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Moosa, M.

2020

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/32806

Moosa, M. (2020). Why teaching? Perspectives from first-year South African pre-service teachers. Perspectives in Education, 38(1), 130-143.

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DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38i1.10

e-ISSN 2519-593X

Perspectives in Education

2020 38(1): 130-143

PUBLISHED:
11 June 2020

WHY TEACHING? PERSPECTIVES FROM FIRST-YEAR SOUTH AFRICAN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

ABSTRACT

South African initial teacher education institutes are currently experiencing an annual increase in admissions of first-year students. In addition, the increasing attrition rate of newly qualified teachers is of concern globally. This begs the question of why students are opting for teaching as a profession. This study focuses on reasons why first-year students have opted to study teaching at a South African university. The theoretical lens used is linked to the expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Five hundred and eighty first year students participated in a mixed methods research study. Data were analysed by using theories of career motivation categories, namely: altruistic, extrinsic, and intrinsic reasons. Trustworthiness was ensured by a side-by-side comparison which collated quantitative and qualitative data. All ethical principles were adhered to. The findings indicate that more than half (60%) of the participants were motivated to pursue teaching for altruistic reasons, followed by almost a quarter (23%) choosing teaching for extrinsic reasons, and 17% opting to become teachers for intrinsic reasons. This paper argues that it would be prudent for initial teacher education institutes to understand students' rationales for selecting teaching to support them to complete their qualification and remain in the profession.

Keywords: *Pre-service teachers, teaching, initial teacher education, career motivation, expectations*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a profession that has a long and interesting history, from being a preferred career with high social status (Wolhuter, Van der Walt, Potgieter, Meyer & Mamiala, 2012) to being regarded as a career selected by young people, based on the extent that teaching is judged to be useful (Watt & Richardson, 2007). In the past 15 years there has been a revived interest in studying teaching with an increase in students enrolling in initial teacher education programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (OECD, 2019; Van Broekhuizen, 2015). From 2004 to 2013, first-time enrolments and graduations in initial teacher education programmes in South Africa have doubled with graduations growing by 49% in total (Van Broekhuizen, 2015). Reasons for these increases include funding in the form of bursaries

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such as the Funza Lushaka[1] bursary and motivation to acquire a teaching qualification because it is a degreed profession. Despite this growth, South Africa is still faced with a challenge of not graduating enough teachers to meet the increasing demand. In addition, large numbers of teachers, according to newspaper articles, have resigned from the profession, with an estimated 30 000 resignations between 2011 and 2015 (Malingo, 2016). The majority of teachers who resign or opt for early retirement are motivated to do so because of the "increased workload, low teacher salaries, lack of security and safety, indebtedness of teachers and lack of incentives which demoralise teachers" (Mafukata & Mudau, 2016: 2243). But surprisingly, there is no shortage of aspirant teachers as teaching was the first choice of career for 49% of teachers in South Africa (Dison, Shalem & Langsford, 2019; OECD, 2019). This paper heeds the call by Wolhuter *et al.* (2012: 188), that more research is needed on what exactly "inspires, motivates or drives student teachers to involve themselves in teacher education programmes and to persist with their studies". By arguing, that understanding South African pre-service teachers' reasons for becoming teachers will enable initial teacher education programmes to better prepare students for the realities of practice.

There is a growing body of research on why people opt to pursue teaching as a career, with studies being done in Malaysia (Azman, 2013), Ireland (Heinz, 2013), Brunei (Yong, 1995), Slovinia (Javornik Krečič & Ivanuš Grmek, 2005), Hong Kong (Wong, Tang & Cheng, 2014), Turkey (Akar, 2012), the Netherlands (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014) and Australia (Manuel & Hughes, 2006). What is evident from international research is that pre-service teachers choose to become teachers for intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic reasons. However, there is limited information within a South African context about what motivates students to become teachers. What is known is that sources of inspiration for becoming a teacher are "(extended) family, religion, the teacher education institution, teaching practice, friends, and personal life" (Wolhuter, *et al.,* 2012) factors.

