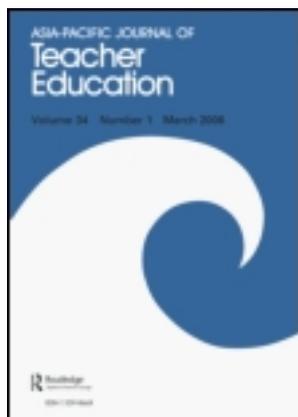


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An introduction to teaching motivations in different countries: comparisons using the FIT-Choice scale

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1. The FIT-Choice project: locally grown internationally known

The FIT-Choice program of research (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice; <http://www.fitchoice.org>) began in 2001, prompted by two questions that had been forming for Richardson over the course of a decade: why do people from demanding, high-status and financially rewarding careers want to switch into teaching? and, what motivates people to choose teaching at all? Richardson directed a Graduate Diploma in Education program which attracted a large proportion of people intent on leaving their prior careers to become teachers. At the beginning of each year people from a wide variety of careers would competitively seek enrolment into teacher education, including women seeking to return to work and a new career following time out of the workforce to start a family, younger graduates who had decided on teaching after a ‘gap’ year or two travelling overseas, older recent graduates, people already teaching in private schools, and an assortment of engineers, practising medical doctors, veterinary surgeons, solicitors, accountants, psychologists and company executives. What was striking about this latter group was their intention to leave more prestigious and highly paid careers to pursue teaching. The severe downturn in employment opportunities in the petroleum industry seemed a logical explanation at one stage for why petroleum engineers were seeking other employment, but this was not the case for solicitors, veterinarians, medical practitioners, accountants and many others.

Having to select from such people prompted Richardson’s reflection on his own decision to become a teacher, how it had happened and what motivated others to do the same. Did these aspiring career switchers into teaching hold values, beliefs, expectancies in common? Assumptions and explanations that circulate among those involved in teacher education did little to address the questions about what motivates a broad cross-section of people who have diverse experiences in work and life to want to become teachers, and what sustains them once they enter teaching. Their talents and demonstrated abilities undermined the simplistic notion often promulgated in the media that people who want to become teachers are those unable to pursue more prestigious careers, so that teaching is a ‘fallback career’. Were their reasons for switching to a teaching career as diverse as the individuals themselves, or were there core motivations shared by teachers in general?

Why had the teacher education literature not been in dialogue with the literature on occupational choice and more importantly, why was no attention paid to robust existing motivational theories when examining teaching motivations? It was these questions

that triggered Watt's interest. Thus began the marriage of teacher education with theories of career choice and motivation which resulted in the FIT-Choice program of research. Watt had worked intensively with the Eccles et al. (1983; Eccles, 2005) expectancy-value motivational theory, initially developed to explain gendered high school mathematics enrolments, which Watt had extended to predict mathematics-related career plans (e.g. Watt, Shapka, et al., 2012). This theory argues that individuals' choices and behaviours are shaped by their expectancies of success, and different kinds of values, with a wealth of empirical work to support its utility and validity for explaining students' achievement-related choices. Why not adapt this to provide a comprehensive and coherent framework to guide systematic investigation into the question of why people choose teaching as a career?

A review of the literature on motivations for choosing teaching as a career highlighted intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motivations as the most important groups of reasons influencing teaching career choice (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). However, the absence of an agreed-upon analytical and theoretical framework has meant researchers have not always concurred on what constitutes intrinsic, altruistic, extrinsic or other motivations. Varying operationalisations have resulted in a lack of definitional precision and overlapping categorisations. A plethora of studies have been conducted over a long period of time using different questionnaires and scales with often opportune samples, frequently no reporting of scale validation and over-reliance on raw frequencies, making it difficult to compare the findings of one study with another. These measurement issues were accompanied by a notable lack of longitudinal data to be able to examine changes in and consequences of particular motivational profiles. What gradually emerged was the need for fundamental theoretical and psychometric work to develop a reliable and valid multidimensional instrument founded in motivational theory with which to investigate beginning teacher motivations among large samples, and to follow those teachers into the profession in order to predict outcomes such as who is likely to stay in teaching, who is likely to leave, and why?

