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"I chose teacher education because...": a look into Indonesian future teachers

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, implementation of the Law on Teachers and Lecturers in 2005 increased teacher salaries and led to an oversupply of students in teacher education programs, which might be due to no specific teacher education admission criteria. Consequently, limited teaching positions upon graduation result in more teacher education graduates undertaking non-teaching careers. Then, why do students enter teacher education? The study applies the Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) theoretical framework. Over eight hundred final-year undergraduate teacher education students from four universities participated in the study. Primary education participants were more motivated by their perceived teaching *ability, intrinsic value, job security, time for family*, opportunities to have a *second job, job transferability, make social contribution, work with children/adolescents, prior teaching and learning experiences*, and *social influences* than all other programs of study. Early childhood and special education participants entered the program because they desire to *enhance social equity*. English language education participants were the least motivated among others. Improving selection criteria for teacher education admissions, strengthening teacher induction programs, as well as refining the quality of teacher training institutions are crucial to ensure high-quality teachers in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS

Teacher education; student teacher; teaching motivation; teaching career; Indonesia

Introduction

Studies have suggested that teacher quality has impacts on students' learning outcomes (Beteille & Evans, 2019; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2005; 2018; World Bank, 2010). Effective teachers need to be capable of preparing students with essential knowledge and skills so that students become self-directed and lifelong learners in the future. Teachers' professional engagement early in their careers as well as their teaching styles in subsequent years are influenced by their initial motivations for teaching as teacher education students (Richardson & Watt, 2014). Investigating their motivations to become teachers can reveal reasons that draw individuals into teaching, and hence affect the length they stay in the profession itself. It also informs the extent of their engagement with their courses as well as their teaching roles and responsibilities (Heinz, 2015).

Focusing on the motivations behind why teacher education students choose to become teachers is crucial for improving our education system. These studies are important in informing effective teacher recruitment and retention policies, including national education policies and teacher

education programs. It is vital for the government to attract and retain high achieving students into teacher education to produce teachers of a high calibre. Research into students' motivation to enter the teaching profession has been widely conducted using various methods (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Fray & Gore, 2018; Han & Yin, 2016; Heinz, 2015). Reviews of student teachers' reasons for entering teacher education across countries found three main motivations: intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic reasons (e.g., Fray & Gore, 2018; Heinz, 2015). Cross-cultural studies of teacher motivation indicate that there are similar motivational factors amongst different settings (Watt & Richardson, 2012) and further studies are needed from diverse settings to understand the antecedents and consequences of teachers' motivation to teach (Watt, Richardson, & Smith, 2017).

Studies investigating pre-service teachers in the Indonesian context have been very limited. A study on teacher workforce planning in Aceh investigated 176 undergraduate students' reasons for choosing teacher education and their perceived career prospects. The study revealed that over 60% of the participants entered teacher education because the employment prospects as a teacher are better than other professions, another 20% perceived that teacher education study was easier than other courses, and a few participants enrolled in teacher education because it is the only option for further study in their area (Education Sector - Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership [ACDP], 2017). Another previous study also focuses on teacher quality improvement in public schools, highlighting the importance of recruiting high-quality teacher education candidates and supporting their development to become effective professionals (Ashadi, 2014). The following section describes teacher status and employment, as well as teacher education in Indonesia.

The present study

Teacher status and employment

As the fourth-most populated country in the world with a predicted seventh-largest economy by 2030, Indonesia is home to the fourth-largest number of students at approximately 50 million students. Three million teachers were employed in over 300,000 schools across 34 provinces (Ministry of Education and Culture [MoEC], 2017), and improving teacher quality has become a key policy development goal for the government.

In the recent global education reforms, reports from major international organizations (e.g., UNESCO and OECD) emphasized teacher certification as a basis for teacher quality (Motivans, Smith, & Bruneforth, 2006; OECD, 2005; 2018). Since the last decade, the Indonesian government has implemented the Law on Teachers and Lecturers (2005) to improve the quality of education. This law aims to professionalize teachers and lecturers, and to provide a legal guarantee for teaching as a profession. The law defines a teacher as *"a professional educator with the main tasks of educating (shaping character and morality), teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in formal early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education"* (The Law on Teachers and Lecturers No.14, 2005, p. 2); thus, teacher certification serves as formal acknowledgement of its professional status. The minimum teacher academic qualification was upgraded from Diploma-2 (two years of education after completion of senior secondary school) to a bachelor's degree or four years of higher education (Diploma-4), followed by passing a certification program which usually takes two years to complete (MoEC, 2013). The law regulates teachers' minimum competency standards, including professionalism, pedagogy, social skills and personal behaviour, and provides a professional allowance for teachers with certification and for those in remote areas.

In 2017, the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (MoRTHE) announced a ministerial regulation regarding teacher education standards. The teacher certification process was updated to include a Teacher Professional Education program (*Pendidikan Profesi Guru [PPG]*), a follow-up course targeted for two groups. The first group consists of pre-service teachers, including Bachelor of Education graduates and graduates from 4-year non-education undergraduate studies (e.g., Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science). The second group comprises in-service teachers

including civil servants and non-civil servant teachers who already have teaching experience (MoRTE, 2018a). The subject and activities undertaken in PPG program vary for pre-service and in-service teachers, but it allows them to deepen their pedagogical knowledge and skills as well as their subject-specific expertise.

In Indonesia, teachers can have different employment statuses. Private school teachers may be on a contract or permanently employed by private schools or education institutions. Teachers at public schools can be civil servants or contract teachers employed by national or district level governments. Being a civil servant teacher means receiving a life-long monthly salary and a pension after retirement. On the contrary, contract teachers are employed on a short-term basis, either by the school or the district government to fulfil a demand for teachers. Contract teachers do not receive a pension or government incentives, and nor do they have high job security. Consequently, they often teach in more than one school or have non-teaching jobs to bring in more income. The practice of working another job in addition to teaching may cause the high rate of teacher absenteeism (Jalal et al., 2009). There are no statistics available about the number of teachers with second jobs in Indonesia, perhaps due to the income received from the second or third jobs being paid in cash and non-taxable.

In a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, religion is a crucial aspect in Indonesia. The state acknowledges six religions: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Indonesians are required to select one religion and it is written on each national identity card. In schools, religious education is included in the curriculum and religion is a compulsory subject from primary to university. As most religions respect teaching as a noble profession, Indonesian teachers have high social status and are perceived as role models in society. As *gurus*, teachers are perceived as wiser than other members of society and are expected to share their knowledge and wisdom (Suryani, 2017). Despite this traditional view, in reality, the status of Indonesian teachers is low compared with other occupations and teachers in neighbouring countries. This is indicated by the low educational qualifications, salary, competence in subject matter and pedagogy, perceived motivation to teach, commitment to teaching, and official certification or recognition of teachers as professionals (Chang et al., 2014).