This paper argues that understanding students' motives for choosing teaching as a career is an important educational inquiry that will have implications for the retention of teachers in the profession. There is a relationship between pre-service teachers' commitment, their entry to teaching and their retention in the teaching profession (Rots, Aelterman & Vlerick, 2010). Furthermore, the reason why students decide to study teaching is of value to initial teacher education institutes in that it would allow for institutes to reconsider their recruitment strategies and programmes offered. This information will enable teacher educators to be more mindful of how to prepare students adequately for the classroom context by being cognisant and considering their reasons for selecting teaching. This paper reports on the 2016 cohort of first-year students' reasons for studying teaching at a university in South Africa. This paper intends to add to the limited current body of knowledge within a South African context as well as internationally on why first-year students have opted to become teachers.

First, I situate the work within the wider body of research on what motivates pre-service teachers to become teachers. I then refer to theories of career motivation. This is followed by a discussion of the expectancy-value theory which is the theoretical framework used in this paper. Next, I describe the research context and process, outline the findings and conclude with a discussion of the findings. I now turn to a brief review of selected literature on theories of career motivation.

1 The Department of Education in South Africa has a bursary programme for pre-service teachers that require funding. The aim of this bursary is to financially assist disadvantaged pre-service teachers who intend on studying in the Education sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Pre-service teachers often have unrealistic optimism about their ability (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) to teach. This is combined with them having various reasons for being drawn to teaching, which is aligned to their own ideals, values, and perceptions (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006) as well as personal characteristics, desires, and motivations (Deacon, 2012). It can be argued that the motives for pre-service teachers' reasons for choosing to become teachers are often based on their observational learning experiences (Lortie, 1975; Pugach, 2006) which could lead to fixed conceptions, perceptions and beliefs about teaching (Mahlios & Maxson, 1995; McDiarmid, 1990). These perceptions include the view that teachers enhance knowledge (Mtika & Gates, 2011), that teachers play a crucial role in developing society and helping students succeed (Wafaa, 2011), the desire to work with children and adolescents and the perception that teaching is a good fall-back career (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014), the salary (Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2014) and that there is a need for teachers (Akarsu & Kariper, 2015).

Experiences of previous teachers and family have been frequently nominated as having an influence on students' decision to become teachers (Book & Freeman, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Nieto, 2004; Pugach, 2006). Inspiring, caring and respected teachers, and teachers who employed effective instructional strategies dominate pre-service teachers' depictions of good teachers (Ashby, Hobson, Tracey, Malderez, Tomlinson, Roper, Chambers & Healy, 2008) yet negative recollections of former teachers also play a role, if only as models to be avoided (Flores & Day, 2006).

2.1 Career motivating factors

There are three basic categories of motivation that have been identified for selecting a teaching career: intrinsic, altruistic, and extrinsic motives (Abbott, Dallat & McClune, 2001; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Moran, Kilpatrick, Abbott, Dallat, & McClune, 2001). Each of these categories will be discussed below starting with intrinsic motives.

Intrinsic motives

Intrinsic values have been rated as the highest motive for choosing teaching (Ashby, Hobson, Tracey, Malderez, Tomlinson, Roper, Chambers *&* Healy, 2008). These include the desire to make a social contribution and to work with children which is based on individuals having had positive prior teaching and learning experiences (Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein & Baumert, 2012). Intrinsic motives also include interest, personal experience and intellectual fulfilment (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Moran, Kilpatrick, Abbott, Dallat & McClune*,* 2001). Pre-service teachers who are motivated by intrinsic factors tend to be more committed to the teaching profession (Wang & Fwu, 2001) and the joy of teaching is regarded as a driving force (Roness, 2011). That is, those who are more motivated by intrinsic factors feel a sense of belonging and if these needs are being met by the profession they feel fulfilled by teaching. According to MacIntyre (1984), meaningful teaching is that which is pursued for its intrinsic rewards or internal goods that are worthwhile and good.