The FIT-Choice program began at its outset with the development of the FIT-Choice scale, designed to allow comparative measurements of teacher motivations locally and elsewhere. With its publication in 2006 in *APJTE* (Richardson & Watt, 2006), and subsequent technical validation in 2007 (Watt & Richardson, 2007), researchers around the world began seeking permission to use it in order to undertake studies in their own contexts. To our knowledge, the scale has so far been used in English-speaking countries such as the United States, United Kingdom and Ireland, as well as translated into German, Croatian, Dutch, French, Mandarin, Estonian and Turkish. The widespread adoption of the scale indicates teacher motivation is an issue of concern which represents a common problem for researchers from many different countries. Cross-cultural comparisons provide wonderful 'natural experiments' to contrast the impact of salient cultural features. For example, teachers in Germany are better paid; and, there is an over-supply of applicants to teacher education in Turkey. We can explore how salary impacts decisions about teaching in Germany versus countries such as Australia, and why teaching seems to be a more attractive career in Turkey. It seems fitting, given our beginning work in this area was published in *APJTE*, and in view of subsequent calls in the journal for just such large-scale, cross-cultural and longitudinal studies (e.g. Nuttall, Murray, Seddon, & Mitchell, 2006), for the present Special Issue to be published in this journal.

2. The FIT-Choice framework

The FIT-Choice model (Figure 1) was developed to assess the primary motivations of teachers to teach. It taps both the 'altruistic'-type motivations that have been emphasised

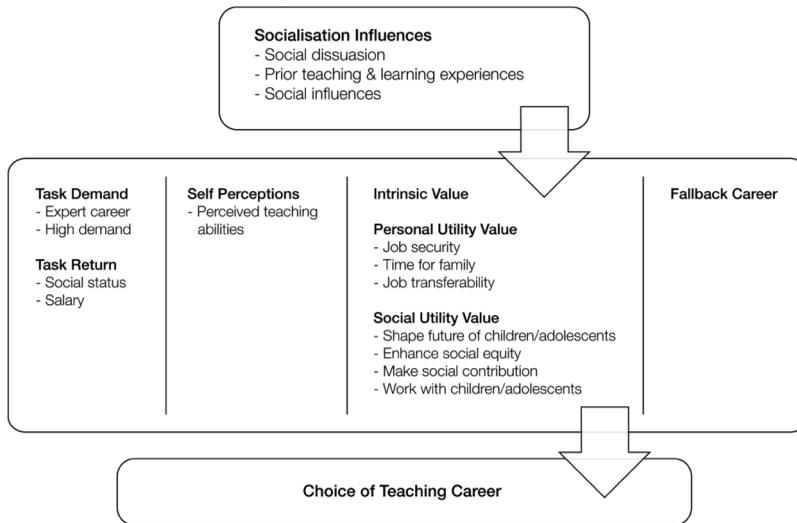


Figure 1. FIT-Choice empirically validated theoretical model.

in the teacher education literature (e.g. Book & Freeman, 1986; Brown, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Moran, Kilpatrick, Abbott, Dallatt, & McClune, 2001; Serow & Forrest, 1994), as well as more personally utilitarian motivations, intrinsic motivations and ability-related beliefs. Measured motivation factors include social influences, positive prior teaching and learning experiences, perceived teaching abilities, intrinsic value, personal utility values (job security, time for family, job transferability), social utility values (shape future of children/adolescents, enhance social equity, make social contribution, work with children/adolescents) and the negative motivation of having chosen teaching as a ‘fallback’ career. Measured perceptions of the profession include perceived task demand (expertise and difficulty) and return (social status and salary); also assessed are experiences of social dissuasion, and satisfaction with the choice of teaching as a career. We have provided a review elsewhere (Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2008) of how our FIT-Choice factors map onto expectancy-value theory, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; see Lent, Lopez, & Bieschke, 1993), and to key findings within the existing teacher education literature.

