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9. What motivates people from business-related careers to change to teaching?

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INTRODUCTION

It is commonplace to observe that people who switch from one career to another do so for a variety of reasons. These may relate to remuneration, job security, the need to develop and challenge oneself, a desire to develop new skills and abilities, a quest for new experiences, to address a set of personal goals, or various combinations of these and other less well-articulated reasons. At its base, in any career change is some level of recognition that the current occupation is not a good fit for the individual. The process may involve a 'push' out of the present career, necessitating the search for new options. It may alternatively entail a 'pull' into another career and consequently away from the career currently being pursued. When a change to teaching requires further education, loss of income for at least a year, and is accompanied by a decline in occupational prestige, which is often the case when people leave business-related careers, then we might ask why people would choose such a course of action.

The motivations, aspirations and profiles of career switchers to teaching have been the subject of sporadic research interest across different countries over the last two decades (Serow and Forrest, 1994; Mayotte, 2003; Priyadharshini and Robinson-Pant, 2003; Richardson and Watt, 2005). These researchers have all suggested that for people who choose to move to teaching, the rewards of salary and career prestige are not a high priority. Their decision to seek a career change is based more on a desire to fulfil other goals and motivations, although researchers have not always sought to relate these to robust theoretical models concerning goals or motivation. Our 'FIT-Choice' (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) programme of research is an exception in that it is founded on the comprehensive 'expectancy-value' motivational framework of Eccles and her colleagues

(Eccles (Parsons) et al., 1983; Wigfield and Eccles, 2000). Although the Eccles et al. 'expectancy-value' model was initially designed to explain adolescents' – especially girls' – participation in mathematics-related activities, it has since been applied to participation in mathematics-related and other types of careers (e.g. Watt, 2006; Watt, in press), and we have developed this framework within the specific context of teaching as a career choice (see Richardson and Watt, 2006; Watt and Richardson, 2007).

For a society that explicitly evaluates career success on measures of salary and the corollary of career prestige, a considered decision to forego both in favour of, for instance, personal satisfaction, the rewards from making a social contribution, and a desire to keep learning, is often evaluated harshly by previous work colleagues and society at large. Over the last three decades there have been many changes in the nature of careers and career structures, but even one and a half decades ago in the context of the US, it could be observed that 'leaving the business world for teaching' was in the minds of many an 'implausible choice' (Crow et al., 1990, p. 197). Since that time little has changed in terms of social attitudes and values, reward structures and occupational prestige. Even though in surveys across different countries, the work and contributions of teachers are valued by parents and the community more generally (OECD, 2005), their rewards in terms of both salary and perceived occupational prestige are modest when compared with business-related careers, making teaching an intriguing career change for people from those professions.

The Present Study

Our study focuses on 90 individuals who previously pursued business-related careers, and who are now changing careers into primary and secondary school teaching. These people have prior qualifications ranging from undergraduate degrees through to Master's in Business Administration (MBA); as well as career experience in fields that include banking, human resources and marketing. They form a subset of our larger sample of commencing pre-service teacher education candidates across three Australian (N = 758) and two US universities (N = 121), studying in the 'graduate entry' mode. This mode provides an accelerated preparation programme typically entailing one to two years of teacher education that is available in a number of countries including Australia and the US. It is not uncommon for people in these programmes, which are open to candidates with relevant prior university qualifications, also to have experience in previous careers.

Table 9.1 Participants who pursued careers prior to teaching within and across cohorts

		Full sample N	Students with prior careers		Prior business professionals		
			n	% of full cohort	n	% of prior careers	% of full cohort
University	USyd	190	65	34.2	19	29.2	10.0
	Monash	280	121	43.2	32	26.4	11.4
	UWS	288	102	35.4	26	25.5	9.0
	UM	86	40	46.5	8	20.0	9.3
	EMU	35	15	42.9	5	33.3	14.3
Country subtotals	Australia	758	288	38.0	77	26.7	10.2
	USA	121	55	45.5	13	23.6	10.7
Grand totals	Total	879	343	39.0	90	26.2	10.2

Notes: USyd = University of Sydney; UWS = University of Western Sydney; UM = University of Michigan; EMU = Eastern Michigan University.

Of our entire sample of commencing Australian and US graduate-entry pre-service teacher education candidates (N = 879), 342 (38.9 per cent) had previously pursued another career, and 258 (29.4 per cent) had seriously considered an alternative career to teaching. Of those who had pursued previous careers, 90 (26.3 per cent) had been engaged in business-related careers (10.2 per cent of the full sample); and of those who had seriously considered a different career, 42 (16.3 per cent) had been business-related (4.8 per cent of the full sample; see Table 9.1).

In this chapter, we first examine the characteristics of people who switched to teaching from business-related careers, and then examine their reasons for having chosen teaching as a career. All information was collected via self-report surveys administered to participants during their first semester of teacher education, through 2002 and 2003 across five universities in Australia and the US. We explore participants' demographic background characteristics, enrolment details, professional histories, degree qualifications, motivations for choosing a career in teaching, perceptions about the profession, satisfaction with their choice of teaching as a career, and comparative satisfaction with their prior business-related careers.