Altruistic motives

Pre-service teachers are also drawn to the teaching profession for altruistic reasons as they are concerned with the well-being of others. The altruistically-motivated teacher views teaching as a socially meaningful and important job and has a desire to be part of young people's growth and development (Roness, 2011; Sinclair, 2008). They are focused on wanting to contribute

to the growth of another individual (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Moran *et al.,* 2001). Altruistic motives would include being responsible for shaping the future of children, making a social contribution, and enhancing social equality within a school context (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Teachers are more likely to stay in the profession if their desires to bring about change in the lives of learners are met.

Extrinsic motives

The extrinsically motivated teacher focuses on the benefits of teaching, such as salary, lengthy holidays, status, vacations, or other external rewards connected to the job (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Moran *et al.,* 2001; Roness, 2011). The challenge with extrinsic career motives is that they may undermine a long-term commitment to teaching (Yong, 1995) when pre-service teachers realise the realities of the demands of the profession. As such, these teachers would be easily encouraged to exit the profession if these needs are not met. Next, I will be discussing the theoretical framework which is drawn on to better understand what motivates individuals to choose teaching as a career.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework that will guide this paper is the expectancy–value theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). This theory postulates that individuals are motivated by their personal values and the expectation that particular choices will fulfil those values. Values such as the need to make a difference in the lives of learners and a love for the teaching profession are often guiding factors for opting to become a teacher (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Moran *et al.,* 2001). Pre-service teachers' specific beliefs regarding their long- and short-term success as teachers are defined as their expectancies (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). These expectancies will shape pre-service teachers' choices for becoming teachers. Individuals' choices, their persistence, and their performances can be explained by their expectations of doing well in an activity and the extent to which they value that activity (Atkinson, 1957; Eccles, 2005; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Wigfield, 1994). In addition, individuals' self-efficacy expectations and outcome expectancies (Bandura, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) can also be viewed as contributing to the expectancy-value theory of motivation. Furthermore, teacher self-efficacy can be linked to the amount of time pre-service teachers intend to remain in the profession (Bruinsma & Jansen, 2010). There is thus a close relationship between the type of motivation and degree of commitment. Individuals' values and expectations are formed through past experiences and the stereotypes held (Eccles, Adler & Meece, 1984). As such, individuals' motives for becoming teachers can be linked to altruistic, intrinsic and extrinsic motives and expectations. This framework allows for a nuanced understanding, interpretation, and shared language of discussion of the factors that govern pre-service teachers' careers choice decision. It also allows the research to draw links between participants' personal values, expectation and levels of self-efficacy regarding their choice to become teachers. Furthermore, the framework would open up possible opportunities for discussion and interpretations of the findings based on motivating factors, observations, expectations, and a recognition of one's own abilities to execute the needed tasks of teaching. All these aspects will allow for an understanding of why participants have opted to become teachers. In the next section, I discuss the research methodology used to explore pre-service teachers' motives.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A convergent mixed-method design (Creswell, 2014) was used to collect data on why students have opted to study teaching. The use of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for greater breadth and depth in understanding first year students' choices (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). Furthermore, a mixed method design enhanced triangulation (Scott & Morrison, 2006) and provided a better understanding (Creswell, 2014) of why first year pre-service teachers have opted to become teachers. The use of a mixed-method design allowed for a more "complete understanding" (Creswell, 2014: 267) of first year students' choices. A mixed methods approach strengthened the reliability of data and the validity of the findings, by using the qualitative data to check the accuracy of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). By checking the quantitative data against the qualitative data created a better understanding between the variables (Scott & Morrison, 2006) as the data was merged and connected (Creswell, 2014) in order to create an understanding of why first year pre-service teachers have opted for teaching as a profession. The validity of the findings, therefore, was established by using the qualitative data to explain the findings of the quantitative data. Thus, the qualitative data was used to enhance and expand the findings of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2018: 206) and provide a more evidence-based argument. One of the challenges of using a mixed methods approach is that it is time consuming to analyse two different data sets. This was augmented by a deductive analysis approach. All ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent from all stakeholders as well as confidentiality and anonymity were upheld in this study.

