

Organizational Factors, Motivational Needs, and Challenges of Elementary Teachers in Santa Fe District: Implications for Educational Management Practices

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the organizational factors, motivational needs, and challenges of elementary teachers in Santa Fe District and their implications for educational management practices. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing total enumeration of permanent elementary school teachers from selected schools in the district. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument that was expert-validated and pilot-tested, consisting of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. Findings showed that organizational factors were perceived at a very high level, particularly organizational linkages, while financial capability was relatively less emphasized. Motivational needs were generally highly satisfied, with teachers reporting a strong sense of affiliation and belonging, although compensation and benefits were rated comparatively lower. Teachers reported minimal challenges overall, though limited promotion opportunities emerged as a notable concern. Qualitative responses supported these results, highlighting themes such as excessive workload, limited resources, restricted career advancement, and the need for more collaborative and supportive leadership. Correlational analysis showed significant relationships among variables, indicating that stronger organizational conditions are associated with higher levels of motivation and fewer professional challenges. The study recommends developing a comprehensive Teacher Motivation and Support Framework that prioritizes resource management, professional development, workload balance, and participatory leadership to enhance teacher well-being and performance.

Keywords: teacher motivation, workplace challenges, educational leadership, professional development, teacher well-being

INTRODUCTION

Education plays an underlying role in shaping the development and quality of society. It is universally recognized as the foundation of sustainable development, and the teachers are its essential pillars. In the Philippine setting, the elementary teachers are the ones carrying the responsibilities of nurturing young learners' competencies, values, and aspirations. Internally, the teachers in the Santa Fe District, however, their motivation and effectiveness are shaped by organizational realities such as financial capability, manpower requirements, facilities, organizational linkages, and professional development opportunities. According to Lagrimas (2025) those components may influence directly the standard of instruction and the overall educational management practices in the district.

The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), stress the continuous professional development, supportive environments, and the recognition for teachers' contributions. Likewise, in DepEd Memorandum No. 89, s. 2025 where it is highlighted the needs to streamline administrative tasks, reduce paperwork, and allowing teachers to focus more on their instruction and learners' engagement. In accordance to Nur Kholifah (2024) the policies emphasize the importance of aligning organizational support with teachers' motivational needs. Being one of the educators in the Santa Fe District, I observed that as teachers profoundly committed to their career, their motivation is frequently challenged by limited resources, administrative workload, and unfulfilled professional needs. As for instance, the financial constraints hinder classroom innovation, while insufficient manpower increases workload.

In global context, this study also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs, particularly SDG 4 or Quality Education and SDG 8 or Decent Work and Economic Growth. This is to guarantee that teachers are motivated, supported, and empowered contributes not merely to improved learning outcomes likewise, for better sustainable educational systems (Cruz & Villanueva, 2024). The motivational needs like employment security, fair compensation, career advancement, and the esteem recognition are indispensable conditions for teachers' effectiveness in teaching. When these needs are unmet, the challenges like stress, excessive paperwork, and resource shortages will become barriers to the quality of education (Teachers' work motivation, 2025).

The concepts that were presented in this study are supported by several motivational theories that explain how organizational conditions influence teachers' motivation and performance. According to Lagrimas (2024) and Pal (2025), in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, he emphasizes that individuals are motivated by a hierarchy that ranges from physiological and safety needs to social belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. In the context of elementary teachers in the District of Santa Fe, the factors such as fair compensation, job security, supportive work environments, and the opportunities for professional growth correspond to these levels of needs. If the said needs are adequately met, the teachers are more likely to achieve their higher levels of motivation and effectiveness in their roles as educators.

It is also similar to the study of the Two-Factor Theory of Motivation by Herzberg (1959) and was also cited in the study of Pujoko et al. (2025); they explain that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction may be influenced by the two sets of factors, which are the hygiene and motivators factors. The hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, administrative policies, and the workload among teachers help prevent dissatisfaction but do not actually motivate them. On the other hand, motivators such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and professional advancement may contribute to their higher job satisfaction and motivation in their field of teaching. In Sionosa et al.'s (2025) study, the issues in the District of Santa Fe, such as the administrative workload given to teachers, limited resources for their teaching, and inadequate facilities, may act as the hygiene factors that affect the teachers' satisfaction in the job. While the opportunities for professional development and

recognition may serve as motivators to teachers and may help them enhance their commitment and performance in the field of teaching.

Moreover, it is foregrounded in the study of the self-determination theory of Deci & Ryan (1985) and Nur Kholifah (2024) that each one may be intrinsically motivated when their three basic psychological needs are fulfilled, which are autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the educational context, teachers may feel more motivated when they are given autonomy in their instructional decisions, are given opportunities to develop professional competence, and have strong collaborative relationships in their school community. Having the policies that reduce administrative load and strengthen their professional support systems therefore contribute to teachers' enhancing their motivation and engagement.

According to Öz (2025), Pal (2025), and Cruz and Villanueva (2024), such theories provide a framework to understand how the organizational factors and motivational needs influence the performance and well-being of elementary teachers in the Santa Fe District. By examining these elements within it, this study aims to identify which management practices foster supportive environments, address teachers' challenges, and ultimately promote a more motivated and effective teaching workforce.

Increasing productivity and effectiveness will surely contribute to move for quality education. While there is a need for the support from the government and parents to attain quality education, it is believed that no other can do it better than teachers because quality education is the excellence of the teaching force. Hence, the objective is to know the employees' needs to ensure quality output of graduates, a citizenry that can be assured of quality through teachers' productivity and effectiveness.

It is in light of this that the researcher embarked on the study entitled Organizational Factors, Motivational Needs, and Challenges of elementary teachers in the Santa Fe District, and to analyze the implications for educational management practices. By doing so, it seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations that strengthen teacher motivation, reduce challenges, and enhance management strategies. In the end, by addressing teachers' motivational needs is not only a professional responsibility but also a moral imperative to ensure that every child in Santa Fe District receives quality education from motivated and empowered teachers (Lagrimas, 2024; Teachers' work motivation, 2025).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship among organizational factors, motivational needs, and challenges experienced by elementary teachers in the Santa Fe District, as well as their implications for educational management practices. It was conducted in selected public elementary schools within the district. The respondents were 40 permanent public elementary school teachers selected through total enumeration sampling and actively engaged in classroom instruction.

