



# Teacher motivation from a goal content perspective: Beginning teachers' goals for teaching



Caroline F. Mansfield<sup>a,\*</sup>, Susan Beltman<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Murdoch University, 90 South Street, Murdoch, Western Australia 6150, Australia

<sup>b</sup> Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, Perth, Western Australia. 6845, Australia

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 15 October 2012

Accepted 9 September 2013

Available online 5 November 2013

### Keywords:

Teacher motivation

Teacher goals

Early career teachers

Teacher retention

## ABSTRACT

Viewing teacher motivation from a goal content perspective, this paper examines graduating and early career teachers' professional goals. Responses to an open-ended survey question by 332 graduating teacher education students and 162 early career teachers were analysed through a collaborative, inductive-deductive process. Participants nominated eighteen types of professional goals which were categorised as overarching personal, situated and career goals. Cohort differences reveal some statistically significant goal emphases at the graduating and early career stages. A framework is developed, Beginning Teachers' Professional Goals, which has potential future use for examining teachers' goals at particular career stages and contributing to our understanding of teacher motivation.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

Recent research on teacher motivation has explored questions such as: why do individuals choose to become teachers (e.g., Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2008); what goals do they have for their teaching (Butler, 2007; Hagger & Malmberg, 2011; Mansfield, Wosnitza, & Beltman, 2012); and why do they stay in the profession (Hong, 2012; Hughes, 2012)? Such questions are important to better understand teacher motivation and retention, especially given the exodus of early career teachers in some contexts. The retention of early career teachers is a major concern for governments due to a lack of return on financial investments, potential future teacher shortfalls, concerns for the quality of students' learning (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006) and ongoing issues associated with teacher stress and burnout (Parker, Martin, Colmar, & Liem, 2012). As the teaching profession meets the challenges of the future and endeavours to attract and retain high quality teachers, there is merit in further understanding aspects of teacher motivation, particularly of early career teachers, including the goals they strive for in their professional lives.

### 1.1. Teacher motivation in the early years

Examining the initial and ongoing motivation of teachers has become an important field of research. A key finding across a range of studies is that both pre-service and early career teachers have a strong intrinsic motivation to teach (Chong & Low, 2009; Guarino et al., 2006; Richardson & Watt, 2010; Sinclair, 2008), although this may be framed differently in the different sociocultural contexts of different countries (Watt & Richardson, 2008; Watt et al., 2012). Sinclair (2008), for example, found

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +61 8 9360 2467; fax: +61 8 9360 6280.

E-mail addresses: [caroline.mansfield@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:caroline.mansfield@murdoch.edu.au) (C.F. Mansfield), [s.beltman@curtin.edu.au](mailto:s.beltman@curtin.edu.au) (S. Beltman).

that for prospective Australian teachers, highest intrinsic motivations were for working with children (e.g. enjoyment of working with children in other contexts), intellectual stimulation (e.g. love of learning or of a particular subject), and self-evaluation (e.g. always wanting to be a teacher). Although significantly fewer than intrinsic, the highest extrinsic motivations for becoming a teacher were the nature of teaching work (e.g. creative, varied work and interesting colleagues), perceived working conditions (e.g. vacation time and job security), and perceived life-fit (e.g. compatible with home life and family demands). Similarly, [Chong and Low \(2009\)](#) explored why student teachers in Singapore chose to enter teaching. Primarily, they also entered the profession for intrinsic reasons (e.g. interested in teaching; love for their subject) followed by altruistic reasons (e.g. love of children; wanting to contribute to society). On leaving their programme, although still positive, they became less so as they moved into their profession.

[Watt and Richardson \(2007\)](#) have used expectancy value theory to identify factors influencing the choice of teaching as a career. Such factors include intrinsic career values, perceptions of ability, personal and social utility values, prior experiences, social experiences, perceived task demand and viewing teaching as a fallback career. Their FIT-Choice model was initially developed using an Australian sample, but has also been used to explore teacher motivation internationally ([Watt et al., 2012](#)). [Richardson and Watt \(2010, chap. 5\)](#) also found that motivations for teaching were generally stable from pre-service over the first five years of teaching. There were, however, differences between different subtypes of teachers, with the “highly engaged persisters” (those intending to spend most of their career in teaching) experiencing declining career satisfaction. These authors also suggested a gap between aspirations and reality as new teachers came face to face with the multiple demands of the profession.

