



# **Boosting the Quality of Education:** Appraisals, Rewards, and Teacher Motivation

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## **ABSTRACT**

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In its theoretical framework, this study conformed to the idea that teacher appraisals adhering to using competency management can positively influence educational outcomes, following which good managerial practice would optimise motivating teachers meeting their set appraisal objectives successfully. Provision of rewards and other management practices is thereafter considered enhancing teacher motivation and act as the key in creating the kind of optimal work environment which would promote the achievement of appraisal objectives. In its stance on motivation, this study adopted the theory of 16 basic desires, which regards motivation intrinsic in its nature and originating directly or indirectly (via instrumental motivation) from these sixteen basic desires.

In its design, the study was an Appreciative Interview-inspired development project that aimed to explore how to support teachers in a small international school in the Czech Republic to meet their appraisal/competency management objectives even better than they already do. Seven volunteering teachers participated in the interviews that focused on their appreciation of practices and rewards already in place and examined their future wishes on how the management could help them feel even more motivated to achieve their appraisal objectives.

The data generated from these interviews were analysed qualitatively using inductive thematic analysis. This analysis process identified six current rewards and management practice themes that the teachers found motivating and their future wishes related to these. The themes developed in this study were: Relevant goals, managerial supervision, verbal praise, collegueship, tangible rewards, and work-itself-as-a-reward.

To enhance management practices in the studied school context so that they would help the teachers to meet their appraisal goals even better than they already do, the study suggested responding not only to the teachers' future dreams but also to the rewards and other practices that they already appreciate. The study also offered specific development suggestions related to each theme and scrutinised the research outcomes in the light of literature related to teacher motivation, intrinsic motivation, and the theory of 16 basic desires.

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Key words: teacher motivation, intrinsic motivation, tangible rewards, intangible rewards, competency management, teacher appraisals

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research topic

Following Tampere University of Applied Sciences thesis regulations regards to the degree objectives, this thesis is a development project in its essence: It is a research-oriented development work that aims to solve problems perceived in practice and create new knowledge about practices in working life (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti, 2015). This thesis originates from our organisation's development needs related to teacher appraisals. By conducting this study, I aim to identify ways to improve the practice related to the execution of these appraisals in a small international school in the Czech Republic, where I work currently.

Literature suggests that rewards can correlate positively with employee motivation (Grant & Gino, 2010; Locke et al., 1980; Hafiza, 2011; Silverman, 2004; Tausif, 2012), including teacher motivation (Anjum, Islam, Choudhury & Saha, 2021; Kaiser, 1981; Packard & Dereshiwsky, 1990; Praver & Oga-Baldwin (2008), and can consequently also improve the quality of educational outcomes (Hulleman & Baron, 2010). Having established these notions in the theoretical frameworks, the objective of the empirical part of the study is two-fold. It sets out to explore what kinds of rewards and practices teachers find helpful and motivating in achieving their appraisal goals in our current school context and what wishes related to the future practice they have, in other words, what kind of rewards and practices would make them even more motivated. Based on the data generated from this study, the aim is to seek to understand what are the best possible practices already in place in our school and how can we make the appraisals work even better for everyone.

In its approach to motivation, this study adheres primarily to the theory of 16 basic desires (Reiss, 2000, 2004, 2013) that does not distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. It suggests that all motivation is intrinsic in its nature and traceable back to sixteen end goals shared by everyone. This theory of 16 basic desires will largely influence the theoretical frameworks, data analyses, and later discussions related to the study findings.

## **1.2 Overview of our school's appraisal policy framework**

Since the appraisals programme was first introduced, its execution has never been without hiccups in our school due to wide-ranging demographic changes over the years. As for the current situation, due to the recent changes in the top management, there is now some renewed interest to review and develop the practice.

In its design, our school's appraisal policy consists of annual and termly appraisals which focus primarily on the management of competencies related to the new English Teachers' Standards introduced in 2012 (Appendix 1). These compile a set of expectations of competencies that focus on a) teaching and b) teachers' professional and personal conduct. The teaching section outlines eight goals that all teachers must adhere to: It indicates what is expected of their practice and conduct in general, from teaching and assessing pupils to maintaining communication with parents, as well as the requirement for continuous professional development. Thereafter, the professional and personal conduct- component covers the expectations regarding everyday conduct. This addresses in depth the behaviour expected of the teacher, including such matters as treating all pupils with dignity and respect, safeguarding, and promoting the fundamental British values.

In their essence, our appraisals comprise both top-down and bottom-up approaches to competence management. The management sets some of the objectives, whereas others are set by the teachers themselves, for themselves. Following the termly reviews of the achievements related to the teachers' standards and other possible competencies, teachers receive their monetary incentives as bonus pay. The use of more long-term tangible rewards, such as base salary increases, are reviewed in the annual meetings.

## **1.3 Research questions**

The focus of this thesis is to understand how to motivate and support our teachers to achieve their set appraisal objectives even more efficiently than they

already do. The study aims to find what already works well in our school setting (i.e. what my colleague teachers identify as the key practices/rewards which motivate and help them to achieve their objectives) and how we could make things work even better (i.e. investigate teachers' dreams of ideal practices).

### **The main question which this thesis aims to answer**

How can we help our teachers to meet their appraisal objectives even better than we already do?

### **The subsidiary questions which this thesis aims to answer**

- What kind of practices/rewards do teachers appreciate and regard as helpful in achieving their appraisal objectives in our school context?
- What kind of practices/rewards teachers dream of? (I.e. How would teachers in our school like to be supported in achieving their appraisal objectives in an ideal future scenario?)
- How can we achieve the goal of providing the best possible practice in supporting our teachers to achieve their appraisal objectives?

## **1.4 Research approach**

This thesis is a qualitative case study that adopts Appreciative Interview (Michael, 2005) as the specific data generation method. The interviews are semi-structured and use open-ended, positively formulated questions to prompt answers to the research questions, and the data generated from these interviews are analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The development of the methodology for this study is primarily informed by Crotty's (2003) guidelines for novel researchers regarding approaches to social science research. In its essence, this study is descriptive and interpretive and conforms to constructivism in its epistemological stance by acknowledging that the research findings do not reflect an objective reality but instead, one constructed by the researcher.

## **1.5 Thesis structure**

The structure of this thesis will adhere to that of the set thesis guidelines by Tampere University of Applied Sciences. The theoretical framework part will address how motivation and different types of rewards interplay with one another and can potentially enhance the quality of teaching and learning in an educational setting. Following this, the methodology part of this study will address in-depth the design of the empirical part of this study, after which the research outcomes will be presented and then discussed in separate sections. The discussion part of this thesis will also address the shortcomings of the research and make suggestions for further research.



## **2 THEORETHICAL FRAME WORK**

“Evaluating the effects of reward on task interest is worth pursuing, but it is best studied, however, without distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.”  
**Reiss (2013, 67)**

### **2.1 Overview of the literature review**

This literature review sets to investigate the interplay between motivation and rewards and how they can boost the quality of teaching. Firstly, the theory of 16 basic desires, which is the study has adopted as its primary approach to motivation, will be addressed. Thereafter, the literature review will explore the relationship between tangible (monetary) and intangible (non-monetary) rewards and motivation. This will address both the general employee motivation and the teacher motivation in specific. The literature review will also discuss how motivating rewards as part of competency management can act as the key in boosting educational outcomes.

### **2.2 The Theory of 16 Basic Desires**

Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries (n.d.) refer to motivation as “the reason why somebody does something or behaves in a particular way”. Dörnyei (2001, 8) suggests that besides being the reason “why people decide to do what they do” central to motivation is also “how long people are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it”. Reiss (2004) claims that all these reasons can be traced back to the 16 basic desires or life motives which all humans share, and defines motivation as being prompted by motives, which are “the reasons people hold for initiating and performing voluntary behavior” Reiss (2004, 179).

It is a common phenomenon in literature to find that motivation is divided into two separate categories: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is seen as the force for doing an activity for its own sake and suggests that motivation is ignited by one’s own inherent needs and desires. In contrast to this,

extrinsic motivation is seen as doing an activity for an instrumental reason and driven by external rewards such as, for example, money or a good school grade.

Reiss (2013, 62 — 63) disagrees with this suggested intrinsic- extrinsic duality concept and argues that there is no such thing as extrinsic motivation. He suggests instead that all motivation is intrinsic in its nature. He claims that the extrinsic-intrinsic division would presuppose the existence of body-mind duality, of which there is no scientific evidence according to him, and states that instead, every need is partly biological and partly psychological. In contrast to the extrinsic-intrinsic classification, Reiss (2004) draws a line between "instrumental goals" and "end goals". The instrumental goals are ones which prompt people to do things, for example, to take a second job in order to earn more money or buy a house in the catchment area of a good public school so that the children can attend to it. Often one instrumental goal leads to another instrumental goal, creating subsequent behavioural chains in which, for example, a person is prompted to take a second job in order to get an extra salary, which in turn may be prompted by the desire to purchase health insurance, which might then satisfy one's end goal which can be, for example, a high desire to look after one's own family. According to Reiss (2004), the number of instrumental goals by their nature is unlimited whereas the number of the end goals is limited.

According to the theory 16 basic desires there are sixteen of these end goals (Table 1), which are also referred to as the basic desires – or human needs or life motives (Reiss 2000, 2004). Following the theory, everybody embraces all these desires but prioritise them differently. Everyone's own unique motivation profile depends on the specific combination of each of these basic desires having either high, medium, or low value for that particular person. How much something is desired by a person depends on the degree of satiating intensity which they place on each particular desire. For example, a person with high satiating intensity for Tranquillity is likely to avoid stressful situations, whilst a person with low satiating intensity for Vengeance is likely to be less competitive than their peers who have a high satiating need for this. Reiss (2004) also explains that when one of the basic desires is satiated, it creates a certain kind of feeling of joy, which is unique for each desire. For example, Power correlates

with efficacy, Curiosity with wonder, and Independence with a sense of freedom. All of the 16 motives, the basic desires, and their “joys” are shared in Table 1.

<b>Motive Name</b>	<b>Motive</b>	<b>Intrinsic feeling (of joy)</b>
<b>Power</b>	Desire to influence	Efficacy
<b>Curiosity</b>	Desire for knowledge	Wonder
<b>Independence</b>	Desire to be autonomous	Freedom
<b>Status</b>	Desire for social standing (including desire for attention)	Self-importance
<b>Social contact</b>	Desire for peer companion (including desire to play)	Fun
<b>Vengeance</b>	Desire to get even (including desire to compete, to win)	Vindication
<b>Honour</b>	Desire to obey traditional moral code	Loyalty
<b>Idealism</b>	Desire to improve society (including altruism and justice)	Compassion
<b>Physical exercise</b>	Desire to exercise muscles	Vitality
<b>Romance</b>	Desire for sex (including courting)	Lust
<b>Family</b>	Desire to raise own children	Love
<b>Order</b>	Desire to organise (including desire for ritual)	Stability
<b>Eating</b>	Desire to eat	Satiation
<b>Acceptance</b>	Desire for approval	Self-confidence
<b>Tranquillity</b>	Desire to avoid anxiety, fear	Safe, relaxed
<b>Saving</b>	Desire to collect, value of frugality	Ownership

TABLE 1. The 16 basic desires, adapted from Reiss (2004,187)

Following Reiss (2000, 2004, 2013), all instrumental goals and behavioral chains are prompted by these sixteen end goals. For example, a teacher may state that he works hard to do well in appraisals to earn extra cash. However, money in this case is not the end goal or the basic desire but rather the means to reach this. The instrumental motive of earning money can be prompted by multiple end goals, such as Eating, Physical Exercise, and/ or Romance. The

teacher can anticipate that money would take him around the world to explore more culinary habits, or make it possible to attend a better gym, or make him look good in his partner's eyes. This suggests that what one finds motivational is always rooted in the intrinsic desire based on one of the 16 end goals, and the reward acts as just the instrumental means to achieve them.

## **2.3 Tangible rewards and motivation**

### **2.3.1 Overview**

Although the impact of tangible rewards on motivation has been addressed widely in the literature, there appears to be no universally agreed consensus regarding the effectiveness of this practice. A string of studies which stretches for more than 40 years back holds that tangible rewards work often poorly and may even impact motivation in a negative manner: Some claim that it lowers the intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999; Kohn, 1993; Pink, 2009), whilst others argue that only under limited circumstances (Eisenberger, Pierce & Cameron, 1999). On the contrary to these, Reiss (2013) claims that the expectancy of rewards distracts rather than lowers the motivation, and Locke et al. (1980) suggest that monetary rewards can effectively increase work productivity. Furthermore, a large meta-study conducted by Gagné and Forest (2008) indicates that rewards can work well in simple, but not in complex tasks.

