Teachers' choices for the teaching career and their teacher-student interpersonal relationships in the classroom

Teachers' choices for the teaching career and their teacher-student interpersonal relationships in the classroom: investigating the Dutch context

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Abstract

Objectives & Framework: This paper reports on the relationships between teachers' reasons for choosing a teaching career and their interpersonal behaviour in the classroom. In doing so, it extends international research with the FIT-Choice scale - an instrument that examines different classes of teachers' motivations: perceived abilities; intrinsic, personal & social utility values; and task perceptions (Richardson & Watt, 2006; Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2008) – to the context of the Netherlands. It also contributes by linking the framework to research on teacher-student interpersonal behaviour in the classroom (Wubbels, Brekelmans, den Brok & van Tartwijk, 2006). Teacher-student interpersonal behaviour is conceptualised here in terms of two major dimensions: control (the degree to which the teacher determines the interaction) and affiliation (the degree to which teachers and students are cooperative or oppositional). Prior research suggests that teacher-student interpersonal behaviour is strongly linked to other teaching variables, teacher stress or burn-out, but also to student outcomes (Wubbels et al., 2006).

Methods & Data: Data was collected among 128 secondary school teachers in the Netherlands. Teachers were selected from three career groups, beginning teachers (0-3 years experience), experienced teachers (8-15 years experience) and senior teachers (more than 20 years experience). To map their reasons for choosing a teaching career, teachers were asked to complete the FIT-Choice scale (Watt & Richardson, 2007), which was translated and back-translated. Also, teachers were asked to complete the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI, Wubbels et al., 2006) to map their perceptions of their control and affiliation in the classroom (self-perception). Teachers also completed the QTI for their preferred interpersonal behaviour (ideal perception). Finally, students of one class of each teacher also completed the QTI for their view of the interpersonal behaviour of their teachers (student perception). Relationships between the Fit-Choice and QTI scales were determined by conducting correlational and regression analyses.

Results: Most of the Fit-Choice scales appeared to be reliable for the Dutch context, although a few of the scales showed room for further improvement (ability, intrinsic value, satisfaction). When looking at the value of the motives themselves, scales that displayed high values in the Dutch context were work with children and shape future, while relatively low values were found for social influence and job transferability. Interestingly, weak and mostly statistically non-significant correlations were found between the Fit-Choice scales and ideal-, self-, and student-perceptions for the two interpersonal teaching dimensions. Correlations were slightly higher with teachers' self-perceptions than with their ideal or with their students' perceptions. Correlations did not differ between different career groups either.

Significance: This study further supports the cross-cultural validity of the Fit-Choice framework. It suggests that similar motives play a role in opting for a teaching career in the Netherlands as elsewhere in the world. It also suggests that motives to enter the profession are relatively independent from the manner in which teachers interact with students throughout the career. Hence, both aspects deserve their own share of attention in both teacher education as well as professional development trajectories.

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1. Introduction

The question what motivates teachers to teach and what keeps them in the profession has since long occupied researchers. In this respect, the *FIT-Choice (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice)* scale has been developed to assess the primary motivations of teachers to teach, and was demonstrated to be psychometrically sound in its initial use among a sample of 1653 Australian preservice teachers (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Since its development, it has been used in many studies in many different countries. It has been shown to predict both positive and negative outcome variables among beginning teachers: the motivations that related most strongly to high initial career satisfaction included the altruistic-type motivations most frequently emphasised in the teacher education literature, the intrinsic value individuals attached to teaching, and self evaluations of their teaching-related skills (Watt & Richardson, 2007). For subsequent planned persistence, planned effort, professional development, leadership aspirations, and career choice satisfaction, similar patterns of correlation were observed. Beginning teachers' ability beliefs, intrinsic value, and social utility values demonstrated significant positive correlations with these later measures; positive prior teaching and learning motivations related significantly positively to later planned persistence in the profession; choosing teaching as a fallback career correlated negatively across all five later measures; personal utility values (job security, transferability, time for family) related negatively to later planned persistence and career choice satisfaction (see Watt & Richardson, 2007). While there has been a variety of research relating the instrument to different teacher or career variables, the link between the motives of the teacher and his or her teaching in the classroom has scarcely been researched. It would be interesting to investigate whether teachers with different valued motives take on different teaching styles and whether this even resonates with students' perceptions of their teachers' behaviours.

In addition, while the instrument has been employed in various countries, such as the USA, UK, Norway, Germany, Ireland, Spain, among others, it has not yet been used in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands, currently there is a strong debate about an argued lack of quality of teachers and the way in which they are educated. At the same time, there is a shortage of teachers, especially in secondary education in the STEM domain, and there is a high burn-out and attrition rate. Public perception of the teaching profession is low.