WHO CHOOSES TO SWITCH FROM BUSINESS-RELATED CAREERS TO TEACHING?

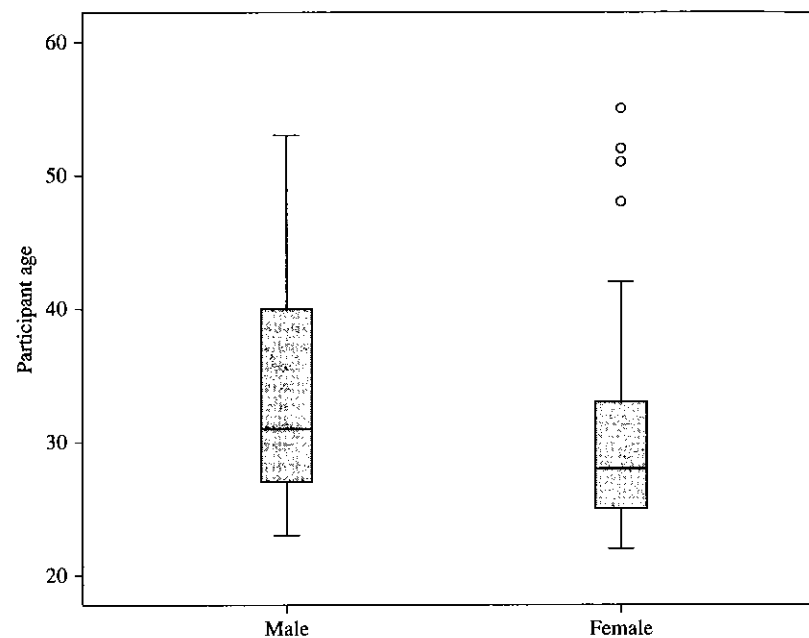
Demographic Background Characteristics

Two-thirds of the graduate teacher education students with prior business credentials were female – a proportion reflective of the pre-service teacher education population in general, in which candidates are predominantly women. More individuals from business-related career backgrounds undertook secondary pre-service teacher education (62.5 per cent) than primary/elementary; and the men were more likely than the women to choose secondary teacher education ($\chi^2(1) = 3.90$, $p = 0.048$). More than three-quarters of the men (76.7 per cent) chose secondary teaching, while similar proportions of women chose each of secondary (55.2 per cent) and primary teaching.

The youngest business career switcher was 22 years old on commencing teacher education and the eldest 55, with the average age being 32 years. On average, females tended to be slightly younger ($M = 30.76$ years, $SD = 7.91$) than males ($M = 33.97$ years, $SD = 8.78$, $F(1,86) = 3.020$, $p < 0.10$). The boxplots in Figure 9.1 show the distributions of ages for males and females in the sample. Although the age range was greater for women than for men, several of the older females were outliers, denoted by circles in the female boxplot. If we consider only the interquartile ranges represented by the solid rectangles in Figure 9.1, which discount the highest and lowest 25 per cent in each group, the age ranges for the middle 50 per cent of men were more dispersed than those for women.

As an indication of family economic background, participants nominated their parents' combined income from the period during which participants had attended high school. The average parent annual income was in the \$60 001–\$90 000 range, and the mode was \$30 001–\$60 000. A small percentage (12.2 per cent) identified low parental incomes of less than \$30 000 per year, and a near equal percentage (13.2 per cent) identified high parental incomes of more than \$120 000 annually. Figure 9.2 displays the percentage of students in each parental income category, which did not differ across gender groups.

The vast majority of participants spoke English as their primary language at home (87.8 per cent). The second most common home language was Chinese (5.6 per cent). These proportions reflect those for the 'FIT-Choice' full Australian sample (see Richardson and Watt, 2006). Most US students had parents born in the US (88.5 per cent of those 13 individuals), compared with 46.2 per cent of Australian parents born domestically. Small numbers in the US sample imply that we should not over-interpret



Note: The box length is the interquartile range and the solid bar represents the median value. 'o' denotes outliers with values between 1.5 and 3 box lengths from the upper or lower edge of the box.

Figure 9.1 Age profiles for men and women entering teaching from business-related careers

these differences in proportions. For the Australian cohort, parents' birth places included several countries in Europe, as well as Asia and the Middle East.

