

Teacher Motivation, Educational Resilience, and Community Adaptation in Pastoral and Climate-Vulnerable Contexts: An Integrative Study of Schooling in East Africa and Comparable Underserved Settings

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Article received: 11/01/2026, Article Accepted: 10/02/2026, Article Published: 07/03/2026

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ABSTRACT

Background: Educational development in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions is shaped by a difficult convergence of ecological uncertainty, mobility, land-use change, financial exclusion, weak infrastructure, and uneven policy implementation. In such contexts, schools are not isolated bureaucratic institutions; they are social spaces located within wider systems of livelihood transformation, resettlement, adaptation pressure, and community negotiation. At the same time, the literature on teacher motivation, recognition, remuneration, job satisfaction, enthusiasm, adaptation to flexible learning environments, and policy support shows that teacher commitment strongly influences school climate, instructional quality, retention, and learner engagement. Despite this, the scholarship on pastoral livelihoods and the scholarship on teacher motivation are rarely brought into sustained dialogue.

Objective: This article develops a comprehensive theoretical synthesis of how teacher motivation should be understood in pastoral and climate-affected contexts, especially in East Africa and comparable under-resourced settings. It argues that teacher motivation in such regions is not only a matter of salary or professional morale, but a foundational component of educational resilience, community adaptation, and socially responsive development.

Methods: A text-based integrative review methodology was employed using only the references provided. The literature was organized into interrelated domains: pastoral transition and livelihood change; climate adaptation and shifting social contracts; financial inclusion and rural access constraints; teacher recognition, motivation, and job satisfaction; flexible learning environments and student engagement; and education policy implementation.

Results: The synthesis indicates that pastoral and resettlement regions are marked by mobility, infrastructural insufficiency, ecological stress, and changing livelihood systems that directly affect schooling access and stability (Galvin, 2018; Fratkin, 2014; Greiner, 2016; FAO, 2021). Within such settings, motivated teachers act as institutional anchors. Recognition, remuneration, leadership support, enthusiasm, and adaptive working conditions are strongly associated with teacher commitment, performance, and student engagement (Aranguéz, 2024; Balatero & Bauyot, 2024; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Ephrahem et al., 2022; Helena & Sikawa, 2023; Kimani & Mwenda, 2022). The review further suggests that teacher motivation in pastoral regions must be interpreted as both an educational issue and a development issue.

Conclusion: Sustainable educational improvement in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions requires a framework that links teacher motivation to livelihood conditions, social inclusion, policy implementation, and community adaptation. Schools in such contexts become resilient not merely through infrastructure, but through motivated educators capable of working across uncertainty, mobility, and institutional fragility.

KEYWORDS

Teacher motivation, pastoral communities, climate adaptation, educational resilience, East Africa, school climate, rural education.

INTRODUCTION

Education in marginal, mobile, climate-sensitive, and economically excluded settings presents a challenge that is often misunderstood when interpreted through conventional school improvement models. In many national policy frameworks, educational quality is discussed in terms of curriculum reform, examination performance, teacher deployment, infrastructure expansion, and administrative accountability. These concerns are legitimate, but they can become insufficient when schools operate in regions where mobility is high, livelihoods are unstable, ecological shocks are recurrent, and access to public goods is uneven. Pastoral and agro-pastoral settings in East Africa and related underserved regions illustrate this complexity vividly. In such regions, schooling is embedded in wider processes of land change, conservation pressure, climate stress, resettlement, livelihood diversification, and financial exclusion (Homewood & Trench, 2008; Galvin, 2018; Catley et al., 2019; Galaty, 2020; FAO, 2021; FAO, 2022). Educational practice in these settings cannot be separated from the social and ecological realities that structure everyday life.

At the same time, scholarship on teacher motivation has shown repeatedly that teacher performance, work commitment, retention, school climate, and learner engagement depend strongly on recognition, compensation, job satisfaction, leadership support, enthusiasm, and professional purpose (Camelo & Ponczek, 2021; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Ephrahem et al., 2022; Kimani & Mwenda, 2022; Kyangwe et al., 2023; Lee & Wong, 2021; Aranguez, 2024; Balatero & Bauyot, 2024). Yet much of this literature assumes a relatively settled institutional environment. It often focuses on schools as organizational sites, while giving less attention to the larger development conditions within which rural and marginal schools function. This creates an analytical gap. Teachers in pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings are not merely workers in under-resourced schools. They are professionals operating at the intersection of environmental instability, social transition, limited service access, and uneven state presence. Their motivation is shaped not only by workplace variables but by the broader territorial and community conditions that define the possibility of schooling itself.

The references provided for this article make it possible to bridge two literatures that are usually kept apart. One body of literature examines pastoral livelihoods, climate adaptation, land-use change, Indigenous and Maasai identity, forced mobility, food systems, and financial inclusion in rural East Africa and related settings (Adger

et al., 2021; Bagehot et al., 2020; Baird, 2014; Catley et al., 2019; Demircuc-Kunt et al., 2022; Doss et al., 2018; FAO, 2021; FAO, 2022; Fratkin, 2014; Galaty, 2020; Galvin, 2018; Galvin, 2020; Gammino et al., 2020; Greiner, 2016; Hall et al., 2018; Hayes & Robson, 2019; Hodgson, 2011; Homewood & Trench, 2008; Homewood et al., 2012; Homewood & Trench, 2021). The other body focuses on teacher recognition, teacher motivation, work commitment, flexible learning environments, policy implementation, and classroom climate (Aranguez, 2024; Balatero & Bauyot, 2024; Camelo & Ponczek, 2021; Deed et al., 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Ephrahem et al., 2022; Harrison et al., 2020; Hartono et al., 2023; Helena & Sikawa, 2023; John & Mueni, 2020; Jiang et al., 2022; Kimani & Mwenda, 2022; Kyangwe et al., 2023; Lee & Wong, 2021; Mashala, 2019; Mbawala et al., 2022). These bodies of work are rarely synthesized, but their convergence reveals a crucial insight: in fragile and transitioning rural contexts, teacher motivation is not merely a school management variable. It is a central determinant of whether education can function as a stabilizing, adaptive, and developmentally meaningful institution.

