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'THE TEACHER LIFE CHOSE ME': INVESTIGATING GRADUATES' TEACHING CAREER DECISION

Abstract:

Understanding what motivates prospective teachers to enter the profession has the potential to contribute to making teacher recruitment more attractive; to strengthening teacher education programmes, in order to meet the goals and aspirations of enrolled candidates; and to ensuring an overall positive school experience through the provision of appropriate mentor support. This information becomes even more important for universities which have undergone changes in the levels at which teacher education degrees are offered. Such is the case of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education (SHBIE), a Graduate Faculty in Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Since 2009, SHBIE has become a Graduate School of Education. This means that the faculty no longer offers teacher education degrees at the undergraduate level. Instead, to prepare candidates for a career as a teacher, SHBIE offers an 18-month full time Master of Teaching qualification. With this in mind, the aims of the present study were twofold: first, to examine the motives of Master of Teaching students for choosing a career in teaching; and second, to compare the motives of these students with those who were in an undergraduate teacher preparation programme in SHBIE before it became a Graduate School of Education.

Data for the present study were collected from 100 Master of Teaching students, using an open-ended questionnaire. Responses were coded and categorised according to extrinsic, intrinsic and altruistic motivations. This was done in order to compare the results of this study with those reported by Yong (1995). His study, conducted more than 2 decades ago, involved 133 SHBIE undergraduates who were training to become teachers in Brunei Darussalam.

Findings revealed major differences between the two groups of students. For instance, while extrinsic motives were the dominant determinants for SHBIE students entering the teaching profession two decades ago, intrinsic motives were the most prominent amongst current SHBIE graduates. In addition, the graduates cited a number of intrinsic and altruistic reasons for choosing teaching, which are not found in Yong's study. Another interesting finding relates to the graduates' perceptions of their teaching-related abilities and perceived sense of expertise in areas related to their first degree. The results of the present study have important implications to facilitate teacher education.

Keywords:

motives, motivation, teaching career, teacher preparation, graduates

JEL Classification: I29, I23