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The Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors for Teacher Motivation

Harun GULTEKIN¹, Erkan ACAR²

Abstract

Education researchers and school administrators have faced the challenge of motivating teachers to higher levels of performance. In this regard, teacher motivation increases classroom performance and, accordingly, improves schooling and the overall quality of the school system. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the different types of motivational factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic, that influence teacher performance and contribute to teacher motivation.

Keywords: intrinsic and extrinsic factors, teacher motivation, social cognitive learning theory, and teacher performance.

Introduction

It is a common belief that a teacher's motivation - strongly related to the desire to be involved in the educational process - is an essential component of classroom effectiveness and improvement (Good & Brophy, 1994). The role of motivation in classroom learning and performance can affect both new learning and the performance of previously learned skills, strategies, and behaviors (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). The purpose of this paper is to explore the different types of motivational factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic that influence teacher performance. The purpose of this paper is to explore various sources of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, especially those which contribute to teacher motivation. The theoretical framework of this paper is based on Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory and on the educational philosophy of Turkish scholar Fethullah Gülen. The following section will define and discuss the concept of motivation. The remainder of the paper will discuss several intrinsic and extrinsic teacher motivational factors and analyze their contribution to teaching effectiveness.

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Motivation

The word motivation is a general term that can be related to a complex series of physical and mental behaviors. According to Green (2002), motivation is an internal state that activates, guides, and maintains behavior. Gagne (2004) considers it to be a condition that facilitates the development of high achievement. Wlodkowski and Jaynes (1990) define it as a value and a desire for learning, Kim (2000) as inner striving conditions, such as wishes, desires, and urges, which stimulate the interest of a person in an activity. Motivation, therefore, is generally considered to be an inner state that stimulates and triggers behavior. Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) support this, defining it as an internal condition that serves to activate or energize behavior and give it direction. Thus, teacher motivation sets teachers in motion and makes them do things (which may or may not be worth doing), in order to reach their goals.

The sources of motivation can be either intrinsic or extrinsic. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation necessary to engage in an activity because that activity is enjoyable and satisfying. Woolfolk (2001) explains that intrinsic motivation involves internal, personal factors such as needs, interests, curiosity, and enjoyment. In Woolfolk's view, intrinsic motivation is the primary attitude in education. Alexander (2006) argues that intrinsic motivation emanates from personal interests and inherent feelings of satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is derived from the influence of some kind of external incentive, distinct from the wish to engage in education for its own sake. It is concerned with factors outside the classroom. In extrinsically motivated behaviors, actions are performed to achieve some kind of result, such as earning rewards or avoiding a negative consequence (Covington, 2000). Consequently, an effective understanding of teacher motivation necessitates the analysis of motivational factors based on their extrinsic or intrinsic nature. There are various theoretical approaches that shed light on the distinct aspects of teacher motivation. In this paper, Bandura's and Gülen's contributions will be examined.

Theoretical framework

Social Learning Theory: Bandura and Motivation

Many educational theories focus on modeling, which is an outcome of motivation. According to Social Learning Theory (SLT), which first emerged in the late nineteenth century, people learn from one another, through observation, imitation, and modeling. Albert Bandura, who is one of the leading proponents of SLT, introduced many SLT concepts into the educational field in the 1960s. He focused on the centrality of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and

emotional reactions of others. Bandura states: “Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action” (Bandura, 1997: 22). Bandura claims here that if people had to rely solely on trial and error in order to learn, it would take them a very long time to learn even simple tasks. In addition, many of us probably wouldn’t live very long if, say, the only way you could learn not to run out into the street is by getting hit by a car. The influence that others have on behavior and the importance of modeling were noted likewise by Eggen and Kauchak (1997). Bandura’s social cognitive theory also points out individual capabilities. This approach is reminiscent of Maslow’s (1954) concept of “self actualization,” which states that human beings search for higher-level qualities such as creativity, maximum consciousness, and wisdom. This school of thought maintains that these potentials can and must be developed by proper upbringing, education and various motivational factors. In the case of education, students’ potential can be developed and utilized by motivating teachers. Thus self-actualization is closely connected to motivation. According to Bandura (1986), people are capable of symbolizing, learning through modeling, having forethought, self-regulating, and self-reflecting. They are not only reactive to situations, but also proactive and anticipative, and they function as regulators and self-evaluators of motivations and actions (Bandura, 2001). In other words, people are not simple stimulus-response machines. They will prepare for what they think is going to happen, and they can initiate their own behaviors. People are organisms with aspirations and the capacity for anticipatory self-control with regard to behavior (Bandura, 1991). Consequently, motivation is not only central for self-actualization, but is also highly correlated with self-reflection and modeling.