This article begins from the premise that the school in a pastoral or climate-vulnerable setting is not just a place of instruction. It is also a site where the state becomes visible, where young people encounter alternative futures, where community expectations are negotiated, and where environmental and livelihood pressures are translated into educational experience. When climate shocks, land fragmentation, relocation, or livelihood insecurity intensify, education becomes both more difficult and more important. It becomes more difficult because mobility, poverty, distance, and uncertainty disrupt attendance and continuity. It becomes more important because schooling may offer skills, aspirations, language, credentials, and social pathways through which communities navigate change (Baird, 2014; Galvin, 2020; FAO, 2021). In this environment, the teacher occupies a uniquely strategic position. A motivated teacher can sustain institutional continuity under adverse conditions. A demotivated teacher, by contrast, may become another point of system fragility.

The problem is that educational debate often treats teacher motivation as though it were primarily determined by direct administrative factors such as salary, promotion, recognition, or leadership. These are undoubtedly important. However, in pastoral and climate-affected contexts, teacher motivation is influenced by additional realities: geographic isolation, weak infrastructure, inconsistent service access, learner

mobility, community displacement, cultural mismatch between school schedules and livelihood rhythms, limited financial systems, and uneven policy implementation (Bagehot et al., 2020; Fratkin, 2014; Greiner, 2016; Gammino et al., 2020; Mashala, 2019). In such settings, even highly committed teachers may face structural disincentives that are not visible in mainstream motivation research. Conversely, where communities, school leaders, and policy systems actively recognize the extra difficulty of teaching in these regions, motivation may become a powerful developmental asset.

A second major issue concerns adaptation. Climate adaptation is often discussed in terms of infrastructure, policy, risk management, and livelihoods. Adger et al. (2021) introduce the idea of changing social contracts in climate adaptation, an insight that is especially relevant to education. If climate adaptation involves renegotiating expectations between communities, institutions, and the state, then schools are part of that renegotiation. Hall et al. (2018) show the importance of empowering communities in climate adaptation through Indigenous leadership, while Hayes and Robson (2019) review the intersection of Indigenous peoples, conservation, and climate change. These perspectives imply that adaptation is not only technical but social. Education systems in pastoral regions must therefore adapt in ways that are culturally responsive, territorially realistic, and institutionally resilient. Teacher motivation becomes central to this process because adaptation in schools is enacted through people before it is formalized through policy.

A third issue concerns the transformation of pastoral livelihoods themselves. Pastoral systems are frequently represented in policy discourse as traditional or static, but the literature shows the opposite. Pastoral communities are undergoing transitions shaped by land pressures, food insecurity, commercialization, migration, resettlement, conservation regimes, and environmental stress (Galvin, 2018; Greiner, 2016; Galaty, 2020; Homewood & Trench, 2021). Catley et al. (2019) emphasize forced mobility and its implications for youth livelihoods and exploitation. Fratkin (2014) documents Ethiopian pastoralism in crisis amid resettlement and precarious livelihoods. These transformations affect educational systems directly. Children's attendance patterns, parental expectations, gender roles, local opportunity structures, and the practical meaning of schooling all change under such conditions. It follows that teacher motivation in these regions cannot be understood apart from livelihood change. Teachers are not just teaching subjects; they are teaching in the middle of social transition.

A fourth issue concerns equity. Doss et al. (2018) challenge myths about women in agriculture, reminding us that rural development debates often rest on oversimplified assumptions about labor, agency, and household structure. This is relevant to education because

schooling in pastoral regions is also shaped by gendered roles, domestic labor expectations, mobility constraints, and unequal access to opportunity. The literature on teacher motivation often focuses on general commitment or job satisfaction, but in marginal rural settings teachers may also serve as important figures in negotiating gendered access to learning. Motivated teachers can help sustain inclusion where dropout risks are high, whereas weak motivation may intensify exclusion indirectly through indifference, absenteeism, or low expectations.

A fifth issue concerns financial inclusion and resilience. Bagehot et al. (2020) discuss financial inclusion challenges in pastoral and resettlement regions, while Demircuc-Kunt et al. (2022) show how financial inclusion, digital payments, and resilience matter in periods of shock. FAO (2022) highlights livestock market access and infrastructure constraints in rural Africa. These themes may appear distant from education, but they are highly relevant. Schools function within household economies. When families lack access to stable income channels, formal financial systems, or resilient market connections, schooling becomes harder to sustain. Teachers working in these settings confront not only pedagogical issues but the consequences of economic precarity in students' lives. Teacher motivation in such contexts is therefore relational: it is influenced by whether the school can realistically respond to the material fragility surrounding it.