Data were collected in two phases namely by means of close-ended questionnaires and narrative essays. The quantitative data consisted of a closed-ended multiple-choice questionnaire (see Appendix 1) and the qualitative data included narrative essays on why students opted to become teachers. First, participants were requested to complete the close ended multiple-choice questionnaire on why they had decided to enrol to study teaching. The questions were formulated using the categories indicated by Pugach (2006) because these categories encompass a wide range of positive and negative reasons for why pre-service teachers might have selected teaching as a career option. Thereafter, participants were requested to compose a narrative essay on why they decided to do teaching; this allowed them to naturally express their decision (Scott & Morrison, 2006). Data were analysed in two phases. First, the responses from the multiple-choice questionnaires were collated and tallied. Thereafter the responses from the narrative essays were analysed using a thematic analysis approach by identifying parts of data using category names, symbols or descriptive words (Saldana, 2015). Responses were categorised deductively using Pugach's (2006) factors that influence pre-service teachers in deciding to become teachers. Then responses from the quantitative and qualitative data were collated, by using a side-by-side comparison (Creswell, 2014) method to acquire a richer data set. Finally, Pugach's (2006) categories were used to group the findings and percentages were used in order to rank categories according to importance designated by participants. The findings from the questionnaires provided the statistical data and the narrative essays allowed participants to expand on their reasons and provide the direct participants quotes used in this paper. Thereafter the data was further categorised using the factors indicated in the theories of career motivation, namely: intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motives (see Table 1).

Table 1: Composite findings from questionnaires and narrative essays

Theories of career motivation categories with overall percentage value	Pugach's (2006) criteria for understanding pre-service teachers views about teaching	Participants' specific reasons for becoming a teacher	Percentage of responses from questionnaires	Percentage of responses from narrative essays	Combined overall percentage
Altruistic Reasons 60%[1]	Personal commitment	To make a difference in the lives of learners	31	22	27
	Personal commitment	The love for teaching as a profession	13	35	24
	Experiences as a student in school	Because of observing their teachers at school	13	5	9
Extrinsic Reasons 23%	Personal belief	Better employment opportunity because there is a shortage of teachers in South Africa	18	5	12
	Autobiography based on parents and teachers' views	Teaching is a career that will create opportunities	9	-	5
	Personal belief	Because of not being accepted for their first career choice	7	-	4
	Personal belief	Teaching offers suitable conditions of employment	3	-	1
	Personal belief	Teaching offers bursaries to study	2	-	1
Intrinsic Reasons 17%	Personal commitment	The belief that they will make a good teacher	2	31	17

5. PARTICIPANTS

The study was conducted in a well-established university in Johannesburg, South Africa with first-year students in 2016. First year students were purposively selected (De Vos, 1998) to participate in this research as they are in the best position to provide reasons about why they opted to become teachers, which is relevant to the overarching research question. The overarching research question for this paper is: Why have first-year students decided to study teaching? In 2016 all 678 first students completed a questionnaire and narrative essay as a compulsory requirement for an on-campus-based teaching practice programme. In total 580 students gave consent for the responses from their questionnaires and narrative essays to be used in this research. Of the 580 participants, 68% were female and 32% were males. Forty-seven per cent of the participants indicated that teaching was their first choice of career while 53% stated that teaching was not their first choice.