Another educational approach to modeling and motivation is proposed by a contemporary thinker, and well-known Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen self-actualization can be understood as the search for the maximum level people can achieve. This level concerns not only physical development, but also the spiritual acquisition of full human potential. The individual actualizes his or her true potential and enjoys the ensuing delights and pleasures. Maslow (1954) also points out that self-actualized people, even though they have everything, maximize their potential and seek even more knowledge, justice, esthetic experiences, self-fulfillment, etc. A Turkish scholar and educational reformer, Fethullah Gülen, has extensively contributed to the theoretical debates of self-actualization and achievement and his contribution well deserves our attention.

Gülen's Educational Vision

Gülen is a self-educated Turkish educationist and well-known author, whose ideas have inspired a social movement since the 1970s. The Fethullah Gülen Movement is a faith-inspired civil society movement named after Fetullah Gülen, for ease of reference. By its participants, however, it is often called *hizmet* or volunteer services (Movement). The Gülen Movement, originating in Turkey, focused on educational and intercultural dialogue activities. Today, the movement has reached a global scale, involving intercultural and educational institutions at all levels in more than a hundred countries, as well as media outlets and business initiatives. The Movement originated in Turkey and has activities in 115 countries, and has established a particularly strong presence in Central Asia, Europe, Africa, The United States, and other places around the global scale (Gülerce, 2009). In the early 1980's Gülen and his associates' vision had led the beginnings of an enthusiastic educational project of building educational institutions all over the world (Nelson, 2005). However, Gülen's teachings provide the theoretical framework for the movement's educational activities. Mainly in Turkey, Turkish businessmen fund educational institutions which are staffed with a young generation of altruistic teachers. The educational and intercultural emphasis of the Gülen movement has recently come to the attention of Western scholars. According to Thomas Michel (2001), the Vatican's secretary for interreligious dialog, Gülen's educational vision is one that embraces societies throughout the world. Gülen's ideas, especially on education, provide a valuable contrast to Bandura's social learning theory. The following discussion will focus on Gülen's theory of education and its contribution to teacher motivation. Additionally, Gülen's philosophy has motivated many individuals not only within the profession of teaching but also the individuals outside the profession. Teachers adopting Gülen's understanding aim to become the builders of the future, founders of a peaceful, harmonious, progressive and prosperous society, and constructors of human personality

Gülen's educational theory is based upon four dimensions (Aslandogan & Cetin, 2007). The first involves the concept of a paradigm: teachers are accustomed to thinking systematically and/or working in a comprehensive tradition. In other words, they should avoid anarchy in thought or action. Also, they should not allow themselves to be dragged along by anything novel in the name of change and development. A teacher should not be attached to novelties introduced at random; instead, he or she should evaluate all material according to established and universally accepted norms and values. This does not mean that the teacher should remain indifferent to new developments and methods, but should be able to adapt new developments to the basic paradigm. Otherwise, what Kuhn (1962) calls a "paradigm shift" happens. However, Gülen does not categorically reject the notion of a "paradigm shift" in the field of education: Gülen himself introduces a "paradigm" that initiates a new understanding and attitude towards the teaching

profession. He believes that only education can solve society's problems. In this solution, teachers are the primary actors.

Altruism is the second dimension of Gülen's educational paradigm. In other words, he calls for elimination of selfishness and the establishment of a spirit of community service in education. His motivational efforts began with teachers and potential sponsors. Through his speeches in many different places, he motivated college students to choose the educational field as their profession. He sees altruism as the key factor to convincing business owners and entrepreneurs to sponsor educational projects (Aslandogan & Cetin, 2007).

The third is a social dimension which brings stakeholders or communities together. Gülen thinks that political elite which is distanced from society cannot bring about improvements in education. Instead, altruistic teachers who see education as a noble profession are deemed essential, as is the formation of an educator-parent-sponsor triangle. Teachers, administrators, educational policy makers, parents, entrepreneurial sponsors, and civic leaders - in short, almost every segment of society - need to play a role in these educational activities (Unal & Williams, 2000).