Teacher education

Since a presidential decree transforming teacher training institutes into universities in 1999, teacher education in Indonesia has become integrated into the faculties of education at these universities. As a result, these universities then also offer both teacher education and non-teacher educational studies. Although not all other Indonesian public and private universities offer teacher training programs, government funding ensures that there is at least one in each province through the specialized universities.

In these specialized universities, faculties other than education offer programs mainly for secondary teacher education based on subjects and non-education programs, with different degrees for the graduates. For instance, the Faculty of Language and Arts offers English literature and English language education programs. Some of the subjects could be similar, but the English language education program focuses on the teaching of English and the students must complete teaching practicums in their final year. A graduate from English literature entitles a Bachelor of Arts degree, while an English language education graduate obtains a Bachelor of Education. Similarly, for mathematics vs mathematics education, physics vs physics education, and other science programs offered by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, graduates from science streams receive a Bachelor of Science, while science education graduates receive a Bachelor of Education. Those with a bachelor's degree from non-education streams have the possibilities to become teachers but they must complete the PPG program as described in the previous section.

In countries like Finland, Germany, Taiwan and Singapore, entry into teacher preparation programs is highly selective, while this is not the case in Indonesia. Senior secondary graduates entering

teacher education at the public universities sit for the same enrolment test with other students who apply for other programs of studies such as social and political science, humanities, and law. Prospective students will be accepted based on their test results and the number of places available in each program. Private universities have their own admission test and selections which differ across institutions. There is no national standard or specific selection criteria for teacher education student admission at university. In the past, teacher education was less popular than other programs such as medicine, engineering and law. Since the implementation of the Law on Teachers and Lecturers, the number of senior secondary graduates entering teacher education has been increased from 200,000 in 2005 to over 1 million in 2010 (Chang et al., 2014, p. 99).

Job opportunities for teacher education graduates are often promoted as abundant, as they are not limited to teaching and are able to delve into the non-teaching occupations related to their degree. For instance, English education graduates can either work as English teachers or as writers, journalists, or translators. Further, teacher education programs have lower tuition fees when compared to other programs of study, such as medical and engineering programs. However, as government subsidies partially fund public universities only, private teacher education programs still tend to charge higher fees than public teacher education programs.

Senior secondary graduates, particularly from low-income backgrounds, often face difficulties in continuing to higher education studies because the government does not provide educational funding or loans, and there is a limited number of scholarships available for undergraduate study. There were over 4,700 higher education institutions with 6.1 million students in 2018. The majority of these institutions (90.7%) were private and 9.3% were public, with the majority of students (57.3%) enrolled in private higher institutions (MoRTHE, 2018b). Due to lower tuition fees and the popularity of programs offered at public universities, more senior secondary graduates preferred to study at public universities. Thus, enrolment into public universities is more competitive than private universities.

The number of teacher training institutes in Indonesia has been increased from only 90 institutes in 2005, to 374 in 2012, and it reached 421 in 2016 (MoEC, 2018). In writing, they aim to prepare future teachers to be competent in planning, delivering, and evaluating educational activities and to continuously develop their professional skills. However, MoRTHE records indicate that only 18 teacher training institutes were considered as excellent or accredited as "A", with 81 institutes were in the "B" category (MoEC, 2018). It is clear that the quality of teacher education needs to be urgently improved.

The increase in teachers' salaries induced by the Law on Teachers and Lecturers in 2005 has improved the appeal of teacher education to secondary graduates. This led to more candidates entering teacher education compared to the actual demand for teachers (World Bank, 2010) and consequently, only 53% of Indonesian teacher education graduates will become employed as teachers. This was confirmed by the Ministry records that the number of Bachelor of Education graduates exceeded the demand of the teacher workforce (MoEC, 2018). The government has intended to set a quota for people interested in becoming teachers and entering the PPG program based on the national teacher workforce demand on each subject of teaching, the capacity of teacher training institutions and the national government budget (MoRTHE, 2018c). Yet, the oversupply of pre-service teachers remains a big problem.

To address the issue of teacher quality, it is important to attract the best graduates into teaching. Since there are no national standard for teacher education admission and oversupply of pre-service teachers recorded, it is crucial to investigate students' motivations for entering into teacher education, whether they choose teacher education because they want to pursue a career as teachers, or they have other reasons. It is also noteworthy to understand how they perceive the teaching profession, and how their motivation and perception vary across programs of studies and universities given the diverse nature and prestige of these programs and type of universities. This paper addresses these important issues.

Literature review

Although previous findings offer insights into the main reasons why individuals chose teaching as a career, it is difficult to compare them due to different research methods used across studies. Comparing motivational factors across different settings using the same psychometrically validated measures can further contribute to a better understanding of the impact of cultural, economic and other possible factors on teachers (Watt et al., 2017). This is the main reason for using Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) framework and its instruments (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Originally created and validated in Australia, the FIT-Choice framework has been widely adopted internationally and translated to over 17 languages (Watt et al., 2017). It allows for a strong foundation for conceptualizing teaching motivation factors and other related factors, such as perceptions and professional development elements (Richardson & Watt, 2006, 2010, 2014; Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2008; Watt et al., 2017). The FIT-Choice framework is founded on the expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation (Eccles [Parsons] et al., 1983; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). *Expectancy* is described as individuals' beliefs and judgements about their capabilities to successfully accomplish a task and is future-oriented, predicting a range of achievement behaviours including achievement, choice and persistence (Eccles [Parsons] et al., 1983). *Value* (i.e., subjective value) is defined as individuals' beliefs on why they engage in specific tasks consisting of attainment value, utility value, intrinsic value and cost. *Attainment value* is the personal importance of completing particular tasks successfully. *Utility value* refers to the extent to which a task is beneficial for individuals with regards to their current and future goals, including career goals. Utility and attainment are sometimes combined and termed "importance value". *Intrinsic* or *interest value* is the gratification people gain from performing an activity; when people intrinsically value an activity, they engage with it fully and persist. Task-specific beliefs such as perceptions of the difficulty of different tasks and an individual's own goals and self-scheme are consequently guided by expectancies and values, as well as the individual's perception of others' attitudes and expectations for them, and her/his interpretation of previous achievement outcomes (Eccles et al., 1983).