Social utility value factors resemble altruism as variously described in the teacher education literature (Book & Freeman, 1986; Brown, 1992; Fox, 1961; Joseph & Green, 1986; Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992). Positive prior teaching and learning experiences, especially in relation to former influential teachers, have also been linked to choosing a teaching career (Book & Freeman, 1986; Fielstra, 1955; Lortie, 1975; Richards, 1960; Richardson & Watt, 2005; Robertson, Keith, & Page, 1983; Wright, 1977), as have various quality of life issues such as having time for family and job security (Bastick, 1999; Jantzen, 1981; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Robertson et al., 1983; Tudhope, 1944; Yong, 1995), which are assessed by personal utility value factors. In prior research, such quality of life reasons have frequently been nominated as extrinsic, although that label obscures the distinction from factors which we distinguish as socialisation influences and task perceptions. Intrinsic value and perceived ability have been less a focus in the teacher education literature, although in the motivation literature they are the main focus of several models, including in the expectancy-value model, and ability-related beliefs have been the focus in the career choice literature more generally. We developed the ‘fallback’ career subscale in light of claims in the teacher education literature and the public media where entrants may have failed to be

accepted into their career of choice or otherwise unable to pursue their first-choice career (see Book, Freeman, & Brousseau, 1985; Haubrich, 1960; Robertson et al., 1983). The values described as motivating people to become teachers in the existing teacher education literature could thus be mapped to constructs within the expectancy-value model, while also suggesting additional important motivations. All parts of the model are proposed to work together to predict choice of a teaching career and professional engagement outcomes.

The initial Australian FIT-Choice sample included 1653 secondary, primary and early childhood commencing preservice teachers, from undergraduate Bachelor and graduate-entry programs (see Richardson & Watt, 2006). Across the sample as a whole, highest rated motivations for teaching were perceived teaching abilities, the intrinsic value of teaching, the desire to make a social contribution, shape the future and work with children/adolescents. The lowest rated motivation was choosing teaching as a 'fallback' career, followed by social influences of others' encouragement to undertake teaching. Other motivations were rated in between for the desire to enhance social equity, having had positive prior teaching and learning experiences, the desire for job security, job transferability and time for family. Counter to prevailing stereotypes about teaching being mainly chosen by women as a family-friendly career, these findings showed this was moderately rated when included alongside competing motivations in a comprehensive multidimensional framework. As well, the low-rated 'fallback career' showed teaching to be a career of choice. Teacher candidates perceived teaching as a highly demanding career having a heavy workload, high emotional demand and generally requiring hard work; and a highly expert career requiring specialised and technical knowledge. At the same time, they perceived it as relatively low in social status, paying a low salary, and reported experiences of quite strong social dissuasion from a teaching career. This shows that at the very outset of teacher education candidates were aware that the demands were high, and returns low. Despite this, mean satisfaction ratings for the choice of teaching as a career were high.

While there have been many studies of teacher motivation in different contexts over time, there has not been a reliable measure upon which researchers could draw which would permit comparisons across different settings and samples, or prediction of various outcomes over time. This has resulted in an abundance of findings which cannot be directly compared or synthesised. To understand how initial motivations impact teacher recruitment, retention and effectiveness, within and across different kinds of samples and settings, we need first to have a valid and reliable instrument encompassing comprehensive teaching motivations and grounded in motivational theory. The FIT-Choice instrument offers the opportunity to measure and compare motivations for different individuals, from varying settings, and to explore correlates and consequences of motivational dimensions. The scale has been demonstrated to be psychometrically sound where it has been applied, thereby yielding reliable findings (Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt, Richardson, et al., 2012). Further, it has been shown to predict both positive and negative outcome variables among beginning teachers: the motivations that related most strongly to high initial career satisfaction included the altruistic-type motivations most frequently emphasised in the teacher education literature, the intrinsic value individuals attached to teaching and self-evaluations of their teaching-related skills (Watt & Richardson, 2007). In a first cross-cultural validation and comparison study including samples from Australia, the United States, Germany and Norway (Watt, Richardson, et al., 2012), the FIT-Choice scale showed good evidence of reliability and construct validity, and revealed motivations that were more similar than they were different across those samples, whereas perceptions about the teaching profession reflected objective country differences, for example in teacher salary. What is next needed is samples from more and diverse settings, comparing different types of teachers,