In this study, we will focus on the link between teachers' motivations to teach and their interpersonal behaviour in the classroom. In all phases of the teaching profession positive relationships with students are central to teachers' self-efficacy and ability to teach well (Day et al., 2006). Problems with teacher student relationships on the other hand seem to be the most important policy amendable reason for teacher attrition early in the career (MacDonald, 1999; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003) and an important factor for teacher stress and burnout later in the career (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). *Teacher interpersonal expertise* is an important factor in creating and maintaining positive relationships with students. For this reason, teacher interpersonal expertise also seems important for enhancing the quality of the teaching career (Wubbels, Brekelmans, den Brok, & van Tartwijk, 2006). We specifically address *interpersonal* expertise, the ability to create a positive classroom climate.

In addition to teacher attrition related to problems with teacher-student relationships, the number of students entering teacher training programmes have decreased significantly during the last

decades. The question rises what can be done to make the teaching profession more attractive in such a way that more people chose to become a teacher. What motivates people to become a teacher. Why did the current teachers chose to become and stay a teacher? Would their interpersonal expertise be at stake here? Is there a correlation between a person's motivation to become a teacher and his/her interpersonal expertise?

This paper explores both concepts and the possible relations between the two concepts and focuses therefore upon the motivation of teachers at the start of their career and their teacher-student relationship. We present the conceptual framework and first results in this paper, being part of an ongoing research project on the development of teacher expertise throughout the professional career. After the theoretical framework and methods are presented, the data gathering and analysis are described and first preliminary results are presented. The paper ends with a discussion on the contribution of the project to teacher development literature and practice. Since the combination of interpersonal expertise and motivation to become a teacher have not yet been studied before, this study will be exploratory. However, we expect to find that teachers with motivations related to 'working with children/youngsters' are perceived more positively in terms of their interpersonal teaching behaviour, or perceive their own interpersonal behaviour more positively.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 The FIT-Choice model

Since the 1960s several studies have been conducted about (student) teachers motivation, leading to various theoretical concepts and models. Overall, the distinction of three kinds of motivations highlighted by Brookhart and Freeman (1992) is generally accepted, however, the operationalizations of these three (intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivation) differ enormously. Drawing upon recent research conducted by Watt and Richardson (2007), the expectancy-value theory 'allows us to locate previously identified motivations with an integrative and comprehensive motivational framework' (Watt & Richardson 2007, 168). This framework has been development by Atkinson (1957) and Eccles (1983) among many others. Watt and Richardson adjusted and applied the expectancy-value theory for measuring 'why individuals choose teaching as a career' (Watt & Richardson 2007, 170). In general, the expectancy-value theory states that values and ability beliefs are crucial motivations in predicting career choices. Intrinsic motivation stems from intrinsic values and refers to the enjoyment an individual experiences when carrying out a certain task. In a similar vein, utility values influence the extrinsic motivation and refer to the extent in which a task is likely to be useful in the future. Altruistic motivation stems from personal values. This theoretical framework provided the basis for the FIT – Choice test, a test to study the factors influencing the choice for a teaching career, which is used in the presented research.

The expectancy-value framework by Eccles and Wigfield was mainly developed to explain gender differences in achievement and career choices (Eccles, 2005). Drawing on other motivational theories, the authors believe that "educational, vocational and other achievement related choices are most directly related to two sets of beliefs; the individual's expectations for success, and the importance or value the individual attaches to the various options perceived by the individual as available" (Eccles, 2005, p. 105). These two sets of beliefs are influenced by

multiple variables derived from the surrounding social world and cognitive processes as shown in Figure 1.