The FIT-Choice framework suggests that individuals' choices and behaviours are influenced by their expectancies and values (Watt & Richardson, 2007). The original framework consists of 12 motivational factors (*ability, intrinsic 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, social influences*), five factors for perceptions about the teaching profession (*expertise, difficulty, social status, salary, and social dissuasion*) and one *career choice satisfaction* factor.

Regarding motivational factors, the framework consists of preceding socialization influences: *prior teaching and learning experiences, social influences* and *social dissuasion*. *Social influences* measure influences from family and friends with regards to the choice of a teaching career. Conversely, *social dissuasion* refers to influences from others discouraging an individual from becoming a teacher. These variables influence the following motivational factors. *Ability* is an individual's perceived teaching abilities. *Intrinsic value* measures participants' personal interest in, and enjoyment of, teaching. *Social utility value* assesses future teachers' desire to positively contribute to the society by working as a teacher, with four component factors: *shape the future of children/adolescents, enhance social equity, make a social contribution, and work with children/adolescents* (Watt & Richardson, 2007). *Personal utility value* ascertains the influence of students' personal goals on their career decisions. It consists of motivations for *job security, job transferability, and time for family*. *Job security* measures whether students chose a teaching job in search of a reliable income and a steady career path. *Job transferability* assesses whether students chose teaching for the possibilities to work and travel and to be able to choose where to live. *Time for family* determines the extent to which students chose a teaching job to allow time for family, particularly after-school hours and during school holidays (Watt & Richardson, 2007). *Task perception* is the perception about teaching profession which includes *task demand* and *task return*. *Task demand* is measured by the perceived

difficulty and level of expertise required to teach. *Task return* refers to the extent to which teaching is viewed as high in social status with a good salary (Watt & Richardson, 2007). *Fallback career* indicates if students chose teaching as their last-resort career because they were not accepted into their first career choice or undecided as to their future career pathway.

The present study extends Watt and Richardson's framework by adding five motivational factors to incorporate the Indonesian cultural setting (Suryani, Watt, & Richardson, 2016): *religious influences* (being a teacher is a noble profession), *second job* (have time for additional work after school hours), *tuition fee for teacher education* (affordable compared to other programs), *admission into teacher education* (less competitive and easier to get into), *time for teacher education studies* (less time to complete compared to other programs) and one perception factor included *media dissuasion* (media reports regarding teachers' modest living and working conditions).

The FIT-Choice scale has been psychometrically validated and used extensively in international setting to determine the relationships between teaching motivations and other variables (e.g., Watt & Richardson, 2012; Watt et al., 2017). The following examples represent findings from FIT-Choice studies in Australia, Germany, Switzerland, United States, China, and Spain.

Watt and Richardson (2007) initially developed and validated the first FIT-Choice scale using a sample of 1,651 first-year pre-service teachers across three Australian universities (Richardson & Watt, 2006). Highly ranked motivations for becoming a teacher were *perceived teaching abilities*, *intrinsic value of teaching*, *the desire to make social contribution*, *shape future of children/adolescents*, and *work with children/adolescents*, whereas the lowest ranked included choosing teaching as a *fallback career* and *social influences*. A study of 1,287 pre-service teachers from five German universities conducted by König and Rothland (2012) determined the key motivations for pursuing a teaching career to be *work with children/adolescents*, *intrinsic value*, *shape future*, *perceived teaching ability*, and *make social contribution*. Berger and D'Ascoli's (2012) investigation of a sample of 483 in-service vocational teachers in Switzerland found that *ability*, *intrinsic value* and *social utility values* were also major motivations for becoming teachers. They also applied German and French translations of FIT-Choice scale. Lin, Shi, Wang, Zhang, and Hui's (2012) research into pre-service teachers' motivations in the United States ($n = 257$) and China ($n = 542$) established that across both countries, *social utility values* ranked highly in participants' motivations for choosing a teaching career while perceiving teaching as low in return. Pre-service teachers in the US rated teaching as high in demand, whereas those in China perceived teaching as low in demand. Further, US participants were more satisfied with their career choice than the Chinese participants. An exploration into 851 pre-primary and primary pre-service teachers from eleven faculties in Madrid, Spain by Gratacós, López-Gómez, Nocito, and Sastre (2017) revealed that *work with children*, *intrinsic career value*, and *shape the future of children* were powerful motivations for pursuing a teaching career. Motivational factors including *perceived teaching ability*, *intrinsic career value*, *social utility values* and *social influences* were found to be affected by participants' prior experiences with family, work, and prior informal teaching at school.

Methods

Participants and procedure

Students enrolled in teacher education programs across two public and two private universities in Jakarta and Yogyakarta provinces were invited to participate in this study. Each selected university offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs with reputable teacher education programs spanning over 50 years. A major proportion of Indonesian teacher education programs involve undergraduate students completing four years to successfully attain a bachelor's degree. At the time of data collection, participants have completed six of the required eight semesters. Final-year students are more likely to have clear career plans upon completing their program, including their decision to pursue teaching as a career, and thus were sampled for this study.

After securing ethics approval, the researcher communicated with deans or senior staff from each of the education faculties of the selected universities to arrange scheduling. An explanatory letter and a consent form were distributed along with paper questionnaires to all final-year teacher education students at each of the universities. Data collection occurred over one week for each university in the middle of the academic year. All students attending lectures on the day of administration were invited to complete the paper questionnaire supervised by the researcher and/or selected representatives. A majority of questionnaires were administered in classrooms at the end of classes, with others also during student meetings and faculty-student briefings. Despite variance in response rates between different locations and times of data collection, overall the response rate from students invited to partake in the survey was well above 95%. Participants from Public University 1 totalled at 328 students; those from Public University 2 at 223 students; those from Private University 1 at 184 students; and Private University 2 made up 67 students of the whole sample (age $M = 21.61$ years, $SD = 2.31$; 83% women). Moreover, a diverse religious background within the sample population was required due to the addition of religious influences as a motivational factor. Public universities are secular by regulation; however, due to the nature of Indonesia as a Muslim majority country, this was reflected in the study as Muslim students made up a majority of enrolled students. Hence, in the interest of religious diversity, two private Catholic universities were involved in this study to ensure a balanced representation from non-Muslim participants. Overall, there were 68% Muslim participants; 24% Catholic participants; 7% Protestants; 1% Buddhist and Hindu; and a further three participants who did not identify their religion.

