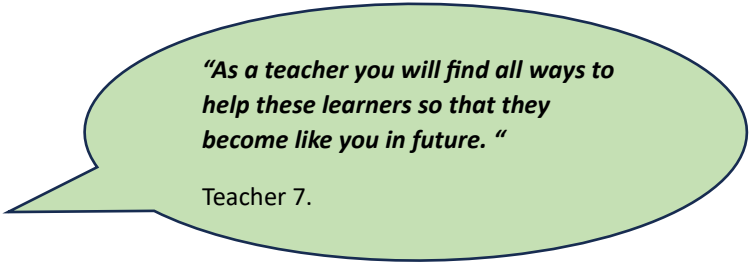
Most teachers **enjoy their job, despite the challenges of limited resources**.

Nearly all teachers talked about a **lack of salary as a major problem**, but that they have no choice but to continue to teach out of a commitment to helping to raise the nation up.



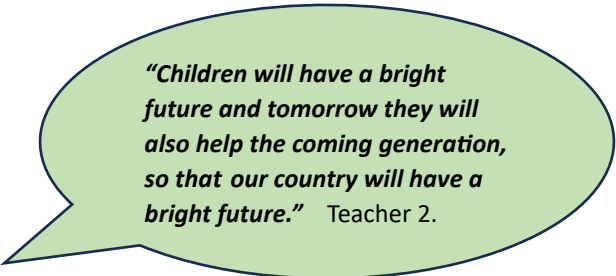
"Don't stay home with your knowledge, it's better for you to share it."

Teacher 3.



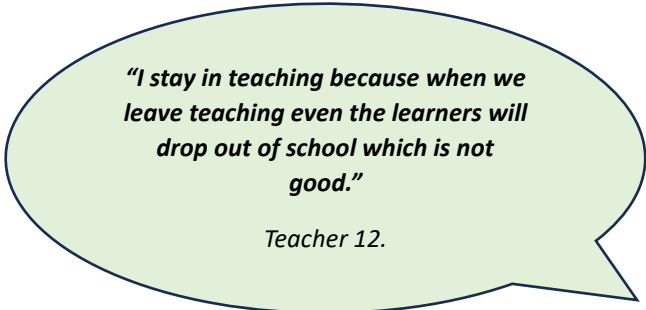
"As a teacher you will find all ways to help these learners so that they become like you in future. "

Teacher 7.



"Children will have a bright future and tomorrow they will also help the coming generation, so that our country will have a bright future."

Teacher 2.



"I stay in teaching because when we leave teaching even the learners will drop out of school which is not good."

Teacher 12.

Recommendations

Promote teaching as a profession that helps to build a nation.

Enhance teacher recruitment by sharing positive experiences of teaching.

Suggestions for further research

What about the motivations of student teachers?

Finding teachers who have left the profession: Why did you leave teaching?

What are the perceived roles of teachers? A comparative study.

What are the characteristics of teachers who remain in the profession?

Contribution to Policy

As a result of this study, we were pleased to be able to contribute to the development of the National Teacher Education Policy in association with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, South Sudan.



(Left to right: Lilly Ladu, Professor Sibrino Barnaba, Director General John Sebit, Victoria Pendry, Faith Poni.)

IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Victoria Pendry is a doctoral student at the Institute of Education, University College London.

She intends to conduct a qualitative research study with teachers in six rural primary schools in South Sudan. Her study will aim to better understand some of what motivates teachers to take up a role as a teacher and to remain in the profession.

The study will utilise two local researchers and will collect data via semi-structured interviews and short questionnaires in a local language. Data collection will follow ethical guidelines from UCL and will be monitored and supervised by two professors from the Institute of Education at UCL. The study has already received full ethical consent from UCL.

All participants in the study will be asked to provide their full consent to take part, and their names will not appear in any related reports or publications. The study is expected to take place between November 2022 and February 2023 and aims to contribute to the development of the National Teacher Education Policy in association with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, South Sudan.

If you wish to discuss this study with her supervisory team, please feel free to email us.



Dr Mary Richardson, PhD. BA.