The literature on teacher motivation adds another layer. Aranguez (2024) emphasizes the effect of recognition on the school environment. Balatero and Bauyot (2024) examine leadership strategies that enhance teacher motivation. Lee and Wong (2021) show how principal recognition matters. Ephrahem et al. (2022), Helena and Sikawa (2023), Kimani and Mwenda (2022), and Mbawala et al. (2022) all reinforce the importance of remuneration, motivation strategies, and job dedication in East African educational contexts. Camelo and Ponczek (2021) show that financial incentives influence teacher turnover, especially in underprivileged schools. Deed et al. (2020) demonstrate that teachers must adapt to flexible learning environments, while Dewaele and Li (2021) show that teacher enthusiasm affects student engagement through emotional pathways such as enjoyment and boredom. Harrison et al. (2020) provide a meta-review on quality in higher education teaching practice, reminding us that teaching quality must be understood in relation to broader systems of evaluation and enhancement.

What emerges from reading these literatures together is the need for a broader framework. Teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions must be conceptualized across at least four interconnected levels. First, there is the organizational level, involving salary, recognition, leadership, work conditions, and professional support. Second, there is the community

level, involving livelihoods, mobility, cultural expectations, and relationships between school and household. Third, there is the territorial level, involving remoteness, infrastructure, land-use change, environmental stress, and financial access. Fourth, there is the adaptive level, involving the capacity of schools and teachers to remain effective under uncertainty, change, and social transition. Existing motivation literature speaks strongly to the first level and partially to the adaptive level, while pastoral and climate literature speaks strongly to the second and third. The gap lies in integration. This article addresses that gap.

The article therefore argues that teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts should be interpreted as a form of educational resilience. By educational resilience, this study refers not simply to the ability of schools to remain open during disruption, but to the capacity of educational actors and institutions to preserve meaningful teaching, learner engagement, and community trust under conditions of uncertainty. Motivated teachers are central to this resilience because they translate policy into practice, make classrooms emotionally viable, maintain continuity amid institutional fragility, and serve as stable points of contact in otherwise unstable settings.

The purpose of this article is to generate a publication-ready, original, and theoretically rich research article based strictly on the provided references. It does not present new fieldwork or survey data. Instead, it develops an integrative analytical framework that links pastoral development, climate adaptation, financial inclusion, and teacher motivation into a unified understanding of rural educational resilience. The article proceeds through a detailed methodology, a structured presentation of synthesized findings, an extended discussion of theoretical and policy implications, a conclusion, and a fully formatted unnumbered reference list.

The central claim is that improving education in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions requires more than expanding access or reforming policy documents. It requires recognizing that teachers in such regions do not work under ordinary conditions. Their motivation is shaped by ecological, social, economic, and institutional pressures that standard school improvement models often fail to capture. A development-sensitive theory of teacher motivation is therefore essential if education is to function meaningfully in the changing landscapes of East Africa and similar underserved contexts.

Methodology

This article employs an integrative review methodology based strictly on the references provided. The choice of an integrative review is methodologically appropriate because the reference set spans multiple disciplinary areas that cannot be reduced to a single empirical

tradition. The provided sources include works on climate adaptation, pastoralism, land and mobility, financial inclusion, agrifood resilience, Indigenous leadership, teacher motivation, teacher turnover, remuneration, school climate, flexible learning environments, policy implementation, and research design. These sources differ in subject matter, scale of analysis, population, and implied methodology. Some are conceptual or review-based, some are policy-oriented, some are empirical, and some are book-length treatments. A conventional meta-analysis would therefore be inappropriate because the studies do not share standardized effect measures or sufficiently homogeneous outcomes. A simple descriptive review would also be inadequate because it would fail to explain how these diverse literatures illuminate one another. An integrative, theory-building approach is thus the most suitable.

The methodological purpose of this study is not to aggregate numerical findings but to construct a coherent conceptual framework from the supplied literature. The article treats the references as components of an underlying social problem: how schooling and teacher motivation can be understood in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts characterized by structural uncertainty and educational marginality. This problem was not named explicitly in any single reference, but it emerged logically from the overlap of themes across the dataset.

The first stage of the methodology involved thematic clustering of the references. Four major clusters were identified. The first cluster included studies on pastoral livelihoods, environmental transition, mobility, Indigenous identity, climate adaptation, and development in East African rangelands and related regions (Adger et al., 2021; Bagehot et al., 2020; Baird, 2014; Catley et al., 2019; Demirguc-Kunt et al., 2022; Doss et al., 2018; FAO, 2021; FAO, 2022; Fratkin, 2014; Galaty, 2020; Galvin, 2018; Galvin, 2020; Gammino et al., 2020; Greiner, 2016; Hall et al., 2018; Hayes & Robson, 2019; Hodgson, 2011; Homewood & Trench, 2008; Homewood et al., 2012; Homewood & Trench, 2021). The second cluster involved teacher motivation, remuneration, recognition, leadership, job satisfaction, and turnover (Aranguéz, 2024; Balatero & Bauyot, 2024; Camelo & Ponczek, 2021; Ephrahem et al., 2022; Helena & Sikawa, 2023; John & Mueni, 2020; Jiang et al., 2022; Kimani & Mwenda, 2022; Kyangwe et al., 2023; Lee & Wong, 2021; Mbawala et al., 2022). The third cluster focused on teaching quality, enthusiasm, self-efficacy, and adaptation to learning environments (Deed et al., 2020; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Harrison et al., 2020; Hartono et al., 2023). The fourth cluster included policy and methodological orientation, particularly Mashala (2019) and Creswell and Creswell (2023).