Primary education students accounted for a large proportion of participants ($n = 293$, 37%), followed by science education (including mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology education) ($n = 261$, 33%); English language education at 16% ($n = 128$), early childhood, special education, guidance and counselling ($n = 115$, 14%), with a further five students who did not indicate their program of study. During their studies, 38% of participants were undertaking paid work ($n = 307$), one-third had past work experience ($n = 269$, 34%), 28% had no work experience at all, and two chose not to answer. Out of participants with work experience, 92% had indicated that it included teaching experience ($n = 530$), while the rest had non-teaching work experience ($n = 45$, 8%), and one participant did not specify the nature of their work experience.

Measures

Survey questions were initially developed in English. As the majority of participants were non-native English speakers, the questionnaire was back-translated into Bahasa Indonesia. The process of back-translation is recommended by American Psychological Association (APA, 2010). In this process, two bilingual academics who have knowledge in educational psychology translated the questions into Bahasa Indonesia, then the third bilingual academic translated independently back to English.

Motivation for entering teacher education was assessed using the FIT-Choice scale (Watt & Richardson, 2007). The FIT-Choice scale in the Indonesian context has been psychometrically validated (Suryani et al., 2016) consisting of 16 motivations⁷, six perceptions of teaching and one career satisfaction factors. As Indonesian teacher education students may choose non-teaching career pathways upon completing their degree, this study began items in motivational factors with *"I chose to enter teacher education because ..."* with response options rated from 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). This is slightly different from Watt and Richardson (2007)'s initial FIT-Choice study, where items began with *"I chose to become a teacher because ..."*. This Indonesian study comprised extra items for motivational factors, such as *"teachers can become a civil servant"* under *job security/career progression* due to the stable salary, health benefits, and pensions after retirement provided to Indonesian teachers with civil servant status. Additional items include *"I will have more time to do home duties"* under *time for family*; and *"my parents are teachers"* under

social influences. To account for the perceptions about teaching, an additional factor, *media dissuasion*, was included in this study.

Participants' teaching plans upon graduation were also investigated in this study, including if they had any intentions of teaching for their entire career, only partially or temporarily, or not teach at all. Those with plans to teach as a career were also asked to nominate their preferences regarding teaching location, level and type of school. As for participants not intending to teach, they were requested to indicate their future career plan and reasons for their career choices.

Data analyses

For a majority of factors, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients indicated good internal consistencies (all Cronbach's α range from .72 to .91, except for a job transferability = .69).

Comparing between motivations and perceptions based on the programs of study was achieved using one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) performed through SPSS. A series of Pearson correlations was conducted beforehand between all independent variables to check for compliance with the MANOVA requirement that the dependent variables should be correlated in the moderate range (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006).

Results

Contrary to the World Bank (2010) estimation that over half of teacher education graduates did not enter teaching profession, the majority of participants ($n = 657$, 82%) preferred to become teachers, 12% ($n = 94$) planned to teach for a few years and then switch to another career, 5% ($n = 39$) intended to pursue non-teaching occupations, and 1% ($n = 12$) did not have preferences. For those planning to teach, the city was the most popular location to work, followed by small cities and suburbs. Others selected villages and remote areas, with very few choosing to teach overseas or prioritizing flexibility depending on their spouse's work placement. Participants highly favoured teaching at a primary school level, followed by senior secondary, junior secondary, and kindergarten, with few participants intending to work as private tutors, private trainers for companies, or daycare staff.

In terms of school types, most participants would seek teaching in public school, followed by private religious, private non-religious, and public religious schools. Some participants did not have any preferences. The "career switcher" participants, along with those who did not plan to teach, indicated their plans to work in a private sector, own a business, or work either as a lecturer, writer, volunteer, civil servant, artist/musician or housewife.

This study found that the majority ($n = 636$, 79%) planned to have a second job, with a considerable number ($n = 530$, 66%) planning to teach and having an additional job at the same time. Only 109 (14%) participants aimed to focus on teaching career without additional jobs. Their preferred second occupations included being a small shop owner, private tutor, lecturer, private sector employee, writer, and farmer.

I chose to enter teacher education because ...

Findings indicated that *make social contribution* ($M = 6.00$, $SD = 1.00$), *prior teaching and learning experiences* ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 1.13$), and *work with children/adolescents* ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.13$), were the highest rated motivations, followed by *intrinsic value* ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 1.31$), religious influences ($M = 5.39$, $SD = 1.36$), *job security/career progression* ($M = 5.37$, $SD = 1.16$), and *second job* ($M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.34$). *Ability* ($M = 5.33$, $SD = 1.12$), *enhance social equity* ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.25$), *time for family* ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.25$), *job transferability* ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 1.28$) and *social influences* ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.32$) were moderately rated. Teacher education factors were slightly around midpoint with *tuition fee* ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.80$), *time for teacher education studies* ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.49$), and *admission into teacher education* ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.51$). The lowest-rated factor was *fallback career* ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.47$).

The programs of study were categorized into four groups: (1) mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology education (referred to as “science”); (2) early childhood, special education and guidance and counselling; (3) primary education; and (4) English language education. There was a statistically significant multivariate difference among the four programs of study in terms of motivations for entering teacher education, $F(48, 1566) = 4.76, p < .001$; Pillai’s Trace = .38; partial $\eta^2 = .127$. Univariate tests using Bonferroni correction ($p < .003$) indicated significant effects on all motivations except *fallback career* and *admission into teacher education*. The findings revealed that primary education participants were the most motivated to enter teacher education (Figure 1). They scored highest on *ability*, *intrinsic value*, *job security/career progression*, *time for family*, *second job*, *job transferability*, *make social contribution*, *work with children/adolescents*, *prior teaching and learning experiences*, and *social influences* than all other programs of study. Early childhood/special education participants scored highest on *enhance social equity*, *religious influences*, *tuition fee for teacher education* and *time for teacher education*. English language education participants were least motivated among others.

A statistically significant multivariate effect of universities was found in terms of participants’ motivations, $F(48, 1572) = 3.39, p < .001$; Pillai’s Trace = .28; partial $\eta^2 = .094$. Univariate tests using Bonferroni adjustment ($p < .003$) indicated a significant effect on *religious influences* (Figure 2). Participants from the two public universities scored higher on *religious influences* as motivations to enter teacher education than participants from the two private universities.

How do students perceive teaching as a career?

In terms of task demand, teaching was perceived as an occupation with high *expertise* ($M = 6.32, SD = 0.82$) and moderately *difficult* ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.15$), but it has a relatively high *social status* ($M = 5.57, SD = 0.99$) and moderate *salary* ($M = 4.58, SD = 1.23$). While the participants scored *media dissuasion* ($M = 4.39, SD = 1.61$) higher than *social dissuasion* ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.54$), they had high *satisfaction* with their choice ($M = 5.51, SD = 1.23$).