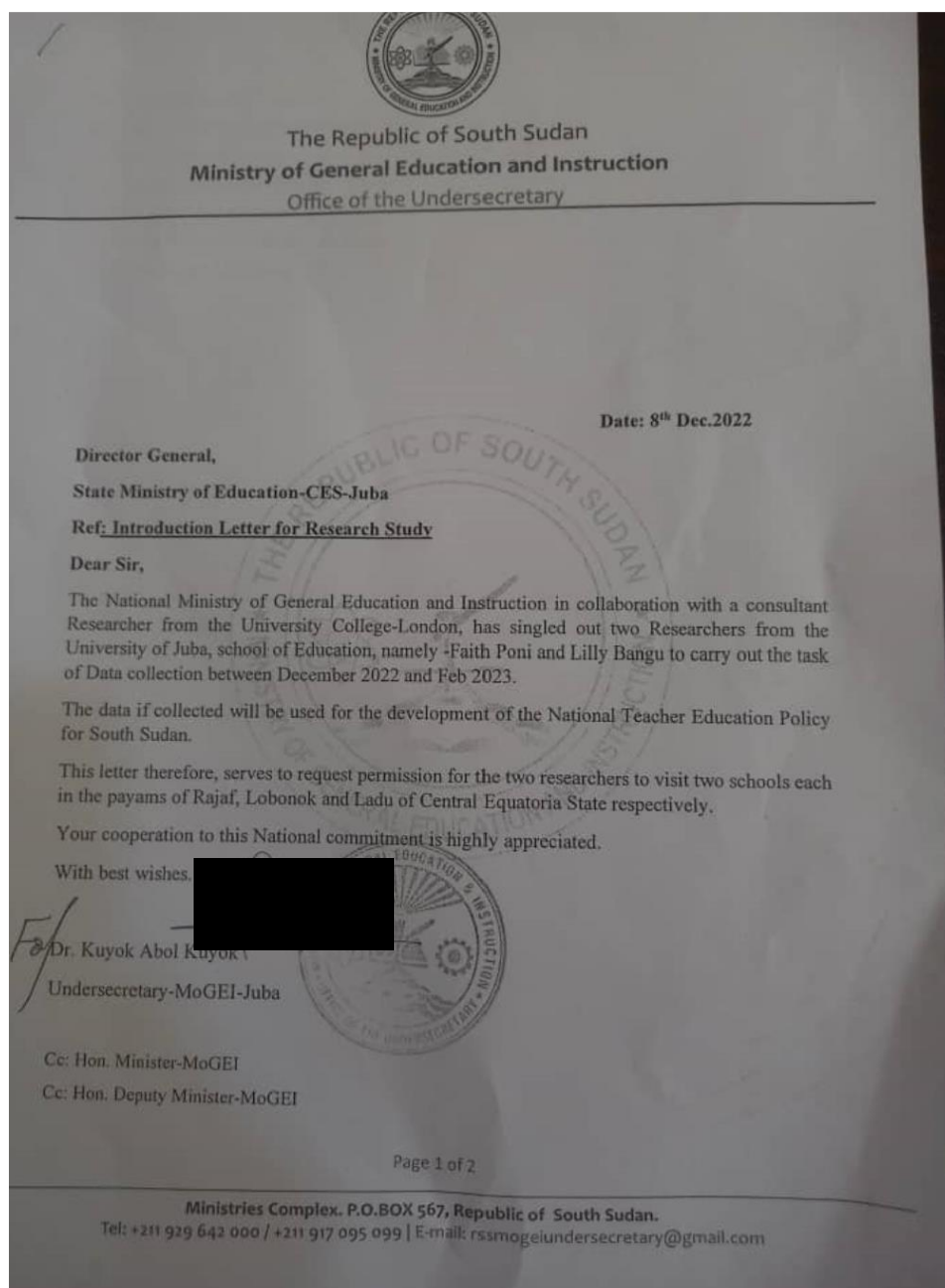
Professor of Educational Assessment, UCL IOE, London.



Dr Jennie Golding, EdD, FIMA, SFHEA, MSc, MA.