and relating teaching motivations to other important factors. The Special Issue meets this need.

3. Impetus for the Special Issue

The Special Issue contains six theoretically grounded, empirical, interpretative articles whose authors come from eight countries. Empirical data derive from Turkey, the United States, People's Republic of China, the Netherlands, Croatia, Germany and Switzerland. Collectively, the articles offer the possibility to discuss and contrast findings from diverse contexts to examine how and why teaching motivations are similar or different, using data yielded by the FIT-Choice scale. Because contributors have assessed teaching motivations using this same measurement tool, for the first time, comparisons can really be drawn across the settings which are examined. All authors first examine the validity of the FIT-Choice scale, before proceeding to examine teacher motivations in relation to their particular foci.

Major contributions can be considered in relation to two 'sets' of papers: those comparing motivations for different groups of preservice teachers (papers 1–3), and those examining how teaching motivations relate to other major constructs (papers 4–6). In the first set of papers, the articles focus on *comparisons between different groups* of preservice teachers – subject specialisms, cross-culturally, and commencing versus completing preservice teachers. Paper 1 from Turkey compares teaching motivations for beginning preservice teachers undertaking science versus non-science specialisms. Paper 2 compares United States and Chinese secondary and elementary preservice teachers' motivations and interprets differences in light of contrasting cultural dimensions. Paper 3 from the Netherlands compares teaching motivations for cross-sectional samples of commencing and completing preservice upper secondary teachers to obtain indications of possible changes in motivations through teacher education, as well as relationships with self-reported affective commitment to the teaching profession.

The second set of papers extend our understanding of teaching motivations through examining their *interrelationships with other key constructs*. Paper 4 from Croatia examines how personality dimensions predict to preservice teachers' motivations. Paper 5 from Germany examines how motivations relate to growth in general pedagogical knowledge (GPK), among primary and lower secondary preservice mathematics teachers. Paper 6 from Switzerland is focused on vocational education and training (VET) teachers, and links teaching motivations to dimensions of their prior occupational perceptions, such as social significance of the job, to find out how these may motivate career change to teaching.

4. Main findings and contributions

The FIT-Choice scale across diverse settings

The FIT-Choice scale demonstrated acceptable reliability and construct validity across diverse settings, with small variations such as item deletions to enhance subscale reliabilities. The motivation of job transferability was found to not apply in the same way to other contexts as the Australian setting where teachers are known to geographically relocate within the country and overseas. The original FIT-Choice scale included items concerning whether beginning teachers were motivated by opportunities to travel and work, especially overseas. This original form performed adequately in the China/US study (Paper 2). The items were adapted for the Turkish and Croatian contexts (e.g. referring to 'European' rather than 'overseas' countries) where there are fewer opportunities to work as a teacher outside the country and overseas, and this modified form demonstrated acceptable fit

(Papers 1 and 4); although these constructs are not directly comparable with the original items. The original items had to be discarded in the Dutch study (Paper 3); and were not asked in the German and Swiss studies (Papers 5 and 6).¹ The fallback career subscale also showed small deficits of reliability (α s ranged from .57 to .67) suggesting it may be less applicable outside the initial Australian setting. Cronbach's reliability estimates for all subscales across studies in the Special Issue are summarised in Table 1.

