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TEACHERS' BACKGROUND FACTORS AND ITS RELATION TO MOTIVATION

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ABSTRACT

In this survey research, we profile the background characteristics of pre-service and in-service teachers and its relation with motivation towards teaching, their beliefs about teaching and their decisions to be a teacher. Specifically, this present study attempted to determine the overall motivation profiles among teachers and the relationship of teachers' gender, age, type of institution, level of study, qualifications of father and mother, and the type of their service with their levels of motivation. A total of 200 Malaysian pre-service and in-service teachers participated in this study. The FIT- Choice scale (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) adapted from Watt and Richardson (2006) was employed as the instrument of this quantitative study. Both descriptive and inferential statistics collected were analyzed by SPSS version 22.0. Results revealed that: (1) participants held high levels of motivation in teaching, (2) males, in-service teachers and teachers in the public sector scored significantly higher in their motivation levels than their counterparts, (3) no significant difference was discerned between participants' level of study, father's and mother's qualification and the total motivation level, (4) teacher's motivation is significantly related to age. The results will have practical implications to the Malaysian government which aims to raise the standard of both pre- and in-service teachers.

Keywords: Teacher's motivation, FIT-Choice Scale, Malaysian Education

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MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a prophetic profession that is respected in all societies. Nations directly or indirectly depend on quality of teachers that they have or produce. It has also been acknowledged by the Government of Malaysia that educational reforms and transformation are impossible without giving enough considerations to the quality of pre-service and in-service teachers. Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013) has highlighted the need to transfer teaching into a profession of choice. It has been planned that the entry bar for teaching from 2013 should be raised and only the top 30% of graduates will be able to be selected as a teacher. By this measure, teaching would hopefully be more widely regarded as a prestigious and elite profession in the Malaysian society.

Despite this being a good initiative to improve quality of teaching, yet the Malaysian Government seems to fail to attract top graduates into the profession. Recent research study shows that many newly appointed secondary school teachers in Malaysia leave their profession just after receiving verification of their position. These teachers have completed their probation period after being trained in teachers training institutions (Jusoh, 2012). Teacher recruitment and retention would affect the quality of teaching, student learning and academic attainment (Sinclair, 2008). Bruinsma and Jansen (2010) identified that pre-service teachers who have “extrinsic maladaptive motives” toward teaching tend to have higher probabilities of leaving the profession. This indicates that one of the reasons for quality Malaysian teachers to remain in this profession is the lack of motivation. Watt and Richardson (2007) recommended that by recognizing the importance of “motivation”, governments and employing authorities can overcome the problems related to teacher shortages, teacher recruitment and supply, restructuring and reformation of teacher education, and professional development of in-service teachers. The Malaysian government and employing authorities should concentrate on motivating the existing teachers and quality graduates into the profession, as it can help in attracting and retaining quality teachers in the profession (Sinclair, 2008).

Malaysia is a multicultural society with a diverse range of people. Thus, teachers are most likely of different ethnic backgrounds. A recent study by Anna Che Azmi and Mohd Zulkhairi Mustapha (2014) identified that gender and ethnicity are the background factors that affect motivation towards academic achievements in Malaysia. Besides that, recent studies had indicated that teachers with different backgrounds may have different types and levels of motivation (Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt & Richardson, 2008; Watt et al., 2012). This has also been confirmed by several other research studies (e.g. Eren & Tezel, 2010; König & Rothland, 2012; Topkaya & Uztosun, 2012). According to Watt and Richardson (2008), since beginner teachers possess a wide range of background characteristics, it may influence the teaching program and the decision of choosing teaching as a career. Motivation towards the teaching profession and background characteristics are interrelated and quality of teachers and teacher education program depends on it (Bruinsma & Jansen, 2010; Kılınç, Watt, & Richardson, 2012; Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt & Richardson, 2008).