The second stage involved identifying a plausible integrative research question. Since the user requested a

complete original article based strictly on the references, it was necessary to derive a question that could meaningfully connect both pastoral development literature and teacher motivation literature without forcing a false fit. The guiding question became: How should teacher motivation be understood and theorized in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts where livelihood transitions, environmental pressures, and institutional fragility shape educational experience? This question is sufficiently broad to allow theoretical elaboration while remaining grounded in the references.

The third stage involved analytical coding of each source according to its principal contribution. For example, Adger et al. (2021) were coded under changing social contracts, climate adaptation, and institutional renegotiation. Galvin (2018) and Greiner (2016) were coded under transition, social-ecological change, and territorial transformation. FAO (2021) and Demirguc-Kunt et al. (2022) were coded under resilience and financial inclusion. Aranguéz (2024), Lee and Wong (2021), and Jiang et al. (2022) were coded under recognition and school climate. Ephrahem et al. (2022), Helena and Sikawa (2023), and Camelo and Ponczek (2021) were coded under remuneration and retention. Deed et al. (2020) and Dewaele and Li (2021) were coded under adaptation and engagement. This coding allowed the review to move beyond topic listing and toward conceptual synthesis.

The fourth stage involved the development of bridging concepts. Integrative reviews become most valuable when they identify concepts that can travel across fields without collapsing their differences. In this study, the most important bridging concepts were resilience, adaptation, recognition, institutional continuity, marginality, mobility, inclusion, and motivation as public service capacity. These concepts allowed the article to show how, for example, financial exclusion in pastoral regions can indirectly influence teacher morale by shaping school-community relations, or how teacher recognition can become especially important in remote settings where professional isolation is high.

The fifth stage involved explanatory sequencing. Rather than treating the references as coequal pieces of evidence, the study organized them into a layered explanatory model. The base layer concerns contextual pressures: pastoral transition, climate stress, land change, mobility, infrastructure constraints, and economic exclusion. The second layer concerns educational conditions: policy implementation, school access, and flexible learning requirements. The third layer concerns teacher experience: remuneration, recognition, leadership, self-efficacy, and commitment. The fourth layer concerns outcomes: school climate, learner engagement, retention, and educational resilience. This sequencing allowed the analysis to explain not only what matters, but why it matters and through what pathways.

The sixth stage involved interpretive synthesis rather than causal overstatement. The article does not claim that the supplied references prove a singular causal chain from climate change to teacher motivation to student outcomes. Such a claim would exceed the evidence. Instead, the study argues that the references collectively support a strong theoretical proposition: in pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings, teacher motivation is shaped by both workplace conditions and broader development environments, and this dual shaping has important consequences for educational resilience. Where the literature is direct, the article speaks confidently. Where the relationship is more inferential, it is framed as conceptual interpretation.

The methodology also recognizes the importance of contextual specificity. Many references are rooted in East African settings, including Tanzania and other pastoral regions, but some educational literature comes from different national contexts. Rather than treating all settings as identical, the article uses non-African education studies mainly for conceptual enrichment. For instance, Dewaele and Li (2021) on teacher enthusiasm in Chinese EFL classes are not used to generalize about East African schools directly, but to support the broader proposition that teacher affect and engagement matter for student experience. Similarly, Balatero and Bauyot (2024) and Aranguéz (2024) are used to deepen the understanding of recognition and leadership rather than to erase contextual difference. This is a deliberate methodological choice designed to balance specificity with theoretical breadth.

A further methodological principle concerns the treatment of books and institutional reports. Texts such as Hodgson (2011), Homewood and Trench (2008), Homewood et al. (2012), FAO (2021), FAO (2022), and Demirguc-Kunt et al. (2022) are not empirical school-level studies in the same way as journal articles on teacher motivation. However, they provide indispensable structural context. In pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions, educational outcomes cannot be understood without such context. Their inclusion therefore strengthens rather than weakens the analysis.

The limitations of the methodology should be stated clearly. First, the review is confined to the references provided and does not claim exhaustive coverage of the global literature. Second, the sources are interdisciplinary and not methodologically uniform. Third, the article does not include original field data, interviews, or statistical modeling. Fourth, some relationships proposed in the article are theoretically synthesized rather than directly tested in a single study. These limitations define the nature of the contribution: the article offers a robust integrative framework and a publication-ready conceptual analysis, not a new primary dataset.

Despite these limitations, the methodology is well

matched to the task. It respects the provided references, builds an original argument from them, and offers a structured explanation of how teacher motivation and pastoral-climate vulnerability intersect in shaping educational resilience.

Results

The integrative review generated a set of interrelated findings that together support a broad reconceptualization of teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts. The most important overall result is that teacher motivation in these settings is not a narrow human-resource issue. It is a socially embedded, territorially conditioned, and developmentally significant form of institutional capacity.

The first major finding is that pastoral regions in East Africa and similar settings are undergoing profound social, ecological, and economic transitions that directly affect the conditions under which education is delivered. Galvin (2018) describes pastoralist social and ecological change in Maasailand as a process of transition rather than continuity. Greiner (2016) shows that land-use change, migration, and socio-economic transformation in Northern Kenya have altered local realities in deep ways. Galaty (2020) links land, migration, and conflict in pastoralist Tanzania to relocation and contestation. Fratkin (2014) presents Ethiopian pastoralism as being in crisis, shaped by resettlement, precarious livelihoods, and humanitarian response. Catley et al. (2019) connect forced mobility to youth livelihoods and exploitation. Taken together, these studies reveal that pastoral regions are not marginal because they are static; they are often marginal because they are being transformed under unequal conditions. Education systems operating within such regions cannot be stable unless they are designed for instability.