Professional Histories

Participants switching out of business-related careers into teaching came from 25 different career backgrounds. The most frequent were marketing, accounting, business management, finance, human resources and retail sales. We grouped prior careers according to their status relative to teaching, as identified by the US Department of Labor *O*NET* employment classification system (US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, 1998). *O*NET* classifications rank careers on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, based on required educational preparation and average salaries (see Richardson and Watt, 2006). Teaching is classified as a '4' on

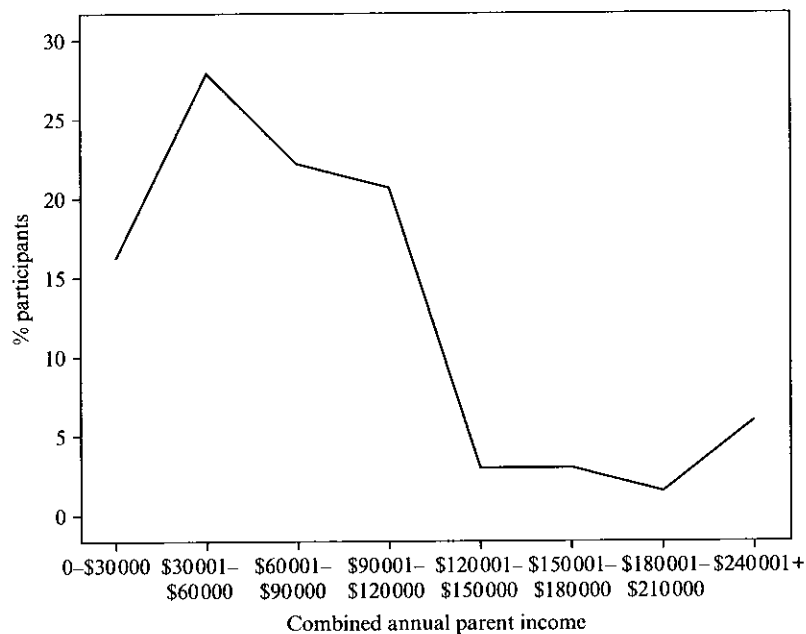


Figure 9.2 Parental income backgrounds for career switchers from business-related careers

the 5-point scale. The vast majority of prior business-related positions (68.9 per cent) also ranked a '4' on the *O*NET* classification, suggesting lateral career moves for those switching into teaching with respect to career status. Approximately 19 per cent of the survey participants came from prior business careers that ranked higher than teaching (e.g. business management, business consulting and information technology consulting), and 12 per cent from careers that ranked lower (e.g. retail sales, bookkeeping and hospitality management). Figure 9.3 illustrates the types of business positions held by the incoming graduate students, indicating which were higher, similar and lower occupational statuses relative to teaching.

Degree Qualification Backgrounds

Former business professionals typically entered pre-service graduate teacher education with an undergraduate degree (68.5 per cent), followed by 12.4 per cent with undergraduate Honours degrees, and 19.1 per cent a postgraduate degree. Women and men had similar prior levels of qualification ($\chi^2(2) = 2.72$, $p = 0.26$). Undergraduate degree credentials

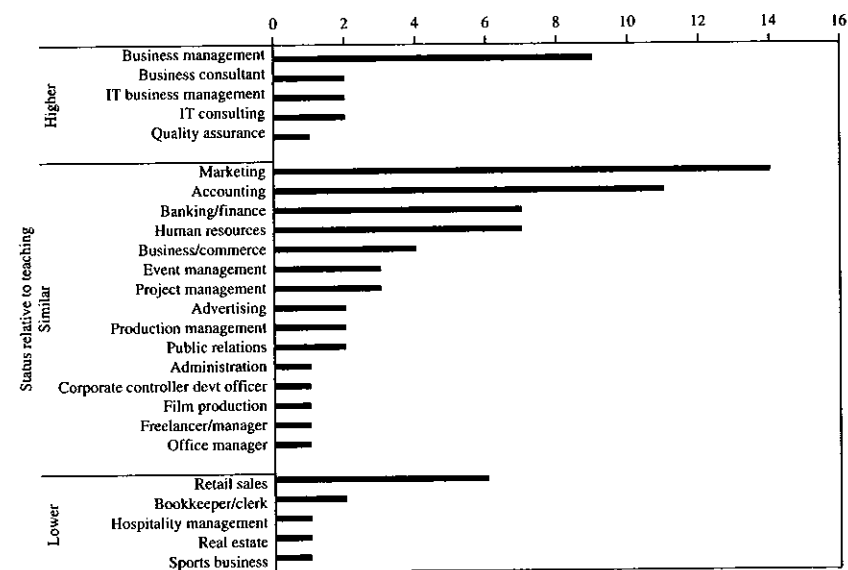


Figure 9.3 Numbers of people switching from business-related careers of higher, similar and lower status than teaching

covered a wide range of disciplines, including fine arts, music, psychology, computer science and sociology. Twenty-six of the respondents who had undergraduate degrees (42.6 per cent) held their qualifications in business-related fields such as economics, public relations, marketing and business management. Of those who held an undergraduate Honours degree, four (36 per cent) were in business-related fields; while eight (47.1 per cent) of the participants with postgraduate qualifications held business-related degrees including MBA, Law, and Master of Science in Accounting. Table 9.2 shows the numbers of people holding undergraduate, undergraduate Honours and postgraduate degree qualifications that were business-related or not, broken down by their prior career status relative to teaching.

The timing of when business career switchers had obtained their earlier degree qualifications varied substantially, from 1972 through 2004. Although the range was greater for women (1972–2002) than for men (1983–2004), the mean difference was not statistically significant ($F(1,84) = 1.18$, $p = 0.28$). There was a strong correlation between age and prior qualification year for women ($r = -0.80$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that the older the woman, the earlier her qualification year. In contrast, there was a far weaker relationship for men ($r = -0.32$, $p < 0.10$; see Figure 9.4), meaning that timing of prior qualification was not strongly related to men's ages.