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

While the Government of Malaysia has spent much time and resources in devising different initiatives to increase teacher's motivation, one of the main factors, i.e. teachers' background characteristics that can help develop quality teachers remains under researched. Therefore, this research aims to explore the background characteristics of the pre-service and in-service teachers and its relationship with motivation towards teaching as a career.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Oxford dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2014) defines "motivation" as the "desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm". In simple terms, motivation is a force that drives us to do something effectively. A teacher's motivation will significantly affect his or her quality of teaching and interaction with students. It can energize new teachers in the beginning of their careers as well keep in-service teachers energetic throughout their careers. Teachers may have intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivation towards teaching and motivation can be changed from one type to other during teacher training and experiences. Changes in student teacher's motivation levels may occur after coursework and practicum experiences when they enter teacher education programs (Sinclair, 2008). These types of motivation are not contradictory to each other but are dimensions within which pre-service teachers often differ in based on the context.

Teachers' experiences while teaching also shape their commitment and retention in the profession. Bruinsma and Jansen (2010) concluded that in the company of other background characteristics (gender, academic background), pre-service teachers with positive teaching experiences indicated greater motivation and commitment towards teaching; whereas those with negative teaching experiences indicated extrinsic maladaptive motives and remained in the profession for short period of time. Motivation is thus positively proportional to the length of time pre-service teachers intend to stay in the teaching career. Therefore, it can be assumed that background characteristics of teachers can be used to predict their motivation, commitment, likeness and dislikes for teaching as a profession and can help us to plan and attract best qualified and competent teachers in this profession.

There are a vast literature on motivation towards teaching as a career (e.g., Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2012; König & Rothland, 2012; Wagner & French, 2010). Richardson and Watt (2006) conducted a large scale survey to report the background characteristics and motivation of pre-service teacher's in three main universities of Australia using the FIT-Choice (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) scale. The results indicated that majority of teachers were females, have lower socioeconomic status, young (age of 19 to 20 for undergraduates and 25 to 26 for graduates), English speaking, born of Australian parents and were careers switchers. On the other hand, the intrinsic value of teaching, perceived teaching abilities, shaping the future, the urge to contribute socially, and working with



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

children/adolescents were highly rated by participants; whereas selecting teaching as the last resort and due to influences from others were rated lowest.

The next advancement in field of teacher's motivation was the development and validation of FIT-Choice Scale in explaining teaching as a career of choice (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Besides using FIT-Choice Scale for motivation, pre-service teacher's background information was also collected. The researchers found FIT-Choice Scale valid and reliable to be used by other researchers.

