



# Teachers' occupational attributes and their psychological wellbeing, job satisfaction, occupational self-concept and quitting intentions

Dennis M. McInerney <sup>a, b</sup>, Hanke Korpershoek <sup>c, \*</sup>, Hui Wang <sup>d</sup>, Alexandre J.S. Morin <sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

<sup>b</sup> The Australian Catholic University, Australia

<sup>c</sup> GION Education/Research, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

<sup>d</sup> McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

<sup>e</sup> Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Teachers' occupational attributes related to various relevant outcomes.
- Positive associations were found for psychological wellbeing.
- Positive associations were found for job satisfaction and occupational self-concept.
- Negative associations were found for quitting intentions.

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 11 April 2017

Received in revised form

21 December 2017

Accepted 29 December 2017

Available online 8 January 2018

### Keywords:

Teachers' occupational attributes

Psychological wellbeing

Job satisfaction

Occupational self-concept

Quitting intentions

## ABSTRACT

Little is known about the determinants of teachers' psychological wellbeing, job satisfaction, occupational self-concept and quitting intentions. In this paper, teachers' occupational attributes (i.e. professional and personal characteristics) were investigated as determinants. Henceforth, the Educator Motivation and Attribute Profile (EdMAP) scales were used to describe the nature of 1109 Hong Kong primary and secondary school teachers' occupational attributes. Furthermore, the relationships with the teacher outcomes were investigated. Construct validity and reliabilities of the EdMAP scales were satisfactory. The results showed positive associations between teachers' occupational attributes and their wellbeing, job satisfaction, and self-concept, and negative associations with quitting intentions.

© 2018 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

The teaching profession is generally seen and experienced as demanding and stressful (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; Johnson et al., 2005; Kyriacou, 2001; Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2012; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). Unsatisfactory levels of psychological wellbeing in the workplace increase teacher stress, and may lead to feelings of burnout and increased quitting intentions (Chan, 2006;

Høigaard, Giske, & Sundsli, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016). A teacher must be a jack-of-all-trades to be able to perform well in various domains. Not only is the primary process of daily classroom practices highly demanding, the workload outside the school is also substantial (Mattern & Bauer, 2014; OECD., 2012). The occupational attributes of teachers entail a broad range of professional attributes (e.g. organizational and interpersonal competencies) and desirable personal attributes (e.g. enthusiasm, devotion, passion, positive affect; e.g., Moè, Pazzaglia, & Ronconi, 2010) that are needed to fulfil their teaching duties. It is a reasonable proposition, therefore, that teachers, as in other professions, need to present a set of professional attributes to perform well. However, the nature of these attributes and their relation to a range of psychological variables is an understudied phenomenon. The present study addresses this topic in more detail and aims to contribute to the

\* Corresponding author. Grote Rozenstraat 3, 9712 TG Groningen, The Netherlands.

E-mail address: [h.korpershoek@rug.nl](mailto:h.korpershoek@rug.nl) (H. Korpershoek).

current body-of-knowledge on teachers' occupational attributes and the relationships with various relevant teacher outcomes.

Although sufficient numbers of students enter teacher training institutes and many of them subsequently become teachers, substantial numbers drop-out from the teaching profession within a few years (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014; see also; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003; Weiss, 1999). For example, in the U.S., Ingersoll (2003) reported teacher attrition rates up to almost 50% within 5 years after graduation. That is, 14% left the teaching profession after one year of teaching, which increased to 46% after five years. More recent figures on U.S. data also show a teacher attrition rate of about 8% per year (Goldring et al., 2014). While the attrition rates in primary and secondary education in Hong Kong are relatively low (4.4% in primary education; 5.0% in secondary education in 2015/2016; Education Bureau, 2016), teacher job dissatisfaction (as discussed later on) and job drop-out remain a major concern (e.g. Cheng, 2009). To identify why teaching attrition occurs, Borman and Dowling (2008) conducted a narrative review on teacher career trajectories and attrition moderators. As it turns out, both personal and professional attributes are important predictors of teacher attrition. Professional attributes, for example, include monetary and material resources, organizational characteristics (e.g. working environment, level of administrative support, school size), but also student body composition (e.g. high percentages of students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds). Unfavourable working conditions and personal dissatisfaction may lead to substantial attrition rates, particularly among early career teachers (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

Often drop-out from the teaching profession is explained by job dissatisfaction (e.g., Heikonen, Pietarinen, Pyhältö, Toom, & Soini, 2016; Wong & Li, 1995) and a diminution in psychological well-being as a teacher (e.g., Hong, 2012; Høigaard et al., 2012). The most central component among teachers is their affective well-being, including a diverse set of aspects such as their mood, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced emotional exhaustion (Van Horn, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2004). Teacher well-being also has an effect on their students. Students of satisfied teachers and of teachers who are psychologically well are more likely to attain than students whose teachers are dissatisfied or emotionally exhausted (Arens & Morin, 2016; Day, 2008; Park, 2005).