### **2.3.2 The view that tangible rewards can handicap motivation**

The pioneering studies on motivation in the 1970s popularised the idea that rewards can lower motivation. Deci (1971) was inspired by Harlow's experiments with monkeys in the late 1940s in which they were found to perform better at solving puzzles when they were not expecting food rewards. He carried out similar experiments with human subjects and discovered that reward expectancy could also influence us in the same way. In his experiments, college students were either paid or not paid to work for a given time on an interesting puzzle. The research outcomes indicated that those under the no-reward condi-

tion played with the puzzle significantly more afterward in an unrewarded free play period than the paid students. The latter group also reported a greater interest in the task. Benabou and Tirole (2003) explain that this experiment has since been replicated many times with numerous variations in design, which all show similar results.

The theory that follows claims rewards, such as money, acting as an extrinsic motivator can negatively impact intrinsic motivation. Deci et al. (1999) warn against using rewards in everyday life and suggest that they can harm people's sense of autonomy by making them lose their own perceived self-determination. They further argue that this may not only lead to short-term consequences, such as lowering rates of successfully carrying out and completing tasks, but also impacting matters long-term by lowering motivation towards similar kinds of tasks in the future - even after the reward is removed. Kohn (1993) and Pink (2009) have popularised these ideas in the fields of education and management and argue that when people's behaviour is controlled by extrinsic rewards this might cause considerable long-term damage.

### **2.3.3 The view that tangible rewards do not handicap motivation**

Reiss (2013) uses the term "undermining theorists" of those who support the notion of extrinsic motivation impacting negatively intrinsic motivation - and disagrees with them. He holds the view that there is no such thing as extrinsic motivation and claims instead that all motivation is intrinsic. This beholds that there is no body-mind duality and "every need is partly biological and partly psychological" (Reiss, 2013, 62—63). Following this, he argues that money, for example, cannot be an extrinsic motivator because extrinsic motivation does not exist. Based on a meta-analysis of intrinsic motivation studies, he concludes that monetary rewards do not appear to lower motivation but instead distract research participants when studies are conducted under laboratory conditions. He further suggests that this notion of distraction is prominent only in novel situations that the laboratory settings always replicate but would vanish in real-life situations and with some repetition.

According to Eisenberg et al. (1999) applied studies commonly demonstrate an either positive or null relationship between tangible rewards and intrinsic motivation. They also identify that “we know very little about how these typical uses of reward in everyday life affect the intrinsic motivation“ and call for more applied studies in the field. Reiss (2013) also echoes this and questions the real-life validity of laboratory experiments on motivation and suggests that instead of measuring motivation, these experiments measure at the best what people can be distracted by.

### **2.3.4 Tangible rewards can motivate and improve performance**

Locke et al. (1980) argue that tangible rewards and individualized performance pay systems correlate positively with productivity. However, more recent reviews, such as Gagné and Forest (2008) suggest that although they can improve the performance quantity they cannot improve its quality. Moreover, they seem to work with simple but not with complex tasks which require lateral thinking. This suggests that as long as tangible rewards focus on non-complex, quantity-related tasks, performance and tangible rewards can correlate in positive terms with each other.

## **2.4 Boosting teaching with tangible rewards: Competency management**

Having established research to indicate that tangible rewards can have some positive impact on motivation and performance, the next question is: Can these rewards go beyond being just motivational and also boost the quality educational provisions in schools?

### **2.4.1 Overview**

Gagné and Forest’s (2008) study suggests that monetary rewards can increase quantity but not the quality of performance and work with simple but not complex tasks. Following this, it is possible to speculate that, for example, such

matters as the time teachers spend engaging in distance learning calls with their pupils or starting their lessons on time could be influenced positively by rewards. Teachers' input regarding any activity that is quantity-based could be basically enhanced by rewards. However, this does not necessarily translate directly into any improved quality of education: More time spent on online calls may not correlate directly with better learning outcomes because these depend more on what happens during that time rather than how long one teaches per se. "Pay gets people to show up for work, but pay doesn't get them to excel," the saying goes. Teaching is a complex task in its nature, and improving it can be considered as even a more complex one.

This complex nature of teaching does not need to mean, however, that a provision of rewards could not improve the quality of education. Gagné and Forest's (2008) study suggests that this can be achieved when they focus on specific, clearly defined simple tasks rather than complex ones. Following Hulleman and Baron (2010) this can be done when the rewards are introduced as part of a well-designed competency management system. This way both, motivation and the quality of the educational provision may get the desired boost.

#### **2.4.2 The significance of what is being rewarded**

Hulleman and Baron (2010) suggest that "what" is being rewarded is a significant matter and point out that, for example, performance pay can contribute in negative terms to teaching. When rewards focus on such matters as the end of the year test results, this may lead to many undesired outcomes such as pushing teachers to focus on pre-teaching for these tests and/or limit their teaching only to the matters directly relevant to these tests. Teachers may also alter test scores and even end up holding back low-performing students. Although the test results may improve as the consequence of these kinds of practices, this can hardly be considered as a sign of good quality education. To overcome these predicaments, competency management that focuses on enabling teachers developing skills related to their profession rather than evaluating pupils' learning results is offered as a better alternative.

### **2.4.3 Teachers' competency management**

Competency management beholds that key skills central to the employees' work profile are identified, and opportunities to develop and master these are provided within the organisation. An effective practice related to this is to break down the key skills into small, specific bite-size competencies that the employees can then attempt to master in a step-by-step manner. Hulleman and Baron (2010) suggest that effective use of tangible rewards in the teaching context would be to weave them together with competency management: Whereas tangible rewards may not help one to solve better complex tasks, they may work effectively in the of context simple, straightforward tasks, such as helping someone to master specific teachers' competencies.

To make effective use of the teachers' competency management, Kunter (2013) writes that it should focus on various sub-categories related to expertise, ability, and willingness. Bakru (2017) uses the terms information, skill, and attitude instead, and Selvi (2010) specifies even a longer list of essential teachers' competencies: field competencies, research competencies, curriculum competencies, lifelong learning competencies, social-cultural competencies, emotional competencies, communication competencies, information and communication technologies competencies, and environmental competencies. All in all, regardless of different labels and subcategories, the research in the field suggests that the quality of education can be best improved when there is a focus on various teachers' competencies, rather than just on some.

### **2.5 Intangible rewards and motivation**

In contrast to tangible rewards, intangible rewards refer commonly to rewards that are non-material in their nature and are not directly money-related. Armstrong and Brown (2006) define them as rewards that contribute to employees' psychological satisfaction and the feeling of being mentally rewarded and according to Tausif (2012) rewards of this kind have the most significant impact on



employee's job satisfaction. Example themes, among others, which coincide with intangible rewards are "manager's verbal expressions of gratitude" (Grant and Gino, 2010) and "empowerment and autonomy", "recognition and appreciation" and "challenging tasks" (Hafiza, 2011).

In studies that distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (such as Silverman, 2004), the term "recognition" is often used when referring to intangible rewards, and the basic "rewards" is reserved for addressing tangible rewards. This division implies that recognition is the motivating factor in intrinsic motivation, whereas rewards boost extrinsic motivation. The further distinction between personal and social recognition is also common, in which "personal recognition" refers to acknowledging the achievements and efforts of an individual, and in "social recognition" that of a group. Studies suggest that these both play a role in enhancing employee motivation, increasing productivity, and improving performance quality (Deeprise, 2006).

The division between recognition and rewards suggests that certain rewards/practices influence intrinsic motivation, meanwhile others influence extrinsic motivation. When examining this in the light of Reiss's (2004, 2010, 2013) work on 16 basic desires, the concept is unplausible. The theory does not recognise extrinsic motivation and suggests instead that all motivation is intrinsic. Following the theory of 16 basic desires, tangible rewards, such as money, can be seen as motivational and rewarding if they help a person to realise one of the 16 end goals in some manner. When an end goal is satiated, the person can experience the corresponding feeling of joy. Similarly, if someone, for example, recognises your work by saying "thank you" this may satiate one of the 16 basic desires and activate the corresponding feeling of joy.

In adherence to this theory of 16 basic desires, the term "recognition" will not be used in this paper when referring to intangible rewards. The term "intangible rewards" will be employed instead. Together with tangible rewards, they both are acknowledged to influence motivation, which is considered to be always intrinsic in its nature.

## **2.6 The best practice: Combining tangible and intangible rewards**

Silverman (2004) highlights that a good balance between extrinsic and intrinsic rewards leads to better employer performance according to studies. In addition to tangible rewards, employees should also receive regular recognition (intangible rewards) that show their work is valued and they are trusted. He identifies that although salary is regarded as the most important part of the employee reward system, in day-to-day practice non-monetary rewards often play a more central role in the employees' eyes, and therefore management should pay attention to both, tangible and intangible rewards, to maximize the positive outcomes (Silverman, 2004).

## **2.7 Rewards and motivation related specifically to teachers**

Studies have also focused on the role that rewards and other practices play in motivating specifically teachers. Kaiser (1981) suggests that teacher autonomy related to such factors as being able to choose their own teaching materials and methods of teaching, as well as being in charge of their own classroom organisation and disciplinary matters can influence teacher motivation in positive terms. Packard and Dereshiwsky (1990) propose teacher motivation to be enhanced by work environment factors that promote good professional relationships; opportunities for individual input; regular evaluation of practice; and, prospects of leadership and professional development opportunities. Anjum et al. (2021) in turn researched five non-financial factors of recognition; work environment; participation in decision making; workplace flexibility; and, training and development opportunities, corresponding in positive terms with teacher motivation. Praver and Oga-Baldwin (2008) distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and suggest that rewards and other practices which correlate with intrinsic motivation, such as the aforementioned ones, are especially important for teacher trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

Other studies have looked into factors that teachers find demotivating instead of motivating. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) identified five themes that contribute in negative terms to teacher motivation, including stress; constrained autonomy; insufficient self-efficacy; poor career structures; repetitiveness of the teaching content; and limited potential for intellectual development. In addition to this also

students' behavioural issues have been identified to demotivate teachers (Kızıltepe, 2008).

In respect to tangible rewards and teacher motivation, financial benefits are regarded as of high value (Sinclair, 2008) meanwhile low salaries are found demotivating (Kızıltepe, 2008). Thereafter, Packard and Dereshiwsky (1990) studied that teachers also found perceived unfair and non-objective distribution of monetary incentives demotivating and that this can contribute to dysfunctional relationships among the staff. Praver and Oga-Baldwin (2008) suggest that tangible rewards, such as salary, pension, and insurance, are more important motivators for in-service teachers than for newly qualified teachers or teacher trainees.

## **2.8 Summary of the theories**

This literature review has approached the interplay between motivation and rewards primarily from the perspective of the theory of 16 basic desires, according to which all motivation intrinsic and stems from these sixteen desires (Reiss, 2000, 2004, 2013). Following this, the literature review has addressed how tangible and intangible rewards can influence employee motivation and explored the role of motivation and rewards specifically related to the teaching profession. Besides practices and rewards that teachers find motivating, also the complex relationship between tangible rewards and educational outcomes is addressed. Whilst studies suggest they might improve the quantity of work and solve simple straightforward tasks, they also suggest that they might work less well when it comes to solving more complex tasks. Competency management, which breaks down the complex task of teaching and being a teacher into smaller clearly defined components, is suggested as a solution. Besides making tangible rewards just motivational, they may also boost the quality of the outcomes.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overview of the methodology

This study sets to investigate how to help and motivate teachers in our school context to achieve their set appraisal objectives in the best possible way. The theory part of this thesis has established that tangible rewards can boost educational outcomes when these focus on clearly defined, simple tasks connected to teachers' competencies. The empirical part of the study sets to investigate our teaching staff's best experiences of being supported to achieve their appraisal objectives and their wishes for future practice. The aim is to understand what is appreciated by the staff and how to get better at supporting each other in achieving our goals. In this section, the methodological approaches to the study are addressed and examined.

#### 3.2 Approaches to research

The research design of this study is primarily informed by two works: Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti's (2015) *Methods for Development Work*, and *The Foundations of Social Research* by Crotty (2003). The latter provides explicit guidance on how epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods relate to one another (Figure 1).

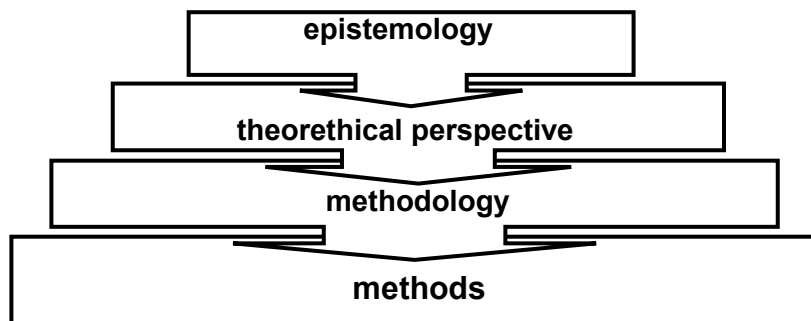


FIGURE 1. How epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods inform one another. Adapted from Crotty (2003, 4).