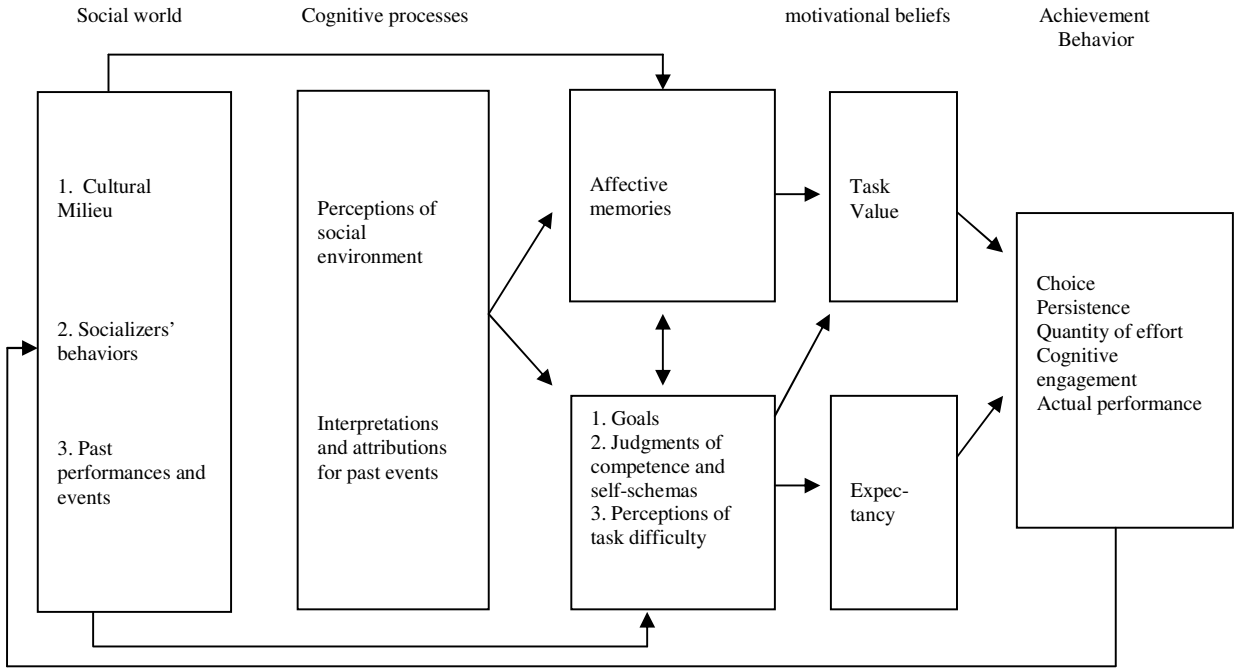

Figure 1. Expectancy Value model as shown in Pintrich & Schunk, 2002 , 2002

Research has shown that expectancy is related to achievement and persistence, whereas subjective value is related to choice (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Subjective task value (STV) is defined in terms of four components: attainment value, intrinsic or interest value, utility value, and the cost of engaging in the activity (Eccles, 2002). With regard to attainment value, the model assumes that individuals aim to confirm the possessions of those characteristics central to their self-image when making decisions, and will highly appreciate those tasks that are consistent with self-image and long-term goals. Intrinsic task value refers to the enjoyment of doing the task or the expectation of enjoyment of a future task. Utility value is similar to extrinsic motivation and entails doing a task as a means to an end, not just for the ability to do it. The last of the value constructs, cost, can come in many forms; time and money spent on the task, fear of failure, fear of social dissuasion, and rejection. Cost is the only construct in the model that relates negatively to choice, which implies that the higher the cost, the less likely the choice will be.

All of these value constructs are subjective and dynamic. When applying the expectancy-value model in research, one has to keep in mind that the perceived options a person has are very subjective, and there never is a full understanding of all the available options and what each entails (Eccles, 2005). Furthermore, decisions are made in a complex social environment and often it comes down to a choice between two or more positive options. Eccles states that utility value especially is strongly influenced and shaped by factors such as the broader cultural environment and values, gender role stereotyping, etc. She argues that her model is well suited for a socio-cultural analysis of motivation, stating:

> I predict that socio-cultural differences in a wide array of activity and behavioral choices, particularly in the achievement domain, reflect cultural differences in success

> expectations, and STV-related beliefs, which, in turn, likely result from socio-cultural differences in the wide range of social experiences that shape human development (Eccles, 2005, p.109).

Attainment value can also have a strong connection to culture and past experiences as it relates to more basic person-environment fit theories that focus on the fit between the needs of the individual and the opportunities the environment provides (Eccles, 2005). The notion of attainment value is an operationalization of this principle and Eccles added two basic needs: (1) the need to feel that what one does matters and (2) the need to feel respected and valued by one's surrounding social group. These needs are culturally embedded and it might be in this part of attainment value that the overlap with utility value exists. On a more basic level, attainment value relates to the notion of self-actualization and confirmation of one's identity. These identity components are culturally embedded and when internalized by individuals they can predict value placement on different activities.

In summary, the model is highly individually-oriented in the sense that all value constructs are based on personal beliefs and goals. These goals and beliefs in turn can be strongly influenced by a person's socio-cultural environment. Together they influence how much value will be attached to a certain task and what choices will be made (Eccles, 2005).