The researcher-crafted questionnaire consisted of four parts: Organizational Factors, Motivational Needs, Challenges in fulfilling motivational needs, and Open-ended questions. Experts validated the instrument, and pilot testing ensured its reliability and clarity. A 4-point Likert scale was utilized to measure data responses.

The data gathering procedure included securing permissions, orienting respondents, conducting pilot testing, distributing questionnaires, collecting responses, and organizing the data for analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation coefficient (r), while qualitative responses were analyzed through thematic analysis. Ethical standards were strictly observed to ensure the *protection, privacy, and rights* of all participants, while maintaining the integrity and credibility of the research process. Ethical measures were implemented throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting stages.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research indicates that teachers require continuous professional growth and a strong institutional support system to enhance their teaching and adjust to educational changes. It stresses that both individual motivation and organizational conditions play a significant role in shaping teachers' performance and well-being.

The framework combines several major motivation theories. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs clarifies that teachers are motivated when their basic needs, like salary, security, relationships, recognition, and growth, are met. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory also complements this: good working conditions such as salary, policies, and workload can prevent dissatisfaction, while factors like recognition and career advancement increase teachers' intrinsic motivation. In contrast, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasizes that teachers become intrinsically motivated when they experience autonomy, competence, and strong relationships in their fieldwork.

To link motivation to teachers' work environment, this study also uses organizational support theory, which states that teachers perform better when they feel valued and supported by their institution. Furthermore, the Job Demands–Resources Model (JD-R) explains that high job demands, such as heavy workloads and large classes, can cause stress, but sufficient resources, support, facilities, and training can improve teachers' motivation and resilience.

Overall, the framework shows that teacher motivation in the Santa Fe District is not purely personal; it is shaped by the interaction between psychological needs and organizational factors. When schools provide enough support and balance demands with resources, teachers are more satisfied, engaged, and effective. If these are not met, they may experience stress, low motivation, and dissatisfaction.

RESEARCH PARADIGM OF THE STUDY

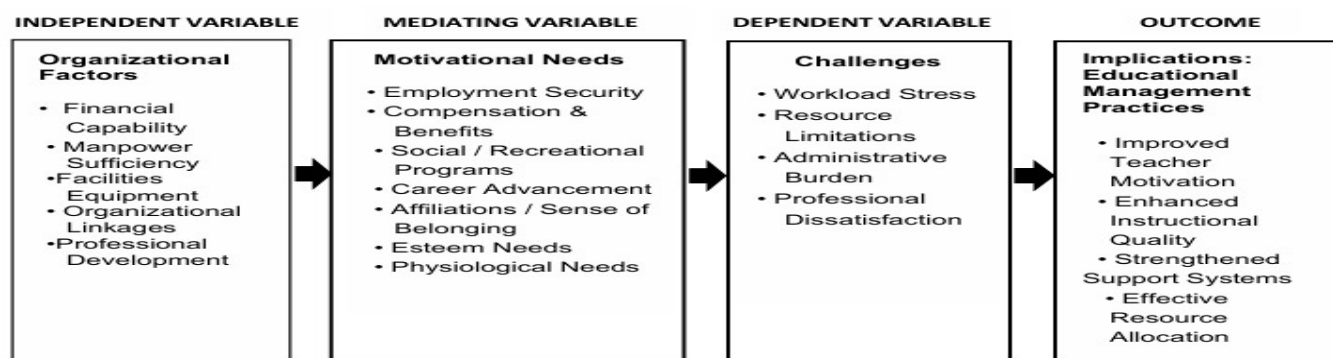


Figure 1 Research Paradigm

Figure 1 presents the research paradigm of the study, which explains how the organizational factors influenced the motivational needs and challenges of elementary teachers and how these mechanics inform educational management practices in Santa Fe District.

RESEARCH SETTING

The study was conducted in the selected schools in Santa Fe District, a diverse educational setting with elementary schools serving learners from various socioeconomic backgrounds. Differences in school resources, organizational support, and teacher experience provided a strong basis for examining how organizational factors influence teacher motivation and performance. The district offers a relevant context for improving educational management practices and supporting broader educational goals.

DATA GATHERING TOOLS

The study employed a *researcher-crafted questionnaire* as the primary instrument to gather data from elementary teachers in the Santa Fe District. The questionnaire was *theoretically grounded, content-validated, and contextually tailored* to capture organizational factors, motivational needs, challenges, and implications for educational management, ensuring that the instrument reflects teachers' actual experiences while aligning with the study's objectives. It comprises four parts: Organizational Factors, Motivational Needs, Challenges in fulfilling motivational needs, and Open-ended questions. Experts validated the instrument, and pilot testing ensured its reliability and clarity. A 4-point Likert scale was utilized to measure responses. It was administered primarily through Google Forms. The instrument was designed to be accessible and user-friendly.