Crotty (2003) argues that the terminology of methodological approaches in the research literature is often inconsistent, and those new to social science research can therefore get easily confused when planning their first research designs. To overcome this predicament, he suggests using specific questions related to epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods to guide the process and help the novel researcher to see how different parts of the study fit together coherently. Acknowledging my position as new to social science/ educational research, I decided to use these questions as the framework when building the methodology for this study. The questions are (Crotty, 2003, 2):

- What epistemology informs this theoretical perspective?
- What theoretical perspective lies behind the methodology in question?
- What methodology governs our choice and use of methods?
- What methods do we propose to use?

In regards to these questions and the overall design of this study, I adopted initially a bottom-up instead of a top-down approach. According to (Crotty, 2003, 13) this is plausible as he states that:

Not too many of us embark on a piece of social research with epistemology as our starting point – – We typically start with a real-life issue that needs to be addressed, a problem that needs to be solved, a question that needs to be answered.

This suggests that the selected research questions often first inform the methods, which consequently inform the selection of methodology, which in turn informs the theoretical perspective, which then finally informs the epistemology. This bottom-up approach also provided the structure for this study and it will be the order in which the questions will be addressed in this paper.

### **3.3 Methods**

#### **3.3.1 Development of the methods**

Crotty (2003) identifies that the role of the methods is to address the techniques and procedures that are used to gather and analyse data to answer the re-

search questions. The aim of this study, which is to gather an in-depth understanding of teachers' lived experiences and future wishes, calls for methods stemming from the qualitative paradigm. In Cresswell's (1994, 1– 2) definition a qualitative study is "an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting". This matches well with the aim of this study. In respect to data collection, I prefer using the term "data generation" similarly to Mason (1996). By data generation she means that in qualitative research "you do not simply work out where to find data which already exist in a collectible state. Instead, you work out how best you can generate data from your chosen data sources" (Mason, 1996,36).

Initially, I aimed to use Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008) inspired focus group meetings as the data generation method. This is a strength-based, positive approach to organisational change and development that searches for what already works well rather than on the problems and shortcomings. In addition to these, it also looks into future dreams and how to achieve these.

Due to the prolonged Covid-19 restrictions in the Czech Republic, however, this design of the study had to be reconsidered in January 2021 as face-to-face group/staff meetings were not encouraged. As an alternative, these focus group meetings could have been organised online, but I anticipated that my colleagues would be reluctant to do so as many of them had already expressed openly being exhausted of all things online due to the prolonged distance learning periods since March 2020. In our school, we have followed the regular teaching schedule throughout the school lockdowns, which means 22 online lessons a week as well as all work to be corrected and planned online. Following this extensive online time, I anticipated that the quality and quantity of the research data would be affected negatively if I organised these focus group sessions also online. As a substitute to these Appreciative Inquiry focus group meetings, Appreciative Interview (Michael, 2005) was chosen as the specific method for this study.

### 3.3.2 Data Generation: Appreciative Interview

Appreciative Interview (Michael, 2005) is an interview method stemming from the field of Appreciative Inquiry. It is a qualitative research method that employs semi-structured interviews with positively formulated, open-ended questions.

An appreciative Interview, similarly to Appreciative Inquiry, focuses on the positives. It explores organisational strengths and what works well instead of problems and weaknesses. Appreciative Interview tackles the first three stages – Discovery, Dream & Design – of Appreciative Inquiry’s 4-D model (Figure 2). In the initial Discovery stage, the interviews address the participants’ positive past experiences related to the research topic. This is followed by the Dream stage that focuses on dreaming and envisioning the best possible future. The Design stage explores how to achieve these dreams. Unlike in Appreciative Inquiry, where these stages are covered separately in different focus group meetings/group interviews, in Appreciative Interview, all these stages are addressed in a one-off interview with each research participant separately. Destiny, the last stage of Appreciative Inquiry, which focuses on delivering the Design, is not part of the Appreciative Interview process.

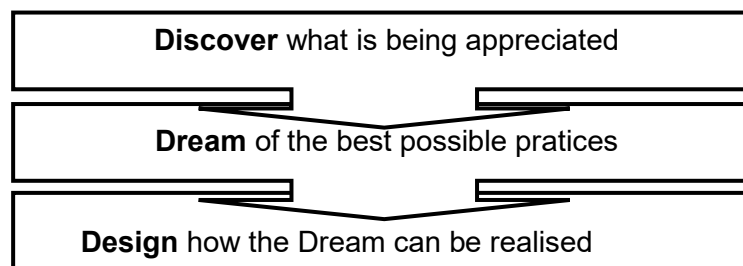


FIGURE 2. The 3Ds of Appreciative Interview

### 3.3.3 Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis

The interviews conducted for this study will be recorded and transcribed using the Otter application, a free online app specifically developed for recording and transcribing meetings. First, I considered other similar products but finally selected Otter because it received high recommendations in a thesis seminar group. To overcome any technical, artificial intelligence, or transcription-related

errors when using this app, I will proofread the transcriptions straight after the interviews and contrast them with the audio files.

After the interview transcriptions are complete, the data will be analysed using Thematic Analysis. This is a qualitative method aiming to “systematically identify, organize, and offer insight into the patterns of meaning, or themes, across a data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2012,57). In Thematic Analysis the search for themes is considered an interpretative process, which suggests that they are constructed instead of seen as objectively inherent in the data and “discovered” by the researcher as, for example, in Grounded Theory (Thomas & James, 2007).

Out of the two possible approaches to Thematic Analysis, inductive and deductive, this study adopts the inductive stance. In the inductive approach, the themes and codes are developed from the data whereas in the deductive approach the data is analysed from the perspective of the pre-existing codes and themes (Braun and Clarke, 2012; Joffe, 2012). As for this study, I have chosen to use the inductive approach because the aim is to explore and develop specific practices in our school context.

Related to these opposing approaches to Thematic Analysis, Braun and Clarke (2012) identify that no study is purely deductive or inductive in its nature. They point out that we as human researchers cannot perfectly overlook any pre-existing knowledge influencing the codes and themes when adopting an inductive approach or stop relying to some degree on subjective interpretation when creating codes and themes in a deductive manner. To this Joffe (2012) adds that we utilize these two together and always approach the data with certain preconceived categories even if trying to remain open for new concepts to emerge. Regarding this, I acknowledge that although aiming to develop novel codes and themes for this study, they might be partially influenced by my prior knowledge of motivation and reward theories.

In practice, the data analysis will be informed by the six separate phases (Figure 3). These phases are developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) and they give



detailed examples of what to do specifically in each of these steps and how to proceed from one to another.

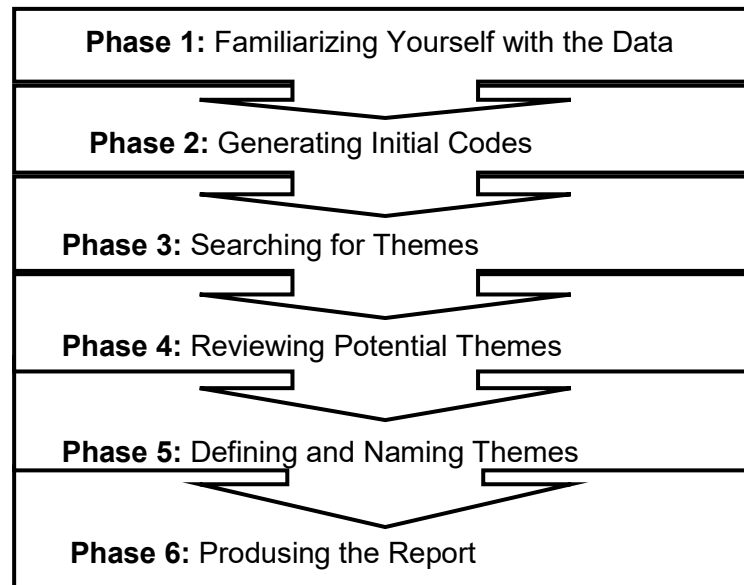


FIGURE 3. Thematic Analysis data analysis steps (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

### **3.4 Methodology**

#### **3.4.1 Approaches to development work**

In Crotty's (2003, 3) words, the methodology is "the strategy, plan of action, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes". In contrast to this, Ojasalo et al. (2015) would use the term "approaches to development work" in the place of methodology.

#### **3.4.2 Appreciative Inquiry - Action Research**

Appreciative Inquiry is a form of action research in its nature, which Ojasalo et al. (2015, 29) define as "an approach in which the participants are interested in on how matters should be, and not only how they are. Matters are not only de-

scribed, as the goal is to change the current reality". They also note that action research is cyclical in its nature, in which the stages of planning, observing, and evaluating are repeated during the course of study.

### **3.4.3 Appreciative Interview - Case Study**

Appreciative Interview differs from Appreciative Inquiry in the respect that instead of being cyclical practice, it is a one-off interview session with each participant and lacks the Appreciative Inquiry's Destiny stage. As the consequence of this research method modification, in other words, adopting Appreciative Interview instead of Appreciative Inquiry, the study now resembles more of a case study with a development aim instead of action research.

### **3.5 Theoretical perspective**

Appreciative Interview complies with the theoretical framework of interpretivism that views reality as a socially constructed phenomenon. This implies that the meaning-making process evolves through interpretation: What we know is negotiated between our relationship with other people (Crotty, 2003). Interpretation in this context refers to an individual research participant interpreting first their own experiences and thereafter the researcher retrospectively interpreting these interpretations. In other words, the study engages in double hermeneutics (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In respect to qualitative interviews, it also needs to be considered that these are heavily affected by one's own capacity to verbalise, interact, conceptualise and remember (Mason, 1996). Given this interpretive stance, the research finding of this study cannot be claimed to be grounded in any objective reality but to be a construction between the researcher and the participants instead.

In reference to the data generation, an interpretive study calls for the employment of flexible and sensitive methods, such as Appreciative Interview, which facilitate individual in-depth narrative to emerge. Furthermore, besides being just inevitably present in the research process, interpretation is acknowledged as a legitimate tool in the data analysis process (Mason, 1996).

### **3.6 Epistemology**

"What constructionism drives home unambiguously is that there is no true or valid interpretation. There are useful interpretations, to be sure, and these stand over against interpretations that appear to serve no useful purpose."

**Crotty (2003, 47)**

This is an Appreciative Interview study that focuses on organizational change and development. Similarly to Appreciative Inquiry, Appreciative Interview also suggests that the best possible way to approach this is through a dialogue that addresses the past, the present, and the future. The outcomes related to this inquiry process are regarded as a construction between the researcher and the research participants. Following Crotty's (2003) question on "How do we know what we know?" the answer falls heavily in the constructivist paradigm: We know what we know by constructing the knowledge together with the research participants. This reflects well Crotty's (2003, 9) defining feature of constructivism, which states that "meaning is not discovered, but constructed". Also, data analysis is considered similarly as an active process instead of a passive one. When developing, for example, codes and themes, they are not expected to emerge but to be actively developed by the researcher.

Following the constructionist stance, I further acknowledge my position as the researcher to influence the research results. It is not possible to null my presence in the interviews with my colleagues nor my interpretations of the data, but I acknowledge these shortcomings and commit myself to do the best to minimise this. The data and the gained developmental insights of this study should not be considered objective in their nature but as a construction.

### **3.7 Summary of the approaches to research**

Crotty's (2003) guideline questions guided the process when I designed the methodological approaches for this study. In its epistemological stance the study conforms to constructivism and regards the research outcomes not reflecting objective reality but one constructed by the researcher. It is also an interpretive study, which means that the research outcomes should be considered a product of interpretation. The specific methodology from the interpretive para-

digm that I chose to adopt for this study is a case study. And, of different types of case studies, I selected Appreciative Interview (Michael, 2005) as the data generation method and Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as the method of data analysis. This overall methodological structure is outlined in Figure 4.