The fourth dimension consists of the synthesis of the heart and the mind, tradition and modernity, and the spiritual and the intellectual. Gülen highlights the importance of sound reasoning for every individual, while promoting spiritual values as a guide for the intellect. He holds that the most favorable way should be the middle way between a self-centered individualism and a collectivism that encourages a sense of social responsibility but does not deny individual rights (Gülen, 2005). He promotes the sense that, as humans, people have the responsibility to serve their community. He also frames individual rights as unfringeable for the greater good without an individual's consent (Kuru, 2003). Perhaps Gülen's most crucial synthesis is that he is able to achieve, in theory and practice, a harmony of science and religion, reason and faith (Gülen, 2005). Teacher motivation is deemed to be central in both Bandura's and Gülen's theories. Bandura's approach points out both extrinsic and intrinsic factors in teacher motivation. Gülen's teachings on teacher-parent-sponsor relations and the adaptation to external circumstances highlight the extrinsic factors in teacher motivation, while altruism and modeling emphasize the intrinsic. A closer analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors will enable us to better identify the contributions of Bandura and Gülen to the study of teacher motivation.

Motivational Factors

Common intrinsic motivational factors

1. *Desire to participate the teaching-learning process, and management style.* According to Curless (2000), one's teaching philosophy can and does affect the teaching-learning process. In order to deal with complex role demands in the routine of teaching, one has to understand styles of student learning in a new educational paradigm that has been constructed, refined, adjusted, and repaired. While finding solutions to these difficulties, teachers should understand their own needs and the opportunities available in teaching, and should desire to participate in the pedagogical processes of students' education within the school environment (Petress, 2003). A teacher's pedagogical role needs to be improved and translated into the effective achievement of educational objectives. Carter (1993) stresses the importance of "pedagogical content knowledge" in this complex process. According to her, knowledge of the content or subject matter has to be taught via curricular activities that are significant in terms of teacher motivational strategies. Borko and Putnam (1996) note that a teacher's acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge is influenced by his or her personal beliefs. As an educator, I believe that our openness to accept the new is also important! I feel really motivated when I'm learning new things! But then we need to be given the space to do something. Some teachers are so loaded that when they come back home they just want to sleep! Flexibility and openness to the new also keep me motivated. I try to be open to hear the students and attend to their needs! Games, humor, technology give a nice spice to my teaching. When preparing a class I try to picture myself as a student and ask if I would enjoy it. If not, I throw my plan away and start from scratch! That is the advantage of once being a foreign English student. Therefore teachers, in my view, are not the only ones responsible for their lack of motivation; the whole environment plays its role. According to Bandura (1977) and Gülen (2000, 2001), most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling, so teachers are naturally role models, and this role modeling helps prepare students for the future. Teachers are leaders in the classroom, and their leadership should contribute positively to students' performance and to the general atmosphere at school. As leaders in the classroom, teachers need to be visionary and exemplary, and to serve as prototypes. Furthermore, Gülen (1996) clarifies those teachers as leaders should be reasonable and wise in all their acts and decisions. Their insight should allow them to solve even the most complex problems, and they should, therefore, implant hope and resolution in the hearts of even the most hopeless students. They should strictly avoid harming anyone, and use all their strength, energy and abilities for the good of their students. Stigler, Lee and Stevenson (1987) observed that student compliance is an indispensable class management issue and is positively associated with academic performance.

In order to achieve this, most teachers wish to have a more controllable student environment, and for this reason they apply an authoritarian condition to teaching. By doing this, they think they are satisfying their “safety need” and can take care of small problems themselves without sending students to the office. They feel they should address disruptive behavior before it escalates or becomes habitual. Also, a teacher must take care to not punish a slightly improper behavior with the same punishment meted out for highly disruptive behavior. According to Baumrid (1971), there are four types of teacher classroom management styles: the authoritative style, the authoritarian style, the permissive style and the indulgent style. The authoritative style is characterized by behavioral principles, high expectations of appropriate behavior, clear statements about why certain behaviors are acceptable and others unacceptable, and warm student-teacher relationships. The authoritarian style tends to be characterized by numerous behavioral regulations. It is often seen as punitive and restrictive, and gives students neither a say in their management nor the courtesy of an explanation when appropriate; the teacher’s character is sometimes perceived as cold, even punishing. The permissive style is characterized by a lack of involvement. The environment is non-punitive, there are few demands on students, and there is a lot of freedom. The indulgent style presents an environment where there are no demands on the student of any sort, and the students are actively supported in their efforts to seek their own ends using any reasonable means (Baumrind, 1971).

