

## Investigation of The Factors Influencing Teaching Profession Choices of Pedagogical Formation Trainees

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees. Survey model was used in the study in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected, aiming to describe any situation as either are in the past or present. The study group of the research consists of 420 teacher candidates trained in Pedagogical Formation at Mersin University Faculty of Education in 2016-2017 academic year. In the research "Personal Information Form" which aims to reveal the personal characteristics of the teacher candidates developed by the researchers and "Motivations For Teaching Scale" developed by Watt & Richardson (2007) and adapted to Turkish by Eren & Tezel (2010) has been used as a quantitative data collection tool. The open-ended questionnaire developed by the researchers was used as a qualitative data collection tool. The general results of the study show that the teaching profession is preferred because of intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivational reasons. Some situations in which internal causes are more effective, such as the reasonable workload, the duration of a vacation, satisfactory fees; gender is not a significant variable; the variation of age group and department make a difference in the individuals' motivation to teach are the main findings of the research. From this point forth, it can be referred that the reason for choosing the teaching profession is multidimensional. The results of the study reveal that pedagogical formation trainees have similar reasons for career choice as teacher candidates in teacher training institutions. In this sense, it is considered that there is a need to determine the implementations that can be made for the teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees and to examine the effectiveness of these implementations.

**Key words:** teaching profession, pedagogical formation, teacher candidates

### INTRODUCTION

It is important to make it clear that teachers often make positive changes by influencing individuals' lives and their learning tendencies. Likewise, it has been recognized that effective teaching with qualified teachers assigned by governments around the world is important for training intelligent, wise and worthwhile citizens. In this sense, it can be said that teacher training is a great influence on shaping the future of countries. Teaching profession is accepted as a field of specialization that requires certain qualifications. The teaching certificate obtained at the end of undergraduate education and pedagogical formation training completed in the institutions that train teachers in Turkey shows that the individuals have the competences related to teaching profession. Teacher is defined as persons assigned with the aim of guiding and directing students' learning experiences in an official or private educational institution (Öncül, 2000). In Article 43 of the basic law of national education No 1739; "The teaching profession is defined as a specialization profession that undertakes the government's education, teaching and related administrative duties". Based upon these definitions, it can be argued that the teacher is the authorized person who has the duty of helping the individuals in the direction of certain programs and laws.

Individuals are thought to have some reasons for choosing teaching. These reasons can be explained by the individual's motivations about teaching. This is because motivation for teaching is directly related to teaching as a career choice (Richardson & Watt, 2006). It is one of the important research subjects how people make professional choices and which causes are controlled by occupations. Examining the literature on teaching as a career choice; intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic motives are emphasized as the most important factors influencing the choice of teaching profession (Balyer & Özcan, 2014; Brown, 1992; Chuene *et al.*, 1999; Çermik, Doğan & Şahin, 2010; Eren & Tezel, 2010; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000; Kyriacou & Kobori, 1998). More explicitly, these motivations include monthly income, vacation time, desire for teaching, experiences, intellectual satisfaction, and the desire to raise other individuals (Bastick, 2000). The image of teaching profession in the society and reasons for choosing that profession are influenced by the same sociological, economical and psychological factors, while varying from country to country in terms of rank and importance (Atav & Altunoğlu, 2013).

Although there are many studies on the factors that influence teaching choice as a career, they lack a theoretical framework to show which factors influence selection and shape the process (Eren & Tezel, 2010). But the FIT-Choice (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) framework, which founded on expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2005) and developed by Watt and Richardson, was highly useful to provide a comprehensive and coherent model to guide systematic investigation into the question of “why people choose a teaching career” (Watt & Richardson, 2006). When literature is examined, it is seen that there are many studies about teaching as a career choice but fewer studies about the teaching as a career choice of pedagogical formation trainees. Considering the researches, it is possible to say that there are various reasons for choosing teaching as a career. It is believed that it is important to understand the situations about people who do not complete undergraduate education in a teacher training institution but decide to become a teacher. From this point of view, this study aims to investigate the factors influencing teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees. Based on this aim, the following questions were searched in the study:

- 1- How are the motivations of the pedagogical formation trainees to choose the teaching profession?
- 2- Do the reasons for the pedagogical formation trainees preference for the teaching profession differ significantly in terms of various variables (gender, age, department)?
- 3- How do the pedagogical formation trainees describe the teaching profession?
- 4- What are the factors influencing teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees?