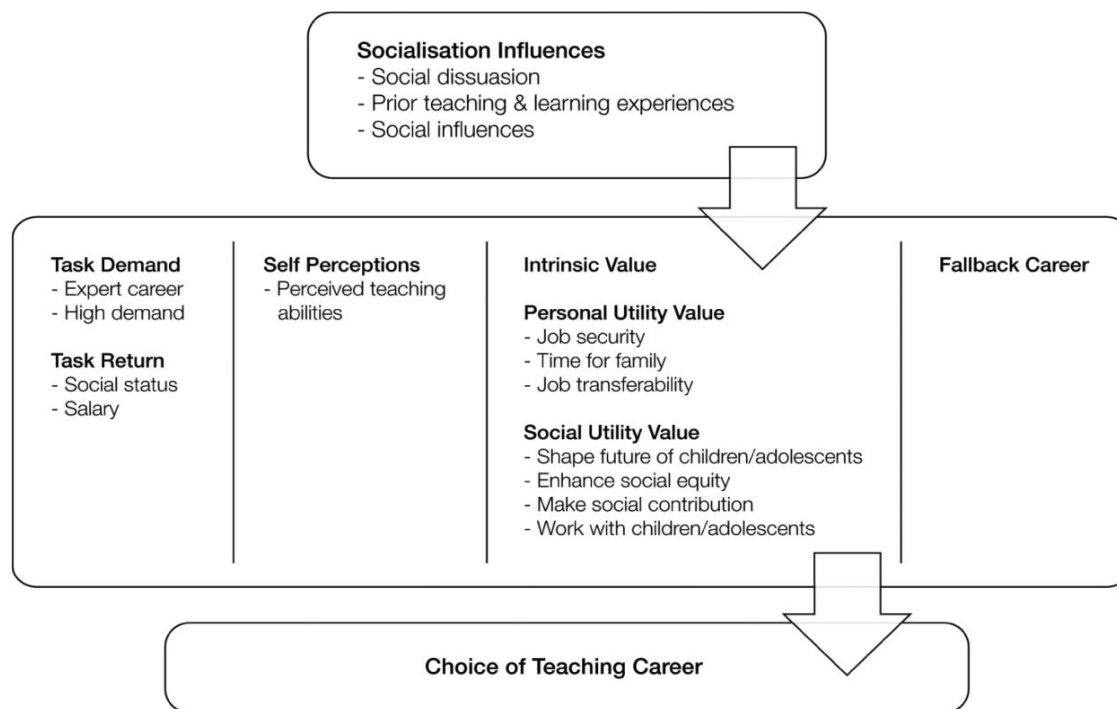


Figure 1. FIT-Choice empirically validated theoretical model (Watt & Richardson, 2012)

This validated instrument was then used in a mixed method research by Watt and Richardson (2008). The professional plans, demographic characteristics, level of satisfaction, opinions and motivations of different teacher types were used to identify if they could help in identifying types of entering teacher by cluster analysis. Data was collected from primary and secondary school pre-service teachers. Configurations of participant's profile based on planned effort, planned persistence, leadership aspirations and professional development aspirations were clustered in "highly engaged persisters, highly engaged switchers and lower engaged desisters" in order to predict teacher's quality such as perceptions towards career, motivations and aspirations.



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

The first two studies were conducted in Australia. The researchers then extended their work in other parts of the world using the same scale (FIT-Choice Scale) with different background characteristics. Watt et al. (2012) collected data from Australia, the United States, Germany, and Norway and found it valid in order to be used fruitfully in other countries like Australia. Moreover, they also found relationship between motivation and perception about teaching by multiple-group mean and covariance structures (MACS) framework using M-Plus 3.11. The U.S. sample scored statistically high while the Norwegian sample scored lower among other countries for motivation towards teaching (intrinsic Motivation, job security, work with children/adolescents, social influences); while overall differences can be found in among all countries. Moreover, the highest ratings for perceptions (expert career, social status, high demand, salary and social dissuasion) were for the U.S., then Australia, and finally German samples.

In another attempt, Kılınç, Watt and Richardson (2012) investigated motivations and perceptions among pre-service teachers from science and non-science teaching programs in Turkey by Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA). The FIT-Choice instrument was translated into Turkish language to maximize the validity and reliability of the study. The findings showed that altruistic 'social utility values' and desire for a secure job were the most influential, followed by intrinsic value and perceived teaching abilities; while job transferability, family flexibility and social influences were moderate, and motivation was lower for negative fallback. Motivation for science and non-science teacher trainees was found to be different.

Watt and Richardson (2012) expanded their study internationally including and contrasting more samples from Turkey, the United States, Croatia, China, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland using FIT-Choice scale and identifying factors influencing teaching as a career. It was found that FIT-Choice scale is valid and reliable in diverse settings except job transferability (work as a teacher outside the country) which did not apply anywhere except Australia. The background of the participants revealed that there were both pre-service and in-service teachers who spoke different languages and from different programs. Teachers in all countries showed a majority of women except for Switzerland.

Findings for motivation factors show that ability motivations and intrinsic value were highly important in all countries except for Chinese and Turkish settings which were having higher fallback career motivations. Social utility values were lowest in the Chinese sample while notably high in the Croatian, Turkish and US samples. On views about the teaching profession, the Australian sample demands were rated high, and returns low. There were notable in the Chinese sample, which had lowly rated both the professionalism needed and demand of teaching. Higher salary ratings were discerned in the German and Swiss settings. Participants were found to be generally satisfied with the decision of selecting teaching as a profession; which was most evident in the Croatian and US samples.

Wagner and French (2010) with the help of mixed method study tested a self-determination theory to descry how teachers' workplace and their motivation, and change in teaching practice professional



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

growth are interrelated. Data was collected from in-service teachers with different background characteristics during a professional development program, through survey questionnaires for intrinsic motivation and work climate, interviews and observations. Findings reflected a strong relationship between teachers' views of their workplace and intrinsic motivation for the professional development program. Supervisor support, the nature of the work itself, and relationship with colleagues are significant predictors of intrinsic motivation. However, qualitative results showed that teachers were themselves not interested to attend the program but rather participated due to obligation and requirement by their employers, or just to fulfil their performance indicators instead of bringing change in their students.