2. *Personal traits and development.* A second class of intrinsic motivational factor is an inexperienced teacher, be they young in years or merely new to the profession, need to be encouraged to improve their skills and develop themselves in their career. If teachers have established the necessary trust and bonds with the school management and have established proper channels to communicate and receive proper feedback, this will not only improve their professional skills but also encourage the healthy development of their personalities (Kegan, 1982). Teachers need to be encouraged to talk about new ways of looking at their own development. Throughout their careers, they encounter and respond to changing demands, circumstances or educational paradigms. In this regard, Kegan’s (1982) work is illuminating, positing that there are practical models of adult developmental stages that render the development of teachers as educators more comprehensible. Individuals, including teachers, may occasionally have difficulty communicating, establishing liaisons with others, or receiving due recognition and acceptance. Therefore, they need to be supported in their personal and professional career, which, of course, positively affects motivation and classroom effectiveness.

Common extrinsic motivational factors

1. *School environment.* Teachers are part of the school society and bear the responsibility of encouraging safety in the school environment. It is well known that positive teacher behaviors, such as good lesson preparation and presentation, warmth, patience and confidence, generally lead to safe schools (Independent Project Trust, 1999). Clement *et al.* (1994) explain that a good classroom atmosphere promotes student involvement, enhances learning activities and self-confidence, and moderates anxiety. As emphasized in Bandura's social learning theory (2001), through social interaction and the maintenance of a role-model status, teachers can enhance the learning environment. Seeing themselves as change factors in their schools enables teachers to provide safe learning environments. Linda Darling Hammond from Stanford University explains that we need to create classrooms that are more personalized, with teachers working in teams with students in a supportive nurturing environment (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). According to Tschannen-Moran and Barr (2004), individual teachers make a difference in student achievement, but the collective efforts of teachers also have a positive influence on students. Tapola and Niemivirta (2008) examined 208 sixth graders, looking at student goal profiles, motivation, and student preferences. They found that student achievement and motivation depend upon the classroom environment. Gülen (1996) argues that school is about much more than effectively teaching people during a particular phase of their lives. For him, the school is like a theater in which we experience different phases of life together. It provides students many possibilities for interacting with others. Whatever students learn in school affects them for the rest of their lives in positive or negative ways. School buildings reflect the importance attached to education. They are part of a community's permanent infrastructure and also belong to future generations. Educating children is seen as a primarily public function. It is everyone's right to be informed by, to participate in and to benefit from the provision of a satisfying public education. Society is obliged to teach and, ideally, provide learning facilities and supportive resources when needed. With this in mind, teachers' attendance at a workshop or conference that is held at a facility with superior resources could be an eye-opening experience, and it might inspire them to have, organize and manage new resources and facilities. According to Buckley, Schneider and Shang (2004), the quality of school buildings can affect teachers' morale and ability to teach, and their very health and safety. According to Gülen, such properly working, encouraging or inspiring environments both affect teacher performance and motivation positively, and support students' learning (Aslandogan & Cetin, 2007). Gülen (2004a) says that teachers are the front-line educators and need to be asked their perspectives and insights about their working conditions. The forums and facilities in which they will air their opinions, share their professional experiences, and explore innovative ideas ought

to be relaxed and comfortable and not intimidating or threatening. Successful completion of any project or program can build respect, support and relationships between a student and teacher in a school environment (Brady, 2005). For example, in short-term projects, teachers and students can take extra roles and responsibility, and community-based facilities and committees can become involved. This may reduce the cost of the projects and motivate teachers, students and to a certain extent, the entire school community. The projects also may provide ways for teachers and students to become more familiar with the organization, design, condition, and utilization of the building or facilities. Having different programs and activities might shed light on vital ideas and events and enable teachers and students to understand their natural and human environments.