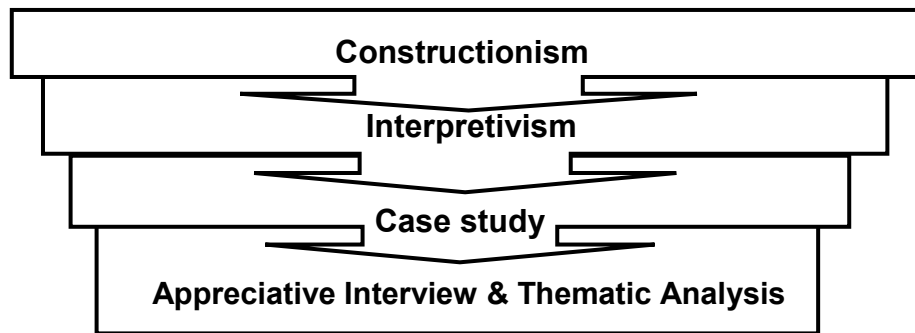


FIGURE 4. How epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods interrelate in this study.

### 3.8 Research participants

The research participants in this study were my current colleague teachers working in our school. They were invited to participate in this study because the focus was to gain insight into how we could develop approaches to the execution of the appraisals specifically in our school context. All teaching staff, excluding the senior management, were invited to participate in the study.

### 3.9 Ethical considerations

This study adheres to the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research by The Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012). Furthermore, the study also complies with the university regulations that require a thesis contract with the working-life party, university, and the student. The head of our school signed this contract before I commenced the empirical part of this study.

The ethical considerations raised by this study will address the following matters:

- The nature and the purpose of the research
- Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw
- Offers of confidentiality
- Storing data
- Participant distress

### **Disclosing the nature and the purpose of the research**

The research participants will be explained that this study has got two distinct aims: It is a development project specifically designed for our school context and a thesis work related to my educational leadership studies. Regards the latter, I will highlight that although set as a specific development project for our school, following the Finnish university thesis regulations, it will also be a public document. I will also explain to the participants that I will need to seek their consent for the interviews to be audio-recorded for later data analysis purposes. Related to these audio records, I will assure to destroy them after the transcriptions are complete and that they will not be available for the third party in any stage of the study.

### **Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw**

As part of inviting my colleagues to participate in this study, I will explain that their potential participation in this study is voluntary, and declining the invitation without giving any reason is fully acceptable. I will also explain to them that they have the right to withdraw, also without giving any reasons, during or straight after the interviews.

### **Offers of confidentiality**

I am offering confidentiality to the participants' anonymity in the study and making efforts to provide non-traceability of their identity. Besides not mentioning their real names, I will put in efforts to ensure the non-traceability of their identities by applying pseudonyms for people and places that could threaten to reveal their identity to the public. I will highlight, however, that

regardless of my best efforts, besides themselves also others who know them well might be able to identify them in the study due to using direct citations of their responses in the final thesis.

### **Storing data**

The data generated in this study will be stored initially in a specific folder in my private computer with password-secured access restrictions. The pseudonymised audio files will be destroyed after the transcriptions are complete, but the interview transcriptions will be saved until after the publication of the thesis.

### **Participant distress**

I am aware of my position as being a middle leader in our school and will consequently do my best to ensure that this will not influence my colleagues' choice to participate in the study. I am also aware that the stories and views that they share with me may include experiences that they might have had together with our shared colleagues, and this requires an extra degree of sensitivity when conducting the interviews as well as when reporting and using the data.

I am also aware that my colleagues could feel distressed if I asked them to focus on what does not work or what would be the shortcomings of our practice and policies related to the appraisals. To overcome this, the focus of this study is on what works well and how things could work even better. I chose this approach for the very reason that it focuses on the positives and I anticipate that it would help my colleagues potentially to be more open and share their thoughts without having concerns about criticising the practice or seen as creating a bad atmosphere, which could happen if the focus was on problems and the shortcoming of the practice and policies instead.

## 4 RESEARCH RESULTS

*"This is really interesting... Like I just feel like I'm highly motivated for myself, but I never went that deep to find out if it's really coming from the outside or something like the support I got from my parents."*

### Appreciative Interview with Teacher B

#### 4.1 Overview of the results

This chapter presents and analyses the collected empirical data generated from the interviews which I conducted with my colleague teachers in the international school in Czechia where I work currently. The focus of these interviews was to investigate what helps our teaching staff to meet their appraisal goals in our school and what kind of practices related to this they would find even more motivating in an ideal, dream-like school setting.

All the current teachers to whom the appraisals apply (who have more than half-time workload) were invited to participate in the study via email. Out of the ten teachers, seven showed enthusiasm to participate by responding to my email invitation. An email invitation was considered less obtrusive than asking face-to-face, as I anticipated that in the case of the latter some teachers might agree to participate, although they might not want to. Saying no in a face-to-face situation can be more difficult than ignoring email. In this chapter, the data generated from these seven interviews will be addressed. Each of the interviews lasted on average about 30 minutes, ranging from 22 to 48 minutes. After completing the interviews, most of the teachers expressed their gratitude by saying that they had enjoyed the interview and had found it interesting, which I anticipate is the outcome of the study focusing on positive matters rather than problems.

This chapter divides into two sections. The first one aims to answer the first subsidiary research question: What kind of practices/rewards related to achieving their goals teachers appreciate in our school? Following this, the second one looks into ideal future school settings and aims to answer the second subsidiary research question: What practices teachers dream of?

The initially planned third stage, the Design stage of Appreciative Interviews, in which I aimed to investigate how the Dream stage could be achieved and realised in our school context, was not carried out in the end. After the first two interviews, it became evident that it was difficult for the participating teachers to answer the set questions, and they also felt that it was beyond their role to anticipate answers to these managerial matters. Following this, the Design stage was dropped and not included in the later interviews. For this reason, in its final design, this study looks only into the first two of the planned stages, the Discovery stage (what is being appreciated) and the Dream stage (how things could be ideally) and addresses similarities and differences between these two.

#### **4.2 Discovery: Current practices that help teachers to meet their appraisal objectives**

After reading the interview transcriptions multiple times, I started coding significant notions with regards to matters that have helped my colleague teachers to achieve their set appraisal goals in our school context. Out of all the coded interview data, I developed six specific themes, which I considered exemplifying their appreciation in the best possible manner. The themes are the following:

- Relevant goals
- Managerial supervision
- Collegueship
- Verbal recognition
- Tangible rewards
- The work itself as a reward

The order in which the themes are presented in this paper is not hierarchical by any means. None of them is more important than another as the study did not focus on quantitative data analyses that would validate hierarchy. Instead, the themes are best understood as ideas that teachers in our school entertain, or as some kind of collection of notions-that-float-there in everyday situations, as demonstrated in Figure 1.



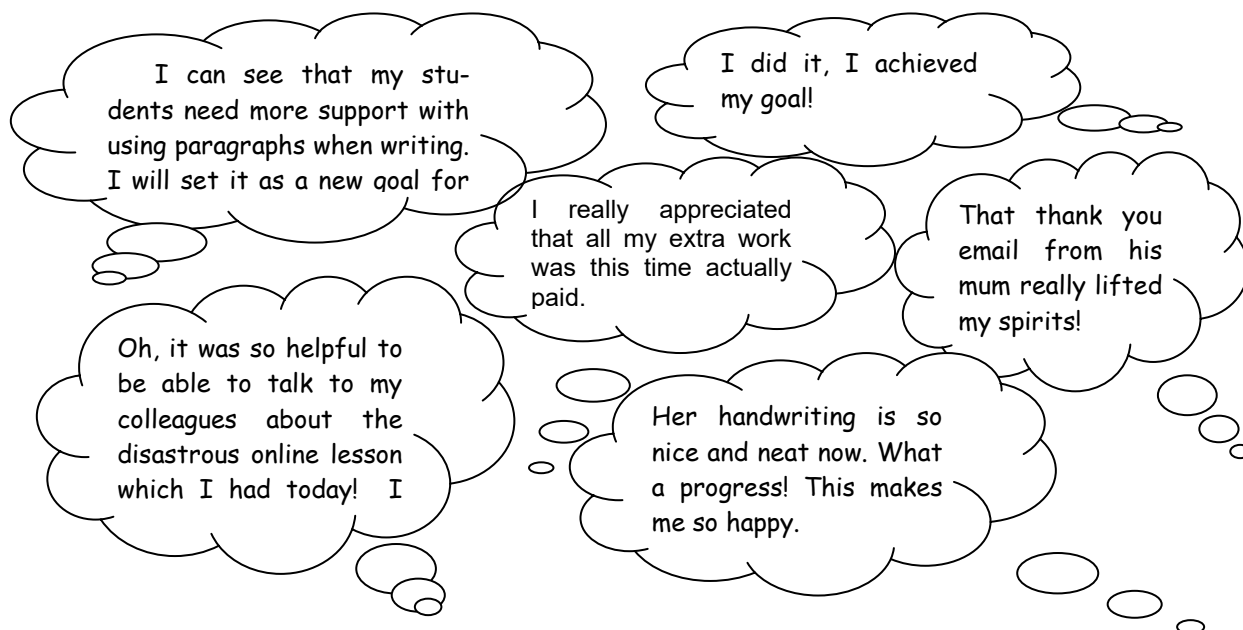


FIGURE 1. “Notions which float there”

To develop these specific themes, I opted for a non-software-based approach to coding and theme development. The decision to do this manually stemmed from the extensive daily computer usage due to all the online teaching hours following the prolonged Covid-restrictions in Czechia. The schools had gone into distance learning mode again for months when I conducted the interviews and I was desperate for some hands-on exercises after work instead of spending more hours by the computer. Highlighting the transcripts by hand, developing the codes, and later the themes by cutting and stacking coded pieces of text into different coloured envelopes, was a welcome change and something that I was looking forward to doing after work. Conducting this part of the study manually was not overwhelming given that the length of the transcribed interview data was manageable in size, 3.5 hours altogether.

As part of the theme development, I lingered at length in Braun and Clarke’s (2006) Thematic Analysis phase 4: Reviewing potential themes. After coding all the interviews, I started grouping the codes, but instead of being a straightforward process, this was one including repetitive regrouping. Table 2 includes all the final themes and their specific codes.

TABLE 2. Teacher appreciation

DISCOVERY THEMES	DISCOVERY CODES
<b>Relevant Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment of achieving set goals</li> <li>• Setting relevant goals</li> <li>• Being helped to set relevant goals</li> <li>• Self-determination in achieving achievable goals</li> </ul>
<b>Managerial Supervision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receiving words of trust</li> <li>• Trusted to self-set goals</li> <li>• Trusted to work independently</li> <li>• Being interested in our successes</li> <li>• Being interested in our efforts</li> </ul>
<b>Verbal Praise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise by the management</li> <li>• Praise by parents</li> <li>• Praise by colleagues</li> </ul>
<b>Colleagueship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of more experienced colleagues</li> <li>• Supportive relationships with colleagues</li> <li>• Trust between colleagues</li> <li>• Team spirit</li> </ul>
<b>Tangible Rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieved pay raise</li> <li>• Prospective pay raise</li> <li>• Continuous Professional Development opportunities</li> <li>• Reduced workload</li> <li>• Paid overtime</li> <li>• Pension fund contributions</li> <li>• Housing allowance</li> <li>• Travel allowance to the home country</li> <li>• Bonus when meeting goals</li> <li>• Provision of additional work equipment upon a request</li> </ul>
<b>Work-itself-as-a-reward</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Witnessing pupils' progress</li> <li>• Pupils themselves</li> <li>• Enjoying the programme</li> <li>• Enjoyment of the responsibility</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.1 Relevant Goals

The theme Relevant Goals is an umbrella term that I developed from two distinct themes – relevant goals and achievable goals. Relevant Goals was later chosen as the theme title to represent both of these because the mere possibility of achieving a goal makes it somewhat relevant, whereas not all relevant goals are necessarily achievable. Table 3 shares a quotation example related to each Relevant Goals code.

TABLE 3. Relevant Goals codes with quotation examples

<b>Enjoyment of the good outcomes</b>	<i>When we first actually went ahead with it (an event collaboration between different schools) it really felt good. I felt positive. I really enjoyed the results so that made me more interested in doing it again. A sense of achievement, a sense of positive motivation through something that made me think that it makes sense to invest extra energy into it. (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Enjoyment of achieving set goals</b>	<i>I think the reward was that I did it. I'm able to do it. It wasn't actually that difficult. And it made me feel like I 'm in the right place, like I'm doing what I'm supposed to do. So that was rewarding knowing that I achieve it (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Being helped to set achievable goals</b>	<i>The goals were mainly set by the managers, but it was completely okay because I think I needed to meet those goals at the beginning because it was my first year and I was at the beginning of this journey or teaching so it made sense. (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Self-determination in achieving achievable goals</b>	<i>I'm like getting there, that I'm learning— —progressing and going towards what is at the end, what's been set as the goal (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Relevant goals</b>	<i>It was directly linked to my teaching, my day to day work in the classroom. That's why I chose this particular goal (study). So the practices that I was using in my classroom made sense to me (Teacher A)</i>

#### 4.2.2 Managerial Supervision

The types of managerial supervision which the research participants appreciate in our school context include the following: Teachers receiving explicit words of trust, being trusted to self-set goals, and being trusted to work independently. It is also appreciated when the management is being interested in teachers' successes and efforts. Initially, I developed two separate themes, "managerial trust" and "managerial interest in our efforts". However, in this final stage, they are unified under Managerial Supervision because I consider them both as aspects of managerial supervision that teachers in our school context seem to value and find helpful in achieving their goals. On the next page, Table 4 provides an exemplary quotation for each code in this theme.