Aside from these particularities, in general the FIT-Choice scale demonstrated good fit in each study, which predominantly employed contemporary confirmatory factor analytic methods to examine the extent to which the scale performed according to prior theory and empirical evidence. Challenges posed by the quite small Dutch sample resulted in exploratory factor analyses, likely explaining the emergence of four hybrid factors which, however, were generally consistent with the higher order factors of the FIT-Choice framework. Future studies involving larger and more diverse samples in the Dutch setting could fruitfully examine the scale structure using confirmatory techniques. Because all authors were requested to include their translated items as an Appendix, it will be possible for future researchers to readily apply and further interrogate these translated forms in related settings. We welcome other researchers using the scale and to contact us to join our developing FIT-Choice network and planned future meetings.

Each of the papers reported descriptive summary statistics for teaching motivation factors, allowing for comparisons across the different settings (see Table 2). To interpret sample differences, it is important to keep in mind particularities of each.

- Study 1 in Turkey: 1577 first-year preservice teachers encompassing secondary, primary and early childhood strands (66.7% women) from three universities.
- Study 2 in the United States and People's Republic of China: 257 US (80.2% women) and 542 Chinese (63.8% women) first-year preservice teachers encompassing secondary and elementary strands from one university per setting.
- Study 3 in the Netherlands: 151 preservice secondary teachers (58% women) from a one-year degree program in one Dutch university.
- Study 4 in Croatia: 374 first-year preservice teachers qualifying to teach the first four years in a comprehensive eight-year school system (> 95% women) from three universities.
- Study 5 in Germany: 1287 preservice teachers encompassing secondary and elementary strands (77.4% women) from five universities, from varying stages of their teacher education degrees.
- Study 6 in Switzerland: 483 VET teachers (327 German-speaking, 156 French-speaking; 35.0% women) undertaking in-service teacher education at one Swiss institution.

Response rates were high in Studies 1, 2, 4 and 6; not calculated in Study 5 where participants were surveyed in obligatory lectures, and rather low in Study 3 which used an online survey format. The response rates reflect the degree of confidence we can have that each study's findings adequately represent the target participants. The span of preservice teacher types in each sample (e.g. secondary/primary/early childhood; single vs. multiple teacher education programs) reflects the extent to which findings can aim to represent preservice teachers in each study setting. While Studies 1, 2 and 5 aimed to encompass all strands of qualifying teachers, Study 3 examined only preservice secondary teachers, Study 4 only those qualifying to teach the first four years in their comprehensive eight-year system, and Study 6 specifically in-service VET teachers. It would be a mistake to generalise

Table 1. Cronbach's α reliability coefficients for FIT-Choice factors across studies.

		<i>Motivations</i>											
Study	Setting	Ability	Intrinsic value	Prior T&L	Shape future	Make social contribution	Enhance social equity	Work with children/ adolescents	Job security	Time for family	Job transfer	Social influences	Fallback career
1	Turkish	.78	.87	.91	.76	.75	.78	.93	.81	.80	.79	.77	.57
2	Chinese	.81	.91	.78	.84	.88	.85	.89	.86	.78	.58	.80	.66
2	US	.79	.64	.80	.79	.79	.83	.90	.78	.80	.67	.88	.57
3	Dutch	.73	n/a ^c	.85	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	.85	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	.90	n/a ^b	.88	n/a ^c
4	Croatian	.84	.83	.88	.81	.82	.81	.94	.73	.86	.88	.86	.67
5	German	.85	.65	.88	.72	.81	.84	.92	.90	.85	n/a ^a	.88	.60
6	Swiss: German	.82	.70	.85	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	.85	.85	.87	.83	n/a ^a	.80	n/a ^a
6	Swiss: French	.86	.75	.80	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	.84	.92	.83	.84	n/a ^a	.87	n/a ^a

		<i>Perceptions</i>					
Study	Setting	Expertise	High demand	Social status	Salary	Social disussion	Satisfaction
1	Turkish	.74	.74	.85	.73	.61	.89
2	Chinese	.86	.72	.87	.81	.66	.88
2	US	.78	.67	.80	.89	.71	.87
3	Dutch	n/a ^c	n/a ^c	.86	.95	.68	.93
4	Croatian	.72	.63	.88	.91	.81	.93
5	German	.84	.67	.88	.95	.67	.95
6	Swiss: German	.78	.72	.86	.95	.73	n/a ^a
6	Swiss: French	.63	.53	.83	.94	.81	n/a ^a

^a constructs were not included in those studies.