2. *Stress vs. tolerance at workplace.* The more teachers are motivated to teach, the more students will learn and be successful. According to Brophy and Good (1986), teachers' enthusiasm is one of the core qualities in their effective teaching and instructional behaviors. This positive relationship highlights the importance of enthusiasm as a characteristic of effective teachers (Watt & Richardson, 2008). The other factor that lessens the level of stress in education is humor. Without a rich sense of humor, teaching or learning may not be very enjoyable. It has also been established that an increased stress level cause a rise in blood pressure, which in turn reduces success in cognitive tasks, induces feelings of helplessness, and makes it difficult to concentrate (Simon, 2009). Jepson and Forrest (2006) add that if teachers have high expectations of themselves, they may experience heightened stress and disappointment. In return, their teaching effectiveness and classroom management may be negatively affected (Klusmann, Kunter, Trautwein, & Baumert, 2006). In Germany, in recent years, the situation has become serious. As a result of stress-related conditions enormous numbers of teachers are taking disability leave or early retirement (Weber, 2004). According to Larchick and Chance's (1998) study of 400 middle school teachers from 102 school districts, there are four exceptionally high-stress factors that teachers admit carrying into their classrooms: money management, health, relationships and care-giving. As a result of personal problems, teachers often miss deadlines and refer more students to the principal for disciplinary reasons. In the same study, teachers rated their principal's willingness to help them cope with intense personal problems that interfered with their significantly high work (Larchick & Chance, 1998). Tolerance opens the doors to dialogue, and dialogue helps people to learn about each other. Gülen (2004a) defines tolerance as follows: "Tolerance does not mean being influenced by others and joining them; it means accepting others as they are and knowing how to get along with them" (p. 37). He sees tolerance as a kind of empathy and positive thinking and as a method for achieving coexistence with others. Tolerance is, therefore, being able to live with others while maintaining one's identity. In fact, such respectful tolerance, mutual understanding and reciprocal respect positively affect the atmosphere in the classroom and the school.

When students conduct themselves respectfully and harmoniously, this eases the teachers' duty with respect to discipline and control.

3. *Financial incentives: good salary, regular pay, allowances/payments.* In 2000, Figlio and Kenny surveyed school personnel practices in 502 schools across the country. They found that teacher salary incentives are associated with higher levels of student performance (Figlio & Kenny, 2006). According to their findings, teachers need to be in a position to meet their financial obligations. Inconsistencies in teachers' salaries certainly influence their motivation, classroom activities and effectiveness. Also, teachers with high salaries may feel more respected. Results of the research carried out by Tutor (1986) with the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (TCLP) clearly indicate that salary is one of the most influential factors that motivate teachers. The survey asked classroom teachers, "To what extent did salary influence your decision to participate in the TCLP program?" Teachers responded to these questions and they were ranking items by influence, and salary came in as one of the four highest-ranked items. Eberts, Hollenbeck and Stone's (2002) case study of the implementation of a merit-pay system in a specific high school suggests that incentives do "work." The merit-pay system is directly targeted at student retention, as defined by a measure understood and agreed upon by both teachers and administrators. Therefore, their results suggest that pay for performance incentives can motivate agents to produce outcomes that are directly rewarded.

4. *The Role of Professional Ethics.* The ethics of teaching require teachers to gain students' respect and to protect their own and their students' dignity. Any positive act by a teacher has the potential to produce a positive outcome or positive feedback from students (Wong & Waring, 2009). It is useful here to remember a very simple principle from daily life: treat people as you wish to be treated, or simply "what goes around comes around" (Weingardt, 2009). Teachers ought to exert extra care not to place students in a negative light or in an embarrassing situation among others, especially among their peers. Teachers should never promote wrong acts, attitudes, and responses. It is obvious that an embarrassed, intimidated, or inhibited student will not wish to participate in any activities or interactions. In other words, the consequences of unethical acts can directly affect motivation. This is not only a personal loss but also a collective loss in terms of society. Carroll (2007) compared Kant and Gülen's works and indicated that both take human value and dignity as the basis for defining legitimate and illegitimate behaviors toward others in society. Within a classroom, which is a microcosm of larger society, teachers need to act sensitively to all people, since they are the role model, even if a student gives a wrong response to a request or question. In any awkward situation, teachers should respond in a way that does not cause embarrassment. The response to a wrong must be right. When witnessing a student doing something wrong or exhibiting a bad habit, teachers should sensitively raise awareness about such wrong or bad habits, and warn all in

general, rather than warning that particular individual directly. It is expected and hoped that the particular student will draw the moral from the general warning (Gülen, 2001). In short, protecting students' self-esteem, personal honor and dignity is part of the responsibility of the teacher and the ethics of teaching. Doing so establishes a positive relationship between the teacher and the students and provides a successful teaching experience for the teacher. Also, what make for excellent and caring teachers is their sensibilities, such as love, engaging with intellectual work, the hope of changing students' lives and a belief in equal rights (Nieto, 2003).