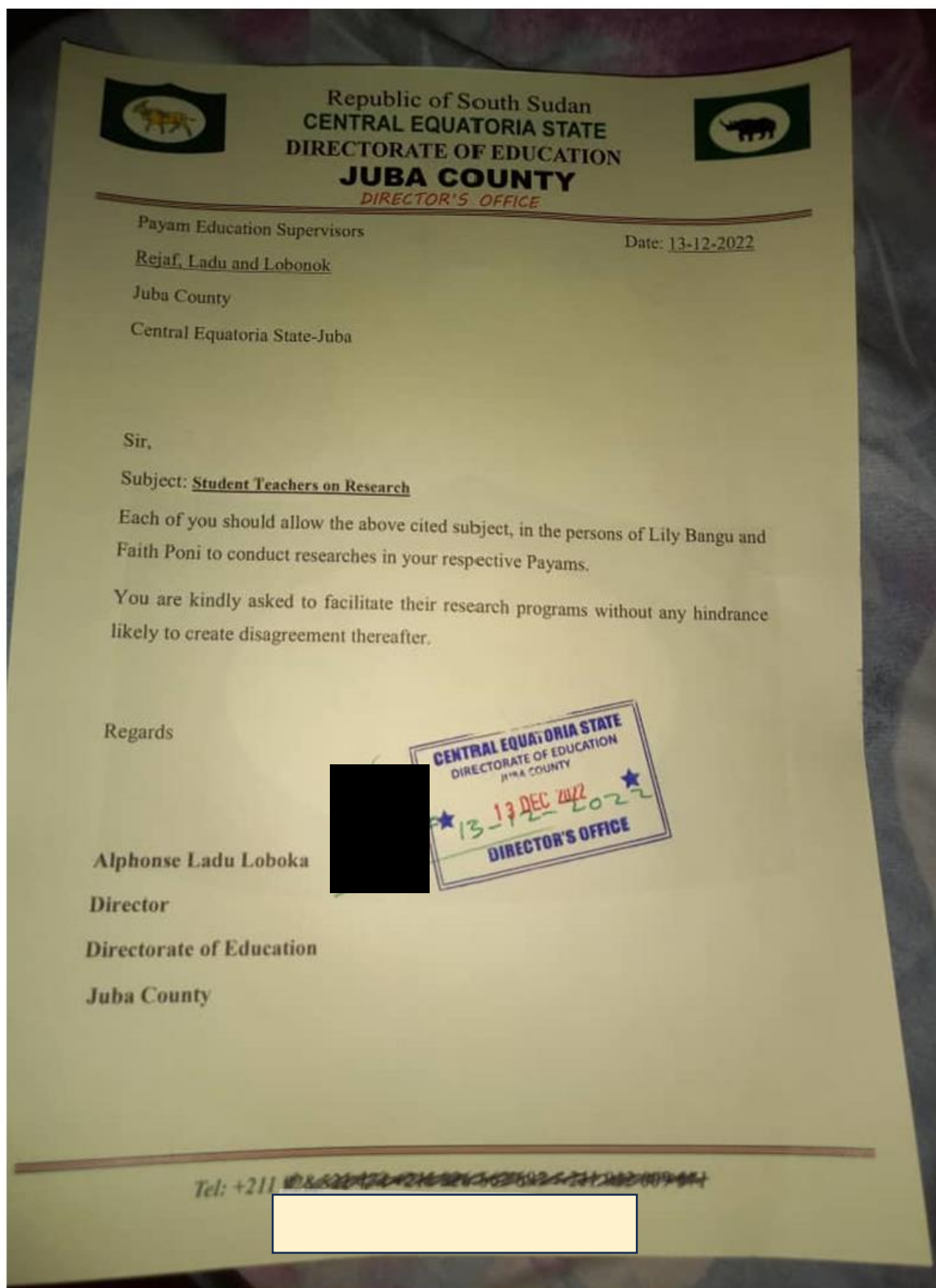
Associate Professor Mathematics Education, UCL IOE.

Appendix M: Letter from MoGEISS to State Education Director



Cc: Dean College of Education UoJ
Cc: Vikky Pendry-Researcher-University College London
Cc: D/G TDMS_MoGEI
Cc: County Education Director- Rajaf Payam
Cc: County Education Director-Lobonok Payam
Cc: County Education Director-Ladu payam
Cc: Faith Poni and Lilly Bangu

Appendix N: Letter from State Education Director to Schools



Appendix P: Example of headlines about education in South Sudan in the news

Bullets banish books in South Sudan as education becomes a casualty of war

Slim progress on education is set back as soldiers requisition school buildings and fighting forces children to flee, but some are returning to the classroom



✎ The educational cost of conflict ... children sit inside a looted classroom at the Doronj Soven secondary school after renewed conflict in Bor, Jonglei state, in December 2014. Photograph: Jok Solomon/Reuters

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Three in four children out of school and a teaching crisis in South Sudan



International

'No food, no school', says South Sudan students

Source: BBC

🕒 18 June 2022 3:46pm

South Sudan Expands Access to Free Education

Millions of Children May Benefit

NEWS

Government vows to improve teachers' salaries

by Number One Citizen Daily Newspaper — on June 17, 2022

GESS
GIRLS' EDUCATION
SOUTH SUDAN



RESEARCH BRIEF

No. 12 - 2018

COUNTY AND PAYAM EDUCATION MANAGERS SURVEY: ENDLINE

Child protection measures are either not in place or inconsistent across Counties and Payams.