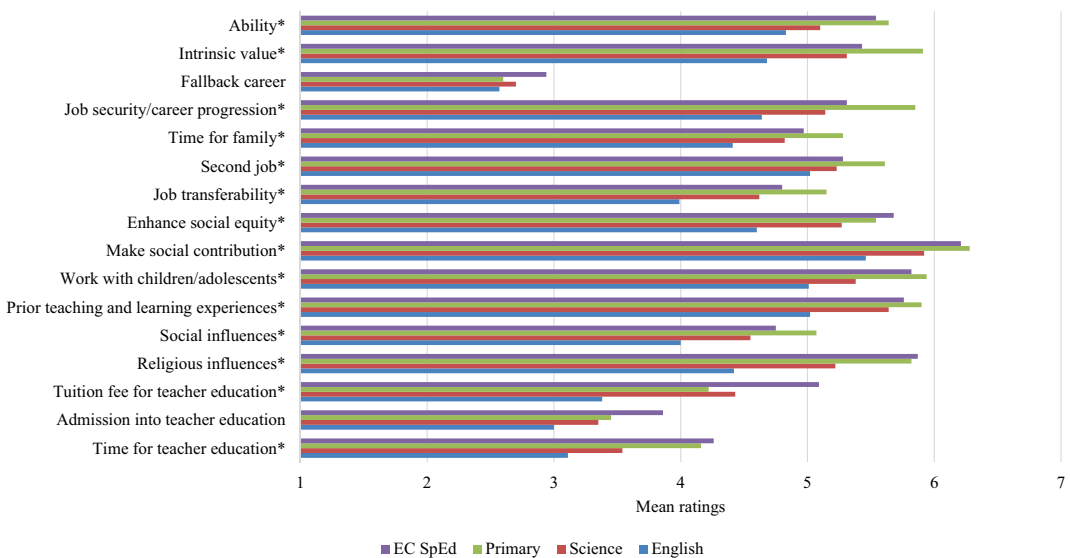


Figure 1. Differences in motivations for entering into teacher education by program of study. *Significant at $p < .003$ with Bonferroni adjustment from $\alpha = .05$. ECSpEd: Early childhood, special education and guidance and counselling, Science: Mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology. Items were rated on 7-point scales: 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). Additional factors to include the Indonesian setting: *second job*, *religious influences*, *tuition fee*, *admission* and *time for teacher education*.

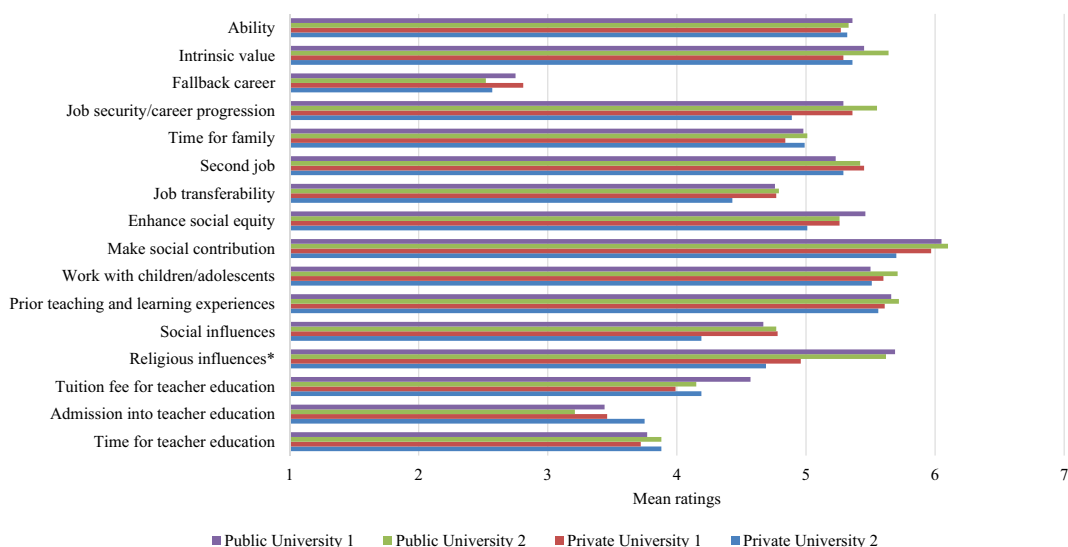


Figure 2. Different motivations for entering into teacher education among public and private universities students. *Significant at $p < .003$ with Bonferroni adjustment from $\alpha = .05$. Items were rated on 7-point scales: 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). Additional factors to include the Indonesian setting: *second job*, *religious influences*, *tuition fee*, *admission* and *time for teacher education*.

There was a significant multivariate effect of program of study on perceptions about teaching, $F(21, 2157) = 7.66$, $p < .001$; Pillai's Trace = .208; partial $\eta^2 = .069$. Follow-up univariate tests using Bonferroni adjustment ($p < .007$) specified significant effects of program of study on *expertise*, *social status*, *salary*, *media dissuasion* and *satisfaction with choice*. Primary education participants rated these factors higher than science, English and early childhood/special education. English language education participants scored these factors lowest and they were the least satisfied with the choice of entering teacher education (Figure 3).

A significant multivariate difference was also found among participants from the four universities in terms of their perceptions about teaching, $F(21, 2169) = 3.29$, $p < .001$; Pillai's Trace = .093; partial $\eta^2 = .031$. Follow-up univariate tests using Bonferroni adjustment ($p < .007$) indicated significant effects on *expertise*, *social status*, *salary* and *satisfaction with choice* (Figure 4). At the significance level of $p < .050$, Tukey HSD post hoc tests revealed significant differences that participants from either public university 1 or 2 perceived teaching as requiring high levels of knowledge with high social status, and also more satisfaction with their choice of becoming a teacher.

Discussion

Social utility values

This study found *social utility values* to be rated highest, which is in accordance with Indonesia's culture as a collectivist nation. Communities from collectivist cultures are more likely to achieve goals that contribute to the group's success, social interdependence, and maintains social harmony (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Oettingen, Sevincer, & Gollwitzer, 2008). In contrast, cultures with individualist tendencies prefer to pursue goals based on personal successes, social independence, and those that influence and persuade others.