## METHOD

### Research Model

Survey model was used in the study in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected, aiming to describe any situation as either are in the past or present.

### Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 420 teacher candidates trained in Pedagogical Formation at Mersin University Faculty of Education in 2016-2017 academic year. There are 162 male and 258 female teacher candidates among the participants. This group was selected because the individuals who have different undergraduate degrees apart from the field of teacher training completed the courses of teaching profession and teaching practice. Teacher candidates participating in the research were chosen with convenience sampling from purposive sampling methods. In the purposeful sampling method, the qualities of the persons are taken as a criterion; a choice is made to reflect differences within the group and to ensure inclusion of certain qualities (Berg, 1998). The "maximum diversity" sampling method (Patton, 1990), which aims to raise the likelihood of reflecting all relevant qualities of the study group, has been used to better understand the tendency of the selected group. For this purpose, the participants were selected, the characteristics such as department and gender, and female and male teachers' candidates were selected considering the voluntary basis in each department. Table 1 presents the gender distributions of the study group.

**Table 1.** distribution of pedagogical formation trainees by gender

Gender	f	%
female	240	57.1
male	180	42.9
total	420	100

### Data Collection

In the research “Personal Information Form” which aims to reveal the personal characteristics of the teacher candidates developed by the researchers and “Motivations For Teaching Scale” developed by Watt & Richardson (2007) and adapted to Turkish by Eren & Tezel (2010) has been used as a quantitative data collection tool. The open-ended questionnaire developed by the researchers was used as a qualitative data collection tool.

### Personal Information Form

In the formation of personal information and closed-ended questionnaire form including the questions which aims to reveal the characteristics of the individuals in the most obvious way experts were offered for consideration in order to take into account the academic and social characteristics of the teacher candidates.

### Open-ended Questions Form

The FIT-Choice Scale was developed by Watt & Richardson (2007) and used to assess factors influencing the choice to teach for prospective teachers. The scale contains 12 motivation factors, 5 factors for beliefs about the profession, and 1 factor for career choice satisfaction (Watt & Richardson, 2007). As emphasized earlier, the motivation factors are ability, intrinsic career value, fallback career, job security, time for family, job

transferability, shape future of children/adolescents, enhance social equity, make social contribution, work with children/adolescents, prior teaching and learning experiences, and social influences each of which contains 3 items, except the time for family factor which contains 5 items. Following the original format of the scale, all motivation items were prefaced by “I chose to become a teacher because.” As was the case in the original scale, a seven-point Likert type response format was used. Thus, possible responses ranged from 7 (extremely important) to 1 (not at all important).

## Data Analysis

### Quantitative Data

As a result of the collected data with the personal information form, frequency and percentage were calculated. As a result of the collected data through the scale, parametric tests (after examining normality values and other assumptions) were used.

### Qualitative Data

The responses of participants to open-ended questions were analyzed through content analysis. The main purpose of content analysis is to reach the concepts and relations that can explain the collected data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2003). Frequency tables were created by coding in the direction of the participants' expressions and determining the frequency of the encoded units. Coding was carried out by two different researchers and codes were agreed upon.

In order to calculate the reliability of the content analysis of qualitative data, after the implementation, the interview coding keys and the interview dossiers were read separately by the researcher and an expert and the necessary arrangements were made by discussing the issues of "agreement" and "disagreement". In order to calculate inter-rater reliability, the total number of agreements was divided by the sum of total number of agreements + disagreements (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis resulted in a high level of inter-rater reliability (87%).

## FINDINGS

In this section, the research findings and interpretations obtained from the analysis of the data are respectively given in tabular form.

### 1. How are the motivations of the pedagogical formation trainees' preference for the teaching profession?

The results of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching score results by gender are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Motivations for teaching scores of pedagogical formation trainees

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total	419	148,00	257,00	211,2482	23,23842
Valid N (listwise)	419				

The analysis results of the pedagogical formation trainees according to the motivation for teaching scores ( $\bar{X} = 211.24$ ,  $S = 23.23$ ) show that individuals have a high level of motivation for teaching.