'Girls have less food to eat'

Hungry and out of school in South Sudan.

5. National Professional Standards for Teachers in South Sudan

Introduction

These standards describe expectations for effective teachers in South Sudan. The term 'teacher' as used in this document means 'effective teacher' inclusive of the seven domains of the professional standards.

The standards are not intended to show isolated knowledge or skills and are not presented in order of importance. Teacher's knowledge and skills in each standard area will impact on their ability to perform effectively in the other standard areas. Each of these standards is important for effective teaching.



Teaching and Learning

Standard 1: Knowledge of the learners and how they learn

Teachers should have a knowledge of the learners they teach: their growth and development and learning processes. They should use this knowledge in planning lessons and facilitating their learning processes.

Description

Teachers must demonstrate a good understanding of learning processes, theories and principles and their application in the classroom. This enables them to design appropriate teaching and learning activities that are learner-centred. Teachers must connect their teaching to the learners' prior knowledge, needs and interests.

Application

- 1.1 Teachers must be knowledgeable of the development needs of the learner including physical, psychological, socio-economic and intellectual development
- 1.2 Teachers use knowledge of learning processes, theories and principles to plan and deliver lessons
- 1.3 Teachers demonstrate knowledge that learners have different learning capacities and use different learning methods to meet the diverse needs of learners in the classroom
- 1.4 Teachers demonstrate respect for learners' diverse cultures, religion, languages and experiences
- 1.5 Teachers know that all learners can achieve their full potential and guide plans of instruction towards this goal
- 1.6 Teachers treat learners with dignity; build good relationships and support their academic achievement.

Standards 2: Knowledge of the subject being taught

Teachers have mastery of the subject for which they have teaching responsibility.

Description

Effective teachers have a deep understanding of the subject matter and have confidence in communicating it to the learners. Teachers make content of the subject matter meaningful, relevant and applicable to real life experiences of learners.

Application

- 2.1 Teachers know the content they teach and use their knowledge of subject specific concepts, assumptions and skills to plan teaching and learning
- 2.2 Teachers understand and use a variety of teaching strategies to effectively teach the central concepts and skills of the discipline
- 2.3 Teachers have a good understanding of the national curriculum goals, priorities and subject standards.
- 2.4 Teachers demonstrate good knowledge about relationships among subjects
- 2.5 Teachers connect subject content to relevant life experiences (and career opportunities).

Standard 3: Teaching Methods

Teachers plan and deliver effective teaching that engages and advances the learning of the individual learner and the community. They apply appropriate teaching methods to different groups of learners.

Description

Teachers have high expectations for all learners, therefore, use a variety of teaching strategies that actively engage them and promote a love of learning. Teachers reflect on their teaching and learners' outcomes to make appropriate decisions which result in increased academic achievement. Teachers correctly design a logical scope and sequence for learning.

Application

- 3.1 Teachers develop teaching objectives and activities that are in line with national education principles.
- 3.2 Teachers create and select activities designed to develop learners as independent learners and problem solvers and adapt their teaching to respond to learners' strengths and needs.
- 3.3 Teachers use relevant and appropriate teaching and learning materials from locally available resources effectively and make use of available technologies to enhance learning
- 3.4 Teachers use participatory teaching and learning activities relevant and meaningful to learners and relate them to everyday lives by using real life stories, local examples and materials

Standard 4: Assessment and Evaluation Methods

Teachers understand and use varied assessment tools to evaluate learners and use results to improve instruction.

Description

Teacher understand the meaning and purpose of assessment and use multiple assessment methods to learn about their learners, to evaluate learning and to plan and adjust instruction. They use formal and informal assessment to gauge learning and determined the academic progress of learners. They keep accurate records of learners' assessment results. Teachers report assessment results to parents, head teachers and other educational administrators.