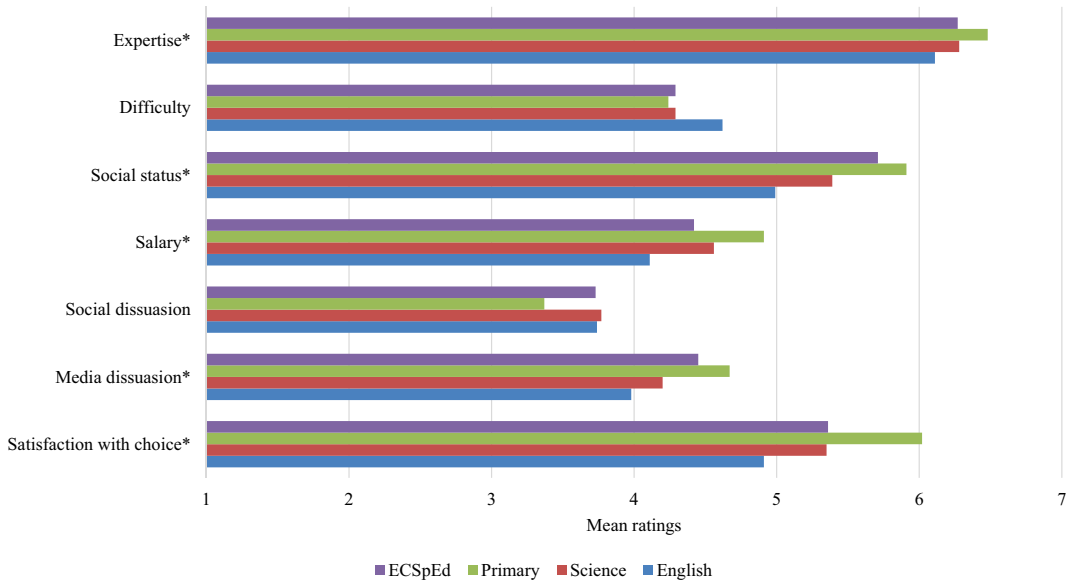


Figure 3. Differences in perceptions about teaching by program of study. *Significant at $p < .007$ with Bonferroni adjustment from $\alpha = .05$. ECSpEd: Early childhood, special education and guidance and counselling, Science: Mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology. Items were rated on 7-point scales: 1 (not at all) to 7 (extremely). Additional factor to include the Indonesian setting: *media dissuasion*.

Overall, participants entered teaching mostly as an opportunity to provide a service to society

The desire to contribute to society was the highest motivation among primary education students and the lowest among English education students. This may be due to the variety of pathways available to English education graduates such as becoming a translator or working in international companies. Early childhood/special education and science education students ranked in

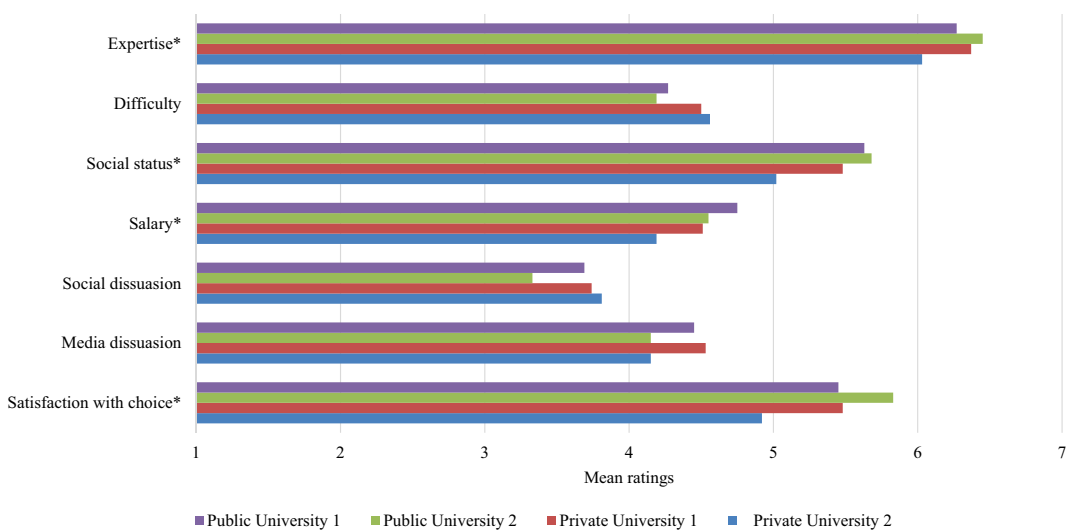


Figure 4. Differences in perceptions about teaching among public and private universities students. *Significant at $p < .007$ with Bonferroni adjustment from $\alpha = .05$. Items were rated on 7-point scales: 1 (not at all) to 7 (extremely). Additional factor to include the Indonesian setting: *media dissuasion*.

between those two. Primary education students were the most motivated to enter teacher education because of the opportunities to help children and adolescents learn compared with participants from other programs of study. Interestingly, early childhood/special education participants were more motivated to enter teacher education by the desire to help and work with socially disadvantaged children and youth than were those from the other programs of study. This may not be a surprise, given that the nature of teaching very young children and/or those with special needs requires an incredible amount of patience. Richardson and Watt (2014) suggest that social utility motivation during teacher education predicted a number of positive self-reported teaching styles throughout early-career teaching, including nurturing positive relationships with students.

Intrinsic value and ability

The experience most participants have as private tutors, part-time teachers at schools, or in practicums may serve as an explanation into why *intrinsic value* was rated slightly higher compared to personal utility value in this study. Teacher education participants tended to not have experience with limited school facilities and unmanageable classrooms, or have to deal with heavy workloads, which is different than full-time teachers. Hence, they may have found teaching to be an enjoyable pursuit, which could be a crucial factor in influencing their career aspirations. This is a positive sign, as students' intrinsic motivation to learn has been determined to be improved by intrinsically motivated teachers (Atkinson, 2000; Lam, Cheng, & Ma, 2009).

It was important to note that *social utility values* were more prominent than *intrinsic* and *ability* motivations in countries with collectivist cultures including Turkey (Eren & Tezel, 2010; Watt & Richardson, 2012) and China (Lin et al., 2012) as opposed to studies from Australia and the US (Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2012), and Switzerland (Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012).

Personal utility values

These Indonesian participants chose to enter teacher education for reasons related to their personal goals. All five *personal utility value* motivations, together with the newly added motivation *religious influences*, were highly rated. *Religious influences* were the highest, followed, in descending order, by *job security/career progression*, *second job*, *time for family*, and *job transferability*. Participants from the two public universities rated *religious influences* higher than participants from the two private universities as the majority of public university students are Muslim. This aligns with another finding where Muslim participants experienced religious influence stronger than other religious groups (Suryani, 2017).