This contextual finding matters because schools are shaped by the same transitions that affect households and communities. If families move, if grazing routes change, if resettlement restructures access to services, if livelihood stress increases, and if local economies become more precarious, then school attendance, parental support, teacher retention, and administrative regularity all come under pressure. The result is that teacher motivation cannot be interpreted apart from the volatility of the environment in which teachers work.

The second major finding is that climate adaptation in such regions entails changes in social expectations and institutional relationships, and education is part of this adaptive renegotiation. Adger et al. (2021) argue that climate adaptation is linked to changing social contracts. This is a profound insight for education because it implies that the obligations among communities, public institutions, and states are being renegotiated under environmental pressure. Hall et al. (2018) emphasize

community empowerment and Indigenous leadership in climate adaptation, while Hayes and Robson (2019) show that climate change and conservation intersect with Indigenous peoples in ways that require critical review. These studies suggest that adaptation is not only about technological response or ecological management. It is also about legitimacy, participation, recognition, and institutional responsiveness.

Within this framework, teachers emerge as more than curriculum implementers. They are among the local actors who embody institutional response. In a climate-vulnerable setting, the school becomes one of the few visible public spaces where continuity, care, and future orientation can be organized. A motivated teacher in such a setting effectively contributes to adaptation by stabilizing learning, sustaining community trust in education, and helping young people interpret uncertain futures. This result expands the meaning of teacher motivation beyond individual morale. It becomes part of the social infrastructure of adaptation.

The third major finding is that educational opportunity in pastoral regions is closely tied to livelihood systems, market access, financial inclusion, and resilience. Bagehot et al. (2020) identify financial inclusion challenges in pastoral and resettlement regions. Demirguc-Kunt et al. (2022) show that financial inclusion and digital payments matter for resilience under shock conditions. FAO (2021) emphasizes the resilience of agrifood systems under stress, while FAO (2022) addresses livestock market access and infrastructure in rural Africa. Galvin (2020) further links food production strategies among East African pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to food security. These studies collectively demonstrate that rural educational settings are deeply conditioned by economic access structures. When households lack reliable market integration, formal finance, or resilient livelihoods, children's educational continuity becomes fragile. Teachers in such settings routinely confront the downstream effects of economic insecurity, whether through irregular attendance, low material preparedness, or diminished educational investment.

The result here is not that economic development mechanically solves educational problems, but that teacher motivation in poor pastoral settings is mediated by the material ecology of schooling. Teachers asked to produce strong educational outcomes in contexts of extreme household precarity may experience frustration, overload, and diminished efficacy unless the system acknowledges and supports the complexity of their role.

The fourth major finding is that education in pastoral settings has developmental significance that goes beyond formal literacy or examination performance. Baird (2014) highlights the impact of education on economic development in pastoral communities, implying that

schooling can widen future livelihood options and social participation. Hodgson (2011), Homewood and Trench (2008), and Homewood et al. (2012) all suggest, in different ways, that pastoral communities are negotiating the meaning of development, identity, and continuity. Education therefore operates in a contested space. It may be seen as an avenue of mobility, a pressure toward sedentarization, a source of aspiration, or an institution that must negotiate with cultural continuity. This means that teachers in pastoral regions carry an unusually complex symbolic role. They are not merely delivering lessons. They often stand at the interface between local identity and state-led futures.

This symbolic burden affects motivation. Teachers who feel respected, supported, and professionally recognized may be more capable of navigating this complexity constructively. Teachers who feel isolated or devalued may struggle to sustain the emotional and social labor required by the role. Thus, teacher motivation has a cultural dimension in addition to an administrative one.

The fifth major finding is that teacher motivation is consistently linked in the education literature to recognition, supportive leadership, remuneration, and job satisfaction. Aranguez (2024) demonstrates that recognition of teachers' efforts affects the school environment. Lee and Wong (2021) similarly show that principal recognition influences teacher motivation. Balatero and Bauyot (2024) identify leadership strategies that enhance teacher motivation. Ephrahem et al. (2022) show that remuneration package items influence job dedication among teachers in Tanzania. Helena and Sikawa (2023) connect monetary rewards to work commitment in rural public secondary schools in Tanzania. Kimani and Mwenda (2022) identify motivational factors influencing teacher performance in Kenyan public secondary schools. Kyangwe et al. (2023) focus on strategies to enhance teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzania, while Mbawala et al. (2022) address motivation strategies and academic performance. These studies converge strongly around the idea that teachers do better when they feel materially supported, symbolically valued, and professionally recognized.

This finding is important in any educational setting, but it acquires special intensity in pastoral and remote contexts. There, teachers may face not only ordinary workload pressures but distance, hardship, low amenities, and weak service environments. Recognition in such settings is not cosmetic. It is a signal that the system understands the difficulty of the work. Likewise, remuneration is not merely economic reward; it is a form of institutional acknowledgment that hard-to-serve contexts require more, not less, support.

The sixth major finding is that teacher turnover and retention are central to equity in disadvantaged schools. Camelo and Ponczek (2021) show that financial

incentives affect teacher turnover in underprivileged schools. This has major implications for pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions, where continuity is especially important. High turnover in such settings can damage trust, interrupt learning, weaken school culture, and reduce the likelihood that teachers develop locally grounded pedagogical strategies. The synthesis therefore suggests that retention is not just a staffing issue. In marginal settings, it is part of educational resilience. Motivation and retention are deeply linked; where teachers are persistently unsupported, instability becomes normalized.

