

Ex-citing times for education researchers

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A journal article written by two Monash University academics has been named the most-cited paper by Routledge, a major publishing house.

The article, "Who Chooses Teaching and Why?: Profiling Characteristics and Motivations Across Three Australian Universities," has topped the Routledge list of highly-cited articles, showcasing articles from journals on the highly-influential Thomson Reuters Social Sciences Citation Index.



Written by Associate Professors Paul Richardson and Helen Watt of the Faculty of Education and published in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education in 2006, the article draws on the extensive FIT-Choice project, profiling background characteristics and teaching motivations of more than 1600 Australian first-year teaching students. The project also charts the progress of these students past graduation, whether into the teaching profession or otherwise.

The findings have enabled both researchers to recommend strategies in the recruitment and retention of future teachers.

"We are delighted to know that our work is being so widely read and cited by other researchers," Associate Professor Richardson said.

"It says to us that there is a need for appropriate measures of teacher motivation that can be used in varying social and cultural contexts."

Associate Professor Watt also stressed the need to address the root motivations of educators to support their classroom responsibilities.

"It is only through such large-scale, multidisciplinary, cross-cultural, and long-term longitudinal studies that we can understand how teachers' motivations and perceptions shape their professional practice and aspirations in the context of particular school and country settings," Associate Professor Watt said.

The researchers have since won two Australian Research Council Discovery Grants that have allowed them to follow-up on their research and to expand their collaborations with colleagues across the world.