The open-ended questions were designed to gather detailed responses regarding the challenges faced by elementary teachers, their motivational needs, and their suggestions for improving educational management practices. These questions complemented the checklist on challenges by allowing respondents to further explain and elaborate on their answers based on their lived experiences. Including open-ended questions supports the study's descriptive-correlational research design by providing qualitative data that enrich and help explain the quantitative results. While the checklist generated measurable data used to determine relationships among variables, the open-ended responses offered deeper insights into the reasons and contexts behind these relationships. The qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. The data were reviewed, coded, and organized into recurring themes and patterns. These themes were then used to support, clarify, and provide context to the quantitative findings, ensuring a more comprehensive interpretation of the relationships among organizational factors, motivational needs, and challenges of elementary teachers.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

The collected data were *analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics* to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. The statistical procedures were organized according to the research objectives and the type of data collected. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale to determine respondents' level of agreement with each organizational factor, the level of fulfillment of each motivational need, and the severity of challenges faced by teachers, using descriptive statistics including the mean and standard deviation. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Additionally, the *Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)* was employed to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Finally, qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. The data were reviewed, coded, and organized into recurring themes and patterns. These themes were then used to support, clarify, and provide context to the quantitative findings, ensuring a more comprehensive interpretation of the relationships among organizational factors, motivational needs, and challenges of elementary teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Part I: Organizational Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation

Financial Capability

Financial Capability had a mean of 3.23 (High). The highest-rated items were "Budget allocation for teaching materials is adequate" ($M = 3.35$), "The school has sufficient funds to support instructional needs," and "The school receives adequate financial support from higher authorities" (all at $M = 3.32$). The lowest-rated items were "Teachers are provided with sufficient budget for classroom projects" ($M = 3.10$), "Funds for school programs and activities are released on time" ($M =$

3.12), and "Financial assistance for classroom innovations is available" ($M = 3.12$). The mean falls within the High range, the only organizational sub-construct that did not reach the Very High range. Pressley (2021) identified insufficient financial resources as a primary institutional condition that negatively affects teacher motivation and can lead to burnout. Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2022) similarly demonstrated that resource limitations are among the most consistent predictors of teacher dissatisfaction. In the Philippine context, David and Reyes (2022) reported that teachers cite limited instructional resources and irregular fund releases as significant sources of professional frustration. The Job Demands-Resources Model (Teachers' Work Motivation, 2025) frames financial adequacy as a critical job resource whose absence amplifies experienced demands by requiring teachers to personally compensate for institutional shortfalls.

Manpower Requirements

Manpower Requirements had a mean of 3.33 (Very High). The highest-rated item was "Teacher-to-student ratio in the school is manageable" ($M = 3.50$, Very High). "Administrative staff provides timely and effective support" scored $M = 3.32$, "The school administration addresses teacher shortages" scored $M = 3.30$, and "Additional manpower is provided during school programs" scored $M = 3.28$. The lowest-rated item was "Teachers are given assignments according to their specialization" ($M = 3.25$). The mean of 3.33 (High) for Manpower Requirements reflects adequate but not optimal staffing conditions. The very high score for teacher-to-student ratio manageability ($M = 3.50$) is encouraging, indicating class sizes have not reached levels that directly impair instructional quality. However, the lower score for specialization-aligned assignments ($M = 3.25$) raises an important concern: placing teachers in grade levels or subjects outside their training reduces instructional effectiveness and may generate professional frustration and a sense of underutilization. Collie (2021) emphasized that supportive administrative structures and appropriate workload distribution are consistently associated with teacher motivation and self-efficacy. The concern about specialization-aligned assignments resonates with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, as cited in Nur Kholifah, 2024), which identifies competence as a fundamental psychological need: teachers assigned outside their expertise may experience diminished professional competence, reducing intrinsic motivation and instructional confidence. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) further found that administrative support and collegial collaboration critically moderate the relationship between workload and burnout.

Office Buildings, Equipment, and Facilities

With a mean of 3.36 (Very High). The highest-rated item was "The school environment is safe and conducive for teaching and learning" ($M = 3.60$, Very High), followed by "The school provides adequate workspace for teachers" ($M = 3.42$) and "Classrooms are equipped with necessary teaching aids" ($M = 3.40$). "Library resources are accessible" scored $M = 3.28$. The lowest-rated item was "ICT facilities are available to support instructional activities" ($M = 3.08$), the only item within this sub-construct that did not reach Very High. The Very High mean reflects a generally positive physical environment in Santa Fe District schools. However, the notably lower ICT score ($M = 3.08$) stands out as a critical gap in an era where technology-integrated instruction has become an educational standard. Teachers who perceive inadequate ICT support struggle to implement modern instructional strategies and access digital learning materials. This gap is especially consequential because it directly relates to DepEd's digital education directives and the growing expectation of technology-enhanced learning across all grade levels. Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2022) demonstrated that inadequate facilities and equipment are among the most direct sources of teacher dissatisfaction. The ICT finding aligns with Cruz and Villanueva (2024), who established that technological access is increasingly critical to teachers' sense of professional competence. Organizational Support Theory (Oz, 2025) frames adequate facilities as one of the most tangible manifestations of organizational care, suggesting that the ICT gap may contribute to a perception of insufficient institutional investment in teachers' professional capacity.

Organizational Linkages

Which registered the highest mean among all five organizational sub-constructs at 3.53 (Very High). All nine items fell within the Very High range. The highest-rated items were "The school regularly communicates its programs and activities to the community" ($M = 3.60$), "The school maintains strong partnerships with parents," and "There is good collaboration with the local government and community" (both at $M = 3.58$). The lowest-rated item was "Communication between administration and teachers is effective" ($M = 3.45$), though still within the Very High range. - Kurtessis et al. (2020) found that perceived organizational support, including community partnerships, is one of the strongest predictors of employee affective commitment. Garcia and Mendoza (2021) further demonstrated that strong school-community partnerships in the Philippine context significantly enhance teacher motivation by providing supplementary resources, parental cooperation, and community validation of the teaching profession. Collie (2021) and Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) similarly identified collaborative leadership environments as among the conditions most strongly associated with teacher self-efficacy and reduced emotional exhaustion.

