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FACTORS INFLUENCING DECIDING FOR A CAREER IN EDUCATION AS SECOND CAREER OPTION

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Abstract

Career selection represents one of many important choices students make in determining future plans. The decision to take on the type of career they choose today will impact on the students either positively or negatively throughout their lives (Ushurhe, 2015). The purpose of our study was to find out the factors which influence the student's choice of teaching as a career according to gender and their educational profile.The present study is based on an exploratory research which aims to identify and prioritize the factors that influence the decision of choosing a career in education among students who subscribed to a vocational training course as a second career option, both according to gender and field of study. To investigate the motivation for student's choice of teaching as a career, we used the Factors Influencing Teaching Choice Scale (FIT-Choice scale, Watt & Richardson, 2007). Another aim of the study is to determine whether there are potential relations between motivational factors for teaching (intrinsic value, job security, time for family, social contribution, work with children/ adolescents) and the satisfaction of the career chosen (satisfaction with choice). The present research is based on a sample of 145 first year students.The study concluded that job security, time for family, make social contribution and working with childre/adolescents are the most important teacher characteristics that can influence student's choice of teaching as a career.

Keywords: Teacher career, career option satisfaction, intrinsic value, choosing a career.

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1. Introduction

Career indecision represents one of the key aspects in the field of vocational psychology. The process of career exploration and decision making can be a particularly stressful time in an adolescent's life and sometimes the adolescents have to recourse to coping mechanisms such as placing the responsibility for making a career decision onto others and may even delay or avoid making a choice, which could ultimately lead to a less than optimal decision (Gati & Saka, 2001).

Career indecision represents one of the major issues in the field of vocational psychology (Brown & Rector, 2008; Savickas, 2006). This concept began to be increasingly studied as a result of increased personnel fluctuation rate, job transitions and the behavior that adolescents frequently adopt (Fouad & Bynner, 2008). Therefore, career indecision has been defined as the inability to make decisions in various contexts and situations (Gaffner & Hazler, 2002; Patalano & Wengrovitz, 2006; Di Fabio & Palazzeschi, 2012), respectively to face up the challenges that involve defining in a realistic way the vocational direction (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996).

Since the emergence of career decision-making self-efficacy concept, a number of studies have demonstrated its importance in the study of career development. For example, several studies have found positive relationships between career decision-making self-efficacy and: vocational identity (Gushue, Scanlan, 2006), career exploration (Blustein, 1989), occupational self-efficacy (Taylor & Popma, 1990), career decision-making attitudes (Luzzo, 1993), self-esteem (Robbins, 1985) and preference for growth in one's career (Gianakos, 2001).

2. Problem Statement

It is well known the key role that a professor holds in forming new generations and implicitly the human capital of society, yet the interest for this profession declines at global level amongst young people (OECD, 2004; Johnson și Birkeland, 2003; Liu, Kardos, Kauffman, Preske, & Johnson, 2000; Preston, 2000; Henke, Chen și Greis, 2000) no matter the field of study. The research published by Liu & colab. (2000) revealed the fact that income differences between educational staff and other occupations, along with disillusions and difficulties specific to teaching activities are the main factors that make this profession less attractive.

According to Brookhart & Freeman (1992), intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic factors are the main categories of motivators for choosing a career in education, but according to Watt and colab. (2012) there are intercultural differences for prioritizing the decision factors linked to this occupational domain. Therefore, while in developed countries like France, Belgium, Holland, United Kingdom or Canada the main motivational factors are the desire to work with children and adolescents along with the need for self-actualization, in countries like Camerun (Abangma, 1981), Brunei (Young, 1995), Zimbabwe (Chivore, 1988) or Jamaica (Bastick, 1999), extrinsic factors (salary, job security, status) are more important than intrinsic or altruistic ones (Book & Freeman, 1986; Brown, 1992, Moran et. al., 2001). The research that targeted extrinisic motivational factors provide more various results, in the sense that whereas some consider that stability is very important in choosing to become a teacher (Farkas et al., 2000, Milanowski, 2003), others believe that the less important values are the salary and social status (Richardson & Watt, 2006). In the study of Yong Yu & Bieger (2013), the most important values include work with children,

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the need to have a social contribution, the perception of personal teaching skills and previous experiences regarding teaching, while less significant values are fallback career and time spent with family.

