

Stronger Smarter Institute Research & Impact Footprinting Reading Review

“Adaptive and maladaptive work-related motivation among teachers”

Collie and Martin (2017) undertook an analysis of surveys of 519 Australian teachers from 18 schools on the positive and negative dimensions of teacher motivation. They identify five motivational profiles which shed light on how teachers are motivated to do their work, and the implications for their workplace wellbeing. The diagram below shows the five profiles and the percentages of teachers in each profile.



A significant finding from this study is that 60% of teachers in the sample group fell into the amotivated and failure-related profiles. The researchers suggest that effective professional development is important, but that it needs to address the maladaptive motivation. We suggest that our westernised Australian education system has effectively endorsed the fact that, for Indigenous students, it is acceptable to be in a failure profile where the locus of control doesn't lie with the teacher. We believe this is why our Stronger Smarter Leadership Program is so important, because it is centred around

improving teacher efficacy and addressing underlying factors contributing to maladaptive motivation with regard to Indigenous education.

Implications for Indigenous education

- ▶ High-Expectations Relationships are about collective teacher efficacy (CTE) and ensuring a whole of school response. We see many highly motivated young teachers working in remote schools. However, a young teacher may struggle to make a difference for their Indigenous students if they are surrounded by other staff in failure profiles or the school itself is in the amotivated or failure accepting profile with regard to Indigenous education. If staff share a belief that through their collective action they can positively influence student outcomes, then they are more likely to be in the success approach profile.
- ▶ Any school intervention (e.g. attendance or behaviour management strategies or a curriculum approach) that brings teachers together towards a common goal with high expectations is likely to increase teacher motivation. However, it is important to make sure the intervention is strength-based, recognising the strengths all students bring to the classroom (not just the strengths endorsed by a western education system). When an intervention is built around high-expectations relationships to bring about staff cohesion and recognise the strengths all students bring to the classroom, we believe it is much more likely to produce successful outcomes for students.
- ▶ We discuss in our companion reading review, Prof Nan Bahr's report for ACER *Building quality in teaching and teacher education*, how teacher-student relationships are shown to be a key component of teacher quality. We believe that focusing on building high quality relationships and focussing on professional accountabilities to build confidence, agency and self-belief in teachers will help teachers move through the success profiles.

The Stronger Smarter Approach

- ▶ **Metastrategy 1: Promoting a positive sense of student identity.** Our programs focus on building confidence and supporting educators to become agents of change – to ensure they are in the Success Approach profile with regard to Indigenous students.
- ▶ **Metastrategy 2: Indigenous leadership.** Embracing Indigenous leadership and building strong relationships with the local community can help to provide educators with the support they need.
- ▶ **Metastrategy 3: High Expectations Relationships** can support educators to build a collegiate staff environment where everyone is working towards a shared understanding of expectations and outcomes.
- ▶ **Metastrategies 4 and 5: Innovative school and staffing models.** A whole school approach where the school leadership has developed visible strategies for school improvement are again likely to support educators to move into success motivation profiles.

For more information, see the Stronger Smarter Institute's full research review of the Collie and Martin's paper, and more details about the Stronger Smarter metastrategies on the Institute's website at www.strongersmarter.com.au . Contact us at enquiries@strongersmarter.com.au.