Personal and Professional Development Opportunities

With a mean of 3.46 (Very High). The highest-rated item was "Teachers are encouraged to attend seminars and training" ($M = 3.60$, Very High), followed by "The school provides opportunities for professional growth" ($M = 3.52$), and "The school provides in-service training programs for teachers" ($M = 3.50$). The lower-rated items were "Mentoring and coaching programs are available" ($M = 3.32$) and "Teachers are supported in pursuing graduate studies" ($M = 3.35$), indicating that individualized long-term development pathways are less established than structured group training opportunities. The Very High mean affirms that Santa Fe District is a learning-oriented organization that actively encourages professional growth. The strong scores for seminar attendance encouragement ($M = 3.60$) and in-service training ($M = 3.50$) indicate investment in formal professional development activities. However, the lower scores for graduate study support ($M = 3.35$) and mentoring availability ($M = 3.32$) reveal a gap between structured institutional training and individualized long-term development pathways. Laguador and Chavez (2021) established that professional development programs significantly enhance teacher competence, motivation, and loyalty, particularly when responsive to individual career aspirations beyond standardized

training. Avalos (2021) emphasized that mentoring and coaching are among the most effective forms of professional development for sustaining long-term teacher growth. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, as cited in Nur Kholifah, 2024) frames these findings within the competence dimension of intrinsic motivation: teachers who receive sustained institutional support for academic development experience higher competence satisfaction, strengthening intrinsic engagement. UNESCO (2023) confirmed that investing in teacher professional development is among the most critical strategies for achieving quality education outcomes.

Summary of Organizational Factors Influencing Teacher Motivation

The grand mean of 3.39 (Very High) indicates that teachers' overall perceived organizational support is very high. Organizational Linkages registered the highest mean ($M = 3.53$, Very High), followed by Professional Development ($M = 3.46$), Facilities ($M = 3.36$), and Manpower ($M = 3.33$). Financial Capability recorded the lowest mean ($M = 3.23$; High), emerging as the only sub-construct below the Very High threshold. The grand mean pattern reveals a district that has built its institutional strength primarily on relational, community, and professional development dimensions rather than on depth of material resources. Organizational Linkages and Professional Development, which represent the district's social capital and learning orientation, are its strongest organizational assets. Financial Capability's lower position reflects a structural resource constraint that, while not severe enough to undermine the overall very high organizational rating, represents the most direct gap requiring targeted improvement. Pressley (2021) established that organizational conditions across financial, manpower, physical, relational, and developmental dimensions collectively shape the motivational climate, and that weaknesses in any single dimension, particularly those as foundational as financial adequacies, can offset positive effects elsewhere. Organizational Support Theory (Oz, 2025) indicates that when teachers perceive multi-dimensional institutional support, their affective commitment and professional resilience are significantly enhanced. The grand mean thus represents both a significant asset to protect and a clear mandate for targeted investment in the financial resource and ICT infrastructure dimensions of organizational support.

Part 2. Level of Motivational Needs of the Respondents

Employment Security

Employment Security had a mean of 3.57 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "My employment status is stable" ($M = 3.68$), followed by "The administration ensures job stability for teachers" ($M = 3.65$) and "I feel secure in my teaching position" ($M = 3.60$). The lowest-rated items were "Teachers are treated fairly regarding employment policies" ($M = 3.45$) and "School policies protect teachers' rights" ($M = 3.48$), though both remain within the Highly Satisfied range. The high employment security scores are grounded in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Lagrimas, 2024; Pal, 2025), which establishes safety and security as prerequisites for higher-order motivations. Malipot (2023) specifically identified job security as one of the three most critical motivational enablers for Filipino public-school teachers, confirming that structural employment protection provides the essential motivational foundation for belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Herzberg's hygiene theory (Pujoko et al., 2025) further predicts that even when core security is highly satisfactory, perceived inequities in policy implementation can gradually erode motivational benefits.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and Benefits had a mean of 3.25 (Satisfied), the lowest mean among all seven motivational sub-constructs, and the only one that did not reach the Highly Satisfied threshold. The highest-rated items were "I am satisfied with the benefits I receive" ($M = 3.42$), "My salary is commensurate with my workload," and "Compensation policies are implemented fairly" (all at $M = 3.35$). The lowest-rated items were "The school provides financial incentives for good performance" ($M = 3.02$) and "I receive additional benefits that support my professional needs" ($M = 3.10$). The relatively lower mean for Compensation and Benefits creates a specific and consequential gap in the district's motivational architecture. While teachers are generally satisfied with their basic salary and benefits, the notably low scores on financial incentives ($M = 3.02$) and additional professional support ($M = 3.10$) indicate that the current compensation structure does not adequately reward performance. This gap is especially significant given the predominantly married composition of respondents, whose family financial responsibilities amplify sensitivity to compensation adequacy. The compensation findings align with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Pujoko et al., 2025; Sionosa et al., 2025), which identifies salary and financial benefits as hygiene factors essential for preventing dissatisfaction. The Satisfied rather than Highly Satisfied mean indicates that compensation functions as predicted by hygiene theory: adequate to prevent significant dissatisfaction but not strong enough to generate positive motivational energy. Malipot (2023) specifically found that fair compensation is one of the three most critical motivational conditions for Filipino public-school teachers, indicating the practical significance of this gap.

Social and Recreational Programs

With a mean of 3.40 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "The school promotes a positive and friendly work environment" ($M = 3.55$), followed by "I feel socially supported in the workplace" ($M = 3.48$) and "Team-building activities strengthen relationships among teachers" ($M = 3.42$). The lowest-rated item was "The school organizes social activities for teachers" ($M = 3.20$, Satisfied), indicating that while the interpersonal atmosphere is highly positive, formally organized social activities may be less frequent or less well developed than teachers' desire. The Highly Satisfied mean reflects the strong interpersonal environment in Santa Fe District schools while revealing an important distinction between naturally occurring social relationships and organizationally structured programs. The high ratings for workplace friendliness and social support indicate that collegial bonds are genuinely strong, driven by organic relationships rather than formal programming. The lower score for organized social activities ($M = 3.20$) suggests that systematic institutional investment in recreational programming has not kept pace with the naturally positive relational climate already in place. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Lagrimas, 2024; Pal, 2025) positions social belonging as critical for motivational development. Han and Yin (2020) specifically found that teachers with strong collegial relationships demonstrate greater professional engagement, higher levels of creative instructional practice, and lower burnout rates. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci

and Ryan, as cited in Nur Kholifah, 2024) identifies relatedness as a universal psychological need whose satisfaction drives intrinsic motivation, confirming that the social relational strengths of Santa Fe District schools directly contribute to teachers' intrinsic professional engagement.