Königa and Rothland (2011) conducted a study to replicate FIT-Choice Scale in Germany with 1287 pre-service teachers to give further insight into the predictive validity of the FIT-Choice scale and to determine the relationship between motivation and their general pedagogical knowledge (GPK) using a subsample of 130 pre-service teachers. FIT-Choice scale was found to be meaningful and convincing for research on future teacher's motivations for teaching as a career. The findings also indicated that intrinsic motivation is strongly related with GPK, while extrinsic motivation negatively related with GPK. The findings showed that intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motivations are significant for usage of opportunities to learn during teacher education.

Fokkens-Bruinsma and Carrinus (2012) examined the suitability of the FIT-Choice scale through factor analysis in a Dutch educational context among two batches of pre-service teachers and found it suitable to be used in Dutch context. They also examined the relationships between the motivations to become a teacher and concurrent commitment. The key motivation for becoming a teacher was found to be due to the social influences and self-perception of teaching-related ability. Motivations of teaching ability, previous teaching and learning experiences, working with children, levels of satisfaction with the choice of teaching and perceived task demand predicted effective commitment.

Addison and Brundrett's (2008) research was done to determine the nature of the issues influencing motivation and demotivation factors in six primary schools in England, and how these factors are affected by ethnographic and demographic characteristics. Questionnaire was used to measure demographic and ethnographic characteristics, while interview and field diaries were used to determine the motivation and de-motivation factors. Principle sources of motivation for primary school teachers are extrinsic motivators such as motivated students, their sense of achievement, interested or well behaved students, supportive colleagues and good progress of children; whereas main demotivation factors include poor responses from children and a heavy workload. Teachers with different demographics and ethnographic background may have different motivation and demotivation factors.

From available literature we came to know that there is a recent interest in the studies of motivation towards teaching. Previously there was not any instrument that could be used to compare and contrast



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

motivation towards teaching profession in all parts of the world, but FIT-choice scale can now be used worldwide (Königa & Rothland, 2011). This scale has not been used in Malaysia.

Most of the studies are related to pre-service teacher's motivation towards teaching and limited studies have researched on in-service teacher's motivation (e.g., Addison & Brundrett, 2008; Sinclair, 2008; Wagner & French, 2010). Furthermore, limited studies are conducted in terms of how teachers' background characteristics would influence their motivation levels.

In light of the identified lack of existing literature pertaining to this, this study was the first research study known to be conducted in the Malaysian context using the FIT-Choice scale. This study aimed to determine the motivation of a combination of both pre- and in-service teachers, and to explore whether their background characteristics influence their motivation levels. The present study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the overall profiles among teachers?
2. Does teacher's motivation differ by gender?
3. Is there a relation between teacher's motivation and age?
4. Does teacher's motivation differ by the type of institution?
5. Does teacher's motivation differ by the level of study?
6. Does teacher's motivation differ by qualification of their father?
7. Does teacher's motivation differ by qualification of their mother?
8. Does teacher's motivation differ by their type of service?

Since teacher's motivation will affect teaching quality and thus students' learning, this research study is expected to help alongside initiatives from the Malaysian Government to revamp teacher training and improve current teachers' motivation and the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Participants were informed of their rights and clearly informed of the intent of the study. Data was collected on a voluntary basis from 200 Malaysian pre-service and in-service teachers of different levels from preschool through to secondary level in March 2014 from different places across the country. The questionnaires were distributed randomly to the respondents via both online survey form and printed copies to maximize return rates.

Subsequently, for data analysis the SPSS version 22.0 was used as a tool for analysis since the research was based on a quantitative study. In this study both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

data analysis. The use of descriptive statistics was to determine the frequencies and percentages of the respondents' background characteristics, besides finding the means for every item.

