

Teaching as a career choice: a discriminant analysis of factors as perceived by technical and vocational education (TVE) student teachers in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The topic on perception of student teachers on choosing teaching as their career has attracted debates on the factors that determine them in doing so. Teaching as a career is often perceived by student teacher as a morally valuable service. Factors such as motivation, perception, expectation and satisfaction are the driving force inducing the teachers to teach. Characteristics such as gender and chosen academic program could also possibly influence student teachers to consider teaching as a career. This paper identified the combination of factors that best distinguished students who choose teaching from those who do not. The study involved 300 students from four public universities in Malaysia. The results from the discriminant analysis shows that the student teachers who intend to pursue a teaching career mentioned that motivation factors namely intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic are the best combination of variables that best explain their choice. However, the perception variables did not contribute strongly to the discriminant function yet it is moderately highly (negatively) correlated with the overall discriminant function. This study has a strong implication in improving teacher recruitment strategies and retaining them longer in the teaching profession. The understanding on the factors that drive a person to take up the teaching career is indeed crucial in explaining their commitment and credibility in the teaching profession.

Keyword: Teaching career; Factors influencing teaching; TVE student teachers