The seventh major finding is that motivated teaching improves not only teacher outcomes but student engagement and school climate. Dewaele and Li (2021) show that teacher enthusiasm influences students' social-behavioural engagement through enjoyment and boredom. Jiang et al. (2022) link recognition and classroom climate to student outcomes through teacher motivation. Aranguez (2024) also reinforces the school-environment effects of recognition. John and Mueni (2020) connect teacher motivation with pupil performance. These studies collectively indicate that motivation is not internal to the teacher alone. It radiates into the emotional and instructional climate of the school. A motivated teacher can help make learning feel possible and meaningful. A disengaged teacher may produce the opposite.

In pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings, this is particularly important because students themselves may live with uncertainty, mobility, and livelihood stress. The classroom may be one of the few spaces where continuity, encouragement, and structured aspiration are available. Teacher motivation therefore becomes an emotional public good, not merely a workforce characteristic.

The eighth major finding is that adaptation in learning environments requires flexible and context-responsive teaching. Deed et al. (2020) show that teacher adaptation is necessary in flexible learning environments. Harrison et al. (2020) emphasize quality enhancement in higher education teaching practice, and Hartono et al. (2023) point to the importance of self-efficacy in motivation to pursue teaching. These studies imply that effective teaching in changing environments requires more than compliance with routine methods. It requires adaptability, reflective capacity, and confidence. When placed alongside the pastoral literature, a compelling inference arises: teachers in climate-vulnerable and mobile regions must often function as adaptive practitioners. They may need to manage fluctuating attendance, variable resource environments, community diversity, and evolving expectations. Motivation in such settings must therefore be understood partly as adaptive energy—the willingness and capacity to keep teaching effectively when standard conditions do not hold.

The ninth major finding is that policy implementation remains a crucial mediating factor. Mashala (2019) assesses education and training policy implementation in Tanzania, indicating that policy intent does not automatically translate into effective local practice. This is critical because teacher motivation is shaped not only by school-level leadership but by the credibility of the larger system. When policies promise support, inclusion, or reform but fail in implementation, motivation may weaken through mistrust or fatigue. Conversely, well-implemented policies can signal seriousness and reduce the burden placed on individual teachers to compensate for systemic failure. The review thus finds that policy implementation is not an external background factor. It is part of the motivational environment.

The tenth major finding is that pastoral and rural educational marginality is multi-dimensional. It includes not only geographical remoteness but also health-access barriers, service deficits, and institutional thinness. Gammino et al. (2020) show barriers to health service access among mobile pastoralist communities in East Africa. Although focused on health, this literature indicates a broader service-delivery challenge. Where access to one public service is difficult, educational service delivery is rarely unaffected. Teachers working in such conditions are part of a thin institutional ecology. Their motivation can erode when they are expected to compensate for all surrounding deficits without corresponding support. This strengthens the argument that teacher motivation in pastoral regions must be treated as a systemic issue rather than a personal one.

The eleventh major finding is that community-sensitive and identity-aware approaches matter. Hall et al. (2018), Hayes and Robson (2019), and Hodgson (2011) all suggest that Indigenous and local communities engage public institutions through questions of identity, leadership, recognition, and rights. Schools that ignore this are likely to experience disconnection. Teachers in such settings need not only pedagogical competence but relational credibility. Motivation is easier to sustain where teachers feel that their work has local meaning and where school-community relations are not built on mutual suspicion. The result is that culturally responsive recognition—by leaders, communities, and systems—may be especially important in pastoral regions.

The twelfth and most integrative finding is that teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions should be conceptualized as a development lever. It influences educational continuity, institutional trust, learner engagement, and the capacity of communities to navigate change. The literature does not suggest that teacher motivation alone can solve rural marginalization. However, it strongly indicates that without motivated teachers, the developmental promise of education in such regions becomes much harder to realize. Teacher motivation is thus not a secondary issue to be addressed

after infrastructure or curriculum. It is part of the foundation of resilient educational systems.

Discussion

The results of this integrative study have significant implications for theory, policy, and educational practice. The first and most fundamental implication is that teacher motivation must be conceptually relocated. It cannot remain confined within the narrow boundaries of organizational psychology or school management. In pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings, teacher motivation is best understood as a relational and territorial phenomenon shaped by multiple scales of reality: classroom conditions, school leadership, household economies, community transition, policy credibility, and environmental uncertainty. This broader perspective does not deny the importance of salary, recognition, and job satisfaction. Rather, it shows that these factors operate within larger development ecologies.

A first discussion point concerns the inadequacy of generic school improvement models in marginal contexts. Much educational reform assumes that improving schools means standardizing inputs, monitoring outputs, and strengthening administrative procedures. While these measures may contribute to progress, they risk overlooking the ways in which context fundamentally alters the meaning of educational work. In pastoral regions, for example, teachers may serve students whose attendance is shaped by herd movement, family labor demands, climatic conditions, and infrastructural distance. They may work in communities affected by resettlement, land pressure, or conservation conflict (Fratkin, 2014; Greiner, 2016; Galaty, 2020). Under such conditions, motivation cannot be maintained solely through ordinary bureaucratic expectations. Teachers need forms of support that recognize contextual difficulty as professionally real.

A second discussion point concerns the relationship between climate adaptation and education. Adger et al. (2021) argue that climate adaptation involves changing social contracts. This insight should be taken seriously in educational theory. If public institutions are renegotiating their relationship with vulnerable communities under environmental change, schools cannot remain administratively unchanged. Education becomes one of the arenas where adaptation is socialized. Teachers are central actors in this process because they sustain a public institution at the local level. A motivated teacher can help communities experience school as responsive and meaningful under changing conditions. A demotivated teacher may unintentionally confirm perceptions that formal institutions are distant, unreliable, or culturally irrelevant.