On the other hand, inferential statistics were performed to understand the relationship among the independent variables, i.e. gender, age, type of institution, level of study, qualification of father, qualification of mother and type of service; and teacher motivation as the dependent variable. Besides, independent sample t-tests, ANOVA and Pearson Correlation were employed to identify the significant values of the factors that contributed to teacher's motivation.

Samples

The sample of this study consisted of 200 pre- and in-service Malaysian teachers from different states across the nation. They are preschool, primary and secondary school teachers from both public and private sectors. Of these, 115 were pre-service teachers and 85 were in-service teachers. The participants' ages ranged from 19 to 56 (*Mean*= 30.15, *SD*= 9.98). Table 1 shows the sample distribution according to gender, type of service, type of institution affiliated to, highest qualification of study and whether or not they have prior teaching experiences.

Table 1

Sample Distribution according to Gender, Type of service, Type of Institution Affiliated to, Highest Qualification of Study and Prior Teaching Experiences

		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	50	25
	Female	150	75
Type of service	Pre-service	115	57.5
	In-service	85	42.5
Type of institution	Public	121	60.5
	Private	79	39.5
Highest teaching qualification	Foundation	9	4.5
	Diploma	25	12.5
	Degree	144	72
Prior teaching experience	Masters/PhD	22	11
	Yes	112	56
	No	88	44



Instrument (FIT-Choice Scale)

The FIT choice scale (Watt & Richardson, 2007) was used to determine the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of Australian teachers. The questionnaire was adapted from with some modifications to suit with the Malaysian context and objective of this study. It was then validated by a specialist in the area. Furthermore, the adapted English questionnaire was translated to the national Malaysian language (Bahasa Malaysia). Due to the multiracial and multilingual natures of the Malaysian citizens, both English and Malay versions of the instrument were used in the study. Participants were given the choice to select their preferred language that they are comfortable with to respond to the survey.

The adapted questionnaire consists of four different sections. The first section required participants of their demographic backgrounds. Section two consists of 26 items related to the influential factors of becoming a teacher, section three has 14 items related to beliefs about teaching, and finally section four comprises 5 items related to participants' decision to become a teacher. All scale items were measured using seven (7) point Likert Scale with ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Reverse coding were also done to the negative items identified in the instrument.

On top of that, the reliability of each item in the instrument has been tested using Cronbach's alpha method. The lowest value of acceptance for Cronbach's alpha suggested by Gardner (2001) was 0.7. A pilot test was done prior to the distribution of the instrument among 30 randomly selected participants. The Cronbach's alpha value was found to be at 0.919, which implied the reasonably high value of reliability. Unnecessary and misleading items found during the pilot test were removed. Furthermore, the validation process for the instrument also included the removal of all outliers and normality testing.

RESULTS

Overall profile of teacher's motivation

The overall profile of teacher's motivation was measured as a whole by the FIT Choice scale (Watt & Richardson, 2006). Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation values) were employed to explain the teacher's motivation profile. The values for the overall teacher's motivation encompass all three parts of the instrument used, namely the influential factors to the decision of being a teacher, beliefs about the teaching career and the decision to be a teacher.

At the global level, the mean scores for each part were well beyond the mid-point (3.5). This indicated that:

1. Highly influential factors have contributed to participants' decision to be a teacher (Mean=131.44, SD=21.56).



2. Participants hold positive beliefs about being a teacher (Mean=78.33, SD=10.65)
3. Participants are positive of their decision to enter the teaching career (Mean=25.03, SD=5.79).

These have contributed to the overall high motivation levels of participants (Mean=234.80, SD=33.81).

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Overall Teacher's Motivation Profile

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Influential factors	200	76.00	182.00	131.44	21.56
Beliefs		51.00	98.00	78.33	10.65
Decisions		10.00	35.00	25.03	5.79
Teacher's motivation		155.00	301.00	234.80	33.81

Effect of participants' gender toward teacher's motivation

Independent sample T-test was conducted to examine the impact of gender on teacher's motivation. T-test results revealed that male participants scored significantly higher in their total motivation compared to females ($t(194) = 4.20, p < .05$).