Conclusion

Education is of crucial importance in the construction of human personality, in the development of potentials, in adaptation to society, in the development of new skills and especially in dealing with the problems everyone faces while progressing from childhood to adulthood. This is the period in which students learn to shoulder responsibility. For this reason, whether formal or informal, one's educational years are the most important period of one's life.

According to the literature, teacher motivation increases classroom performance and accordingly improves schooling and the quality of the school system. The quality of academic learning opportunities can only be enhanced by competent and committed teachers (Prenzel *et al.*, 2005). Khamis, Dukmak, and Elhoweris (2008) found that teachers have a direct effect on students' motivation to learn in every aspect of their classroom experience, and that most students respond positively to a well organized course taught by an enthusiastic instructor. A lack of knowledge in students and teachers alike is directly related to a lack of teacher motivation (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Carter, 1993).

Teachers' motivation and responsibilities have an impact not only on the days and years they spend in schools, but on the days and years they will spend in society at large. Teachers are, therefore, role models, and the memory of their performance continues to offer progress, exemplary modeling and support to their students throughout their students' entire lives, whether this is acknowledged or not. Gage and Berliner (1998) describe observational learning, modeling, and mentoring as the essential components of Bandura's social learning theory, much of which deals with learning through observing someone's behavior. It is important to understand that for learning to take place, effective modeling must occur (Abbott, 2007). This is an ongoing effect. The motivation of teachers to teach and their sincere efforts to broaden their students' perspectives and world-views, their positive, exemplary interpersonal relationships with students, and their pedagogical caring all help to produce socially, culturally and mentally healthy and prosperous individuals and societies. Intrinsic motivation is an

important part of commitment to the profession. When applicants of educational degree programs are asked why they chose the profession, their answers are mostly related to intrinsic sources of motivation, such as liking teaching (Younger *et al.*, 2004). According to Nieto (2009), teachers' attitudes, beliefs, values, and dispositions have a powerful influence on why teachers teach and why they remain in the profession in spite of difficult conditions.

As Wentzel's (1997) research reveals, students continue to value the memories and positive influence of teachers, caring and uncaring alike, long after graduation. Students' perceptions of good teachers center on teachers who are fair, democratic, communicative, disciplined (in the sense that they set rules for the classroom and activities), and last but not least, motivated. Organizing conferences, supporting programs, and involving teachers and students in these activities may help develop individual and societal motivations for both learning and teaching. Such activities can be related to Bandura's (1994) self-efficacy, which is defined as "individuals' confidence in their ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions, and therefore influence an outcome" (p. 71-81).

Gülen (2002) also motivates both students and teachers by saying that education is humanity's greatest service, and that both teachers and students should be aware that they are doing the most honorable thing for society. Gülen's (2002) broader concept of "teacher" includes not only traditional classroom teachers in public schools but also many other key personalities, from prophets to parents, from philosophers to spiritual guides, from lovers of wisdom to the honest government administrator. His message to all these teachers is simple: serving your fellow citizens and humanity in general through education is the responsibility of being a human, and it fulfills the purpose of one's own creation (Gülen, 2002). Gülen's philosophy has motivated many individuals, not only within the profession of teaching but also outside of it. Teachers adopting Gülen's understanding aim to become the builders of the future, founders of a peaceful, harmonious, progressive and prosperous society; and constructors of human personality. This compensates for the low-paid, unappreciated, low social status given to teachers in some societies (Aslandogan & Cetin, 2007).

Gülen (1998) succinctly emphasizes the place and weight of teachers and their dedication and motivation to build a better future; to actualize true human potential, which lies dormant in many people; and to cultivate and spread humane values through philosophical, social and spiritual structures. For Gülen (1998), freedoms of ideas, of thought and of conscience are indispensable and inalienable rights. According to him, one cannot reach full actualization without the freedom of thinking, learning, and self-expression. To realize such an actualization, teachers are the most important means, conduits and agents that will engage students and improve performance at all levels, from elementary through postsecondary classrooms. Therefore, motivating teachers should be an essential part of any

educational system, so that students can perform better and so that we, as the larger society, may attain a better future.

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