Table 9.2 Undergraduate, undergraduate Honours, and postgraduate degree qualifications for business switchers from careers of lower, similar and higher status relative to teaching

		Career status relative to teaching			
		Lower n	Similar n	Higher n	
Undergraduate degrees					
Business-related	BA Communications	1	2	–	
	B Commerce	1	5	1	
	B Commerce (Marketing)	1	–	1	
	BA (Economics)	1	–	–	
	BA (Public Relations)	–	1	–	
	B Applied Science (Consumer Science)	–	1	–	
	B Economics	–	1	–	
	B Music/Commerce	–	1	–	
	B Arts/B Business Management	–	2	–	
	B Business	–	4	–	
	B Business Admin.	–	–	1	
	B Economics	–	–	1	
	B Technology Management (Manuf.)	–	–	1	
	Other	B Science	1	2	–
		B Arts	1	9	2
B Arts (Fine Arts)		1	–	1	
B Theology		1	–	–	
Visual Art		1	–	–	
BA (Psychology and Sociology)		–	1	–	
B Agricultural Science		–	1	–	
B Applied Science (Human Movement)		–	1	–	
B Applied Science (Statistics)		–	1	–	
B Mathematics		–	1	–	
B Mechanical Engineering		–	1	–	
B Social Science		–	1	–	
BA (Psychology)		–	2	–	
B Applied Science		–	2	–	
BA (Art theory)		–	–	1	
Sociology		–	–	1	
Undergraduate Honours degrees					
Business-related	B Marketing	–	1	–	
	Economics & Communications	–	1	–	

Table 9.2 (continued)

		Career status relative to teaching		
		Lower n	Similar n	Higher n
Other	Aviation Management	–	–	1
	B Business Admin. Summa Cum Laude	–	–	1
	Music	1	–	–
	BA (Sociology)	–	1	–
	B Arts	–	1	–
	B Computer Science	–	1	–
	B Science	–	1	–
	Psychology	–	1	–
	Law	–	–	1
	Postgraduate degrees			
Business-related	MBA	–	1	1
	Grad. Certificate of Business	–	1	–
	Grad. Dip. Accounting	–	1	–
	M Commerce	–	1	–
	M Science (Accounting)	–	1	–
	Public Relations Business	–	–	1
	Grad. Certificate in IT Management	–	–	1
	Other	B Arts (Honours)	1	–
B Applied Science		–	1	–
Grad. Dip. Librarianship		–	1	–
Grad. Certificate		–	1	–
M Arts		–	1	–
M Science (Computer & Info. Sci.)		–	1	–

It may be that these women were more likely to complete their university qualifications closer to high school completion than men if they entered university sooner or directly following high school completion. Alternatively, perhaps women tend to stay in business-related fields for longer than men before switching out – because we did not ask the number of years that participants had worked in their prior career, we are unable to evaluate this speculation. It could also be that women are more likely to drop out from and later retrain and re-enter the workforce, due to factors such as child-rearing and family commitments.

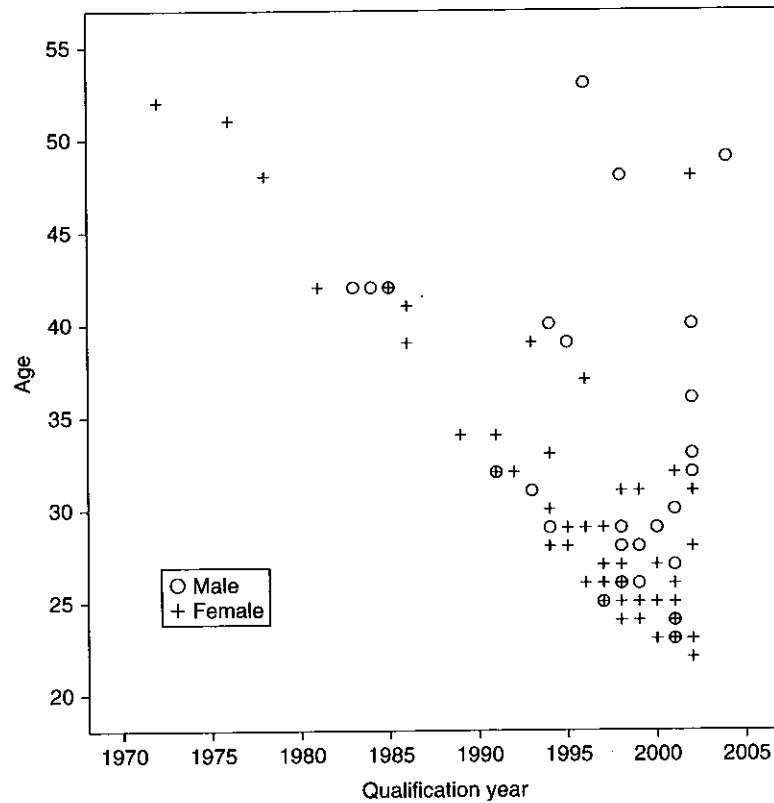


Figure 9.4 Scatterplot of men's and women's ages on entering teacher education against year of prior qualification ($r = -0.32$ $p < 0.10$ for men; $r = -0.80$ $p < 0.001$ for women)