### 2. Do the reasons of the pedagogical formation trainees preference for the teaching profession differ significantly in terms of various variables (gender, age, department)?

The results of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching score t-test results by gender are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Pedagogical Formation Trainees' Motivations for teaching score t-Test results by gender

gender	n	$\bar{X}$	S	sd	t	p
female	239	209.41	7777.00	26.26	-1.867	.604
male	180	213.68	2954.00			
total	419					

When Table 3 is examined, it was found that the motivations for teaching scores of the pedagogical formation trainees did not differ significantly by gender ( $t = -1.867$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

The results of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching score results by age are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Pedagogical Formation Trainees' Motivations for teaching scores by age

age	N	$\bar{X}$	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
21-25	119	203,41	21,16	1,93
26-30	124	218,75	20,43	1,83
31-35	113	213,60	25,59	2,40
36 and over	63	207,06	22,76	2,86
Total	419	211,24	23,23	1,13

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that the highest mean of motivations for teaching scores are individuals in the 26-30 age group ( $\bar{X} = 218.75$ ) and the lowest mean of motivations for teaching score in the 21-25 age group ( $\bar{X} = 203.41$ ).

Table 5 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance to determine the differentiation of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching scores by the age group.

**Table 5.** One-Way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results of Pedagogical Formation Trainees' Motivations for teaching scores by age

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	LSD
between groups	16015.287	3	5338.429	10.564	.000	21-25 and 26-30
within groups	209714.899	415	505.337			21 -25 and 31 -35
total	225730.186	418				

The results of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching score results by department are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Pedagogical Formation Trainees' Motivations for teaching scores by department

department	N	$\bar{X}$	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Turkish Lang.	61	208.83	19.11	2.44
Foreing Lang	73	223,70	16,88	3,08
Mathematics	38	212.07	22.17	3.59
Physics	27	211.88	23.00	4.42
Chemistry	27	218.92	17.81	3.42
Biology	30	218,53	21,78	2,54
Philosophy	33	193.63	31.55	5.49
Sosiology	45	210.17	25.39	3.78
Economics	34	208.52	23.84	4.08
Radio-TV-Cin	15	204.80	26.64	6.87
Psychology	36	205.80	16.47	2.74
Total	419	211.24	23.23	1.13

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the highest mean of motivations for teaching scores are in the foreign language department ( $\bar{X} = 223.70$ ) and the lowest mean of motivations for teaching score in the philosophy department ( $\bar{X} = 193.63$ ).

Table 7 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance to determine the differentiation of pedagogical formation trainees' motivations for teaching scores by department.

**Table 7.** One-Way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results of Pedagogical Formation Trainees' Motivations for teaching scores by department

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LSD</i>
between groups	22739.35	10	2273.93	4.57	.000	Tur – For. Lang.
within groups	202990.83	408	497.52			Tur – Bio.
total	22739.35	418				Tur – Philo. For. Lang - Philo Mat – Philo Psy - Philo

The result of the analysis of variance in Table 7 revealed that this difference in the mean of motivations for teaching scores of pedagogical formation trainees was statistically significant ( $F = 4.57$ ,  $p < .05$ ). compared to that of the subjects who received pedagogical formation training. In other words, the motivation for teaching levels of pedagogical formation trainees varies in terms of department.

### 3. How do the pedagogical formation trainees describe the teaching profession?

In this section, the answers about how do pedagogical formation trainees describe the teaching profession in the open-ended questions form are examined. Table 8 contains the statements of pedagogical formation trainees about the teaching profession.

**Table 8.** Pedagogical formation trainees' views on teaching as a career choice

THEME	CODE	f (211)
<b>personal utility</b> 82	enjoyable	26
	easy	17
	learning through teaching	14
	voluntary	11
	appeals to heart and brain	8
	important	6
<b>social utility</b> 85	shapes the society	25
	respectful	23
	protects national values	9
	adopted by society	8
	valuable	7
	blessed	5
	leads the truth	4
	model for students	4
<b>Expertise Requirement</b> 44	requires patience	11
	requires responsibility	10
	requires devotion	9
	requires skills	8
	teaching profession	6

When Table 8 is examined, it is seen that the pedagogical formation trainees define the teaching profession as a pleasant occupation ( $f = 82$ ). Also, while the vast majority indicated social effects ( $f = 85$ ), some expressed the need for expertise and not easy as it seems ( $f = 44$ ).