Experiencing the realities of teaching has been proposed as a potential reason for changes in other motivational constructs. For example, [Woolfolk Hoy and Burke Spero \(2005\)](#) in a US longitudinal study of prospective and practicing teachers found that the teachers' efficacy increased during their pre-service preparations but dropped as they began to work as a new teacher. The authors hypothesised that novice teachers underestimated the complexity of teaching and were disappointed with the “gap between the standards they have set for themselves and their own performance” (p. 353). As pre-service teachers graduate and move into the profession there appear to be subtle changes in motivational constructs that warrant further exploration.

## 1.2. Teacher goals

To better understand teacher motivation, researchers have also investigated teacher goals. Goals have been described as subjective representations of what individuals would like to occur, or not to occur, in the future and these in turn act as important organisers for thoughts, emotions and behaviours ([Ford, 1992](#); [Schutz, Crowder, & White, 2001](#)).

One perspective used to examine teacher goals, is that of achievement goals. Achievement goals are concerned with the purpose of achievement related behaviour ([Ames, 1992](#)), the main two goals being mastery goals (to develop skills and competence) and performance goals (to demonstrate competence relative to others) ([Ames & Archer, 1988](#)). In the context of teaching, achievement goals represent the strivings teachers have for success in their job ([Butler, 2007](#); [Butler & Shibaz, 2014](#); [Retelsdorf, Butler, Streblow, & Schiefele, 2010](#)) and have been associated with particular behaviours. Butler, for example, found that teacher mastery goals positively influenced teacher help seeking behaviour ([Butler, 2007](#)) and that goals to develop caring and close relationships with students predicted mastery focused instructional practices ([Butler, 2012](#)). Mastery goals have been shown to be adaptive goals for teachers and have been associated with classroom mastery goals, high levels of interest in teaching and low levels of burnout ([Retelsdorf et al., 2010](#)). [Papaioannou and Christodoulidis \(2007\)](#) found that strong performance goals were associated with low levels of job satisfaction. Other studies have supported conceptualising teacher goals from an achievement goal perspective among practicing and pre-service teachers (e.g., [Fasching, Dresel, Dickhäuser, & Nitsche, 2010](#); [Nitsche, Dickhäuser, Fasching, & Dresel, 2011](#)). Both mastery and performance goals have been shown to have an approach (striving towards) and an avoidance form (striving to avoid) ([Elliot, 1999](#); [Ford, 1992](#)) and this four factor model has been extended to teachers' achievement goals ([Retelsdorf et al., 2010](#)). Furthermore, [Kucsera, Roberts, Walls, Walker, and Svinicki \(2011\)](#) have developed a scale to measure teachers' Goal Orientation Towards Teaching (GOTT), focusing on three orientations, learning, proving and avoiding. Associations between teachers' achievement goals and school goal structures have also been recently investigated ([Cho & Shim, 2013](#)). While achievement goals provide a useful lens with which to view teacher motivation, a sole focus on achievement goals may not account for some of the broader purposes for pursuing a teaching career as indicated in the teacher motivation literature.

In addition to achievement goals, the student motivation literature has benefited from a focus on the content of students' goals ([Dowson & McInerney, 2003](#); [Mansfield, 2012](#); [Wentzel, 2000](#)) and how they influence thoughts and behaviour. Although the content of teachers' goals, has received less attention, research in this field is steadily gaining momentum (e.g. [Mansfield, Wosnitza, et al., 2012](#)). In a 1996 study, Lemos investigated teachers' spontaneously articulated goals, identifying seven goals (enjoyment, learning, complying, working, evaluation, relationship and discipline). [Ng \(2010\)](#) examined teachers' career goals, conceptualised as “teachers' perceived career-related purposes for learning engagement” (p. 401). [Niikko and Ugaste \(2011\)](#) investigated the goals of preschool teachers in Finland and Estonia, finding that teacher goals included goals for their children, for pedagogical activity and professional development. [Hagger and Malmberg \(2011\)](#) found that the content of goals reflected “both the self (themselves, their health and their career progression), teaching tasks (skills and techniques), students (relationships with students, colleagues and community) and impact” (p. 607). [Hagger and Malmberg](#) also reported some associations between goals and wellbeing (measured through self-esteem and depression

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/356939>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/356939>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)