The FIT-Choice model (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) is based on expectancy-values theory (Eccles et. al., 1983; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) and was framed by Watt and Richardson (2006; 2007) to provide a theoretical psychometrical integrated background, developed and validated within Australian context (Watt & Richardson, 2007) and later within other social-cultural contexts. According to this model, the decision of choosing a career in education is determined by previous experiences on learning and teaching (social influences; social persuasion), which are accompanied by other immediate influences such as perception over task: task challenge (expert career, demanding tasks) and task reoccurrence (social status and morality, income); self-perception (perception over teaching skills); intrinsic values regarding a career: personal usefulness value (job security, job transferability, time for family), social usefulness value (implication in the formation of children/adolescents, consolidating social equity, making a contribution to society, satisfaction of working with children/adolescents) and quitting a career (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Therefore the model included constructs for each component of expectancy-value relation (intrinsic, achievement and usefulness values).

Wigfield & Eccles (1992) agree that the most important intrinsic values regarding choosing a career are: usefulness, cost and achievement, all of these being linked with the satisfaction of doing the work itself, the usefulness - in the sense that the activity is beneficial to others and the cost – meaning the sacrifice and the effort undergone for carrying out the certain activity. The same authors claim that expectancies towards success are important variables that are taken into account for a career decision, mainly involving beliefs and perception over personal skills.

However, Watt, Richardson (2008) believe that the main motivational factors that determine people to choose a teacher career are susceptible of later influencing their professional commitment and the methods applied in their teaching activity

3. Research Questions

What are the factors that lead to the decision of working as an educational instructorin the case of students who subscribed for a vocational training course as a second career option, both from a gender as well as a field of study perspective?

4. Purpose of the Study

The present study is intended to be an exploratory research through which we aim at identifying and later be able to prioritize the factors that lead to the decision of working as an educational instructorin the case of students who subscribed for a vocational training course as a second career option, both from a gender as well as a field of study perspective. Moreover, we wish to study whether there are correlations between the identified factors.

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5. Research Methods

5.1. Participants

The study included 145 students enrolled in the psycho-pedagogical training program at the Babes Bolyai University, students from the first year of the Faculty of Letters (N = 43, M = 22, SD = 12,5), the Faculty of History and Philosophy (N = 28, M = 79,5, SD = 8,22), Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences (N = 22, M = 54,5, SD = 6,49) Faculty of Physical Education and Sports (N = 52, SD = 119.5, SD = 15.1).

5.2. Research design

The proposed study is of an exploratory nature, which aims at identifying the reasons why the students decided to opt for the profession of teacher and implicitly the hierarchy of these reasons, according to gender and the field of study. Additionally, it is desired to identify the potential existing relationships between the identified motivation factors and the career choice satisfaction. In this sense, it was chosen for a correlational and quasi-experimental design.

5.3. Measures

The two variables investigated in this study (motivations for teaching factors and career choice satisfaction) were measured using Factors Influencing Teaching Choice Scale (FIT-Choice Scale; Watt & Richardson, 2007)

Factors Influencing Teaching Choice Scale (FIT-Choice Scale; Watt & Richardson, 2007) contains 76 items which comprise 12 motivation factors, 5 factors for perceptions about the profession, and 1 factor for career choice satisfaction. Motivations for teaching factors include intrinsic value, job security, time for family, job transferability, shape future of children/adolescents, enhance social equity, make social contribution, work with children/adolescents, self-perceptions of individuals' own teaching abilities, the extent to which teaching had been a ''fallback'' career choice, social influences, and prior positive teaching and learning experiences. The Perceptions about the teaching process comprising five factors: expert career, high demand, social status, salary, and social dissuasion and the Professional engagement and career development aspirations subscale compromising the following factors: social dissuasion and satisfaction with choice.

The answers provided are framed on a Likert scale from 1 to 7 where 1 (not important) and 7 (extremely important). According to Cronbach's alpha measurements, the internal consistency of the scale is high (ranging from .90 to .97), and exploratory factor analysis with image extraction and oblimation rotation has shown good evidence for convergent and divergent construct validity with pattern coefficients ranging from .56 to .95 (Watt & Richardson, 2007)

5.4. Procedure

In the first stage all participants were informed about the purpose of the present investigation and about the instrument used to collect the data. To avoid any measuring error that might have been due to the data collection procedure, all participants were given a collective briefing before questionnaire completion. After this stage every participant had individually filled the form in a paper-pencil format.