Career Advancement and Personnel Development

With a mean of 3.34 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "The administration encourages teachers to pursue professional advancement" ($M = 3.50$), followed by "Performance evaluations help contribute to my progress and career growth" ($M = 3.45$) and "There are clear opportunities for promotion" ($M = 3.38$). The lowest-rated item was "I receive support for further studies" ($M = 3.12$), echoing the lower score for graduate study support observed in the organizational factors section. The Highly Satisfied mean indicates a generally positive career development environment. However, the consistent pattern of lower scores for graduate study support across both the organizational factors ($M = 3.35$) and motivational needs ($M = 3.12$) sections represents the most persistent structural gap in career advancement. The finding that 90 percent of respondents hold MA units but only 2.50 percent have completed a Master's Degree strongly indicates that barriers to completing graduate study are real and consequential for the career trajectories of most teachers in the district. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Pujoko et al., 2025; Sionosa et al., 2025) identifies career advancement as a primary motivator that generates genuine satisfaction rather than merely preventing dissatisfaction. Laguador and Chavez (2021) established that institutional support for graduate education is a particularly high-impact professional development investment in the Philippine context, as it simultaneously addresses career advancement motivations, competence needs, and the credentialing requirements for higher-rank promotion, making it one of the most direct priorities for educational management in Santa Fe District.

Affiliations (Sense of Belonging)

Affiliations or Sense of Belonging, which registered the highest mean among all motivational sub-constructs at 3.62 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "I have good relationships with colleagues" ($M = 3.70$), followed by "I feel a strong sense of belonging in this school" and "I feel included in important school activities and decisions" (both $M = 3.65$). All six items reached the Very High level, making Affiliations the most consistently strong motivational dimension in the study. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Lagrimas, 2024; Pal, 2025) positions social belonging as the prerequisite for esteem and self-actualization. Han and Yin (2020) specifically demonstrated that teachers with strong collegial bonds show greater professional engagement and lower burnout rates. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, as cited in Nur Kholifah, 2024) identifies relatedness as one of three universal psychological needs whose satisfaction drives intrinsic motivation, and the uniformly high Affiliation scores provide strong empirical confirmation that this fundamental need is being met at an exceptional level within Santa Fe District schools.

Esteem Needs

With a mean of 3.56 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated item was "I feel proud of my contributions to the school" ($M = 3.68$), followed by "My efforts as a teacher are acknowledged by the school community" ($M = 3.62$) and "I am respected by my peers and school administrators" ($M = 3.60$). The lowest-rated items were "My accomplishments are recognized by the administration" and "I received appreciation for my work," both at $M = 3.48$, representing the most actionable dimensions within this sub-construct. The Highly Satisfied mean affirms a generally strong sense of professional recognition among teachers. The highest score for personal pride in contributions ($M = 3.68$) signals robust intrinsic professional satisfaction. The distinction between community acknowledgment ($M = 3.62$) and administrative recognition ($M = 3.48$) is meaningful: teachers feel seen by their broader school community but may not receive the same frequency of formal administrative appreciation that would better satisfy their esteem needs at the institutional level. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Lagrimas, 2024; Pal, 2025) establishes esteem as encompassing both self-esteem from personal achievement and externally conferred recognition. Malipot (2023) established that recognition is one of the three most critical motivational conditions for Filipino teachers, confirming the practical significance of the administrative recognition gap. Herzberg's motivator factors (Pujoko et al., 2025; Sionosa et al., 2025) classify recognition and achievement as primary drivers of positive job satisfaction, confirming that systematic investment in administrative recognition practices would have a disproportionately positive impact on the overall motivational climate.

Physiological Needs

Physiological Needs had a mean of 3.36 (Highly Satisfied). The highest-rated items were "The school provides a safe and comfortable working environment" ($M = 3.52$) and "The school environment supports my physical well-being" ($M = 3.48$). The lowest-rated items were "My workload allows sufficient rest" ($M = 3.25$) and "My salary adequately supports my basic needs" ($M = 3.28$), the two items closest to the Satisfied boundary and representing the most pressing physiological concerns. The Highly Satisfied mean indicates that teachers' fundamental physical requirements are generally being met. The strong scores for physical safety and environmental well-being affirm that schools' physical conditions support teacher health. However, the borderline scores for workload-related rest ($M = 3.25$) and salary adequacy for basic needs ($M = 3.28$) indicate two distinct but related concerns: the demand side of teaching and the financial dimension of basic living. The salary adequacy concern connects directly to the compensation gap, reinforcing that financial resources persistently affect teachers at both professional and basic living levels.

The physiological needs findings are grounded in the foundational level of Maslow's Hierarchy (Lagrimas, 2024; Pal, 2025). The borderline workload-rest score resonates with the Job Demands-Resources Model (Teachers' Work Motivation, 2025), which posits that when demands exceed available recovery resources, physical and psychological well-being deteriorates progressively. Pressley (2021) and Bakker and Demerouti (2022) found that workload stress and insufficient recovery time are among the most direct physiological pathways to teacher burnout, suggesting that workload-rest concerns deserve proactive management before they escalate.

Summary of the Level of Motivational Needs of the Respondents

The summary across all seven motivational sub-constructs. The grand mean of 3.44 (Highly Satisfied) indicates that teachers' motivational needs are highly satisfied overall. Affiliations registered the highest mean ($M = 3.62$), followed by Employment Security ($M = 3.57$) and Esteem Needs ($M = 3.56$). Compensation and Benefits registered the lowest mean ($M = 3.25$; Satisfied), the only sub-construct below the Highly Satisfied threshold. The summary reveals a broadly strong but selectively differentiated motivational profile. Six of seven sub-constructs within the Highly Satisfied range indicate that Santa Fe District schools provide a motivationally rich environment. The one exception, Compensation and Benefits, creates a specific vulnerability: because compensation relates to both the physiological base of Maslow's hierarchy and Herzberg's hygiene foundation, its relatively weaker performance could undermine the benefits of stronger performance in other dimensions if it deteriorates further. Salipong et al. (2024) found that motivated teachers experiencing high need fulfillment demonstrate measurably better teaching strategies and student engagement, confirming that the high overall motivational satisfaction has direct positive implications for instructional quality in Santa Fe District. Cruz and Villanueva (2024) documented that Filipino teachers with strong community bonds and collegial support systems demonstrate higher professional resilience and sustained motivation, affirming that the relational strengths identified in this study are structural motivational assets with significant implications for educational management.