TABLE 4. Managerial supervision codes with quotation examples

<b>Receiving words of trust</b>	<i>So I got also some verbal feedback actually, like, yeah, I trust you. That was fine (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Trusted to self-set goals</b>	<i>And what is the other good thing is the freedom you are given to set certain goals. The freedom to decide about certain events, or certain ways of how to assess or how to go about the objectives. This gave me confidence— —that was actually very helpful (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Trusted to work independently</b>	<i>I feel the main reward has been like people not constantly being on my case like have you done this, where's this and where's that. I feel like, in comparison to other people— —I don't have it like this, no-one is chasing me. I don't have that pressure. (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Being interested in our successes</b>	<i>They (managers) were coming to me like, "show me like what you do and what did you learn there". So they were interested and they were coming to my lessons for observations. (Teacher F)</i>
<b>Being interested in our efforts</b>	<i>I think it was good when they came and showed that they noticed. (Teacher D)</i>

#### 4.2.4 Verbal Praise

The theme Verbal Praise includes the code "praise by the management" which could have also been included in the previous theme of Managerial Supervision. However, it was seen at the end as more suitable to be introduced as part of this theme because verbal recognition by management, colleagues, or parents alike was considered by many teachers as a significant motivator and something that they appreciated in our school context. Table 5 provides a quotation for each code included in this theme.

TABLE 5. Verbal Praise codes and quotation examples

<b>Praise by the management</b>	<i>I think it is good, like we do in those meeting, they start and finish off with, thank you guys for doing this. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Praise by parents</b>	<i>Like when doing the online lesson, I got lots of sort of positive messages, like emails or even text messages from parents where they said, thank you very much. That does motivate me. Direct communication— —in personal level, with human touch to it. (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Praise by colleagues</b>	<i>Some people (colleagues) said that I was doing quite well. That's always nice to hear. (Teacher E)</i>

#### 4.2.4 Collegueship

Good collegial relationships among the staff also appear to be something that most of the teachers participating in this study appreciated and recognised as helpful in carrying out their work successfully in our school. The specific topics related to Collegueship that came up in the interviews are shared in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Collegueship codes and quotation examples

<b>Availability of more experienced colleagues</b>	<i>What helped me were my colleagues who were here before me. So my colleagues were a huge help. (Teacher A)</i>
<b>Supportive relationships with colleagues</b>	<i>Communication with colleagues— —when I started I felt like I could ask whatever I wanted basically and I didn't feel stupid asking that (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Trust between colleagues</b>	<i>I can share with my colleagues if I have a bad lesson. This juts happened recently and then everyone in the staff room started sharing and talking about their bad lessons. I am very much aware of the fact that I am lucky to be working somewhere where there is enough trust, and there is enough openness that we can talk about things like that (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Team spirit</b>	<i>The nurturing environment from staff and the feeling of being like family, close friends, has definitely encouraged me to work harder. (Teacher C)</i>

#### 4.2.5 Tangible rewards

*"I think we all come to work, to work and make money. And that's the bottom line — — I think money is why you come to work. And I do find money motivating." (Teacher D)*

Tangible Rewards, as a theme, comprises all codes which are somehow clearly traceable back to money. For example, "reduced workload" can be considered a monetary reward when one's salary does not become lowered regardless of teaching less than the set full lesson load (22 lessons/per week). In our school context, this is a standard procedure for teachers who are completing their NQT year and also granted under some circumstances for other teachers who teach, for example, a composite class or face other challenges. One of the teachers stated that, *"I get extra time, so I don't teach four lessons a week— —I think this*

*extra time is important as it gives me time to research more and be more prepared*". This allocation of extra preparation time in terms of reduced workload does not come without some financial sacrifices for the school, and that is why I think this code has got its rightful place under the theme of tangible rewards.

Based on the data, it is evident that tangible rewards are well appreciated by teachers in our school as everyone made some references to tangible rewards which they considered motivating. Below, Table 7 shares extracts which I anticipate to explain each code the best.

TABLE 7. Tangible rewards codes with quotation examples

<b>Achieved pay raise</b>	<i>I got the raise (of the salary) recently and now I am quite ok with the money. That was nice. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Prospective pay raise</b>	<i>He (the manager) told me immediately that in next, I don't know, five or 10 years, I could get— —he said some amount, and that I could earn that much money — — So, at that point it was, I think, a big motivation for me to try and work — —and to stay here. (Teacher G)</i>
<b>CPD opportunities</b>	<i>Opportunities to train, take online courses, that's a reward that the management has always offered. You just show initiative about any training or a course that you would like to do and they have always supported with these courses (Teacher F)</i>
<b>Reduced workload</b>	<i>I get extra time, so I don't teach four lessons a week— —I think this extra time is important as it gives me time to research more and be more prepared. (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Paid overtime</b>	<i>Biggest support— —the money! (Teacher F)</i>
<b>Pension fund contributions</b>	<i>I appreciate the pension fund contributions as I see as not only for me, but also for people who depend on me, my family. So that's why it is so valuable for me and it means a lot. It is saving for the future for me and my family. (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Housing allowance</b>	<i>We do get the housing allowance, which is motivational (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Travel allowance to the home country</b>	<i>I think it is a great idea that our foreign teachers get such rewards as annual plane tickets back to their home countries. I think it's just fair. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Bonus when meeting the goals</b>	<i>I thought there would be more money if I did everything I was supposed to do. So money. (Teacher A)</i>
<b>Provision of extra work equipment on request</b>	<i>So let's get more material now, like for example the gym balls (to be used as chairs) — —these little thing— —.that they are interested in what we might need and what we might find helpful. That's a nice reward. (Teacher B)</i>

#### 4.2.6 Work-itself-as-a-reward

Work-itself-as-a-reward is the Discover theme with the smallest number of references across the data. Regardless, I developed it into an independent theme because four out of the seven participating teachers made specific statements about finding the work itself rewarding. Table 8 shares the four specific codes related to this theme and example quotations.

TABLE 8. The work itself as a reward with quotations

<b>Witnessing pupils' progress</b>	<i>Working with children and after a while you see their progress. That's what helps me as well. The pure enjoyment of seeing them so active. (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Pupils themselves</b>	<i>Except the kids, that's of course also motivation to see how great they are. (Teacher G)</i>  <i>I love job. I love doing what I do for the kids. (Teacher A)</i>
<b>Enjoying the programme</b>	<i>It's interesting, the programme— —this actually gives me the happiness of working— —just enjoying the job. (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Enjoyment of the responsibility</b>	<i>It was basically the responsibility of all this. Like, I have a job now, I am teacher and I'm responsible for the children— —That was the thing that was pushing me. (Teacher B)</i>

#### 4.3 DREAMS: Rewards that teachers dream about

In the second part of the interviews, I invited the research participants to share their ideas of an ideal Dream-stage. In other words, they were invited to dream about how things could be organized ideally in our school context. Sometimes it happened that reflections about these dream-like future stages were made already earlier in the interviews as a natural continuation to the appreciations. When this happened, instead of stopping anyone, I allowed my colleagues to continue and asked related questions before directing them back to “now” and the current appreciations. When coding the data later, I had to pay extra attention to this feature in order to distinguish whether someone had said that they appreciated having experienced something previously, or they expressed a future wish.

In quantitative terms, the coded quotations related to Dreams compile a larger set of data than the Discover appreciations. This suggests that the teachers in our school have many dreams and visions related to what an ideal work environment would be like in their opinion.

The Dream codes appeared to fit well under the previously developed Discovery themes, with maybe a slight exception with Work-itself-as-a-reward. The only code which vaguely fits under this theme is the wish for more tranquillity which suggests that less work-related stress could help teachers to handle their work better. However, it is not elaborated on how to do this. Elsewhere in the data, there are references to performance-related pay being found prospectively stressful. This is, however, discussed under the code “progressive pay scale” because the potential stress factor was directly related to the wish for a progressive basic pay structure rather than performance-based incentives. All Dream themes and codes are compiled below in Table 9.

TABLE 9. Teachers’ dreams

DREAM THEMES	DREAM CODES
<b>Relevant Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting relevant goals</li> <li>• Measurable goals</li> <li>• Self-setting goals</li> </ul>
<b>Managerial Supervision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings with management</li> <li>• Open communication with management</li> <li>• Management expressing trust</li> <li>• Managers curriculum knowledge</li> <li>• Managers offering ongoing support and guidance</li> <li>• Managers being interested in our work</li> <li>• Managers awareness of pressing issues</li> <li>• Need for middle management</li> </ul>
<b>Verbal Praise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular, but casual praise by the management</li> <li>• Objective praising</li> </ul>
<b>Colleagueship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of more experienced colleagues</li> <li>• Team spirit</li> <li>• Team development</li> <li>• Collaborative work</li> </ul>
<b>Tangible Rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progressive pay scale</li> <li>• Fair &amp; transparent pay</li> <li>• Objective and measurable monetary incentives</li> <li>• Clearly set monetary incentives</li> <li>• Competitive pay in the local economy</li> <li>• Paid overtime</li> <li>• CPD opportunities</li> <li>• Reduced workload (more preparation time)</li> <li>• Provision of refreshments/ lunches</li> <li>• Social incentives</li> <li>• Extra days off as reward</li> <li>• Pay related meetings initiated by the management</li> </ul>
<b>Work-itself-as-a-reward</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tranquillity</li> </ul>



### 4.3.1 Dreams of relevant goals

Four of the teachers participating in this study made references to their wish for more relevant and achievable goals when they talked about an ideal future Dream-stage of the school. Relevant Goals, in a similar fashion as in describing what teachers appreciate about the current practice, is also something that is wished more for in the future. The code "setting measurable goals" includes appeals for more measurable goals in the sense that all goals should be clear and objectively measurable with evidence - and if not possible, then they should not be set as actual goals but just given as friendly advice instead. Teachers also expressed their desire to be more in charge and self-set their own appraisal goals, especially in the case of the experienced teachers. Table 10 below provides some extracts supporting the identified codes.

TABLE 10: Dreaming for more relevant goals

<b>Setting relevant goals</b>	<i>It would motivate me — — if the tasks that were assigned to me were actually like important — — if I have proved already that I'm able to organise an event because I have done it in the past already — — so it would be like repeating my goal if it was set up again the same one. (Teacher A)</i>
<b>Measurable goals</b>	<i>If you set up goals which are objective and measurable with evidence, then it really helps. It also helps if you haven't achieved that as you can look at the evidence and clearly define why not...so for example if you have covered all the summative test for this term, that's measurable, that's objective, you have evidence for it. (Teacher C)</i>
	<i>Maybe just some friendly advice rather than a goal which I must achieve and to come up with a outcome. Some things are not so solid. Not everything can be turned into a goal (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Self-setting goals</b>	<i>I like that I have some control over it (setting goals independently) and then I cannot blame anyone else for it (Teacher B)</i>
	<i>Teachers with more experience should have — —more personal goals rather than different teachers' standards. (Teacher C)</i>

### 4.3.2 Dreams of managerial supervision

A number of teachers also dreamed about specific Managerial Supervision practices. Besides making just references to certain kinds of relationships with the top management, a number of teachers also call for more middle manage-

ment support, especially in the initial stages when being new to the school. The codes with example quotations related to this theme are shared in Table 11.