Application

- 4.1 Teachers are able to design valid and reliable assessment instruments
- 4.2 Teachers use different assessment methods, and use the data generated from the assessment to improve teaching and learning.
- 4.3 Teachers apply (formal and) informal assessment in their lessons to gauge learners' progress on a regular basis.
- 4.4 Teachers keep accurate records and analyse the data to make decisions on learners' progress, to plan, to differentiate and to modify instruction accordingly.
- 4.5 teachers collaborate and communicate assessment results to learners, parents, their peers and school officials, school supervisors and inspectors.

Standard 5: Learning Environment

Teachers use the existing conditions to create child-friendly learning environments that are conducive to learning.

Description

Teachers treat all learners fairly and establish an environment that is respectfully, supportive, caring, and physically and emotionally safe. They create learning situations in which learners work independently, collaboratively or as a whole class, and motivate the learners to work productively and assume responsibility for the own learning. They maintain an environment that is conducive to learning for all learners.

Application

- 5.1 Teachers treat all learners fairly and establish an environment that is respectful, supportive and caring to include differences in gender, ethnicity, language, culture, religion and ability.
- 5.2 Teachers create learning environments that are physically and emotionally safe.
- 5.3 Teachers create learning situations in which learners work independently, collaboratively or as a whole class
- 5.4 Teachers maintain an environment that is conducive to learning for all learners including those with special needs
- 5.5 Teachers ensure disruptive behaviours and indiscipline are discouraged and managed.

Teaching as a Profession

Standard 6: Professional Responsibility and Growth

Teachers assume responsibility for their own professional growth as individuals and as members of a learning community.

Description

Teachers are professionals who must understand that they are in a unique and powerful position to influence the future of their learners and the communities. Teachers are continuously engaged in their own professional development and contribute to the teaching profession. Teachers serve their school and surrounding communities in various leadership roles. They ensure the transmission of cultural heritage, values, customs and tradition of their immediate community and of South Sudan as a whole. Teachers foster ongoing collaboration with their peers and serve as change agents in the learning communities.

Application

- 6.1 Teachers are continuously engaged in their own professional development at various levels.
- 6.2 Teachers contribute to ongoing collaboration with their peers and to the teaching profession.
- 6.3 Teachers are exemplary and service a model of good citizenship for their learners and the community.
- 6.4 Teachers seek knowledge about and contribute to the heritage, values, customs and traditions of South Sudanese society
- 6.5 Teachers are aware of the importance of psychological issues such as child abuse, forced labour at home, rights of learners, and take account of these in teaching
- 6.6 Teachers have a basic knowledge of the educational goals, as contributing factors to quality education in the context of national policies in South Sudan

Standard 7: Teachers' Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics

Teachers are aware of the South Sudan Professional Code of Conduct and exhibit high standards of personal integrity and professional ethics.

Description

Teachers shall all carry out responsibilities with a high degree of professionalism that promotes a high standard of learning; thus contributing towards achievement of the strategic goal of building an educated and informed nation. They must observe the standards of behaviour and conduct as established in the Ministry's Teachers' Code of Conduct. As role models in society, teachers must practice the highest standards of integrity, fairness and honesty.

Application

- 7.1 Teachers apply the rules and policies of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction.
- 7.2 Teachers have regard for the need to safeguard for the policies and practices of the school in which they teach
- 7.3 Teachers have proper and professional regard for policies and practices of the school in which they teach
- 7.4 Teachers promote and maintain effective relationships with parents, members of the school community, as well as persons and bodies outside the school that may have a stake or interest in the school
- 7.5 Teachers practice the highest standards of integrity, honesty, fairness and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- 7.6 Teachers plan and execute duties with diligence, commitment, dedication, fairness and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.