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6. Findings

Table 01. Means of factors related to choosing a career in education according to gender

Gender		Intrinsec value	Job security	Time for family	Make social contribution	Work with children/ adolescents	Social status	Salary	Satisfaction
Masculin	Mean	4,64	5,09	4,70	4,54	5,19	4,51	4,19	4,92
	N	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	61
	Std. Deviation	1,30	1,14	1,25	1,05	1,09	1,06	1,04	1,39
Feminine	Mean	4,26	4,75	4,68	4,66	4,67	4,63	3,73	4,62
	N	84	84	84	84	84	84	84	84
	Std. Deviation	1,21	1,37	1,38	1,32	1,44	1,04	1,45	1,40
Total	Mean	4,42	4,89	4,69	4,61	4,89	4,58	3,92	4,75
	N	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	145
	Std. Deviation	1,26	1,28	1,32	1,21	1,32	1,05	1,31	1,40

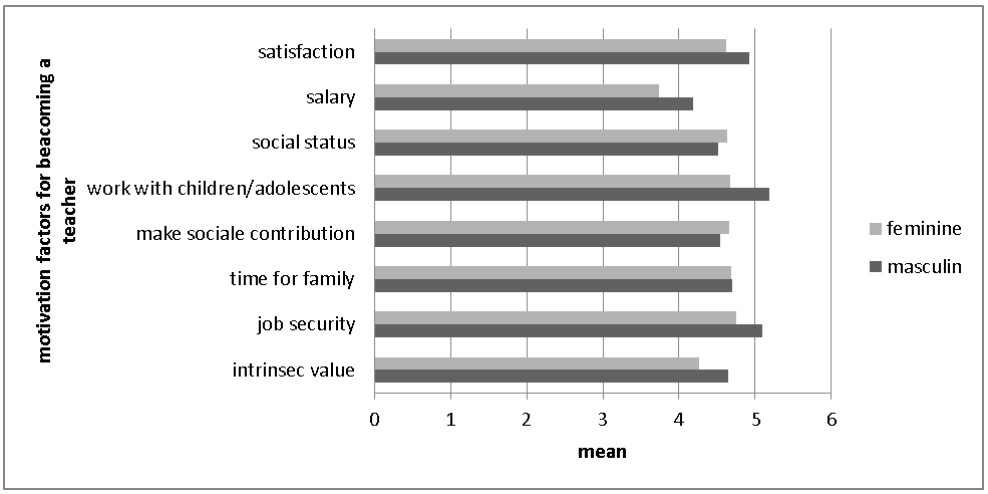

Table 02. Means of factors related to choosing a career in education according to field of study

		Intrinsec value	Job security	Time for family	Make social contribution	Work with children / adolescents	Social status	salary	satisfaction
Faculty of Letters	Mean	4,22	4,70	4,24	4,43	4,40	4,66	3,46	4,39
	N	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
	Std. Deviation	1,26	1,54	1,63	1,43	1,55	,94	1,46	1,70
Faculty of History and Philosophy	Mean	4,48	4,97	4,75	4,61	5,20	4,50	4,60	5,28
	N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Std. Deviation	1,28	1,15	1,22	1,42	1,09	1,01	1,19	1,21
Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences	Mean	4,52	4,60	4,78	4,69	4,93	4,86	3,43	4,63
	N	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
	Std. Deviation	1,21	,99	1,06	1,09	1,19	,92	1,44	,92
	Mean	4,52	5,13	5,00	4,72	5,12	4,44	4,15	4,80

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Faculty of Physical Education and Sport	N	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
	Std. Deviation	1,28	1,21	1,11	,94	1,20	1,20	,95	1,34
Total	Mean	4,42	4,89	4,69	4,61	4,89	4,58	3,92	4,75
	N	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	145
	Std. Deviation	1,26	1,28	1,32	1,21	1,32	1,05	1,31	1,40

Figure 01. Motivation factors for becoming a teacher

It can be noticed that there are gender differences regarding the motivational factors linked to choosing a teacher career. Thus, the factors contributing to the career decision making process in the case of female population are: make social contribution (M=4,66; SD=1,32) and social status (M=4,63; SD=1,04). Regarding male participants, the factors that they take into account

when choosing a career in education, as a career alternative are: job security (M=5,09; SD=1,09), work with children or adolescents (M=5,19; SD=1,09), salary (M=4,19; SD=1,04) and satisfaction (M=4,92; SD=1,39).