TABLE 11. Dreams related to managerial supervision

<b>Need for regular meetings with management</b>	<i>I think that these (individual goal setting/review meetings) should be executed at the beginning of each term, and then wrapped up at the end of the term. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Open communication with management</b>	<i>I just think that it would be really nice to feel like it's a safe environment and that it's completely fine and okay to go and ask — — ask for whatever. And that they won't look at me like, What do you want, or like are you crazy? So I think the the safety of the of the conversation, open, healthy communication. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Management expressing trust</b>	<i>I think it is a big motivation when we hear...that we are appreciated and trusted. (Teacher G)</i>
<b>Managers' curriculum knowledge</b>	<i>Mentors should be knowledgeable and experienced. (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Managers offering ongoing support and guidance</b>	<i>You would also like to hear how you can be better and how the management would support you in that. (Teacher C)</i>  <i>I would appreciate more help, like daily support on how things work here, especially during the first months. (Teacher G)</i>
<b>Managers being interested in our work</b>	<i>(The manager) didn't even go there — — and he never told us, "Thank you!" or anything, like "I appreciate your hard work". Nothing. So, I felt at the time like it was a really big thing. There was no motivation to put such efforts to it like next year. I would appreciate the management to be more interested in our efforts. (Teacher G)</i>
<b>Managers awareness of pressing issues</b>	<i>I am too much in the lockdown situation now — —I can't think how the management could improve more — —but like right now, it was in December the whole thing with attendance for example. Like why to put that extra stress and extra work on us in all this mess? More human factor is needed (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Need for middle management</b>	<i>— — maybe stability of the staff, staff that remains and retains for many years, then you would assume you would have some mentors who would look after you for the first couple of years and help you to reach some level of independency. So the opportunities of simply relying on someone and going to that person for help, not only the top management. This middle management is quite important that they would offer you think kind of face-to-face support (Teacher C)</i>

#### 4.3.3 Dreams of verbal praise

Related to the Discover stage, I have pointed out earlier that the Verbal Praise theme could have been disregarded and the codes related to this introduced as part of Managerial Supervision and Colleagueship themes. However, this would have meant that the code "praise by parents" would be singled out without any

relevant theme to belong to, and therefore this theme was developed. Regarding the teachers' future dreams, there is no mention of wishing to hear more praise either from parents or colleagues. Instead, both of the developed codes relate to the relationship with management. Following this, it is arguable that these two codes should now be included in the previous theme rather than constructing an independent theme. However, for the clarity of later discussions, I have chosen to keep the themes separate. Both of the codes and quotation examples are shared below in Table 12.

TABLE 12. Dreams of verbal praising

<b>Regular, but casual praise by the management</b>	<p><i>It would be actually nice to hear more “thank you”. Thank you like even for smallest things like thank you guys for doing this, or the acknowledgement of how hard it is. Something of this sort. I don’t need extra money, but I would like to hear more “thank you”.</i> (Teacher B)</p> <p><i>Saying thank you, this shows that you are valued...and creates generally positive atmosphere.</i> (Teacher D)</p> <p><i>Simply saying “thank you” or acknowledging that this is what you did, “good!”.</i> (Teacher A)</p>
<b>Objective praising</b>	<p><i>In the appraisal meeting, I would definitely make sure that the person being appraised hears some positive comments and thank yous...with specific evidence of why that person is being appraised.</i> (Teacher C)</p>

#### 4.3.4 Dreams of collegueship

Besides talking about how we as colleagues already help each other to achieve our goals, the research participants also expressed ideas of what they would wish to see more or what they think that an ideal collegueship would be like. All these dreams and notions are grouped under four specific codes of availability of more experienced colleagues, more team spirit, more team development, and “more collaborative work. References to team spirit and collaborative work were kept under two different codes, although their close relationship to one another is acknowledged. In my opinion, team spirit differs from collaborative work in that it does not necessarily mean working together, but, for example, just acknowledging and appreciating each other’s efforts or other practices

which can contribute to creating a healthy work environment. Table 13 includes example statements for each Colleagueship code.

TABLE 13. Dream colleagueship

<b>Availability of more experienced colleagues</b>	<i>But the problem here is that they (more experienced colleagues) haven't got time. They all teach fulltime or more. The teachers in the school are quite helpful but they haven't got the time. (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Team spirit</b>	<i>What would make me feel good is that the whole environment is healthy, people would say thank you and see what everyone else is doing— —because I this would really help the whole group— —like being a team of co-workers, that would help to create some sort of like supportive atmosphere like a team spirit. (Teacher B)</i>
<b>More team development</b>	<i>I suppose that would be nice more sort of team development rather than team admin — —yes, some team sort of development or planned trainings together would be good— —there's not so much of that kind of going on here in terms of development. (Teacher E)</i>
<b>More collaborative work</b>	<i>You know, support, knowledge, opinion, ideas — —teamwork, because I feel like people are just keeping to themselves more, and they are just trying to do what they need to do for themselves and just go home. We're not really involved with each other that much. It would be nice if we worked more as a team anymore. I feel. (Teacher A)</i>

#### 4.3.5 Dreams of tangible rewards

All participating teachers had some dreams and wishes regarding tangible rewards, and this theme compiles both, the largest set of codes as well as individual references across the interviews. Besides this, it must be noted that some of the individual codes themselves are quite versatile in their nature and consist of different approaches to the same coded topic. For example under the code “progressive pay scale” teachers call more for this kind of reward structure for the reason that climbing up on a pay scale would provide a sense of security in comparison to receiving extra bonuses as part of the flexible part of the salary. Related to this, Teacher C stated, for example, that, *“When there is the flexible part, then the basic salary is low. And then we lose in all social contributions such as sick leave pay and pension pay — — We should have our competencies reflected in the basic pay”*.

This dream of making better use of the progressive pay scale was also seen as an expression of trust on behalf of the management, as explained by Teacher

B, *“Salary raise would be better than one time reward. Because that would also mean that the management trusts me — — and it's like, like an investment, sort of.. because they know that I can carry on like this”*. The same teacher also states that she is a bit wary of incentives or bonuses which are related to performance pay to be used as she thinks this could negatively impact the team spirit and create unhealthy competition. Similarly, also Teacher E would consider it more rewarding to climb on a progressive pay scale rather than receive performance-related bonuses. She said that she would find this kind of practice stressful, and states that, *“If it was like a bonus related performance base, I think I'd be too stressed, so rather have you achieved something and then you can go another pay scale for example, like the base pay”*. Furthermore, Teacher D would find a clear, progressive salary structure fairer, and stated that, *“I don't think the flexible part of the salary should be part of the salary. — —there should be instead a set salary for everyone — —There should be a very clear salary structure — — I don't like the flexible part at all. It is not a fair thing. It is so subjective”*.

The participating teachers did not, however, only express their wishes for a progressive basic pay scale, but they also called for more objective and measurable pay-related practices regarding the use of incentives. These wishes are grouped under the codes of “objective and measurable monetary incentives” and “clearly set monetary incentives”. Statements under these two codes suggest that the teachers do not find the current practice as objective, transparent, and easy to follow as they would wish for in an ideal situation.

The other topics related to tangible rewards which the participating teachers dreamed more of are paid overtime; receiving competitive pay in the local economy (which means that the teachers are not asking for the same pay as in Prague but in comparison to other schools in the region); even more opportunities for continuous professional development; reduced workload (enough preparation time); provision of refreshments/lunches; social incentives (related to team building); and wishes for the management to initiate meetings about tangible rewards (instead of the teachers). All the codes and example quotations are shared in Table 14 on the next page.

TABLE 14. Dreams of tangible rewards

<b>Progressive pay scale</b>	<i>When there is the flexible part, then the basic salary is low. And then we lose in all social contributions— —we should have our competences reflected in the basic pay. (Teacher C)</i>
<b>Fair &amp; transparent basic pay</b>	<i>The structure (pay related) needs to be very clear, very transparent, apply to everyone and be very much on display, because otherwise there is space for interpretation. (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Objective and measurable monetary incentives</b>	<i>If rewards are given, they should be measurable. (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Clearly set monetary incentives</b>	<i>If would have come to me straight away from the beginning and tell me that there's gonna be a financial recording of hours, but he didn't. — —so some days I felt like, why am I doing this, like, I don't even know if I will get any extra for this. — —it would be good to know this beforehand — —and have a written agreement — —or a verbal agreement. That would be the ideal scenario. (Teacher F)</i>
<b>Paid overtime</b>	<i>Obviously, you would want your extra hours of work to be paid, per hour. (Teacher A)</i>
<b>Competitive pay in the local economy</b>	<i>Paying enough, competitive salary is important so that people stay (Teacher B)</i>
<b>More CPD opportunities</b>	<i>What would get me motivated— —if I was offered a chance of very meaningful professional development, but not some sort of clicking online courses— —Some professional development where I could be able to learn from others who know more what they are doing. I would find it motivating if I could see good practices like in a practical way outside of our school, because our school is very small. I would find it motivating if I could see how others do things, like in other schools. I am working in this key stage only a couple of years now, and I think I would benefit from talking to people who have done this much longer. I could learn from them. So, having the opportunity to learn, I would find that motivating (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Reduced workload</b>	<i>I think we need just time in school in order to achieve the goals rather than extra pressure of...you have to do all your school things, there is no relief of any of those...and then you are expected to improve but when was the time to do that? So I would like time within school, I think that would be the main thing that was beneficial (Teacher E)</i>
<b>Provision of refreshments/ lunches</b>	<i>Free lunch like contributions— —and tea and coffee in the staff room (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Social incentives</b>	<i>It would be nice if for example we would have such rewards as being taken out for dinner at Christmas time or something similar— —.I think it would be rewarding as it would be again acknowledging that I care about you, my team (Teacher B)</i>
<b>Extra days off as reward</b>	<i>I would find it motivating to have extra days off when the pupils are not at school (Teacher D)</i>
<b>Pay related meetings initiated by the management</b>	<i>I would appreciate that the management would initiate meetings about the pay and stuff. Not us (teachers). (Teacher B)</i>

#### 4.3.6 Dreams or work-itself-as-a-reward

As already pointed out earlier, the only code that fits this category is “tranquillity”, i.e. stress-free work environment. When discussing their appreciation about the work itself, the participating teachers mentioned how they found such things motivational as pupils themselves and seeing them making good progress in their studies, as well as the educational program itself. With regards to potential future scenarios of how the work could be even more rewarding in its own right, only “tranquillity” fits in the theme. Related to this, Teacher D stated that, *“I think that’s a huge part of this whole motivation and rewards thing, like feeling good and relaxed is a reward for me.”* Thereafter, as discussed earlier related to the wishes for a progressive pay scale, Teacher E expressed her concern over the potential use of performance-related incentives because this would stress her out. She further explained that she would value a more collaborative, calm, and friendly work environment instead of a competitive and stressful one.

#### 4.4 Summary of the results

All the participating teachers identified rewards and other practices that they considered helpful as having supported them to meet their appraisal goals successfully in our school context. Each of them also shared dreams of possible future rewards and practices that they would believe helpful. Out of all the coded data, I developed six themes. I used these same six themes for both sets of codes, those derived from the Discovery and those from the Dream interview stages. The themes were: Relevant Goals; Managerial Supervision; Verbal Praise; Colleagueship; Tangible Rewards; and, Work-itself-as-a-reward. Each of these themes has provided some unique insight into answering the subsidiary research questions of “What kind of practices/rewards do teachers appreciate and regard as helpful in achieving their appraisal objectives in our school context?” and “What kind of practices/rewards teachers dream of?”

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Overview of the conclusions**

This section addresses the main research question of "How can we help our teachers to meet their appraisal objectives even better than we already do?" To answer this question, the current appreciations of the participating teachers and their future dreams are contrasted theme-by-theme and across the themes. I consider this contrast between the appreciations and the dreams essential because it highlights that the future visions are anchored on the appreciation of already existing practices that the staff finds motivational. The current appreciations are also valuable in their own right when looking into supporting and motivating teachers effectively because responding just to the dreams without continuing to provide what is already appreciated could be counterproductive. To help our teachers to meet their appraisal objectives even better than we already do, I suggest that addressing both the appreciations and the dreams should be considered.

### **5.2 Provision of Relevant Goals**

Regarding Relevant Goals, the participating teachers expressed their appreciation for being helped to set goals and taking pride in achieving their goals. They also mentioned being self-determined in completing their set goals when these appeared achievable. Concerning their future wishes, the teachers wished for appraisal goals that would be more directly relevant for their work and ones which would be easy to measure, objectively, whether they were achieved or not. The wish for more objectively measurable goals relates to other themes as well (Dream themes of Verbal Praising, and Tangible Rewards) that also call for more measurable and objective practices, as demonstrated in Figure 5. Some teachers wished for more opportunities to self-set goals, which would also be potentially the way to address the wish for setting more relevant goals - given that what is relevant is often depending on the individual circumstances.