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportions of men and women who had children (13 (43 per cent) of men, 22 (37 per cent) of women, $\chi^2(1) = 0.37$, $p = 0.54$), although this does not necessarily imply that these men and women would have had similar family responsibilities, since mothers traditionally still carry a greater involvement in child rearing, and as a consequence are subject to more disrupted career paths than men. Not surprisingly, people who had children were older than those who did not ($F(1,84) = 49.24$, $p < 0.001$, $M = 38.26$, $SD = 8.46$ for those having children, $M = 27.81$, $SD = 5.06$ for those without). This was similarly the case for both men and women, with no statistically significant interaction effect of gender and having children on age.

WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO SWITCH FROM BUSINESS-RELATED CAREERS INTO TEACHING?

Why Make a Career Change?

To begin, we explored through participants' open-ended responses the reasons this group of career switchers gave for wanting a teaching career. As we might expect, embedded within participants' responses were also their most salient reasons why they had left their previous careers in a business-related field. For some, the need for change rested on dissatisfaction with various aspects of the working life they had experienced in the 'corporate world'. This was often driven by the need to achieve a better balance between work and other aspects of life, and, importantly, to be engaged in a career they perceived as meaningful, fulfilling, satisfying, challenging and rewarding. These perceptions often figured in the reasons why individuals had rejected their careers in business; and conversely what they perceived a career in teaching would provide. The desire to work in a people-friendly environment, and to feel that the work one was engaged in was making a difference by contributing to the community, also lay at the base of the reasons why people had given up a business-related career.

Some of these individuals were in their mid-twenties and could only have spent a few short years in the corporate environment following their graduation from university, while others who were in their forties and older had invested much more time. Intriguingly, their reasons for seeking a career switch into teaching were often very similar. For instance, a 42-year-old male said that 'after 16 years in the corporate sector I felt that I wasn't making a difference', while a 26-year-old male insisted that he wanted 'to do something meaningful/rewarding in my life'. Despite differences in the number of years invested in the corporate world, the reasons for choosing teaching and for leaving corporate life behind could be very similar. This was also true of the female participants. One 24-year-old woman observed: 'I have worked in the corporate world and while there were financial rewards it was ultimately unsatisfying. I am hoping teaching will be a much more (emotionally) rewarding profession and I love kids!!' Another 31-year-old woman stated that she 'worked a corporate job for eight years. Want a people friendly job more suited for a family (kids).'

The lack of career satisfaction that accrued from a career in the corporate sector was explicitly nominated by males and females alike who were switching to teaching – a 27-year-old male said he was 'unsatisfied with job as a marketing analyst' and complained that the 'hours were too long with lots of work going unnoticed', and a woman of 37 wanted to use her 'professional knowledge in a meaningful way in a career that provides flexibility

of conditions'. The desire for a more meaningful and satisfying career was mentioned in various guises, with participants using words such as 'rewarding', 'satisfying', 'challenging', 'diverse' and 'interesting' to describe their perceptions of a career in teaching. These switchers into teaching wanted to know they were contributing something positive to society, which their previous experiences in business-related careers hadn't provided, and that their labour would make a difference by influencing the lives of children and young people. Such sentiments were to be found in comments including: 'I believe teaching is an under-valued career essential to the direction of society and pushes me to continue learning as well' (29-year-old male), and 'I want a career which contributes to a just society and has satisfaction regardless of remuneration' (25-year-old female).

Not surprisingly, the refrain of liking and wanting to work with children and adolescents to help them understand themselves and their place in the world was an important reason for seeking a change to teaching. For people who will teach in primary and secondary school contexts, the desire to have a career that allows them to make a difference by helping shape the future for young people is perhaps a fundamental requirement. Those who do not like or even dislike children would be ill advised to take on teaching, even in the short term. Table 9.3 brings together some of the voices of male

Table 9.3 Sample reasons for switching to teaching

Primary	Secondary
Second career. To help children and be part of the solution to education challenges. (Male, 49)	I am very interested in this career because I love to assist kids. (Male, 53)
I have worked with kids for the past 8 years. I find it very rewarding and hopeful to the future. (Female, 48)	I enjoy spending time with teenagers. I feel that I can provide positive support and encouragement in their learning endeavours. (Female, 51)
I love children and interested [<i>sic.</i>] in child development/education. Also I want skills to teach my own children because I don't trust the system alone. (Female, 31)	Enjoy working with teenagers. Always had an interest in teaching. (Female, 33)
Brought up in educational family always involved with organizing school age children on programs and always loved being with children – feel like it's been a 'calling'. (Female, 28)	I wanted to help kids learn skills and knowledge for later life because this is hard to do when everything else that is important to them in life is going on. (Female, 26)

and female prospective primary and secondary teachers of varying ages for whom the desire to work with children and adolescents was strongly registered.