In order to establish their background, participants were requested to indicate what they had done during the year before enrolling to complete their teaching degrees. From the 580 participants, 66% had completed their final year of schooling the previous year, 4% stated that they were working within a school context either as assistant teachers, unqualified teachers, sport coaches, or tutors, 13% were employed in a full time job, 5% were enrolled in another course the year before, and 2% were repeating their first year in BEd degree. Eleven percent (11%) ticked the column that indicated "other" on the questionnaire and elaborated that they were either at home doing nothing because they had no funding, repeating or rewriting some of their grade 12 subjects in order to qualify to study teaching. Thus, two thirds of participants had just completed their final year of high school and the other third were engaged in other activities before enrolling for teaching. Next, I discuss the findings of this research.

6. RESULTS[2]

This section will focus on the overall results as gleaned from responses in the questionnaires (quantitative data) and use the information from the narrative essays (qualitative data) to substantiate participants' decisions. The discussion of the results was guided by the factors stipulated in the theories of career motivation, namely: altruistic, intrinsic, and extrinsic motives.

6.1 Altruistic motives for becoming a teacher

Overall, altruistic motives were the highest category indicated by pre-service teachers for becoming teachers. In total, this category made up 60% of pre-service teachers' reasons for pursuing teaching. Participants cited their personal commitment to the profession and experiences at school as key factors for selecting teaching as a profession. Four specific reasons why pre-service teachers wanted to become teachers were identified. The first reason, which 27% of the participants' data indicated, was that they wanted to "make a difference" in the lives of children in South Africa and in their "community". Their data pointed out their desire to "change the education system and close the gap between township and urban school education in South Africa". Some 24% of the participants in this study said that they wanted to become teachers because of the love they have for teaching as a profession. They stated that "teaching is a calling" and they felt that teaching was their "purpose in life". Participants also indicated that they were "inspired by children". This, they claimed, has influenced their decision to teach as they have "always loved working with children". Lastly, 9% of the pre-service teachers wanted to become teachers because of their 'apprenticeships of observation' (Lortie, 1975) at school. Some participants had been exposed to teachers who they regarded as positive role models and indicated that they were "inspired by [the] teachers who motivated" them. Other participants indicated that they had "bad teachers in [their] past and would like to change that" by becoming better teachers.

6.2 Extrinsic motives for becoming a teacher

Extrinsic motives made up 23% of pre-service teachers' reasons for becoming teachers and as such forms the second-largest category. The overarching categories as per Pugach's (2006) categorisation included aspects relating to pre-service teachers' autobiographies, specifically their parents and teachers' views and their personal belief about teaching. Analysis of the dataset found that 12% of the participants believed that a degree in teaching would enable them to get better employment opportunities because "there is a need for teachers" in South Africa. For 5% of the participants in this study, teaching was a career that they think will

2 Quotations in this section refer to the exact words of participants in their narrative essays.

create other opportunities for them. One reason was that teaching is a good "fall-back" career if they cannot find other employment. For those who indicated that teaching was not their first choice, they "hope[d] [that teaching will] open more doors to greater opportunities that will further help [them] develop in [their] field of choice". With a teaching degree, students felt that they "are able to shift to another country easily" and hence, is "ideal" for those who "love to travel". Thirdly, 4% of the participants indicated that teaching was not their first choice but because their "application for another degree was unsuccessful," they thought that teaching was a good second choice because "teaching is an easy job and even studying teaching would not be that difficult". One percent (1%) of the pre-service teachers were drawn to teaching because of the conditions of employment which include "working hours", "school holidays" and "job security" for them. These conditions of employment will allow them "[to] do other hobbies in [their] free time and it [will] allow [them] to be able to spend time with family". A further 1% of the research participants decided to enrol for teaching because of their financial constraints and the fact that "it was easy to get a bursary that will fund the Bachelor of Education Degree".

6.3 Intrinsic motives for becoming a teacher

Intrinsic motives were the lowest-ranked overall category. In this category, 17% of the participants indicated that they had been motived to become teachers for intrinsic reasons that were specifically based on their personal commitment to the profession. These participants decided to become teachers because they believed that they had the necessary characteristics to become good teachers. These characteristics included them being "patient" and having the ability to "easily interact with people". Furthermore, participants indicated that they had good subject knowledge, especially in the subjects they have selected as their major teaching subjects.