Part 3. Challenges in Fulfilling Motivational Needs

The mean of 2.46 (Minor Challenge) indicates that overall challenges fall within the Minor Challenge range. "There are limited promotion opportunities" had the highest mean (2.82; Moderate Challenge) and was the most prominent professional barrier. Three additional items reached the Moderate Challenge range: "There are limited professional development programs" ($M = 2.62$), "I experience inadequate facilities and resources" ($M = 2.58$), and "I experience a heavy teaching workload" ($M = 2.52$). The lowest-rated challenge was "I experience job insecurity" ($M = 2.05$, Minor Challenge). The Minor Challenge mean indicates that Santa Fe District teachers are managing professional difficulties within generally manageable parameters. However, the four Moderate Challenge items form a coherent, structurally interconnected pattern of professional barriers: limited promotion opportunities, constrained access to professional development, inadequate resources, and workload stress all share common roots in resource allocation, organizational investment in teacher development, and career pathway management. The convergence of limited promotion as the top challenge with the high concentration of Teacher III-ranked respondents confirms a structural career-advancement concern that requires urgent management attention.

Pressley (2021) identified workload, resource deficiencies, and limited institutional support as the primary contributors to teacher burnout, which directly mirrors this study's Moderate Challenge items. David and Reyes (2022) reported that Filipino teachers most commonly cite administrative demands, insufficient materials, and limited professional development as their primary barriers. The Job Demands-Resources Model (Teachers' Work Motivation, 2025) provides the overarching framework: all four Moderate Challenge items reflect conditions in which job demands exceed available resources, creating strain that reduces motivation and professional performance. The very low job insecurity score ($M = 2.05$) indicates that structural employment protection effectively removes this foundational concern from Santa Fe District teachers' motivational calculus.

Part 3.1 Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Themes from Open-Ended Question 1: Major Challenges Affecting

The most prominent theme was Excessive Workload and Non-Teaching Tasks, with multiple respondents citing paperwork, administrative duties, and non-instructional responsibilities as the primary drivers of motivational decline. Limited Resources and Teaching Materials constituted the second most prominent theme, with teachers describing the burden of personally funding instructional materials as particularly demotivating. Learner Behavior and Diverse Needs was the third significant theme, with teachers identifying the management of diverse learning needs, behavioral challenges, and the demands of special education students as major sources of motivational stress.

The emergence of excessive workload as the dominant qualitative theme directly complements and reinforces the Moderate Challenge rating for heavy workload ($M = 2.52$) in the quantitative analysis. The qualitative responses add important nuance that the Likert-scale data cannot fully capture: teachers are not simply experiencing workload as a matter of volume but are specifically frustrated by the proliferation of non-teaching administrative tasks that displace time and energy from their core instructional function. This distinction between workload volume and workload type matters for educational management, as it suggests that the most impactful workload interventions would target reducing administrative tasks rather than adjusting class size or teaching hours. Pressley (2021) identified excessive workload and insufficient institutional support as the primary contributors to teacher stress and burnout, confirming the empirical significance of the workload theme identified in this study. Bakker and Demerouti (2022) found that administrative burdens, when they exceed teachers' coping resources, disproportionately erode professional motivation by reducing time for intrinsically rewarding aspects of teaching, such as student interaction, lesson preparation, and curriculum development. The resource limitations theme also resonates with Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2022), who demonstrated that inadequate teaching materials are among the most direct contributors to teacher dissatisfaction in institutional settings similar to Santa Fe District.

Themes from Open-Ended Question 2: Recommendations to Enhance Teacher Motivation

The prominence of workload reduction as the most frequently cited recommendation is particularly significant given the quantitative findings. The qualitative data reveal that teachers are not merely experiencing workload stress as an abstract challenge but have a clear, specific, and actionable prescription: remove or redistribute non-teaching tasks so that teachers can focus on their core instructional function. The salary and financial incentives theme reinforces the quantitative finding that Compensation and Benefits is the only motivational sub-construct below the Highly Satisfied threshold, with the specific requests for faster promotion and performance-based compensation directly addressing the lowest-rated challenge (limited

promotion opportunities, $M = 2.82$) and the lowest-rated motivational item (financial incentives, $M = 3.02$). These aligned findings across quantitative and qualitative data strengthen the evidence base for prioritizing these two dimensions in educational management interventions.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Pujoko et al., 2025; Sionosa et al., 2025) predicts that reducing hygiene factors such as administrative burden, inadequate working conditions, and compensation inequities will remove the primary sources of teacher dissatisfaction, while simultaneously increasing motivators such as recognition, advancement opportunities, and meaningful work will generate positive professional engagement. Laguador and Chavez (2021) and Salipong et al. (2024) further established that supportive leadership and recognition are among the most consistently effective strategies for improving teacher motivation in the Philippine educational context, directly validating the leadership and recognition themes that emerged from respondents' qualitative recommendations.