The comments made by these prospective teachers indicated their perception of the intrinsic value of teaching together with a belief in their inherent ability to make a difference in the lives of young people by working with them in shaping their futures. For people who have experienced careers in business-related fields it is intriguing that they had such strongly held beliefs in relation to working with children and adolescents. In seeking a career change into teaching, they may be fulfilling a need that has remained somewhat dormant while they pursued other career options. For these people, teaching represents the realization of an 'ideal' career fit that provides for meaningful and socially valuable work, and affords the individual opportunities for further learning and professional development.

Quantitative Comparisons of Motivations and Perceptions Related to Teaching

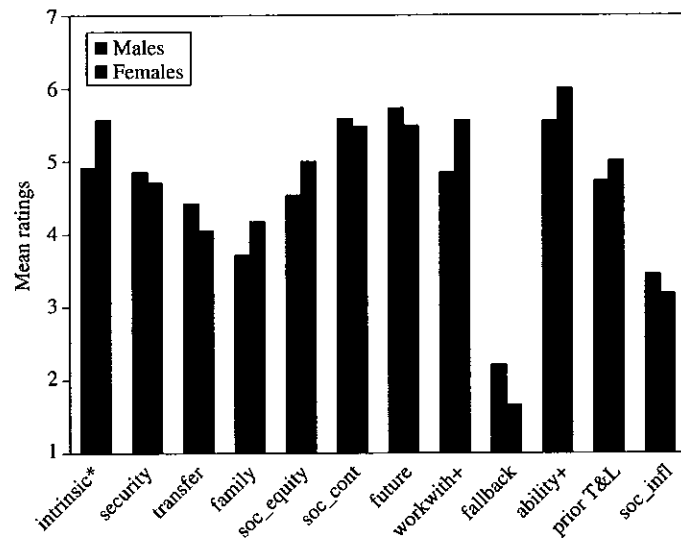
Motivations for choosing teaching as a career were measured using our 'FIT-Choice' scale (see Richardson and Watt, 2006; Watt and Richardson, 2007). The motivations assessed by this measure include intrinsic values, personal utility values (job security, time for family, job transferability), social utility values (the desire to shape the future of children/adolescents, enhance social equity, make a 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. Each factor was measured by multiple items with response options ranging from 1 (not at all important) through 7 (extremely important). The 'FIT-Choice' scale has been validated in Australian (Watt and Richardson, 2007) and international settings (see Watt et al., in preparation), and provides a sound framework with which to investigate teaching motivations and perceptions. Measuring the extent to which each of multiple possible motivations led individuals to choose a teaching career allows us to interpret which motivations were the strongest for business career switchers. Participants also rated the extent of their agreement with a number of propositions about the teaching profession, relating to the extent to which they perceived teaching as high in task demand (expert career, high demand) and task return (social status, salary). They rated the amount of social dissuasion they had experienced from teaching as a career choice, their career choice satisfaction for each of their previous business-related careers, and their current choice of teaching as a career.

Why choose teaching?

The highest-rated motivations for choosing teaching included perceived teaching abilities, the intrinsic value of teaching, the desire to make a social contribution, shape the future, and to work with children/adolescents (see Figure 9.5). The lowest-rated motivation was choosing teaching as a ‘fallback’ career, followed by social influences of others’ encouragement. Motivations that were rated in between included the desire to enhance social equity, having had positive prior teaching and learning experiences, job security, job transferability, and time for family. Figure 9.5 presents mean ratings for each motivation, separately for males and females.

Few systematic differences were evident between the teaching motivations for men and women changing out of business-related careers. The only statistically significant difference occurred for intrinsic value ($F(1,80) = 7.089$, $p = 0.009$), where women rated their liking and interest for teaching as having been more influential in their career decision. There was a trend for women’s perceptions of their perceived teaching abilities to have influenced their choice of teaching more than men ($F(1,80) = 2.999$, $p = 0.087$), as well as their desire to work with children/adolescents ($F(1,80) = 3.131$, $p = 0.081$).

These gender differences in motivations for having chosen teaching as a career held true regardless of whether participants were undertaking



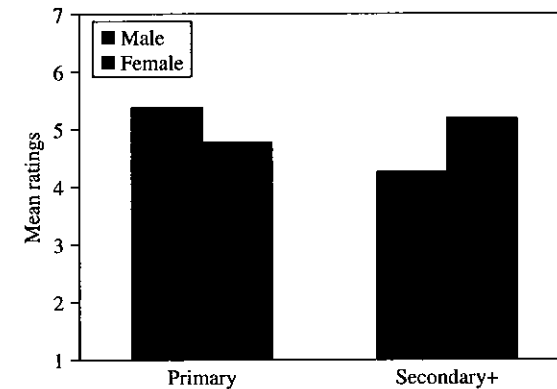
* $p < 0.05$, + $p < 0.10$.

