



*Research Paper*

## Factors Affecting Teaching as a Career Choice from the Perspective of Student-Teachers of Farhangian University in East Azarbaijan Province

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### Abstract

**Aim:** The present study aimed to analyzing the “Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice) Scale” by Richardson and Watt (2006) among the student-teachers of Farhangian University of East Azerbaijan in the academic year 2017-2018. In this descriptive survey study, 580 student- teachers of Farhangian University of East Azerbaijan were included by simple random sampling. The data collection tool was FIT-Choice Scale by Richardson and Watt (2006) that has 58 questions with a 7-point Likert scale. Data analysis was performed using factor analysis statistical test in SPSS 25 software. By performing exploratory factor analysis on 58 items, 15 factors were extracted. The share of each factor was as follows: social participation 21.79%, ability and intrinsic value 6.20%, willingness to work with children and adolescents 5.65%, social status 4.96%, time for family 4.46%, prior teaching and learning experiences 3.94%, expertise 3.23%, social dissuasion 2.68%, social influences 2.53%, income and salary 2.49%, satisfaction with occupation 2.10%, fallback career 2.00%, job transferability, 1.93%, high demand 1.90%, and job security, 1.72%. These 15 factors together explain 67.64% of the total variance. Given the diversity of factors affecting the choice of teacher profession in students and the existence of factors such as job security, alternative job, income that is not related to improving the quality of teacher education, it seems to develop scientific and practical strategies to select and attract talented and motivated students.

**Keywords:** *Farhangian University, Motivation, Teaching profession, The effective factors*

## **Introduction**

The teaching profession, teacher education and primary motivations and problems of employment and retaining teachers are increasingly emphasized throughout the world (Mehrmohammadi, 2019). Good teachers are regarded as important factors in students' success and satisfaction with their school (OECD, 2018). Therefore, the motivation to join this profession and the factors that encourage or discourage teachers should be carefully considered and their needs should be met (Bernaus, Wilson & Gardner, 2009). The motivation to choose a profession comes from the individual's personal values and expectations, and is experienced in particular conditions of social and cultural structures and different demand and reward structures. Understanding the effective motivations of individuals who have chosen education as their profession has important implications for promotion and efficiency. Employment and retaining a teacher follows the stage of understanding motivation (Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein & Baumert, 2012). Therefore, given the importance of motivation in teaching as a career choice in teachers' and students' future performance, and considering the international attitude to Factors Influencing Teaching as a Career scale (FIT-Choice), to assess the motivations to enter this profession, the present study problem is to investigate the factors affecting teaching career choice in student-teachers studying at Farhangian University in East Azarbaijan Province. Thus, the following questions arise:

1. What is the share of each of the motivational factors in teaching as a career choice in student-teachers of East Azarbaijan Province?
2. What is the share of each of the attitudinal factors in teaching as a career choice in student-teachers of East Azarbaijan province?

## **Methodology**

The present descriptive-survey study was conducted to investigate factors affecting the teaching career choice based on Factors Influencing Teaching Choice scale (FIT Choice) of Richardson & Watt (2006) in 2130 student-teachers of Farhangian University in East Azarbaijan Province in the academic year 2017-18. Given the number of questionnaire items, sample size was determined 580 students out of 2130.

## **Results**

The exploratory factor analysis showed that out of 58 items, 58 had factor loadings  $> 0.30$ , and out of these 58 factors, only 15 had eigenvalue  $>1$ . Therefore, maximum number of main factors can be 15. These 15 factors explain 67.64% of the total variance: Factor 1, make social contribution, 21.79% with nine items; factor 2, ability and intrinsic career value, 6.201% with six items; factor 3, work with children/adolescents, 5.65% with three items; factor 4, social status, 4.966% with six items, factor 5, time for family, 4.468% with eight items; factor 6, prior teaching and learning experience, 3.949% with three items; factor 7, expertise, 3.235% with three items; factor 8, social dissuasion, 2.686% with three items; factor 9, social influences, 2.530% with three items; factor 10, salary, 2.499% with three items; factor 11, satisfaction with choice, 2.101% with three items; factor 12, fallback career, 2.003% with three items; factor 13, job transferability, 1.932% with three items; factor 14, difficulty, 1.907% with three items, and finally, factor 15, job security, 1.729% with two items.

## **Discussion and conclusion**

Student-teachers' social participation had a greater share than other factors, which shows that the main aim of student-teacher choice of teaching is to shape the future of children and adolescents, and enhance their social justice. The ability and intrinsic career value, and interest in working with children and adolescents had a greater share. Other factors such as social influences, fallback career, time for family, and job security and transferability ranked next. Attitude factors in the order of the explained variance included social status, expertise and skills, social dissuasion, income and salary, job satisfaction, and difficulty.

Using a questionnaire and its particular limitations, including its conservatism and superficiality, could have affected complete and accurate study results. Thus, mixed method and qualitative studies on this subject are recommended. It is further recommended that their attitude and motivation be assessed according to reliable tests and scales in addition to their knowledge that is determined through GPA and tests in the process of employing student-teachers. Also, universities, officials and professors should be helped during the student-teacher education to create appropriate structures, processes and strategies to properly deal with the subject through knowing students' motivations. It is also recommended that positive aspects and social and spiritual benefits of teaching profession be explained for students through effective communication with the education system so as to

reinforce their motivation and positive views about teaching, so that all applicants have stronger motivations for entering the teaching profession.

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