### 4. What are the factors influencing teaching profession choices of Pedagogical Formation Trainees

In this section, the answers about the factors influencing teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees in the open-ended questions form are examined. Table 9 contains the statements of pedagogical formation trainees about the factors influencing teaching profession choices.

**Table 9.** Factors Influencing Teaching Profession Choices of Pedagogical Formation Trainees

THEME	CODE	f (421)
<b>intrinsic motivations</b> 117	compulsion	48
	desire to teach	24
	time for family	16
	life-long career	15
	embrace	13
	aspiration	11
<b>extrinsic motivations</b> 239	family pressure	42
	good status in the society	36
	Fees, job security	35
	holidays	30
	Prior learning experiences	28
	Reasonable workload	26
	time to earn extra money	21
	teaching skills	14
<b>altruistic motivations</b> 66	shape future	21
	love children/people	18
	contribution to the social development	16
	Raising Atatürkist individuals	11

When Table 9 is examined, intrinsic motivations for the teaching profession of pedagogical formation trainees are found to be higher ( $f = 239$ ). Also, while quite a large majority indicated extrinsic motivations ( $f = 229$ ) some have expressed altruistic motivations such as shaping society ( $f = 66$ ).

### Results and Discussion

This research was conducted to investigate the factors that influence teaching profession choices of Pedagogical Formation Trainees, to determine the perceptions on teaching and to question the relation of the profession choices with various variables. The general results of the study show that the teaching profession is preferred because of intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivational reasons. Some situations in which internal causes are more effective, such as the reasonable workload, the duration of a vacation, satisfactory fees; gender is not a significant variable; the variation of age group and department make a difference in the individuals' motivation to teach are the main findings of the research. From this point forth, it can be referred that the reason for choosing the teaching profession is multidimensional.

However, similar situations are clearly seen in the literature when compared with other studies based on career choice of teacher candidates. The reasons for teaching profession choices of individuals are more dependent on internal motivation can be interpreted as it is mostly due to the opportunities that the profession will provide rather than the desire to teach. Similarly, Papanastasiou & Papanastasiou (1997) and Sinclair (2008) found that the attractiveness of choosing a teaching profession lies in more internal factors than external factors. The findings of the research conducted by Sinclair (2008) show that the self-interested and extrinsic factors on career choice of individuals are more dominant than those of intrinsic and altruistic factors. Moreover, in many studies (Acat & Yenilmez, 2004; Boz & Boz, 2008; Gençay & Gençay, 2007; Çermik, Doğan & Şahin, 2010; Gürbüz & Sülün, 2004; Salı, 2013) conducted in Turkey, individuals' motivations to teaching have been examined and the internal situations such as career, fees and social status have been seen as the foreground.

As stated in the answers to the open-ended questions, reasons such as "individual's score is enough only for the existing department" or "obligation" may have affected the choices which are significant on behalf of the departments with higher university entry points. A study by Salı (2013) shows that individuals may have department-specific reasons in career choice such as personal utility value and extrinsic career value. The finding on individuals' ages and career choices can be explained by the fact that candidates have to deal with career choices more autonomously based on age and experience (Çermik, Doğan & Şahin, 2010). Findings on extrinsic motivation confirm the findings of a study (Kniveton, 2004) that family and society are more effective than teachers on career choices of candidates. The present study indicates that Pedagogical Formation Trainees intend to choose a career in teaching and factors that are crucial in their choice of career. Based on the results of this

Pedagogical Formation Trainees have been influenced by intrinsic factors such as the long holidays, potential talent for teaching, social status, extrinsic factors such as family pressure, Prior learning experiences, Fees, job security and altruistic factors such as shaping future, sacred profession. The results of the study reveal that pedagogical formation trainees have similar reasons for career choice as teacher candidates in teacher training institutions. In this sense, it is considered that there is a need to determine the implementations that can be made for the teaching profession choices of pedagogical formation trainees and to examine the effectiveness of these implementations.

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