Figure 9.5 Gendered motivations for choosing teaching as a career

primary or secondary teacher education. The one exception was for the desire to enhance social equity, where gender differences were in opposite directions among secondary versus primary pre-service teachers ($F(1,80) = 4.847$, $p = 0.031$). This interaction effect was due to a trend for females undertaking secondary teacher education to rate it lower than males ($F(1,53) = 2.893$, $p < 0.10$), while there was no statistically significant gender difference among men and women in primary education (see Figure 9.6). There was one main effect of primary versus secondary pre-service teacher education for job transferability ($F(1,80) = 4.112$, $p = 0.046$; primary $M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.67$; secondary $M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.51$), where secondary pre-service teachers regardless of their gender were more likely to have been influenced by the character of teaching as a ‘transferable’ job – allowing them to travel or choose where they wished to live. In the Australian context it is possible to transfer between the various states of the country without having to take further examinations, although the various states and territories are now requiring professional registration before employment as a teacher is possible. Australian graduates continue to be highly sought after to fill positions overseas, perhaps fuelling the perception of teaching as a ‘transferable’ career. This situation is not the case in the US or in many European countries (OECD, 2005).

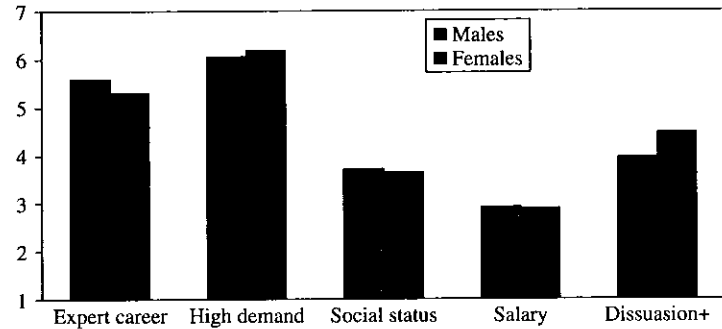
Perceptions about the profession

Participants generally perceived teaching as a career that is high in demand – and low in return. They rated teaching as a highly demanding career, bringing with it a heavy workload, high emotional demand, and



+ $p < 0.10$.

Figure 9.6 Gender by level interaction on the desire to enhance social equity



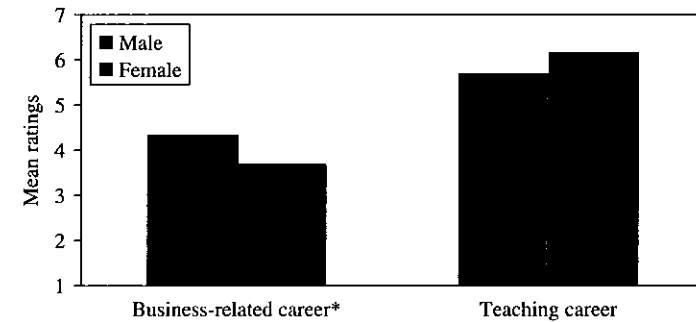
+ $p < 0.10$.

Figure 9.7 Gendered perceptions about teaching as a career

generally requiring hard work. They also rated teaching as a highly expert career, in terms of requiring high levels of specialized and technical knowledge, while at the same time they perceived it – even on entry to teacher education – as relatively low in social status, and paying a low salary.

Few systematic differences were evident between males and females in their perceptions about teaching, and no differences occurred between primary and secondary pre-service teachers. The one gender difference held true irrespective of whether individuals were in primary or secondary teacher education, where women tended to have had more experiences of people trying to dissuade them from a teaching career ($F(1,84) = 3.379$, $p = 0.070$; see Figure 9.7). Interestingly, this gender difference was not evident among our full 'FIT-Choice' sample (see Richardson and Watt, 2006), suggesting that greater social dissuasion from teaching as a career for women may be specific to these switchers from business-related careers into teaching. This stands in contrast to three decades ago, when teaching and nursing provided a means for women to secure a career, financial independence and social mobility. Following changes in the labour market and the greater participation of women in higher education, it would now appear that women who have succeeded in entering careers in business are discouraged by friends, family, colleagues and others from seeking a career in teaching.

Both men and women reported substantially and statistically significantly higher levels of satisfaction with their choice of teaching as a career than with their previous business-related career ($F(1,83) = 43.676$, $p < 0.001$; see Figure 9.8). There was also a significant interaction effect of gender and career ($F(1,83) = 5.371$, $p = 0.023$), where females reported



* $p < 0.05$.

Figure 9.8 Males' and females' satisfaction with previous business-related careers and satisfaction with the choice of teaching as a career

lower satisfaction with their prior business-related careers than men ($F(1,83) = 4.118$, $p = 0.046$). However, both men and women were equally highly satisfied with their current choice of a teaching career.