7. DISCUSSION

Overall, more than half of the participants did not want to study teaching, according to what they indicated in the questionnaires. This means that half of this cohort had chosen a programme that did not align with their initial career plans, and this could lead to high drop-out probability (Belloc, Maruotti & Petrella, 2010: 137). Despite this admission, participants still provided reasons in their narrative essays for selecting teaching as a career based on altruistic, extrinsic, and intrinsic reasons. Regarding these categories, which were derived from the quantitative and qualitative data, more than half (60%) of this cohort of South African pre-service teachers opted to become teachers based on altruistic reasons. This group was mostly concerned with the well-being of learners as they wanted to make a difference in the lives of learners and be responsible for shaping their futures. If these specific pre-service teachers feel that they are making a difference in the lives of learners, they would be more likely to remain in the profession. As such, their motivation to remain in the profession is likely to be based on their perceived sense of them making a difference. This finding is in line with findings in the 2018 TALIS report that indicated that 97% of teachers in South Africa became teachers to influence children's development and to contribute to society (OECD, 2019). They would need reinforcement in the form of acknowledgment from learners or various stakeholders that they are making a difference. In the absence of that affirmation they might opt to leave the profession and pursue a career outside of teaching.

The second largest category (23%) included extrinsic reasons for wanting to become teachers. The specific reasons cited by research participants was that there were bursaries available to study teaching as well as being almost guaranteed employment opportunities because of the shortage of teachers in South Africa. These extrinsic factors that motivate students' decisions, however, may demoralise their continuing commitment to teaching (Yong, 1995). Furthermore, the challenge with extrinsic decisions by pre-service teachers who did not get into the course they initially wanted is that they are at higher risk of leaving initial teacher education programmes early (Lassibille & Gómez, 2008: 103). If pre-service teachers should find that teaching is not an easy job, but a career that can be demanding and not always inspiring, they may be discouraged from staying in the profession. The challenge with altruistic and extrinsic motives is that if these needs are not met in the profession, teachers are more likely to look for alternative work opportunities, and as such the cycle of a shortage of teachers will continue. In addition, the challenge with being motivated by altruistic and extrinsic reasons is that in order for these needs to be met, these teachers may be reliant on external factors and might not be self-motivated. This could lead them to easily be persuaded to exit the profession. Those who are unable to exit the teaching profession could become despondent and negative about the demands placed on them and as such become ineffective in meeting learners' needs. Thus, the stereotyped views held about teaching, based on students' past experiences through their apprenticeship of observation, could have negative and devastating implications for individuals but also the profession at large if not demystified as early as possible in initial teacher education programmes.

Lastly, intrinsic reasons for becoming teachers were cited by the least amount (17%) of participants. In this category participants' decisions were spearheaded by their level of self-efficacy that will impact on their ability to do well. This group of pre-service teachers have a high sense of personal commitment for the teaching profession because they believe that they have the required characteristics to make good teachers. This group could tend to be more committed to the teaching profession (Wang & Fwu, 2001). Hence, this group of pre-service teachers is more likely to remain in the profession because they are motivated by intrinsic factors. It is concerning, however, that this group makes up the smallest percentage of all the participants.

8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, what the data showed is that altruistic reasons for choosing teaching were the highest scored criteria by this cohort of students. Their foremost reason for becoming teachers was to make a difference in the lives of learners in South Africa because they loved working with children. It is encouraging to note that this cohort of teachers have opted to become teachers to make an overall difference in the lives of learners in South Africa. Despite being encouraging, this finding is also concerning based on research that states that teaching is not an easy career and that the attrition rate of teachers is due to lack of job satisfaction, school policies, workload, future prospects and relations with parents (Chireshe & Shumba, 2011; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014) and teaching not being the first choice for some (Mkumbo, 2012). In addition, it is evident that at this stage of their journey to becoming teachers, these participants lack a nuanced understanding of the complexities, challenges and realities of teaching. Thus, even though this cohort of pre-service teachers would like to focus on improving the lives of learners, they might find that due to the challenges they would be faced with in teaching, the realities of what teaching actually entails, and a lack of teacher self-efficacy, their needs will not necessarily be met.