^b construct had to be deleted in that study.

^c hybrid factors do not provide meaningful comparative reliability assessments.

Table 2. Mean scores for FIT-Choice motivations and perceptions factors across studies.

Study	Setting	Motivations											
		Ability	Intrinsic value	Prior T&L	Shape future	Make social contribution	Enhance social equity	Work with children/adolescents	Job security	Time for family	Job transfer	Social influences	Fallback career
1	Turkish	4.98	5.08	5.27	6.06	6.16	5.57	5.31	5.32	4.56	3.91 [†]	3.85	3.07
2	Chinese	4.37	4.13	5.09	5.12	5.19	4.64	4.67	5.01	4.40	3.96	3.66	3.33
2	US	5.83	5.77	5.73	6.18	6.06	5.42	5.91	5.09	4.48	4.37	3.73	2.04
3	Dutch	4.97	4.91 ^c	3.83	4.73 ^a	4.73 ^a	3.75	4.91 ^c	3.55 ^b	3.30	—	2.44	3.55 ^b
4	Croatian	5.73	5.90	5.09	6.22	5.93	5.67	6.26	4.99	4.64	3.97 [†]	4.63	2.23
5	German	5.45	5.75	4.65	5.64	5.35	4.96	5.89	5.02	4.29	—	3.36	1.84
6	Swiss	5.46	5.94	4.39	5.19 ^e	5.19 ^e	4.52	5.28 [†]	3.94	3.16	—	2.65	—
Australian validation sample (Richardson & Watt, 2010)		5.62	5.44	5.02	5.52	5.40	4.89	5.44	4.96	3.85	4.22	3.30	2.06

Study	Setting	Perceptions					
		Expertise	High demand	Social status	Salary	Social dissatisfaction	Satisfaction
1	Turkish	5.24	5.31	4.18	3.24	3.99	5.16
2	Chinese	2.77	3.41	3.13	3.53	4.51	4.54
2	US	5.41	6.01	4.33	2.49	4.43	6.11
3	Dutch	5.25 ^d	5.25 ^d	3.28	3.29	3.35	5.03
4	Croatian	5.76	5.52	3.58	3.21	3.48	6.33
5	German	5.76	3.99	4.42	4.42	3.53	4.64
6	Swiss	5.86	5.53	4.31	4.72	2.52	—
Australian validation sample (Richardson & Watt, 2010)		5.32	6.08	4.08	3.33	4.07	5.90

Notes. Croatian study first-order factor descriptive statistics were supplied by the study authors. — omitted items in those studies. ^{a, b, c, d, e} factors which have matched superscripts were combined into single factors in that study. [†] adapted items to suit cultural setting.

to *all* teachers in any of the settings, but, especially those where specific types of teachers were sampled, from single institutions, or where response rates were low. Further research to establish the generality of findings is required in each context.