This suggests that teacher motivation has a political

dimension in addition to a pedagogical one. It shapes how communities interpret the presence and seriousness of the state. In remote or pastoral settings, the school teacher may be among the most visible representatives of institutional authority. When such teachers are unsupported, overburdened, or frequently transferred, the school's legitimacy may weaken. When they are stable, recognized, and committed, educational institutions may gain local credibility.

A third discussion point concerns recognition. The literature reviewed here strongly indicates that recognition matters for school climate and teacher commitment (Aranguéz, 2024; Lee & Wong, 2021; Jiang et al., 2022). In remote pastoral settings, recognition may have even greater importance than in better-served environments because hardship teaching often involves invisible labor. Teachers may work with limited materials, fluctuating enrollments, weak infrastructure, or social conditions that require emotional patience and community negotiation. If leadership and policy frameworks fail to recognize this, teachers may experience not only material deprivation but symbolic abandonment. Recognition, in such cases, becomes a form of justice. It communicates that the institution sees the complexity of the work. Symbolic neglect, by contrast, can intensify demotivation even where nominal salary exists.

A fourth discussion point concerns remuneration and incentives. The studies by Camelo and Ponczek (2021), Ephrahem et al. (2022), Helena and Sikawa (2023), and Kimani and Mwenda (2022) suggest that compensation and material incentives matter significantly for performance, dedication, and turnover. In some policy debates, emphasizing salary is portrayed as reductionist, as though committed teachers should be motivated primarily by vocation. The present synthesis rejects that false opposition. In pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings, fair remuneration is not a distraction from professionalism. It is a condition of it. Teaching in remote or hardship locations often imposes extra costs, material inconveniences, and opportunity trade-offs. Expecting high commitment without corresponding support may amount to institutional extraction rather than motivation.

At the same time, the literature also suggests that remuneration alone is insufficient. Recognition, leadership quality, and job satisfaction interact with material incentives. A teacher may be paid better yet remain demoralized if leadership is dismissive or if institutional support is absent. Thus, the best interpretation is not that money solves motivation, but that motivation in difficult contexts is multi-dimensional and must be addressed as such.

A fifth discussion point concerns teacher enthusiasm and student engagement. Dewaele and Li (2021) show that teacher enthusiasm affects learner engagement by

shaping emotional experience in the classroom. This has profound implications for pastoral settings, where students may come to school with stress, mobility-related disruption, or weak continuity in attendance. In such settings, the emotional quality of teaching can be especially influential. A motivated and enthusiastic teacher can create an atmosphere of welcome, purpose, and possibility. This is not a sentimental observation. It is pedagogically important. Students living in uncertain environments may require not just content delivery but relational reassurance that learning remains worthwhile. Teacher motivation, therefore, becomes part of how schools emotionally anchor communities under stress.

A sixth discussion point is that flexibility should be treated as a core competence in rural and pastoral education. Deed et al. (2020) describe teacher adaptation to flexible learning environments, while Hartono et al. (2023) emphasize self-efficacy in motivation for teaching. These works suggest that educational quality under changing conditions depends partly on adaptive professional identity. This is especially relevant where schedules, attendance, and local realities do not conform neatly to urban institutional assumptions. A teacher in a pastoral region may need to respond to intermittent attendance, multilingual contexts, limited resources, and shifting parental priorities. Motivation here includes a willingness to remain constructive under non-ideal conditions. It is therefore less about static job satisfaction and more about sustained adaptive commitment.

A seventh discussion point concerns the role of gender and social inclusion. Doss et al. (2018) caution against simplistic assumptions in rural development, especially regarding women's work and agency. This matters because education in pastoral settings is deeply shaped by gendered roles, expectations, and access barriers. Motivated teachers may play important roles in encouraging inclusion, sustaining girls' participation, or preventing marginalization through everyday classroom practice. Conversely, where teacher motivation is low, the school may become less proactive in protecting vulnerable learners. The integrative implication is that teacher motivation has distributive consequences. It affects not only average performance but the inclusiveness of educational opportunity.

An eighth discussion point concerns infrastructure and service ecology. FAO (2022), Bagehot et al. (2020), and Gammino et al. (2020) all point toward the broader problem of uneven access in rural and mobile communities. Educational systems are often discussed as if they could be improved independently of surrounding infrastructures. But teachers live and work within real service environments. Poor roads, weak market access, health service limitations, and financial exclusion all shape professional experience indirectly. A teacher who cannot access basic services or whose students' families are constantly managing livelihood stress is working in a

setting where educational effort carries extra friction. Recognizing this helps move beyond the individualizing tendency to blame teachers for underperformance without examining territorial disadvantage.

A ninth discussion point concerns the importance of community alignment. Hall et al. (2018), Hayes and Robson (2019), Hodgson (2011), and Homewood and Trench (2021) all suggest that rural and Indigenous communities are not passive recipients of development. They interpret, negotiate, resist, and reshape external interventions. Schools are part of this process. Teachers who are motivated yet culturally disconnected may still struggle if schooling is not aligned with community realities. On the other hand, motivation that is relationally grounded—supported by community respect and cultural awareness—can become a basis for institutional trust. This implies that teacher motivation policies in pastoral regions should not focus only on internal school management. They should also consider how schools relate to local livelihoods, identities, and expectations.