Religion plays a major role in the lives of Indonesians as they consider the existence of God as a crucial aspect of their identity despite differences in religious affiliations. This is reflected in teacher education students' strong desires to ensure that their personal work goals do not morally clash with their own life goals, which is afforded through a career in education. In Indonesian society, teaching is widely perceived as a good and noble profession, along with lecturers and religious leaders, due to its duty to serve others without receiving a high level of monetary compensation. Hence, becoming a teacher provides opportunities for students to work in a socially decent and noble profession assisting others. These were confirmed through a study in Singapore, another southeast Asian country, where one motive for wanting to become teachers was "to answer the call from God" (Low, Lim, Ch'ng, & Goh, 2011).

Job security/career progression and second job

The second-highest motivation among the set of personal utility values was *job security/career progression*. Job security ranks very high in the priority list for Indonesian jobseekers when choosing

a profession as job markets in developing countries such as Indonesia is far more competitive when compared to developed countries. Primary education students were the most highly motivated by the desire for job security, followed by those in early childhood/special education and science education, with English education students rating this factor the lowest. Teachers have higher possibilities of securing a civil servant position which provides a stable salary, family allowance, and life-long pension. As the number of primary schools in Indonesia exceeds junior and senior secondary schools, primary education students have bigger opportunities to get a permanent teaching position or employed as a civil servant teacher.

The possibility of having a *second job* afforded by the shorter hours required in a teaching day in addition to becoming a teacher was an important consideration for many teacher education students when choosing teaching as a career. Consequently, most participants with intentions of teaching also planned to obtain a *second job*. These were often informal jobs, characterized by flexible working hours that complemented teachers' working demands and non-taxable with cash-in-hand payment. As such, no national records are available detailing current teachers' second jobs, working hours, and salaries earned. Studies into Indonesian teacher absenteeism showed that teachers living in cities with a higher level of formal education have more opportunities to obtain additional jobs (Usman, Akhmadi, & Suryadarma, 2007). Teachers are able to pursue education-related work, such as teaching part-time at private schools, working as private tutors, educational consultants or in school administration. However, they may not necessarily be education-related, with examples being running small shops or catering businesses. Teachers located in rural areas can also work in agriculture. As a consequence of having a second job, they may not be focused on their main role as a teacher. Interestingly, primary education students were the most motivated to have additional jobs outside of teaching, while English education students were the least motivated, and those in early childhood/special education and science education were in the middle. This may be due to primary education students being on demand as private tutors, while English education students are likely to already be pursuing a non-teaching pathway.

Time for family, social dissuasion, and media dissuasion

The large role family plays in Indonesians' lives contributes to *time for family* being rated as a major motivation for choosing teaching as a career. The working hours required of teachers allows them more time to spend with family when compared to other careers. This proved to be consistent with studies from other collectivist countries, as *time for family* scored slightly higher, but still within the moderate range, when compared to China (Lin et al., 2012).

Social dissuasion was scored slightly below the midpoint in the present study. That is, family and friends tended to not dissuade participants from becoming teachers. This is similar to studies from culturally different nations including Australia, US and Germany that found *social dissuasion* to be moderate (Watt et al., 2012) and in Switzerland, the lowest compared to all FIT-Choice studies. Another new factor, *media dissuasion*, scored moderately high. This aligns with Indonesians' negative perception of teaching as a profession influenced by mass media and thus discourages them from becoming teachers. Interestingly, although primary education participants were exposed to the negative portrayal of teachers by the media, they were also motivated by the opportunity to have time for family while working as a teacher.

Job transferability

In Indonesia, teacher education graduates are likely to pursue a teaching career domestically as their degrees are not internationally recognized. Hence, the original notion of *job transferability* in the Australian context as a motivation to obtain work overseas as teachers are not applicable in the Indonesian context. Instead, job transferability items were changed to refer to opportunities to work in other areas nationally. This study found *job transferability* to be the lowest-rated motivation compared to other personal utility values. Teacher education students in this study indicated their

intention to work in schools in the cities, which is consistent with the growing trend for Indonesians to migrate from rural to urban areas to access better life opportunities through working or studying. They are also able to obtain the same quality of life by commuting to cities while living in the suburbs. Additionally, when comparing participants across programs of studies, primary education students are likely to have more flexibility in choosing schools as there are more primary schools than secondary schools in Indonesia.

Social influences and prior teaching and learning experiences

In line with the strong sense of community in collectivist nations, Indonesian youth are more inclined to be more dependent on their parents and family and thus have their career plans and decisions influenced by parents, siblings, relatives and friends. In contrast, youth in Western societies tend to be more independent. Participants' families, parents, and friends strongly supported participants' decisions to become teachers as it complemented their individual abilities, experiences, and interests. In this study, the role of significant others, such as family and/or role models, were found to be positive influences on students' teaching career decision.

Prior teaching and learning experiences were scored as the second-highest motivation in this study, which can be attributed to the culture of respect that has been instilled in young Indonesian children for *gurus*. They are taught to treat teachers just like how they would respect their parents, and the high self-esteem teacher education students hold for past teachers perceived as role models undoubtedly inspired them to pursue teaching as a career. This is especially true for primary education participants who, when compared with the other three programs of study, had encountered the most positive teaching and learning experiences during their schooling.

Fallback career

The recent introduction of legislation increasing teachers' salaries has become a stronger inducement for choosing teaching as a career, in contrast to teacher education being a second choice for most Indonesian secondary graduates in the past. Consequently, current students chose to enrol into teacher education because it was their genuine desire to become teachers and not due to being rejected for other choices. This is reflected in the negative motivation of *fallback career* being the lowest-rated factor.

These findings align with all other FIT-Choice studies where participants chose to enter teacher education because they truly wanted to, not as a fallback, including studies conducted in Australia (Watt & Richardson, 2007), Croatia (Jugović et al., 2012), Turkey (Eren & Tezel, 2010; Kılınç et al., 2012), the US (Lin et al., 2012) and Germany (König & Rothland, 2012). Notably, however, a FIT-Choice study conducted in the Chinese context (Lin et al., 2012) found that some pre-service teachers' low university entrance examination scores constrained them from entering other preferred programs, hence leading them to pursue teaching as a *fallback career*.

Tuition fee, time and admission into teacher education

In this study, early childhood/special education students were the group most motivated to enter teaching due to less expensive tuition fees. Regarding *time for teacher education*, although the length of study is normally four years, similar to other undergraduate studies, it is still possible for teacher education students to undertake work during their study. Student teachers also have practical teaching skills, and the demand for private tutors, working a few hours per week, makes earnings possible.