Richardson and Watt (2007) conducted research on teacher motivation using the FIT-Choice scale they developed based on the expectancy-value theory by Wigfield and Eccles (1995). As explained, Wigfield and Eccles proposed three higher order constructs in their expectancy-value theory; (1) expectancy/ability beliefs, (2) subjective task value (attainment, intrinsic, and utility values) and (3) perceived task difficulty (Eccles and Wigfield, 1995). The Fit-Choice scale refers to these three constructs as; self, value and task perceptions (Watt and Richardson, 2007). For the expectancy/ability beliefs, items were developed asking about participants' perceptions of their teaching abilities. The value component was divided into intrinsic value, personal utility value and social utility value. Intrinsic value refers to the enjoyment one gets from doing the task and for this category items were developed that assess individuals' interest in and desire for a teaching career (Watt and Richardson, 2007). Personal utility value is based on the construct of attainment value in the original motivational framework, and measures the extent to which individuals consider tasks to be relating to their personal goals. Reasons falling in this category revolve around time for family, job security, job transferability, and bludging (choosing an easy option). In previous research, this category was mainly called extrinsic reasons for becoming a teacher (see, Bastick, 2002). The construct of social utility value was divided into the following categories: make a social contribution, enhance social equity, shape the future of children/adolescents, and work with children/adolescents. These altruistic, service-oriented goals proved one of the most mentioned categories by teacher candidates in different studies (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992).

Perceived task difficulty or task perceptions consisted of task demands and task return. Task demands were divided into expert career and high demand, while task return was divided into social status, teacher morale, and salary.

Social influences as well as prior learning and teaching experiences were the antecedent socialization constructs. These social influences can be positive (e.g., "My friends think I should become a teacher") or negative (e.g., "Were you encouraged to pursue careers other than teaching?"). Teaching as a fallback career was also taken into account. For an overview of these categories and their perceived relationship, see Figure 2.