Extrinsic factors include better employment opportunities, not being accepted for their first choice, the belief that teaching offers suitable employment conditions, and financial constraints. These findings differ from those in research conducted by Wolhuter *et al.* (2012) in South Africa. The findings from Wolhuter *et al.* (2012) mostly referred to extrinsic reasons for pre-service teachers' choice. In this research, however, pre-service teachers mostly cited altruistic reasons for becoming teachers.

This information provides a deeper understanding of why students opt to enter the teaching profession, thus contributing to the overall understanding of how to better prepare pre-service teachers for the profession. If pre-service teachers have a deeper and more realistic understanding of what teaching actually entails, they might be more resilient to deal with the challenges of the profession. The findings of this paper would benefit initial teacher education institutions and the Department of Basic Education as it would not be of value to either one if the needs of teachers are not met at a pre- or in-service level. It is important to prepare students fully for the profession, but it is equally important that the conditions of service are such that they would want to remain in the profession especially since this cohort is mostly motivated by altruistic factors. This suggests that institutes of teacher education need to counter misrepresentations of student teachers' choices to enter the profession and why they leave. They need to recognise the preferences of student teachers and develop curricula that respond appropriately to those established needs.

A limitation of this study is that students' views were sought at the beginning of their degree. A follow-up study to this research would be to re-evaluate the same cohort of students' views about teaching in their final year. This would allow for a stronger argument to be made about their resilience, or lack thereof to remain in the profession.

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APPENDIX 1: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

WHY DID I DECIDE TO BECOME A TEACHER?

Gender: _____

Please answer the questions below by making an X in the relevant block/s. You may select more than one block.

Last year I was	In grade 12	Working at a school	Working somewhere other than a school	Studying another course	Doing my first year B.Ed	Other
Teaching was my first choice as I always wanted to become a teacher					Yes	No
I choose to study teaching because	Of the love I have for teaching	I had good teachers and want to be like them	I want to make a difference in the lives of learners	I wasn't accepted in any other course	Of the bursary	It's what my family/ parents/ teachers want me to do
	I need to get the qualification to be better employed	It is better than just sitting at home and doing nothing	I eventually want to become a lecturer/ professor	There is need for teachers in our country	I want a job where you can leave early and have long holidays	Other
I will make a good teacher because	I have a loud voice	I am tall	I am not afraid of children	I was really clever at school	I can be bossy and strict with learners	I love working with children
	I am friendly and kind	I am a good listener	I have a good sense of humor	I know my subject really well	Everyone said I would	I want to make a difference in the lives of children in South Africa
I am afraid of	Not being liked by learner, teachers and parents	Not being able to discipline learners	Not being able to communicate effectively	Not being able to answer questions learners might ask during a lesson	All the media reports of what happens at some schools	All the marking and other administrative tasks teachers have to do
I am excited about	Being called sir/ mam	Becoming a teacher	Having long working half days and having long holidays	Working with children	Making a difference in the lives of the children I teach	Earning a salary
I chose my major because	Of my bursary	I love the subject	I had no choice as other courses were full	I got high marks for the subject in grade 12	My teacher/family members said I will be good at teaching this subject	There is a need for teachers in this subjects

Is there anything else you would like to mention regarding why you decided to become a teacher, which has not been included in the above questionnaire?

_____

_____

(Footnotes)

1 Percentages were calculated by dividing the number of responses in this category by the total number of participants.

2020 38(1):143-143 http://dx.doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38i1.10