DISCUSSION

A substantial proportion of people switching their careers into teaching came from business-related fields and held business-related degree credentials. Career switchers into teaching from these career backgrounds have attracted increasing research interest, with the common intuition that these individuals would be unlikely to be attracted to a career in teaching, which seems an 'implausible choice' (Crow et al., 1990). Although business career switchers were young on average, there was a large age range, implying that business professionals made the switch out of those careers and into teaching at different points in time and after having spent differing amounts of time in their prior business careers. Notably, most business switchers were making lateral career moves into teaching in terms of their career status. Fewer came from previous business-related occupations which were of higher or lower career status. Lateral career moves would suggest that the perception of teaching as lower in occupational prestige needs to be tempered. It also provokes the question of whether those who switch out of business careers into teaching are those who failed to succeed in their previous career – either in objective terms (e.g. status or salary), or in terms of their own personal needs and ambitions (see Pines, 2002). Failure to succeed might also be interpreted as careers in business failing to meet

deeper individual concerns with work/life balance and quality of working life focused on participation in meaningful, socially responsible work.

Similar to findings across entire cohorts of undergraduate and graduate-entry pre-service teachers (Richardson and Watt, 2006), participants' teaching ability-related beliefs, personal and social utility values and positive prior experiences of teaching and learning were all important motivations for choosing teaching as a career. Values included the intrinsic value of teaching, social utility values (including the desire to shape the future, enhance social equity, make a social contribution and work with children/adolescents), and then personal utility values (including job security, time for family and job transferability). Teaching was not typically considered a 'fallback' career for business career switchers into teaching. Nor was encouragement from others a strong factor in individuals' choice of teaching as a career. In fact, participants reported relatively strong experiences of social dissuasion from teaching – more so for women.

Participants perceived teaching as a highly demanding career, and one that provided for low return in terms of salary and social status. Simultaneously they reported high levels of satisfaction with their choice of teaching as a career. The fact that these pre-service teachers rated highly the intrinsic value of teaching suggests that a teaching career may afford different types of rewards that are not always inherent in other occupations. For example, teaching may provide a domain where individuals feel they can readily derive a sense of existential significance from their work (Pines, 2002). Because perceptions were assessed near the beginning of participants' first year of teacher education, clearly they had chosen teaching as a career despite perceptions of teaching as high in demand and low in return, and despite experiences of others attempting to dissuade them from their choice. Satisfaction with the choice of teaching as a career was significantly and substantially higher than satisfaction with previous business-related careers, for both men and women.

The gender differences that were evident in motivations and perceptions related to teaching resonate with findings from prior research. Women were more motivated than men by interest, the desire to work with children/adolescents, and their perceived teaching abilities. They also reported lower levels of satisfaction with their prior business-related careers than the men. In Chapter 2 of this volume, Malach-Pines and Kaspi-Baruch's study of MBA students found that women reported higher levels of citizenship (such as giving money to charity) as well as the meaning of work in terms of its importance and significance. In that study, women also rated their perceived abilities to have influenced their career choice more than men. These findings are consistent with ours: women in both studies were more motivated by intrinsic, social and altruistic career dimensions, and perceptions

of their own abilities, in their career decision. In other research, Eccles and her colleagues have long argued and demonstrated that adolescents' and young adults' ability beliefs and intrinsic and importance/utility values are highly influential in their career choices (e.g. Eccles (Parsons) et al., 1983; Eccles (Parsons), 1984; Eccles, 1984; Eccles et al., 1984; Ethington, 1991; Meece et al., 1990). Further, it has been found that perceptions regarding usefulness are more salient for girls' and women's career choices, at least in the domain of mathematics (Watt, in press; Watt, 2006).

Women had experienced more social dissuasion from teaching as a career, regardless of whether they were undertaking primary or secondary school teacher education. Similar proportions of women were undertaking primary and secondary teacher education, while a greater proportion of men had selected secondary teacher education – consistent with proportions in the teaching workforce more generally. Of course, our gender comparisons are only within the sample of individuals who switched out of business-related careers into teaching, and substantial gender differences probably exist among the population of business professionals who do not enter or consider a career in teaching. Malach-Pines and Kaspi-Baruch (Chapter 2, this volume) identified women MBA candidates as holding higher expectations than men regarding their qualification in relation to acquiring knowledge, improving analytical skills, enhancing their job market value, competence and social prestige. Such higher levels of expectation may be presumed to be less easily met than the more modest expectations of men, and may even produce higher levels of career burnout for women business professionals (see Pines, 2002).

It is particularly interesting that business career switchers accounted for a sizeable proportion of career switchers into teaching across the full sample, implying that teaching is an attractive career alternative for business professionals. The fact that these individuals' motivations for entering teaching reflect those from across our full pre-service teacher sample shows that business professionals are attracted into teaching for the same types of reasons as are other individuals. Future studies could fruitfully sample business professionals to directly explore their career satisfaction, considered career alternatives, motivations for entering the business world, and perceptions regarding the intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic rewards their career provides. Just how many business professionals *do* leave their careers for careers such as teaching due to a perceived lack of social meaning and contribution? It also remains to be seen whether the somewhat idealized perceptions of teaching as a career as registered by our participants will be reshaped in schooling contexts and education systems where the nature and substance of teachers' work is being remade (OECD, 2005) as an outcome of a pervasive educational reform agenda.

AUTHORS' NOTE

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