Table 3
Summary of T-test Results on Gender and Teacher's Motivation

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p
Teacher's Motivation	Male	48	251.88	33.79	194	4.20	p < .05
	Female	148	229.26	32.01			

Relationship between participants' age and teacher's motivation

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine whether there is relationship between age and teacher's motivation. The correlation coefficients were interpreted according to Davis' descriptors (1971) (negligible = .00 to .09; low = .10 to .29; moderate = .30 to .49; substantial = .50 to .69; very strong = .70 to 1.00). Results as shown in Table 4 indicated that there is low, positive significant relation between age of participants and their motivation ($r = .22, p < .01$).



Table 4
The Correlation Matrix between Age and Teacher's Motivation

	Teacher's Motivation	Age
Teacher's Motivation	-	.22**
Age	.22**	-

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Effects of type of institution towards teacher's motivation

T-test results as shown in Table 5 had discerned significant difference between teacher's motivation for teachers from the public and private sector. Teachers from the public sector scored significantly higher in their levels of motivation compared to those in the private sector ($t(186.80) = 5.87, p < .05$).

Table 5
Summary of T-test Results on Type of Institution and Teacher's Motivation

Variable	Type of Institution	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p
Teacher's Motivation	Public	121	244.55	34.52	186.80	5.87	p < .05
	Private	75	219.07	25.95			

Effect of participants' level of study toward teacher's motivation

One way ANOVA was used to compare the influence of different levels of study among participants (Foundation in Education, Diploma level, Bachelor's Degree, Masters/PhD) on teacher's motivation. One way ANOVA revealed that there is no significant differences between the level of study and teacher's motivation ($f(3,192) = .781, p > .05$).

Table 6
Summary of One Way ANOVA Results on Participants' Level of Study and Teacher's Motivation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2687.911	3	895.970	.781	.506
Within Groups	220165.926	192	1146.698		
Total	222853.837	195			



Effect of father's qualification toward teacher's motivation

One way ANOVA was used to compare the impact of participants' father educational qualifications on teacher's motivation. One way ANOVA revealed that there is no significant differences between father's qualification and teacher's motivation ($f(5,190) = 1.572, p > .05$).

Table 7

Summary of One Way ANOVA Results on Fathers' Qualification and Teacher's Motivation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8853.790	5	1770.758	1.572	.170
Within Groups	214000.047	190	1126.316		
Total	222853.837	195			

Effect of mother's qualification towards teacher's motivation

One way ANOVA was used to compare the impact of participants' mother educational qualifications on teacher's motivation. One way ANOVA as seen below in Table 8 revealed that there is no significant differences between mother's qualification and teacher's motivation ($f(5,190) = 1.640, p > .05$).

Table 8

Summary of One Way ANOVA Results on Mother's Qualification and Teacher's Motivation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9221.469	5	1844.294	1.640	.151
Within Groups	213632.367	190	1124.381		
Total	222853.837	195			

Effect of participants' type of service toward teacher's motivation

T-test results as shown in Table 9 have discerned significant difference between teacher's motivation for teachers from pre-service and in-service teachers. Teachers from the pre-service sector scored significantly lower in their levels of motivation compared to those from the in-service sector ($t(194) = -3.06, p < .05$).



Table 9

Summary of T-Test Results on Type of Service and Teachers' Motivation

Variable	Type of Service	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p
Teacher's Motivation	Pre-Service	111	228.46	31.92	194	-3.06	p < .05
	In-Service	85	243.07	34.59			

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicated a reasonably high level of motivation through the analysis. However, the data has shown that in-service teachers were more highly motivated towards teaching compared to pre-service teachers. The finding is contrary to studies done by Bruinsma and Jansen (2010) which found that pre-service teachers showed high motivation and commitment to teaching. According to their study, pre-service teachers were found to possess high levels of motivation due to having previous experience in teaching. However, Malaysian pre-service teachers do not necessarily have teaching experiences and this might contribute to lower motivation in teaching compared to in-service teachers.