The extent to which teaching motivations and perceptions about the profession were endorsed in each study sample is shown in Table 2, with reference to the initial Australian validation sample (details summarised in Richardson & Watt, 2006, 2010). In this section we compare and contrast group differences, excepting the specialised Swiss in-service VET sample, and the Dutch sample in which non-comparable hybrid motivation factors were analysed. Consistent with the validation study findings, fallback career was rated very low in the German, US and Croatian settings; less low in the Chinese and Turkish settings. Relatedly, ability motivations and intrinsic value were highly important, except interestingly, in the Chinese and Turkish settings. This could partly be consequent upon their higher fallback career motivations. As well, career choices may be less based on individual interests and abilities in a collectivistic culture such as China, or a developing nation such as Turkey in which more basic needs such as job security may have primacy, on which the Turkish sample indeed scored highest. Social utility values appeared similarly high in the Croatian, Turkish and US samples, notably lowest in the Chinese sample, and in between for the Germans. Perhaps social values are taken more for granted in collectivistic Chinese culture, and the tracked school system in Germany could mean that future teachers perceive lower agency in driving social equity outcomes and youth opportunities consequent upon education and instruction. Personal utility values appeared strikingly similar, suggesting these reflect basic needs in contemporary society, although the Turkish sample rated the motivation of job security somewhat higher. Social influences were highest for the Croatian participants, all qualifying to teach the first four years of the comprehensive eight-year system; it is possible that socialisation influences suggest teaching as a very suitable job for women, given their highest proportion in that sample.

For perceptions about the profession, as in the Australian validation sample, demands were generally rated high, and returns low. Notable exceptions occurred for the Chinese sample, who rated both the expertise required and high demand of teaching quite low, and the Turkish sample who rated demand only moderately (see Table 2). Possibly the collectivist approach to teacher development and group accountability may help explain the low Chinese ratings (see Study 2), and the frame of reference for the demanding nature of alternative jobs in the developing Turkish context may explain moderate ratings for teaching demand (including heavy workload, emotional demand and hard work). Higher salary ratings in the German and Swiss settings reflect objective context differences. Lower social dissuasion from teaching as a career among the Croatian sample is consonant with their higher social persuasion influences. Participants' satisfaction with the choice of teaching as a career was high; highest in the Croatian and US samples.

After evaluating the performance of the FIT-Choice scale, the studies focused on group differences and comparisons (papers in first set), or interrelationships of motivations and other key factors of concern (papers in second set). Together, the papers further our understandings of how teaching motivations differ across different groups of beginning teachers, and how teaching motivations are relevant to other important factors.

Comparative motivations for teaching

The first study, 'Factors Influencing Teaching Choice in Turkey' (Kılınç, Watt, & Richardson), examined motivations and perceptions among 1577 preservice early childhood, primary and secondary teachers. Science-related teacher candidates scored higher on

fallback career, had chosen a teaching career the most recently, and were lower on almost all other teaching motivations, demonstrating a less positive motivational profile. Findings are interpreted in light of economic development and the role of the teaching profession in Turkey. Less adaptive motivations belonging to preservice teachers in scientific fields highlight potential risks and recruitment strategies to optimise teacher quality in those priority fields.

Study two, 'Initial Motivations for Teaching: Comparison Between Preservice Teachers in the United States and China' (Lin, Shi, Wang, Zhang, & Hui), examined similar and differing initial motivations to teach between samples of 257 preservice teachers from a university in the US and 542 from another university in China. The US preservice teachers reported significantly higher motivations from social utility values, teaching abilities, intrinsic career value, and prior teaching and learning experiences; the Chinese sample reported higher fallback career motivations. While both viewed teaching as low in salary and status, Chinese participants rated teaching to be low in demand whereas US participants perceived demand as high. Despite this, US participants were more satisfied with their career choice. Similarities and differences are discussed in relation to social and cultural-value differences.

The third study, 'The Factors Influencing Teaching (FIT)-Choice Scale in a Dutch Teacher Education Program' (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus), included two cross-sectional cohorts of beginning ($N = 62$) and completing ($N = 89$) preservice teachers. These teachers at the end of their teacher education rated social influences and teaching ability motivations as more important, suggesting possible changes in motivations through teacher education which future longitudinal research could explore. Relationships between teaching motivations and affective commitment to the profession were examined; significant motivational predictors were teaching ability, working with children, prior teaching and learning experiences, and time for family, as well as satisfaction with the choice of teaching and perceived task demand.