Moreover, significant differences are reported regarding students' field of specialization. For the students from the Faculty of Letters, the most important reasons for becoming a teacher are job security (M=4,70; SD=1,54), make social contribution (M=4,43; SD=1,55), social status (M=4,66; SD=0,94) and satisfaction (M=4,39; SD=1,70), compared to the students from the Faculty of History and Philosophy where job security (M=4,97; SD=1,15), time for family (M=4,75; SD=1,22), work with children or adolescents (M=5,20; SD=1,09) and satisfaction (M=5,28; SD=1,21) represent the main factors when they consider a career in education as a second occupation option. Student from the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences believe that time for family (M=4,78; SD=1,06), make social contribution (M=4,69; SD=1,09), social status (M=4,93; SD=1,19) and salary (M=4,86; SD=0,92) are most significant motivational factors in choosing a career as a teacher, whereas the students from the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport place more importance on job security (M=5,13; SD=1,21), time for family (M=5; SD=1,11), social status (M=5,12; SD=1,20) and satisfaction (M=4,80; SD=1,34) as factors they would take into account.

Table 03. Correlations between Motivations for Becoming a Teacher and the Career Choice Satisfaction

		Intrinsic value	Job security	Time for family	Make social contribution	Work with children / adolescents	satisfaction
Intrinsec value	Pearson Correlation	1	,368**	,334**	,372**	,393**	,329**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
Job security	Pearson Correlation	,368**	1	,513**	,304**	,529**	,460**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,000	,000
Time for family	Pearson Correlation	,334**	,513**	1	,326**	,506**	,262**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000	,000	,001

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Make social contribution	Pearson Correlation	,372**	,304**	,326**	1	,327**	,175*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000		,000	,036
Work with children / adolescents	Pearson Correlation	,393**	,529**	,506**	,327**	1	,325**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	,329**	,460**	,262**	,175*	,325**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,001	,036	,000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Analyzing the results from table 3, it can be noticed there is a positive relation between motivational factors related to choosing a career as a teacher and the satisfaction of the choice made. Thus, after calculating the Pearson r correlation, we obtained a positive correlation between intrinsic values and the satisfaction of the choice made, with a score of $r(143) = 0,32$, $p<0,01$. Moreover, significant positive correlations were also obtained between the satisfaction of choice and job security ($r(143)=0,46$, $p<0,01$), time for family ($r(143)=0,26$, $p<0,01$), make social contribution ($r(143)=0,17$, $p<0,05$) and work with children/ adolescents ($r(143)=0,32$, $p<0,01$).

7. Conclusion

The present study aimed at investigating the main motifs for which students opt for a potential career in education based on the optional specialty courses they choose to enroll to. Based on the results obtained after comparing the means, we notice that across the entire investigated sample (N=145), the main motivational factors are represented by the desire to work with children and adolescents and job security, followed by satisfaction, time for family, desire to make a social contribution, social status and the income as least important. The analysis of results from the perspective of gender differences indicate the following: in the case of female participants the factors that rank the highest are job security, followed closely by time for family, satisfaction derived from work with children and adolescents and desire to make a social contribution. All these motifs are followed by social status, work satisfaction and income. In the case of male participants, the factors considered to be most important are: work with children and adolescents, job security, satisfaction, time for family, desire to make a social contribution and social status. The obtained data are in agreement with the data delivered by the literature with very small differences concerning the ranking.

The main limit of the present study is the small number of participants, due to which the results cannot be generalized to the entire population of Romania. Therefore we intend to that in a future study we include a larger sample and a more various population which could offer the possibility of generalizing the obtained data. Moreover, for a greater validity of the data we intend to use a correlational design in which all variables included in FIT-Choice Scale and CDDQ would be considered.

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