Themes from Open-Ended Question 3: How Educational Management Can Support Teachers

Open Communication and Collaborative Leadership emerged as the most prominent theme, with teachers emphasizing the critical role of accessible, transparent, and inclusive leadership in creating a motivationally supportive environment. Fair and Equitable Workload Distribution was the second most prominent theme, consistent with the earlier recommendations. Adequate and Timely Resource Provision, Support for Career Advancement and Professional Growth, and Teacher Autonomy and Professional Recognition completed the thematic landscape of management support expectations. The emergence of open communication and collaborative leadership as the top management support theme reveals an important dimension of teacher motivation that the quantitative data partially captures through the organizational linkages and leadership items but does not fully articulate. Teachers in Santa Fe District are not simply seeking better resources or lighter workloads; they are seeking a qualitatively different mode of organizational relationship, one characterized by genuine dialogue, shared decision-making, and leadership that treats teachers as professional partners rather than administrative subordinates. The career advancement theme further reinforces the convergence of qualitative and quantitative findings, with the promotion support theme appearing across all three open-ended questions as a persistent, deeply felt motivational concern. The thematic analysis findings affirm the theoretical frameworks applied throughout this study. The prominence of communication, autonomy, and collaborative leadership themes aligns with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, as cited in Nur Kholifah, 2024), which identifies autonomy and relatedness as fundamental psychological needs whose fulfillment drives intrinsic motivation. Organizational Support Theory (Oz, 2025) further frames resource provision, career support, and open communication as tangible expressions of organizational care that strengthen teachers' affective commitment and professional investment.

Part 4. Relationship Among Organizational Factors, Motivational Needs, and Challenges

The relationship between Organizational Factors and Motivational Needs produced a high positive correlation ($r = 0.8942$, $p < 0.001$), leading to the rejection of H01. Organizational Factors and Challenges yielded a low negative correlation ($r = -0.3648$, $p = 0.0206$), thereby rejecting H02. Motivational Needs and Challenges produced a low negative correlation ($r = -0.4217$, $p = 0.0067$), leading to the rejection of H03. All three null hypotheses were rejected at the 0.05 significance level. The very high positive correlation between Organizational Factors and Motivational Needs ($r = 0.8942$) is the key finding: it shows that organizational improvement is the most effective approach for educational managers to enhance teacher motivation, with the near-very-high magnitude confirming that investments in organizational conditions translate directly and substantially into higher motivational need fulfillment. The negative correlations involving challenges, while statistically significant, are more modest, reflecting that professional challenges are influenced not only by organizational conditions but also by systemic factors such as national policy structures, curriculum mandates, and career advancement systems that operate partly outside district-level management authority.

Basilio-Estillore et al. (2025) established that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors are significantly correlated with job satisfaction and professional retention. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2021) similarly found that supportive organizational environments significantly enhance teacher motivation and reduce emotional fatigue. These negative correlations align with the Job Demands-Resources Model (Teachers' Work Motivation, 2025), which predicts that increases in job resources, including organizational support and motivational need fulfillment, buffer the impact of job demands and reduce experienced challenges. Garcia and Mendoza (2021) specifically found in the Philippine context that teachers who perceive stronger organizational support and higher need fulfillment are significantly less likely to report serious professional challenges, directly paralleling the pattern observed in this study.

Implications for Educational Management Practices

The very strong positive correlation between Organizational Factors and Motivational Needs ($r = 0.8942$) establishes that investing in and improving the organizational environment of Santa Fe District schools is the most direct and empirically validated strategy for enhancing teacher motivation. Among the five organizational sub-constructs, Financial Capability ($M = 3.23$, High) is the only indicator below the Very High threshold. The items on classroom project budgets ($M = 3.10$), fund release timeliness ($M = 3.12$), and ICT facility availability ($M = 3.08$) represent the most concrete and actionable investment priorities in this dimension. These priorities are powerfully reinforced by the qualitative themes, which identify resource limitations and inadequate teaching materials as prominent motivational barriers.

The identification of Compensation and Benefits as the only motivational sub-construct below the Highly Satisfied threshold ($M = 3.25$) combined with financial incentives as the lowest-rated motivational item ($M = 3.02$), limited promotion as the most serious challenge ($M = 2.82$), and the recurrence of salary, promotion, and recognition themes across all three open-ended questions, creates a convergent and compelling case for prioritizing career recognition and financial acknowledgment of professional achievement. While direct salary adjustments require national policy action, district and school leaders can address the incentive and recognition gap through merit acknowledgment programs, recognition ceremonies, and advocacy for additional career advancement positions that can absorb the district's large Teacher III population.