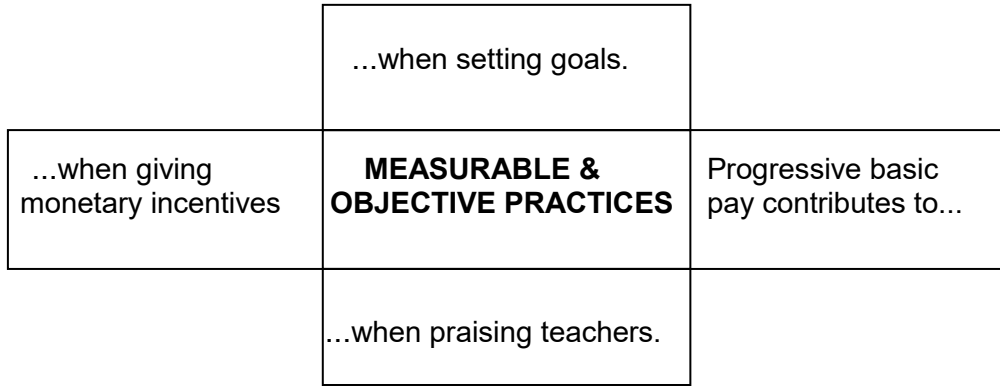


FIGURE 5. Dreams of measurable & objective practices across the themes

### 5.3 Provision of Managerial Supervision

Teachers identified several appreciations towards managerial practices which they found motivating. The words “trust” and “interest” appear to play a key role in this theme. In addition to hearing explicitly the phrase “I trust you” they also appreciated other demonstrations of trust, such as being allowed to self-set their goals or otherwise work independently without overwhelming managerial control. Related to “interest”, the participating teachers had found it motivating in the past when the management had expressed interest in their successes as well as efforts. When it comes to the dreams of ideal practices, both of these topics emerge again, meaning that the need for trust and interest is not yet fully satiated, as demonstrated in Figure 6.

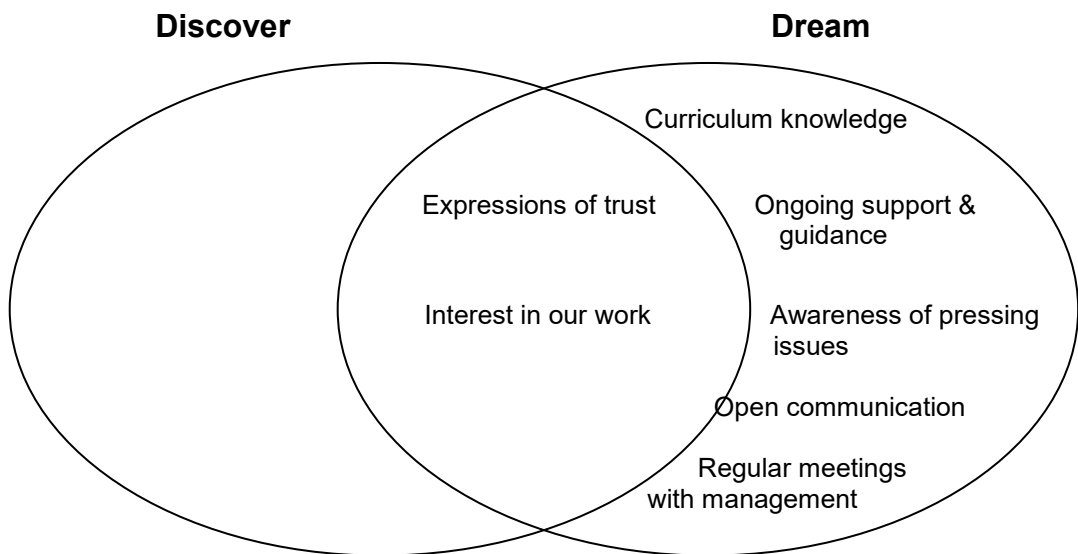


FIGURE 6. Shared appreciations and wishes related managerial supervision

The Managerial Supervision code “need for middle-management” is left out of the previous Figure 6 on purpose, for the reason that middle management, or more middle-management (as some provision is already available) may be the key to responding to many of the expressed dreams. More availability of middle-management in terms of subject coordinators who would have the curriculum knowledge, and the general know-how in providing continuous support and guidance, as well as being available to regularly organise specific meetings with staff, could potentially help to meet the identified Dreams. It would also likely act as an assurance that the management is interested in the teachers and their achievements. Thereafter, more middle management provision could build a bridge between the teachers and the top management and consequently help the top being more aware of the pressing issues among the staff. To conclude, the data suggests that in our school context Managerial Supervision could be potentially enhanced by organising more possibilities for middle-management support and exploring further what the concepts of “trust” and “interest” mean to the staff team and implement practices that address these.

#### **5.4 Provision of Verbal Praise**

The participating teachers identified practices related to verbal praising that they found motivating were not only the praise given by the management but also the praise given by colleagues and parents. In contrast to this, the future dreams related to verbal praising only extend to managerial praising. The teachers wish to experience some more praising but in a casual fashion instead of some stiff, official praising. Possibly a little bit more acknowledgment of work well done now and again would do. In its nature, however, this praising should be fair and objective, as demonstrated earlier in Figure 5. This means that instead of praising simply for the sake of doing it, the praising should stem from actual measurable reasons to do so.

#### **5.5 Provision of Collegueship**

Aspects of Collegueship that teachers appreciate and have experienced as helpful are trust between colleagues, supportive relationships between the col-

leagues, good team spirit, and the availability of more experienced colleagues. Whereas the two former ones are only Discover-appreciations, the two latter ones are also Dreams of ideal practice, as demonstrated in Figure 7, which suggests that teachers wish for improving the team spirit and the availability of more experienced colleagues.

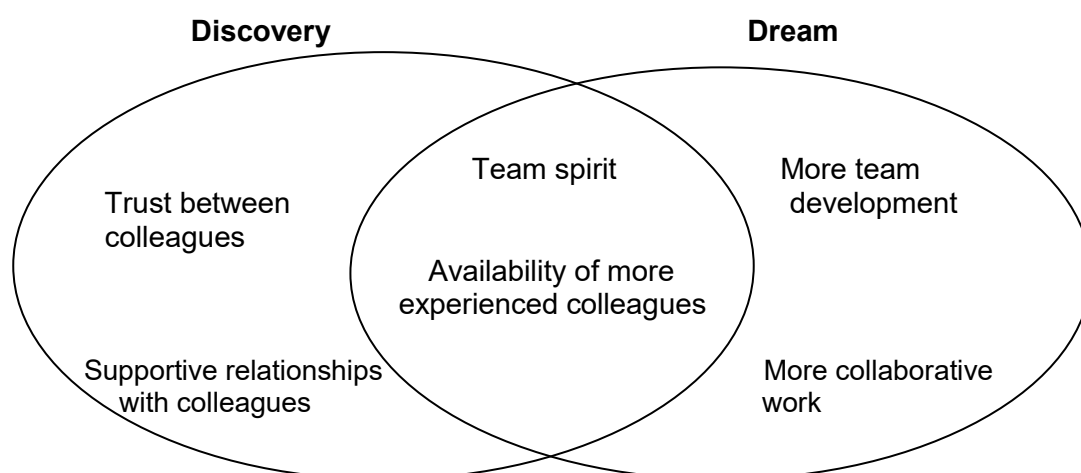


FIGURE 7. Appreciations and dreams related to collegiality

The code “availability of more experienced colleagues” relates to the previous theme of Managerial Supervision and the Dream of more middle management provision. Besides being offered as a solution for solving several managerial supervision matters, enhanced provision of middle-management support could also be the key to satiate the Collegiality wish for the availability of more experienced colleagues. Responding to the wish for more collaborative work and team development opportunities could, in turn, contribute to increasing the team spirit, which is both appreciated by the participating teachers as well as expressed as their future wish.

The Dream of more “collaborative work opportunities” might be partially caused by the exceptional year due to school closures and other restrictions that have significantly limited any collaborative endeavours and work opportunities this year. To overcome this, it can be worthwhile addressing this and providing more opportunities for teacher collaboration. The wish for more “team development” can be seen as partially connecting to the next theme, Tangible Rewards, under which the staff has also expressed their Dream to have some “social incentives”.

## 5.6 Provision of Tangible Rewards

Tangible Rewards was by far the largest theme across the whole data set. In order to identify the differences, as well as the relationships between the appreciations and the dreams related to tangible rewards, Figure 8 provides a comprehensive overview of all the codes across the data set.

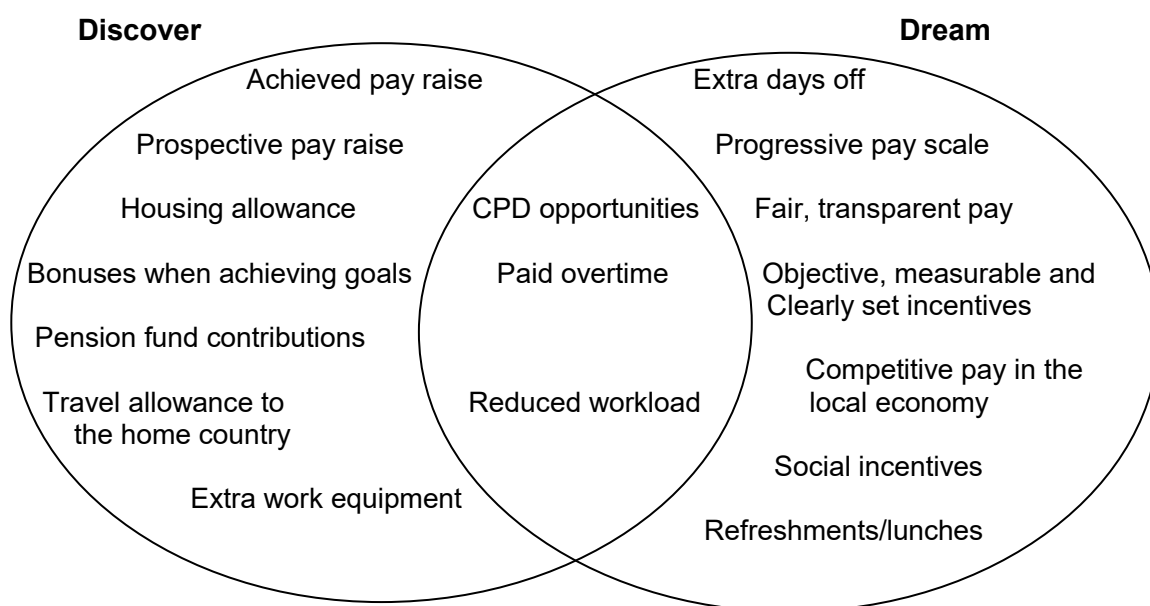


FIGURE 8. Appreciations and dreams about tangible rewards

The Dream code of “pay related meetings initiated by the management” is left out of the above diagram for the reason that the other codes are considered to be practices, appreciations, and dreams, which would be ideally addressed in appraisal meetings, which the staff would like to see initiated more by the management. If meetings of the kind were organised, they could also potentially satiate the wish for more open communication with the management, which has been identified as a Dream related to Managerial Supervision.

The data also suggests that although some teachers appreciate the given CPD-opportunities, being paid when doing overtime, and the chances to have reduced workloads, there are others who dream of these. This discrepancy might

stem from some management practices which the staff might not find fair and/or transparent, as suggested by one of the Dream codes.

It would also be worthwhile to explore some alternative options for the regular cash-related tangible incentives. The Tangible Reward Dream of “social incentives” overlaps with the Collegueship dream of “more team-building opportunities”, which opens a window for prospective practices that could be developed in order to respond to both of these Dream codes. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to make actual suggestions regarding what these practices could be, but I believe that the set of codes identified in this study can provide a relevant starting point for looking into some creative solutions related to paying incentives in addition to the regular monetary bonuses.

Finally, it must not be overlooked that the teachers in unison were dreaming about the better future implementation of the progressive basic pay scale. They would find the prospect of climbing up on this scale more motivating than any other forms of monetary incentives.

### **5.7 Provision of Work-itself-as-a-reward**

Teachers appreciate and find motivating the work itself with our pupils and witnessing their progress in their studies. They also consider our educational programs interesting and rewarding to work with. Besides these, the responsibility associated with the work, ranging from supporting pupils' wellbeing to their academic progress, is another matter which the staff identified as motivational. Following this, it might be a good idea to encourage teachers to set some student progress targets as this practice could simultaneously satiate the Dream code related to Relevant Goals according to which teachers would find it motivational if they could self-set more goals.

Concerning future wishes and dreams of the work itself, the wish for more “tranquillity” came up as the single topic in this category. The questions that follow are numerous. What does tranquillity mean in this context? Which specific steps would help us to create more tranquillity in our workplace? One way to pursue this Dream is to continue exploring further the themes and codes central

to this study - and continue with the provision of practices that would enable teachers to keep on appreciating what they already appreciate and thereafter explore further how to implement new ones which would satiate the Dreams they have.

## 6 DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Overview of the discussions

In this section, the research findings of this study will be contrasted with relevant literature in the field of teaching, rewards, and motivation. The discussion will draw primarily from the topics reviewed in the Theoretical Frameworks, namely the theory of 16 basic desires (Reiss, 2000, 2004, 2013), the relationship between tangible and intangible rewards and motivation, and the role rewards play specifically in the teaching context. The shortcoming of this study and suggestions for further research will be addressed at the end of this section.