Appendix R: Costs for this study

Item	Unit cost	Total	Comments
Research assistants	\$100/day	6 days each for visits to schools. 6 days each for transcriptions. 4 days each for training and follow-up. \$3,400	Faith is paid \$40 a month by the NGO she works for. Per diem is \$50/day/person for workshop participation via UNICEF where Intellectual property is provided. Head of Education at UoJ informed me that \$200 a day is the 'going rate' for researchers from the University.
Taxi	\$150/day	6 visits to schools over 4 days. 1 day to visit 3 schools to distribute findings. \$750	A taxi ride for NGOs is \$12 per trip within Juba. 'Boda boda' ride (back of a motor-cycle) is equivalent of 20c for the same journey.
A5 card Participation Certificates for Teachers	\$70	100 certificates \$70	Used local printer . Certificates for all teachers. Generally, 4 teachers in each school were interviewed and 6 completed paper surveys.
\$ Appreciation of Participation for teachers	\$5	70 teachers \$140	Teacher were paid \$40 month by donor organisations between Jan 2020 and June 2022. Government pays \$20 a month, but as of July 2024, teachers have not been paid by government since November 2023.
70 Findings booklets for teacher. A5, 4 page booklets.	\$56	\$56	Used local printer.
Mobile data for research assistants	\$10/day	12 days in total – 6 days each. \$120	
Refreshments for school visits	\$10/school	6 schools . \$60	
Backpack and stationery for Lilly and Faith	\$50	One each. \$100	Backpacks were provided to help with security, durability and as an incentive/appreciation.

Principal Investigator	\$400/day	4 day initial review of literature. 4 day situation analysis. 1 day inception report. 5 day – recruit and train researchers. 4 days monitoring and coordination. 5 days analyse data. 2 days report writing. 1 day present findings. 26 days = \$10,400	This is an estimate per day based on what I know of what NGOs pay per day for consultant/freelance Principal Investigators. Estimate of allocated days removes the ‘EdD’ nature of this study (ie: the days here are considerably lower than actual!) Estimate is based on what I know of days allocated to similar projects.
Travel to South Sudan	Visit	Flight \$1,500 x 3 visits Visa \$100 x 3 visits Alien registration \$50 x 3 visits DSA \$200 x 6 nights x 3 visits \$8,550	I did not incur these costs because it was covered by my work, but this information is representative of current expenses.
		Total: \$23,646	

Appendix S: Characteristics of actors who participated in this study

Name and role in this research project	Links to other actors and professional responsibilities	Influence on the study design
Faith Poni. Research Assistant	An MSc student in Natural Resources Management (Wildlife) at the University of Juba. Faith is also a Teaching Assistant at the College of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. Department of Wildlife. Faith is employed by an NGO also as a researcher and project officer. I have worked with the NGO too, but not with Lilly or Faith. Faith knows Lilly well.	1) Working with Faith gave me access to a local NGO to hold and distribute cash for the project. Without this, I don't know how I would have managed the cash flow as my own visits to Juba were not regular/reliable. 2) The Project Manager of the NGO was also a trusted colleague of mine who was able to offer helpful advice regarding remuneration for teachers, Lilly and Faith.
Lilly Ladu. Research Assistant	Lilly is an experienced teacher and researcher at the UoJ. I did not know Lilly before this study. She has an MSC in Chemistry from UoJ. Lilly was recommended to me by the Head of Education at UoJ, Dr Otim Gama. Lilly was Faith's high school chemistry teacher, they were neighbours also and since 2019, colleagues at UoJ.	1) Lilly, as a more experienced researcher, was able to offer Faith some mentoring. 2) Lilly was able to identify schools that would be willing to take part in the study through her work at the UoJ. 3) Lilly knew the process of how to recruit schools through the County Education Director with whom we had to negotiate access to each school. 4) Lilly was also able to hire a taxi driver who knew the route to schools well from previous work with UoJ. 5) The link via Lilly to the UoJ gave this study credibility when contacting schools.

Dr Otim Gama. Head of Education, UoJ.	Dr Otim Gama is the Head of Education at Juba University. I connected with him via work on the Teacher Education Policy that my company had been working on with TDMS and the Teacher Training Institutions since 2019. At the time of commencing this study, Otim was in the final year of his own doctorate, and we struck up a mutual interest in each other's work. I approached Dr Otim to help me recruit a researcher, and he suggested Lilly. Dr Otim knows DG John Sebit well from TDMS ⁵³ .	1) Dr Otim was able to convene a meeting at UoJ to discuss research partnerships 2) It was helpful to have three people from UoJ involved in this study in some way (Dr Otim, Prof Sibrino and Lilly) so that there were some informed discussions between them.
Professor Sibrino Barnaba. Dean of Education, UoJ.	Professor Sibrino knows TDMS very well also. I had connected with Prof Sibrino through various education projects that my company has been involved with since 2016. Prof Sibrino knows DG John Sebit very well from TDMS.	1) Professor Sibrino was my point of contact for gaining ethical approval from UoJ. Although this was not a formal application, the process and discussion were important in strengthening my understanding of the context. 2) The ethical approval process also provided an opportunity for the department to reflect upon ways of working with researchers 'such as myself' from another university and/or from outside of South Sudan.
Director General John Sebit.	DG John Sebit is the head of TDMS. I have worked with John on various teacher education projects since 2016 through my company. John was	1) John made official contact with County Education Directors to request permission to conduct research in schools. The letter he