Interrelationships of teaching motivations with other factors

In study four, 'Motivation and Personality of Preservice Teachers in Croatia' (Jugović, Marušić, Ivanec, & Vidović), personality dimensions of the five-factor model provided a set of theoretically meaningful relations with the specific motivational factors determining the choice of teaching profession among a sample of 374 first-year preservice teachers. Intrinsic motivations were better predicted by personality traits than extrinsic motivations. Extraversion predicted teaching ability motivation; the interpersonal dimensions of extraversion and agreeableness predicted intrinsic career value and satisfaction with the choice of teaching; agreeableness also predicted social utility value motivations.

The fifth study, 'Motivations for Choosing Teaching as a Career: Effects on General Pedagogical Knowledge During Initial Teacher Education' (König & Rothland) first asked to what extent 1287 future teachers in Germany endorsed teaching motivations indicated by the FIT-Choice scale. Second, the relationship between teaching motivations and growth in GPK was explored in a follow-up using a subsample of 130 preservice mathematics teachers. Intrinsic motivations were positively correlated, and extrinsic motivations negatively correlated with GPK at the first occasion of measurement; yet, extrinsic motivation had positive effects on learning gain, whereas intrinsic motivation did not.

The sixth and final study 'Becoming a VET Teacher as a Second Career: Investigating the Determinants of Career Choice and Their Relation to Perceptions about Prior Occupation' (Berger & D'Ascoli) examined teaching motivations in relation to perceptions

of former occupation among German- and French-speaking ($N = 483$) Swiss VET teachers, for whom ageing and the threat of shortages are current issues in Europe. Interestingly, those who were motivated to switch to teaching for reasons of social utility value perceived their prior occupation as socially meaningful; similarly, those motivated to switch to teaching for reasons surrounding time for family were those who had perceived their prior occupation as having good working conditions. These findings conflict with previous research that career-switchers to teaching do so due to dissatisfaction with their prior occupation. To explain the findings, the authors propose VET teachers' transition within a professional field may be more adequately described as a continuation of their career development rather than a total career upheaval. The prior career is thereby recognised and valued unlike in other teaching contexts where prior skills and experience may be ignored, under-valued or under-utilised.

5. Implications, recommendations and priorities for future research

It is commonplace for policymakers, politicians and the general public to offer the view that we know why people want to be teachers. Sometimes these stereotypes provide negative images that do little to attract and retain teachers. It is only now that we are beginning to understand some of the core values, beliefs and expectancies that attract people into teacher education, as well as those that sustain teachers as healthy and effective professionals, within particular sociocultural and contextual settings. Teaching motivations matter, because if they are not able to be realised in particular school contexts, it is likely that professional satisfaction and fulfilment will deteriorate. In our continuing program of research, our objectives are to illuminate those support structures that sustain teachers and allow them to thrive, provide clear indications of how and why teachers become disengaged or lose commitment to their work, and map the factors that predict job burnout versus psychological and physiological wellbeing.

The FIT-Choice scale generally displayed good construct validity and reliability across diverse samples. Some factors, job transferability and teaching as a fallback career, were not equally relevant in all settings, pointing to cultural and professional particularities. The FIT-Choice scale provides a psychometric and theoretical framework which should prove useful to guide continuing investigations. It provides a systematic and integrated approach to facilitate comparisons across samples and settings, to yield findings rich in implications for recruitment and retention of teachers. The samples and settings included in the Special Issue provide first indications of country differences; further distinctions are likely such as between primary and secondary teachers, secondary subject specialisms and teaching locale. How teaching motivations may change following professional entry and contingent on varying school contexts is an open question, along with the range of possible antecedents and consequences of motivations and perceptions related to teaching. A common scale provides a platform for many different kinds of comparisons. Being both theoretically comprehensive and psychometrically valid, the FIT-Choice scale appears a promising measure upon which future research could fruitfully draw. Our Special Issue will be an important contributor to setting the agenda for future research.

Note

1. An adapted form of items for the Work with children/adolescents subscale was also administered for the Swiss study (replaced with 'youth') because VET teachers do not work with young children, and the constructs Fallback career and Satisfaction with choice were not asked in the Swiss study because of its particular focus.

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