### 6.2 The theory of 16 basic desires

The theory of 16 basic desires (Reiss, 2004, 2013) does not distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Instead, it suggests that motivation is intrinsic in its nature and that all motivation, directly or indirectly through a chain of instrumental motives, can be traced back to the 16 end goals or basic desires (Table 1). As part of the data analysis in this section, the presence of both kinds of motivation, instrumental and end motives, will be acknowledged.

The only code name directly adopted from the 16 basic desires theory is the Dream code “tranquillity” which coincides with Tranquillity-motive, i.e. the desire to avoid anxiety and fear. This code relates to teachers’ wish for a more stress-free work environment. Other end goals, or basic desires, that teachers made direct references to were Independence and Social contact. The Discover codes of “trusted to self-set goals” and “trusted to work independently” and the Dream code of “self-setting goals” each appear to have an association with the desire to be independent and autonomous. Thereafter, the Dream Tangible Rewards code “social incentives” as well as most of the Colleagueship codes appear to be related to the desire for peer companionship, with maybe the exception of “availability of more experienced colleagues” that closely connects with Curiosity and the desire for knowledge.

The participating teachers made some direct references to the instrumental nature of how they found certain rewards motivating. Teacher C, for example, explained why she appreciated the school's pension fund, *"Because I see it as not only me, but people who depend on me, my family. So that's why it was so valuable for me and it meant a lot. It is also saving for the future for me and the family"*. Teacher B also expressed her gratitude towards the management for being interested in the teachers' needs and, for example, purchasing them all gym balls to be used as chairs when online teaching. She pointed out that, *"These little things that they are interested in what we might need, what might be helpful. That's a nice reward."*

The data provides evidence that both instrumental and end goals play a central role when teachers talk about what motivates them and rewards that they appreciate and wish for in our school context. The study was not, however, designed to categorise these end and the instrumental goals, nor was the aim to try to trace back the end goals, but instead to look into practices that teachers find motivating and helpful in supporting them to achieve their appraisal objectives. If teachers find, for example, the progressive pay scale better than other forms of monetary incentives, it would not necessarily improve our practice to know which one of the basic desires is in action here, i.e. whether it is, for example, Tranquillity, Family or Status. What matters is that this particular instrumental goal and desire of being able to climb on the pay scale would be addressed somehow in the future.

### **6.3 Tangible rewards and motivation**

The data from this study suggest that the provision of tangible rewards plays an important role in teachers' professional lives in our school context. In the interviews, the participating teachers expressed their appreciation of the past and current practices and wish for future practices, out of which the Dreams of Tangible Rewards - theme has the most codes and quotations across the entire data set. This suggests that there exists a significant relationship between teacher motivation and tangible rewards in our school context. Claiming, how-



ever, that this “significant relationship” means simply that tangible rewards motivate our teachers per se would be contradictory.

Based on this study, teachers do not appear to hold high regard for competitive monetary incentive practices. They seem to favour more fixed and secure pay practices, such as a progressive basic pay scale, and fringed monetary rewards such as flight tickets back home, pension fund contributions, and social incentives, rather than direct money/cash incentives. As regards the distribution of these monetary incentives, the teachers wish for more fair and transparent practices. All this suggests that the concern over practices related to monetary rewards (Deci et al., 1999; Kohn, 1993; Pink, 2009) appears somewhat relevant. Although the data does not indicate that our teachers would find monetary incentives demotivating per se (except maybe when creating competition or not fairly distributed), it does suggest that they show preference to other forms of tangible rewards. The repetitive wish to improve the usage of the progressive pay scale lends to the idea that monetary rewards, when they are not fixed and predictable, can actually be, if not outright demotivating, at least less motivating than their more set, long term alternatives.

The high value based on the wish to make better use of the progressive pay scale, which would reflect teachers achievements in the long term, instead of using one-off incentives indicates that whereas some discrepancy between monetary incentives and motivation may exist, money as such (especially salary increase) is considered as an important motivating factor by the participating teachers. This, in its essence, contradicts the basic claim by Deci (1971) that tangible rewards would lower motivation. Being paid is after all a tangible reward, and it is evidently highly valued by our teachers. Teacher D summarises this by saying, *“I think we all come to work, to work and make money. And that’s the bottom line— —I think money is why you come to work. And I do find money motivating.”*

Related to pay raise, it is worth recognising, however, that the employer might have some concerns when it comes to issuing a fixed increase in the basic pay. Deeprose (2006, 32) discusses that although rewarding achievements and efforts with pay raises might contribute to short-term appreciation, it is likely to

diminish with time when living expenses swell to meet the raise, for example. She also suggests that employers often opt for one-off or temporary pay rewards because these can be discontinued if the employee fails to meet the set expectations, which might not be possible with fixed salaries. In the light of this study, this unpredictability of short-term/ one-off incentives appears to be a concern for my colleague teachers.

It would be interesting to further examine the complexity of the roles which monetary rewards appear to play with motivation in this study in the light of the Reiss Motivation Profile (IDS Publishing Corporation, 2020). When interpreting the data in the light of the theory of 16 basic desires, the impact which these desires might have on motivation may be specific to each individual. For example, someone with a high score in Vengeance might be competitive and enjoy the setup where the “best” teacher claims the highest monetary reward, whilst another person scoring low in Vengeance might find this particular kind of setup demotivating. In a similar fashion, someone scoring high in Savings and the desire to collect might appreciate more such rewards as pension fund contributions instead of different one-off bonuses. When considering teacher motivation and tangible rewards from the perspective of the 16 desires, it leads to the idea that instead of lowering motivation, tangible rewards can influence everyone differently, depending on their unique motivation profile.

#### **6.4 Intangible rewards and motivation**

The participating teachers showing their appreciation of and wish for many intangible rewards correlates with Tausif’s (2012) research finding according to which intangible rewards have the most significant impact on employee’s job satisfaction. All the other themes appearing in this study, except Tangible Rewards, are intangible in their nature: Relevant Goals, Managerial Supervision, Verbal Praise, Colleagueship, and Work-itself-as-a-reward are constructed of codes that address non-material rewards and practices. When contrasted to the literature, these match well with themes developed in other studies that have investigated the relationship between intangible rewards and motivation (such as Grant and Gino, 2010 and Hafiza, 2011).

To motivate our teachers and help them to meet their appraisal goals even better, the data suggests that instead of simply focusing on tangible rewards also intangible reward practices should be attended to in our school. Although this does not necessarily require direct financial sacrifices, their implementation can be demanding as according to Dewhurst, Guthridge, and Mohr (2009) the role that intangible rewards play in companies is often overlooked because of the extensive time commitment that their implementation requires from the management. They identify that simply allocating tangible rewards according to the staff's wishes is often easier and the path many companies opt for. However, it would be counterproductive to overlook the intangible reward appreciations and wishes if the aim is to motivate our teachers better and help them to achieve their appraisal goals even better than they already do. After all, intangible rewards dominate in themes and codes the data set when compared to tangible rewards.

### **6.5 Rewards and teacher motivation**

The results of this study comply well with the previously reviewed literacy related to teacher motivation. Although an inductive approach was used when analysing data, in other words, novel themes and codes were developed from the data instead of scrutinising it according to pre-existing ones, the findings relate closely to those of other studies in this field.

The codes of self-determination in achieving achievable goals, trusted to work independently, and wish for self-setting goals, and management expressing trust, suggest that the teachers interviewed for this study value being trusted to work autonomously. In the reviewed literature, teacher autonomy is one of the factors that, for example, Kaiser (1981) correlates positively with motivation. Similarly, Packard and Dereshiwsy (1990) suggest that individual input enhances teacher motivation, and Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) claim that constraints related to teacher autonomy can harm motivation.

Packard and Dereshiwsy (1990) report that teachers find the opportunities of regular evaluation motivational was also replicated in this study. Teachers ex-

pressed their wish to have regular meetings with management and also otherwise receive ongoing support and guidance. Both of these were Dream codes, but not appreciations, which suggests that teachers might find the current practices related to regular evaluation insufficient to some degree.

Good professional relationships was another factor that Packard and Dereshi-wsky (1990) suggest to motivate teachers. In this study one entire theme, Col-leagueship, is dedicated to this. Having a good team spirit, opportunities to work together, and learn from more experienced colleagues are regarded as impor-tant by my colleague teachers.

With regards to tangible rewards, this study identified teachers to wish for better implementation of the progressive pay scale, more fair, transparent and objec-tive pay related practices, and more continuous professional development op-portunities. When examining these research outcomes from Dörnyei and Ush-ioda's (2011) perspective, who suggest that poor professional career structures demotivate teachers, and Packard and Dereshi-wsky's (1990) study that sug-gests that unfair distribution of monetary incentives demotivate teachers, at-tending to these matters is well-grounded if the intention is to improve the cur-rent practices in our school.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) also suggest that teachers find stress correlating negatively with teacher motivation. This study replicates these findings. Com-petitive practices, such as performance pay, were found stressful and not ap-preciated by teachers. Related to the future wish of how the work itself could be even more rewarding than it already is, more tranquillity, in other words, less stress, would also be appreciated in our school context.

## **6.6 Evaluation of the study and further suggestions**

It is likely that the Covid-restriction related study design adaptations of using the individual interviews instead of focus groups impacted the outcomes of this study. As discussed in the Methodology section earlier, instead of action re-search this study conformed finally to be a case study due to the necessary

last-minute adjustments. Different codes and even different themes could likely have developed under the focus group circumstances. I anticipate that the focus groups would have led to fewer codes/topics because the teachers would have collectively disregarded some. In this respect, it would be interesting to conduct a focus group-based follow-up study (when the restrictions permit) which would aim to scrutinise the findings of this study. These meetings would possibly help further define how to support our teachers to meet their appraisal goals more effectively in our school context.

These focus groups could also address the originally planned Design stage. Teachers would possibly brainstorm ideas better collectively on how to reach the ideal Dream stage rather than imagine individually these steps. Following Ojasalo et al. (2015) it is appropriate for a student's thesis work that confirms to action research methodology to address only a part of a bigger action research project carried out in an organisation. Similarly, I hope this study will also be a part, a specific case study, of a much larger study that looks into teacher motivation in our school.

Conducting Reiss Motivation Profiles (IDS Publishing Corporation, 2020) amongst the teaching staff could also provide potentially an interesting, new approach to understanding motivation in our school. These profiles could give insightful information about who we are and what motivates us as well as help us to understand where we might clash and where to see eye-on-eye on things. Someone scoring high on Independence might find it challenging when, for example, a colleague who scores low on Independence searches often others' approval on things she does, or someone having a high need for Order might find such things as spontaneous school events off-putting. When giving the teachers a chance to examine these habits and reactions in the light of the Reiss Motivation Profiles, they might not only develop better collegial tolerance but affirming relationships. Furthermore, these motivation profiles could also potentially help us to think more creatively about the role tangible rewards could play in our organisation. If many scores high, for example, in Physical activity some sports vouchers could potentially work well as motivating bonuses.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Teachers' Standards (2012)



Department  
for Education

# Teachers' Standards

## PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

## PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

### 1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

### 2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

### 3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

### 4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

### 5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

## 6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

## 7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

## 8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

## PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

## **Appendix 2. The outline of the interviews**

### **Setting the scene:**

*Think of any past situation when you had a goal and you managed successfully to achieve it. Think of a specific situation.*

- What was the goal?
- Why did you want to achieve the goal?
- What helped you to achieve the goal?
- What motivated you to do so?
- How did it motivate you?
- Can you identify there any specific rewards or practices that motivated you?

### **Achieving goals in our school context:**

*Let's next focus on our school context and the best practices of what you have experienced here. Can you think back to some specific NQT/ Appraisal goals which you have managed to achieve successfully?*

- Why did you want to achieve the goal?
- What motivated you to achieve the goal?
- What/who helped you to achieve it?
- How did it help you?
- Were there any specific rewards or practices that helped you to achieve the goal?

### **Achieving goals in an ideal school context:**

*Now it is time to dream away! Think of a scenario where you would have a certain goals set in a NQT/Appraisal meeting. How would it look like, the process of achieving your goals, in an ideal school setting?*

- What would help you to achieve the goals the best?
- Who would help you to achieve the goals the best?
- How would she/he/they help you to achieve it?

- How would the process of setting the appraisal/NQT goals look like?
- What kind of rewards would motivate you to achieve the goals?

**Creating that ideal school context:**

*Let's continue dreaming and think how we as a school community can reach the ideal scenario in which you would meet all your goals most efficiently.*

- What do you think this would require from us as a school community?
- How could we get there?
- What are the specific steps we should make in our practice meet the ideal scenario?