The thematic analysis revealed that teachers in Santa Fe District are calling for a qualitatively different mode of organizational relationship characterized by open communication, shared decision-making, equitable workload distribution, and leadership that genuinely invests in teacher professional growth. These qualitative findings extend the quantitative data by identifying the relational and leadership dimensions of educational management as foundational conditions for sustainable teacher motivation. UNESCO (2023) stressed that improved teacher motivation contributes directly to SDG 4 quality education outcomes, while the International Labor Organization (2022) emphasized the need for decent work conditions for educators as a prerequisite for sustainable educational quality. Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) established that systemic improvements in organizational support produce multiplicative effects on teacher motivation and instructional quality, confirming that addressing the identified gaps not a s isolated concerns but as components of a coherent management strategy will generate the most significant and sustainable improvements in the educational outcomes of Santa Fe District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school principals and the district supervisor are encouraged to prioritize the timely release of school program funds through transparent financial management processes. A small instructional innovation fund at each school — providing teachers with ready access to modest amounts for classroom project implementation — may be institutionalized as a standard operational budget line across all district schools.
- It is suggested that the district may develop a multi-year ICT infrastructure plan that prioritizes the progressive expansion of functional ICT facilities in all elementary schools. Teacher training in digital instructional methodologies may accompany hardware and software acquisitions, ensuring that technology investments translate into improvements in instructional practice.
- The district supervisor and school principals are encouraged to conduct a comprehensive administrative task review that systematically identifies which non-teaching responsibilities can be reduced, redistributed to administrative staff, or streamlined through digital tools. DepEd Memorandum No. 89, s. 2025, which emphasizes reducing teachers' administrative workload, may serve as the policy foundation for implementing specific local measures aligned with this national directive.
- It is recommended to establish regular, structured, and inclusive communication mechanisms between school administrators and teachers. Santa Fe District schools may institutionalize regular faculty consultation meetings, anonymous feedback channels, and transparent sharing of administrative decisions that affect teachers' professional conditions as standard leadership practices.
- The district may find it beneficial to formalize existing community and stakeholder partnerships into structured resource-sharing agreements. Parent-Teacher Association funds, local government educational support programs, and academic partnerships with higher education institutions may be leveraged as supplementary resources to help address identified financial and ICT gaps.
- The school principals and the district supervisor may consider developing a formal, institutionalized teacher recognition program providing regular and specific administrative acknowledgment of individual teacher achievements and contributions. Recognition practices may include frequent informal acknowledgment throughout the school year, not only certificates and awards at year-end assemblies, to address the gap between community acknowledgment and formal administrative recognition identified in the esteem needs data.
- The educational managers are encouraged to advocate for performance recognition programs that include meaningful non-salary rewards such as professional development scholarships, priority access to training opportunities, and recognition allowances. District leaders may formally document and advocate to the division and regional offices for additional financial incentive mechanisms beyond the standard salary structure.
- It is recommended that the district formalize partnerships with graduate schools to negotiate group enrollment arrangements, tuition support mechanisms, or flexible modalities that make graduate degree completion practically accessible for the large number of teachers currently enrolled in MA programs. This may help address the consistently low scores for graduate study support identified across both organizational factors and motivational needs.
- The high Affiliations and Sense of Belonging scores represent a significant institutional asset that educational managers may actively build upon. School leaders are encouraged to institutionalize Professional Learning Communities, cross-school teacher collaboration networks, and intergenerational mentoring partnerships as regular features of the district's professional development ecosystem.
- Several Principals or School Heads may find it beneficial to develop explicit work-life balance policies that set reasonable and consistently applied boundaries for teachers' total work obligations, including classroom instruction, administrative tasks, extracurricular responsibilities, and after-hours documentation. This is indicated by the borderline workload-rest score and the dominant qualitative theme of excessive workload across all three open-ended questions.
- The district leaders are encouraged to treat workload reduction as a management priority. A formal policy that explicitly limits non-teaching administrative tasks, establishes preparation time as a protected instructional resource, and ensures that reporting requirements are calibrated to genuinely necessary documentation — aligned with DepEd Guidelines on the Multi-Year Performance Management and Evaluation System (PMES) series of 2025 — may be developed and implemented across all schools in the district.
- It is advised that the district may conduct a systematic mapping of promotion eligibility among its Teacher III population and advocate actively at the division level for the creation of additional Master Teacher and Head Teacher positions. The district should clearly and proactively communicate promotion timelines, eligibility criteria, and application processes to all eligible teachers, given that limited promotion opportunities are the highest-rated challenge.
- The district is encouraged to expand access to professional development programs by increasing the frequency, diversity, and accessibility of training, workshops, and mentoring opportunities. The district may pursue partnerships with the DepEd division office, higher education institutions, and professional organizations to supplement its professional development capacity and ensure equitable access for all teachers, regardless of school location.

- Educational managers are proposed to invest in targeted professional development for classroom management, differentiated instruction, and special education support. Teachers assigned to inclusive classrooms or handling students with diverse learning needs may benefit from specialized preparation and ongoing coaching, in response to learner behavior and diverse needs emerging as a qualitative challenge theme.
- Educational managers are encouraged to serve as effective mediators between national curriculum changes and classroom implementation by providing teachers with adequate preparation time, clear implementation guidance, and supplementary instructional materials well in advance of curriculum shifts. Reducing the reactive quality of curriculum change implementation at the school level may help address the qualitative theme of curriculum instability as a motivational stressor.
- The district supervisor and school principals may develop a comprehensive Organizational Support Enhancement Plan identifying specific and measurable targets for improvement in Financial Capability, ICT infrastructure, graduate study support, and career advancement transparency — with clear timelines, responsible parties, and evaluation mechanisms. This is supported by the strong positive correlation between Organizational Factors and Motivational Needs, which indicates that improving organizational factors is an effective way to enhance teacher motivation.
- The negative correlations between organizational factors and challenges and between motivational needs and challenges indicate that improvements in organizational support and motivational need fulfillment are associated with fewer reported professional challenges. Educational managers are encouraged to prioritize organizational interventions not only for their direct motivational benefits, but also as a preventive approach to prevent moderate challenges from escalating into more serious professional barriers.
- The district supervisor may consider conducting annual surveys using the validated quantitative instrument developed in this study, supplemented by brief open-ended questions to capture emerging qualitative concerns. This approach may track changes in the identified variables over time, evaluate the impact of implemented interventions, and identify new concerns before they become serious motivational barriers.
- The district supervisor, school principals, and division office administrators are encouraged to develop a comprehensive Santa Fe District Teacher Motivation and Support Framework integrating organizational strengthening, motivational need fulfillment, challenge reduction, and a collaborative leadership culture into a coherent and sustainable educational management strategy. This framework may be reviewed and updated annually based on monitoring survey results.
- The policymakers at the division and regional levels may consider the findings of this study in the formulation of teacher support policies that address compensation equity, career advancement accessibility, ICT infrastructure investment, and professional development funding for elementary school teachers in district settings similar to Santa Fe.
- Future researchers are encouraged to conduct a similar mixed-method study in other elementary school districts within Nueva Vizcaya and the Cagayan Valley region to determine whether the motivational profile, challenge patterns, and management support themes observed in Santa Fe District reflect broader regional conditions or are specific to this district's unique context. A comparative multi-district study would provide richer and more generalizable evidence for regional educational management policy development.
- Researchers are encouraged to conduct deeper qualitative follow-up studies using focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with Santa Fe District teachers to more fully explore the experiences underlying the quantitative patterns, particularly the nature of career advancement barriers, the specific administrative tasks that most significantly burden teachers, and the leadership practices that teachers believe would most meaningfully improve their motivational experience. The open-ended themes identified in this study provide a rich starting framework for such qualitative inquiry.
- Future researchers are also encouraged to explore the differential motivational experiences of teachers across different grade levels, service lengths, and rank categories, as the current study's total enumeration design with a sample of 40 limits the statistical power available for subgroup analyses. A larger sample drawing from multiple districts would enable more nuanced examinations of how demographic and professional characteristics moderate the relationships among organizational factors, motivational needs, and challenges.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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