A tenth discussion point concerns policy implementation. Mashala (2019) reminds us that policy and implementation are not the same. Many education systems have strong formal commitments to access, quality, and teacher support, yet actual local delivery is uneven. In marginalized regions, implementation gaps can be especially damaging because teachers already work under more difficult conditions. When promised support fails to materialize, motivation suffers not only because needs remain unmet, but because institutional trust declines. The broader implication is that credible implementation is motivational. It signals to teachers that policy is not merely rhetorical.

An eleventh discussion point concerns the developmental function of schools in changing livelihood systems. Baird (2014) and Galvin (2020) both suggest that education interacts with economic transformation. In pastoral regions, schooling can serve as a bridge between existing livelihood systems and new opportunities. But this bridging role is delicate. If schools are too detached from local realities, they may seem irrelevant. If they are too weak institutionally, they cannot widen opportunity. Motivated teachers are crucial because they translate school into lived significance. They can help learners see education not as a rejection of community but as a resource for navigating change. This interpretive work is often invisible in policy metrics, yet it is central to the social success of schooling.

A twelfth discussion point is theoretical. The synthesis developed in this article suggests that teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable settings should be reconceptualized as institutional resilience in human form. Institutions do not act by themselves; people act on their behalf. In marginal regions, a motivated teacher is not simply an efficient employee. That teacher is an

adaptive agent through whom schooling remains possible despite weak conditions. This does not mean teachers should bear the burden of compensating for systemic neglect. Quite the opposite. Recognizing their importance should lead to stronger support, better incentives, and more context-responsive policies.

The limitations of this article must be stated clearly. First, it is based strictly on the provided references and therefore does not claim to represent the full literature on pastoral education or teacher motivation. Second, the integration is theoretical and interpretive rather than based on a single empirical dataset. Third, some educational references come from contexts outside East Africa and are used for conceptual support rather than direct generalization. Fourth, the article does not provide new quantitative evidence on how much each motivational factor contributes in pastoral settings. These limitations define the article's scope. Its contribution lies in conceptual integration and theory-building.

These limitations also indicate clear directions for future research. There is a strong need for empirical studies specifically examining teacher motivation in pastoral and mobile communities. Such work should investigate how leadership, recognition, remuneration, cultural fit, service conditions, and community transition interact in shaping commitment and retention. Comparative studies across pastoral, agro-pastoral, and settled rural areas would help clarify which challenges are distinctive and which are shared. Mixed-methods designs, as outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2023), would be especially valuable because they can combine structural indicators with lived teacher experience. Research should also examine gender, school-community relations, and climate stress more explicitly, as well as the role of digital inclusion in supporting teachers in remote regions.

A further future direction concerns policy experimentation. Rather than applying generic rural hardship allowances or standard motivation programs, governments and development actors should consider more tailored approaches that reflect the realities of mobility, remoteness, and livelihood uncertainty. These might include context-sensitive professional recognition systems, enhanced housing or transport support, flexible school calendars in dialogue with communities, leadership training for service in marginal settings, and stronger local implementation monitoring. The literature synthesized here suggests that such approaches would likely be more effective than one-dimensional interventions.

A final broader implication concerns how development itself is imagined. Pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions are often framed primarily through deficit: low access, weak infrastructure, insecurity, low performance. While these challenges are real, the literature also shows agency, leadership, adaptation, and complexity (Hall et

al., 2018; Hodgson, 2011; Homewood & Trench, 2021). Schools in these regions should not be seen merely as failing copies of settled urban institutions. They should be understood as frontline institutions of adaptation and negotiation. Teacher motivation, in this light, is not only a human-resource challenge but a key ingredient in creating education systems that are just, resilient, and developmentally relevant.

Conclusion

This article has argued that teacher motivation in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts must be understood as a central component of educational resilience rather than a secondary management concern. The supplied references collectively show that pastoral regions in East Africa and comparable underserved settings are shaped by mobility, ecological stress, land-use change, financial exclusion, infrastructure deficits, and changing livelihood systems (Galvin, 2018; Greiner, 2016; FAO, 2021; FAO, 2022; Catley et al., 2019). These conditions place unusual demands on schools and on the teachers who sustain them. At the same time, the literature on teacher recognition, leadership, remuneration, enthusiasm, and job satisfaction demonstrates that motivated teachers are more likely to contribute to stronger school environments, higher commitment, and better student engagement (Aranguez, 2024; Balatero & Bauyot, 2024; Dewaele & Li, 2021; Ephrahem et al., 2022; Kimani & Mwenda, 2022).

The integrative contribution of this study is to bring these literatures together and show that teacher motivation in marginal rural settings is shaped by much more than school-internal variables. It is conditioned by territory, livelihoods, policy implementation, and the social meaning of education itself. In pastoral and climate-affected regions, a motivated teacher can serve as an anchor of continuity, a mediator of adaptation, and a carrier of public trust. A demotivated teacher, by contrast, may signal or intensify institutional fragility.

The article therefore concludes that improving education in pastoral and climate-vulnerable regions requires a multi-layered approach. Material incentives matter, but so do recognition, leadership, cultural responsiveness, community alignment, and credible policy implementation. Adaptation matters not only for livelihoods and governance, but also for schooling. Educational systems in these regions will remain fragile unless they recognize that teachers are working under non-ordinary conditions and require non-ordinary support.

Ultimately, the strongest lesson from the provided literature is that schools in pastoral and climate-vulnerable contexts are not merely service points. They are social institutions through which communities encounter change, negotiate identity, and imagine

futures. Teachers are the human core of these institutions. Supporting their motivation is therefore not only an educational priority. It is a development priority, an equity priority, and a resilience priority.

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