⁵³ Ministry of Education South Sudan, Teacher Development and Management Service

Director of TDMS	instrumental is convening a stakeholder's group to co-develop the Teacher Education Policy, which began in 2022. John knows UoJ very well, but he did not know Lilly or Faith.	produced was counter signed by Dr Kuyok also to give it further strength. 2) John distributed the Research Findings Booklet across the Ministry of Education.
Professor Mary Richardson and Dr Jennie Golding. My supervisors from UCL.	Dr Richardson and Dr Golding are my EdD supervisors. Prior to this study, they did not have connections to any other actors associated with this research project. I will schedule a zoom call with all actors in this network after my viva to consolidate the value of this partnership.	1) Mary and Jennie developed a 'To who it may concern' letter which confirmed my status as a EdD student at UCL and my intentions to conduct research in South Sudan. This letter was important for Lilly and Faith to carry with them as they travelled to schools to confirm the connection to UK an institution which they said was important. 2) Mary and Jennie provided me with an opportunity to discuss and develop the research methodology and subsequent findings. 3) Prof Sibrino and DG John Sebit referred frequently to the validation that UCL gave to this study.
Global Partnership for Education and UNICEF	UNICEF was the grant manager for the GPE fund during the course of this study. It is this fund that enables my company to work with the Ministry of Education, and thus, to facilitate my time in Juba.	Research activities in country were tied directly to times when my company was working in country with the Ministry of Education. Due to the uncertain nature of programming and activities under GPE funds and work plans, I was never quite sure when my next visit would take place. This meant a certain amount of setting this up 'well enough' just in case I was unable to visit Juba again in a reasonable timeframe. During the course of this study, I visited Juba on six occasions – as set out in the flow chart in Chapter 4.

Appendix T: Interview schedule

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. My name is xxxxx and this is xxxxx and we are from Juba University.

What language would you prefer we use for this interview? We would like it to be easy for you.

We would like to record this interview because we want to be accurate and focus on what you say rather than taking notes.

Do you give your permission for this interview to be recorded?

(If no: 'Are you happy to continue with us taking a few notes?')

We will be talking with you about why people want to become a teacher and why they stay as a teacher.

We hope you will participate in our research! You have the right to remain anonymous throughout the research.

What you tell us will only be used by other researchers with our full permission.

You have the right to leave or stop the interview at any time.

Are you happy to continue?

Interview Questions

- 1) Can you tell me why your decided to become a teacher?

- 2) How did you become a teacher? (Prompts: qualified, volunteer, Certificate, CPD...)
- 3) What do you enjoy the most about being a teacher?
- 4) What did you do last week as a teacher that you really enjoyed?
- 5) What are your roles and responsibilities?
- 6) Which of these are the most important and why?
- 7) What challenges do you face as a teacher?
- 8) What helps you to fulfil your role as a teacher?
- 9) Does any other person help you to fulfil your role? How?
- 10) How many schools have you taught in? Why did you move?
(If no moves, 'Why have you stayed at this school as a teacher?')
- 11) What makes you want to stay in the profession of teaching?
- 12) What do you think makes a good teacher?
- 13) Is there a teacher who has been a role model for you – when you were a child or one of your colleagues? What characteristics did they have?

14) What would you say to somebody to encourage them to become a teacher?

15) Do you think you are an effective teacher? How do you know?

16) Do you have anything else you'd like to add about what encouraged you to become a teacher?

17) Do you have anything else at all to add?

**18) *"Thanks you for your excellent answers and for giving us some of your time.
We have really enjoyed speaking with you."***

Structure of the EdD at IoE, UCL

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Year Six	Year Seven
Course modules and assessments	Foundations of Professionalism in Education Methods of Enquiry I Methods of Enquiry II	Institution-Focused Study Portfolio Reflective Statement		Thesis Upgrade	Thesis Impact Statement Reflective Statement		