A significant, but low correlation between age and teacher's motivation was discerned in this study, which was in consistent with Günbayeri and Toprak's study (2010). However, this was in contrast with the findings of Guzel (2011) who found that young teachers with 1-5 years of experience had the highest motivation and vice versa. On the other hand, the limitation of having an imbalanced number of participants in the different age groups might lead to misleading and inaccurate results. Thus, these findings should be considered inconclusive. Findings of teacher's age or years of experiences in teacher motivation bear further research.

In terms of gender, male participants showed significantly higher motivation than female teachers. This is consistent with Günbayeri and Toprak's study (2010). This might be due to the higher workload and stress levels female teachers experienced compared to their counterpart (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). According to the findings in Guzel (2011), male teachers were motivated better in terms of advantages and rewards in teaching, while females had better motivation in the profession-related factors.



MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

Concerning the institutions affiliated to the participants whether public or private, a significant difference was found in favor of teachers from the public sector. This finding was in consistent with Guzel's study (2011). In light of the discrepancies and contradiction found in the available body of literature, there is a need for further research in terms of the influence of background characteristics to teacher's motivation.

CONCLUSION

Teacher's motivation is undeniably an essential research area in light of the importance of a teacher's role (Guzel, 2011). This study allows for cross-national comparability with other studies conducted. Our research study employed the first Malaysian version of FIT-Choice scale to study the influential factors of teacher's motivation in relation to their background characteristics in the Malaysian context. Results from this study may benefit educational authorities such as teacher training institutions, schools and also policy makers by suggesting factors that might influence teacher's motivation. Variables which comprised of participants' background characteristics including gender, age, type of institution, level of study, mother and father highest education qualification, and type of service were analysed.

This study provides a glimpse of selected variables that affect pre- and in-service teacher's motivation. Our research revealed possible subject differences to the motivation of teachers that have not been identified by previous research. Such differences will have practical implications to the Malaysian Government aiming to raise the standard of both pre- and in-service teachers. This study has raised several interesting questions that could be explored for future research studies. Klassen and Chiu (2010) have noted the limited available literature on the context of teaching and teachers' self-efficacy. In light of their recommendation, it would be interesting to determine which subjects have the highest motivation toward teaching in terms of levels, i.e. preschool, primary or secondary teachers in our context. Do the subjects teachers teach (Mathematics, Language, Science, Art, Music etc.) influence their motivation levels? Do motivation levels of special education teachers differ from mainstream teachers? What are the factors that might increase or decrease teacher's motivation in teaching? Does ethnicity affect teacher's motivation towards teaching?

The findings of this study are expected to raise the awareness of the importance of both pre- and in-service teacher's motivation levels. Teacher training institutions, national or private schools, and the Government should always strive to encourage and motivate teachers using various initiatives such as organizing team-building camps or retreats, acknowledging teachers' efforts, providing sufficient guidance for entry-level teachers, empathize with the problems teachers might face, and providing opportunities for continuous professional development. These measures will surely enhance teacher's motivation levels.



LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

However, the results of the current study may be subject to the following limitations. The sample size of this study was insufficient to allow for generalization of the results. In comparison of the research done by Koniga and Rothland (2011) which included a total participants of 1287, the amount of participants at 200 in our study was not large enough for cross validation of the results obtained. The sample comprised of a mixture of teachers from various levels namely preschools, primary and secondary schools. As each level of education varies to a certain extent from another, it will be difficult to accurately reflect the motivation of teachers using one measure in a single study. Studying teacher's motivation from each level in separate studies is recommended for future research, as it would provide more detailed analysis and bring more significant impact to the respective fields. Furthermore, the variables chosen in this study were limited. The relationships between the variables and teacher's motivation could be further researched on as suggestions for future studies. The analysis employed in the study mainly involved T-Test and ANOVA which lacked depth and rigor to lead to impactful results. Exploring in a more detailed manner by employing more data analysis approaches such as Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (EFA and CFA), Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) would increase the validity and reliability of the study. A suggestion for further study on this research area could involve conducting interviews to explore in-depth the motivation and de-motivation factors and relation between each factor that influence motivation towards teaching in Malaysia. Lastly, the sample was restricted to Malaysian teachers mostly from urban settings. Despite the fact that the respondents were from a wide variety of schools, there was no sample randomization and thus findings might not represent the views of other groups of teachers from different settings.

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