In this context, a number of researchers have noted the importance of teaching commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of teachers, teachers' psychological well-being, and a diminution in their drop-out intentions (McInerney, Ganotice, King, Morin, & Marsh, 2015a, b; Morin et al., 2017; Morin, Meyer, McInerney, Marsh, & Ganotice, 2015). An examination of the teacher attributes that have high psychological well-being, job satisfaction, occupational self-concept, and low intentions of leaving the profession provides a further insight into the teacher characteristics that might result in long-term commitment to the teaching profession. Teachers' commitment to their profession is associated with their self-efficacy beliefs, for example, believing that they could empower their students (Bogler & Somech, 2004). In turn, having strong self-efficacy beliefs may also protect teachers against attrition (Hong, 2012). Other studies found that, the stronger teachers' commitment to their profession, the higher their self-efficacy for classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement (Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, & Hogan, 2008; Klassen & Chiu, 2011). More recent studies identified self-efficacy as the most significant factor in teachers' professional well-being, as well as job satisfaction and recognition (Yildirim, 2015). The importance of teaching efficacy has also been highlighted by Renshaw, Long, and Cook (2015), showing that teaching efficacy, joy of teaching,

and school connectedness identify the level of teachers' subjective well-being. In turn, emotional characteristics such as hope and gratitude to some extent predict teachers' life satisfaction (Chan, 2009, 2011, 2013), showing the complex interrelations among teacher self-efficacy, job/life satisfaction, and feelings of burnout.

Choi and Tang (2009) described the developmental trends in teacher commitment in Hong Kong by studying the interplay between personal, workplace, and education systemic factors throughout teachers' careers. Personal factors, such as teachers' personal value of love for students and sense of purpose (i.e. application, personal accomplishment), were associated with sustained/increased commitment trends among teachers (see also Van Horn et al., 2004). Similarly, Moè (2016) found that a passion for teaching was positively associated with, among other things, job satisfaction and job self-efficacy. Decreased commitment (Choi & Tang, 2009) was often observed when teachers had negative perceptions of education systemic and workplace factors such as unfavourable working conditions (see also Borman & Dowling, 2008). A large-scale study therefore, of the teacher attributes that are related to psychological well-being, positive occupational self-concept, and job satisfaction should shed light on the correlates of drop-out intentions, and provide a heuristic for the further study of the nature and development of desirable attributes within the teaching profession. This is particularly the case in Hong Kong where attrition rates from the teaching profession are relatively low. The attributes found to be most salient may be ones that provide a benchmark for examining teacher attrition internationally.

Other important variables that are posited to be associated with teacher retention in the profession are psychological well-being, and positive self-concept as a teacher. Many studies have reported that unsatisfactory levels of psychological well-being increase teacher stress, and may lead to feelings of burnout and increased quitting intentions (e.g. Høigaard et al., 2012). Work-related psychological well-being can be defined by an individual's subjective positive experience at work (Dagenais-Desmarais & Savoie, 2012). It is generally accepted that it comprises multiple dimensions, providing a more nuanced picture of an employees' well-being at the work place. In line with the studies presented by McInerney et al. (2015a, b), the present study focuses on five dimensions of teachers' psychological well-being. These dimensions are: *interpersonal fit at work*, *thriving at work*, *feeling of competency*, *perceived recognition at work*, and *desire for involvement at work*, as described in the paper of Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2012). These dimensions are described in more detail in the Method section.

One factor that has not received much attention in the literature on teacher retention in the profession is teachers' occupational self-concept. Although teachers' job satisfaction has received ample attention, showing positive associations between occupational commitment and job satisfaction in meta-analytic reviews (e.g. Lee, Carswell, & Allen, 2000) and in more recent studies (e.g. Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011), studies on teachers' occupational self-concept are lacking. This is surprising, because self-concept among students is generally found to be an important factor explaining differences in student performance (Huang, 2011; Marsh & Martin, 2011). Hence, teachers' occupational self-concept should also be seen to be an important focus of attention. Moreover, teachers' self-concept is associated with their valuing of student-centered approaches to learning (Yeung, Craven, & Kaur, 2014).

## 1.2. The present study

The desired (or expected) professional occupational attributes, and other desirable attributes described in the introduction have not been investigated in a large-scale study in Hong Kong where

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6850065>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6850065>

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