Recently, teacher education has gained popularity due to the implementation of The Law on Teachers and Lecturers in 2005. Participants indicated that the less competitive nature for admission into the program was not their main motivation for entering. This was supported by the fact that

admission into teacher education was rated below the midpoint. In the last few years, the 10 popular programs at public universities with the highest number of applicants were business management, accounting, information technology/computer science/information systems, primary school teacher education, law, medicine, psychology, communication science, pharmacy and public health. Primary education was thus one of the favourite programs of study in public universities, even higher than law and medicine (unfortunately, the entrance data did not include private universities, where admission is managed independently by each university).

Perceptions of teaching as a career

Typically, Indonesian classrooms adhere to Hofstede's power distance dimension of culture (2011) where teachers are expected to possess a high level of knowledge, students must obey teachers' instructions, and the classroom structure is hierarchical with one-way communication. Consequently, teaching is seen as a profession requiring high levels of skill and knowledge, and thus findings confirmed that the *expertise* factor was rated highest.

Primary education students were the ones most likely to view teaching as a highly skilled occupation, followed by those in science and early childhood/special education and lastly, English education students. FIT-Choice studies conducted in diverse settings including Australia (Watt & Richardson, 2007), Germany (König & Rothland, 2012), Turkey (Eren & Tezel, 2010, Kılınç et al., 2012), and Switzerland (Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012) have also shown that teaching was perceived as a highly skilled occupation.

This study found that teaching is moderately regarded as a difficult and stressful profession. It is common for teachers in Indonesian rural public schools to be responsible for the education of 40 to 50 students in each classroom, although the student-teacher ratio in wealthy private schools in cities is undeniably lower. The further administration work teachers are often required to undertake also decreases the time available for planning and preparation, hence making the job even more challenging. This phenomenon is prevalent as FIT-Choice studies from Australia (Watt & Richardson, 2007), Germany (König & Rothland, 2012), Switzerland (Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012) and Turkey (Eren & Tezel, 2010, Kılınç et al., 2012) all indicated high levels of perceptions of teaching as a demanding profession.

Teaching is often portrayed negatively in the mass media as an occupation with a low salary and a heavy workload. It was interesting that the participants did not rate teachers' salaries as low, despite the fact that teachers receive lower salaries than other professions (OECD, 2012), and even compared to the national income (Jalal et al., 2009). Perhaps the students felt that once they have settled into a permanent teaching position, they would receive better remuneration. Primary education participants perceived teaching as a high-earning occupation more frequently than those from other programs of studies.

However, objective salary differences across FIT-Choice studies conducted in different contexts are also reflected in their respective findings. Salaries earned by teachers were rated slightly high in Germany (König & Rothland, 2012; Watt et al., 2012) and Switzerland (Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012), whereas they were more likely to be low in areas where participants believed teachers do not earn a satisfying salary such as Australia (Watt & Richardson, 2007), Turkey (Eren & Tezel, 2010), the US (Lin et al., 2012; Watt et al., 2012), and China (Lin et al., 2012).

Satisfaction with choice and social status

Participants were highly satisfied with their career decisions, and primary education participants were the most satisfied. Again, this is consistent with the fact that primary education participants were the most motivated to become teachers; they also perceived the *social status* of teaching more positively than students from other programs. As discussed in relation to their more positive motivations, and the prestige associated with the competitiveness and popularity

of the primary education program, primary education students are perhaps more engaged with their studies as they have limited work choices other than teaching once they graduate.

It was discussed earlier that teacher education graduates may have opportunities to work in non-teaching occupations, and that more opportunities exist for graduates from English language, arts and science education, than for graduates from primary and early childhood/special education who have specialized skills and knowledge which do not readily qualify them to enter other work sectors. Those who entered primary and early childhood/special education appeared more highly motivated to teach and more satisfied with their career choices.

Upon graduation, a large proportion of Indonesian teacher education students from this study indicated strong plans to become teachers for the entirety of the career. They were more likely to favour teaching at a primary school level, due to a majority of participants enrolling in primary education programs, followed by senior secondary, and then junior secondary. Public schools were more preferred compared to private schools as public school teachers are more likely to become civil servants, and hence receive the associated benefits of being an Indonesian civil servant. Additionally, participants indicated a strong preference for city-based schools, which is reflected in the oversupply of teachers in cities yet a shortage in remote areas (Jalal et al., 2009).

For 5% of participants, however, teaching was not included in their future career plans. Some intended to instead find work as private sector employees, business owners, writers/editors/journalists, civil servants, lecturers or housewives. They were influenced by factors including already having a job offer, undecided about teaching as a career, pursuing a better salary, or simply following a career path more relevant to their personal interests. Those who expressed a desire to teach temporarily then switch to another career at a later date cited teachers' lower salaries or wanting to follow their personal interests as reasons discouraging them from permanently teaching. Other reasons, such as teachers' heavy workload or social status, were not indicated by participants as a factor deterring them from pursuing teaching.

Conclusions

Most participants intend on being teachers for their whole career, which is a positive revelation. It is also noteworthy for teaching to be viewed as a profession requiring high expertise to elevate its status as equally high as other skilled professionals such as lawyers and engineers. Teachers are highly respected, and government policies have gradually improved teacher salaries for civil servant and permanent teachers. However, there is a limited quota for civil servant or permanent teachers and a majority of teacher education graduates end up working as part-time or casual teachers with lower salaries and less secure employment. More work is needed to support future teachers by revising career progression structures and compensation policies, as well as providing strong practicum components during their teacher education which will equip them in transition to teaching in the real classroom. An important question remains of how to improve teacher quality. It is also crucial to develop selection criteria for teacher education admission, strengthening teacher induction programs, as well as improving the quality of teacher training institutions.

Despite efforts conducted by the researcher to produce a large sample from four different universities that are diverse from both religiously and sociocultural points, these findings may not reflect teacher education students in other regions of Indonesia very well. It is vital for a further enquiry to be performed with a sample of student teacher participants that are nationally representative, encompassing all provinces and islands, in order to develop a comprehensive large-scale view of the motivations behind future teachers.

Note

1. *Shape future of children/adolescents* factor was omitted in this Indonesian study. For the psychometric validation of the scale, see (Suryani et al., 2016).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

Anne Suryani, PhD is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Vocational and Educational Policy, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne. She has completed a range of government-funded, consultancy and grant-based research of teacher motivation, religious tolerance and educational policy in Indonesia and Australia.

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