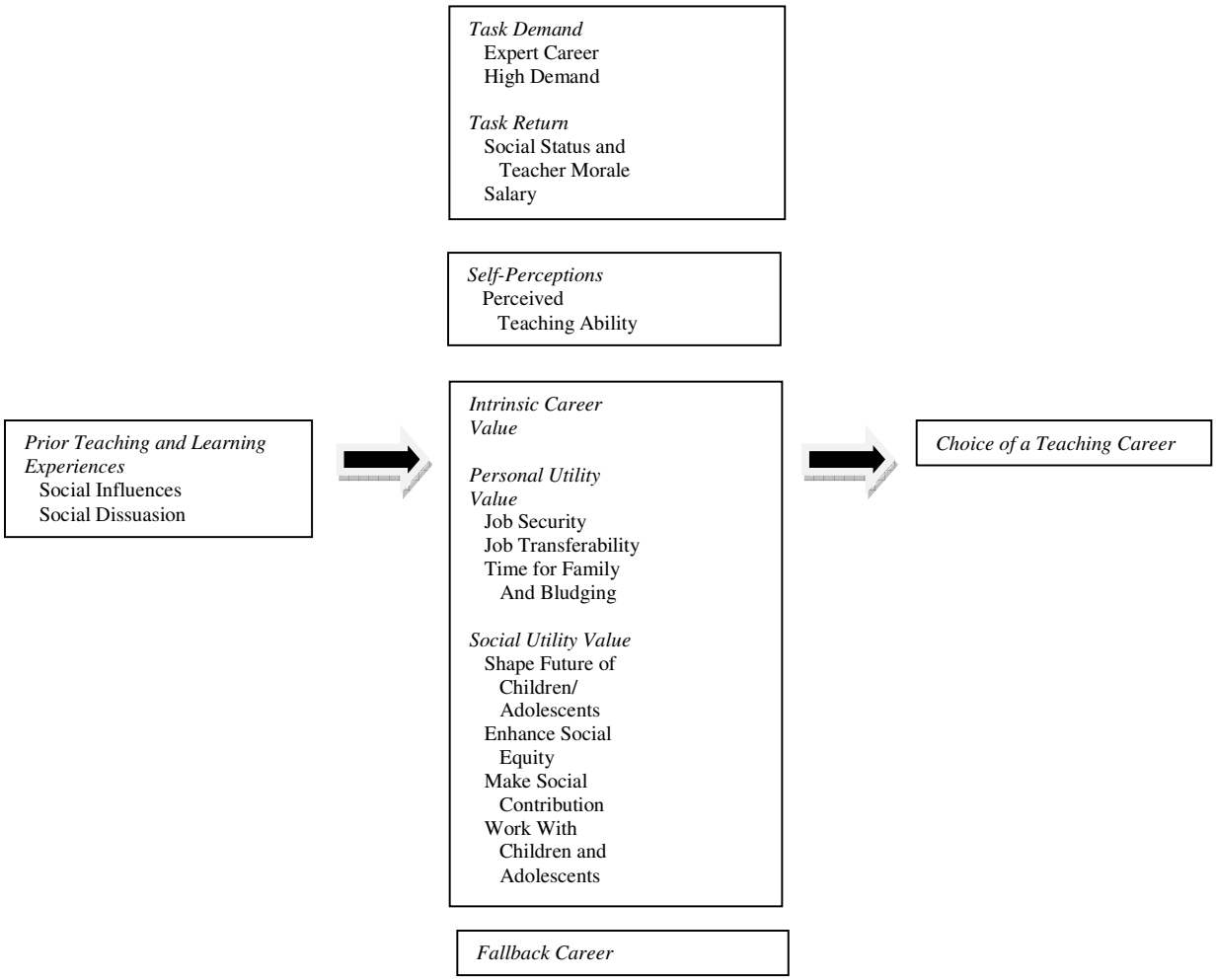

Figure 2: theorized constructs within the FIT-Choice model (Watt and Richardson, 2007, p.179)

2.2 Teacher-student interpersonal relationships

To map perceptions of teacher-student interpersonal behaviour in the present study, interpersonal theory is used as theoretical framework (Horowitz & Strack, 2011; Kiesler, 1996). Interpersonal theory assumes that actual behaviour or behaviour perceptions can be reduced to two dimensions, primary to all social interaction. One dimension describing *dominance* and *submission*, and a second dimension of *hostility* and *affection* (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005). These dimensions have been given various names in the literature depending on the context in which they are used (Bruckmüller & Abele, 2013; Wiggins, 1991; Wubbels, et al., 2006). According to interpersonal theorists, these various names should be interpreted in reference to the meta-concepts Agency and Communion (Gurtman, 2009; Horowitz & Strack, 2011). A high position on the *Agency*-dimension means someone is dominant, takes matters in his or her own hand, has power, and control; a high position on the *Communion*-dimension means that someone shows love, friendliness, and affiliation (Gurtman, 2009). According to interpersonal theory, the interpersonal meaning of each behavior represents a specific blend of Agency and Communion, that can be graphically represented using the

interpersonal circle or circumplex (Fabrigar, Visser, & Browne, 1997; Gurtman, 2009; Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957; Sadler, Ethier, Gunn, Duong, & Woody, 2009).

Wubbels, Créton and Hooymayers (1985, see Wubbels & Levy, 1993) adapted the circumplex model to education and named it the *Model of Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour* (MITB). In their original model, interpersonal behaviour is described along two dimensions - a Dominance/Submission (*Influence*) dimension, and a Cooperation/Opposition (*Proximity*) dimension. The two dimensions can be depicted in a two-dimensional plane, that can be further subdivided into eight categories or sectors of behaviour (see Figure 3): Leadership (DC), Helpful/Friendly (CD), Understanding CS), Giving Responsibility/Freedom (SC), Uncertain (SO), Dissatisfied (OS), Admonishing (OD) and Strictness (DO). Each sector can be described in terms of the two dimensions: Leadership, for example, contains a high degree of Influence and some degree of Cooperation; Helpful/Friendly behaviour some degree of Dominance and a high degree of Cooperation; etc.

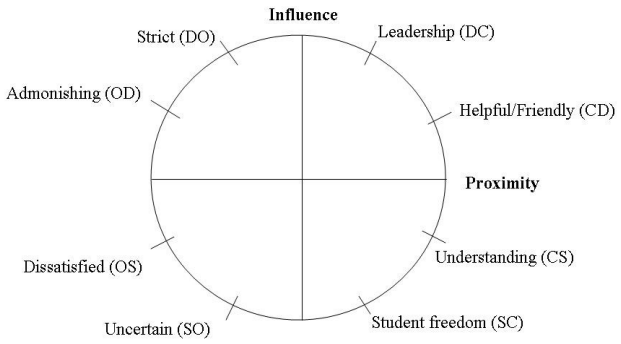

Figure 3: The model for Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour

Recently, Wubbels and colleagues (Wubbels, Brekelmans, den Brok, Levy, Mainhard, & van Tartwijk, 2012), following several major review studies and contemporary research on interpersonal circumplex theory, renamed the two dimensions into *Control* and *Affiliation*, and the eight interpersonal sectors into *steering, friendly, understanding, complying, uncertain, dissatisfied, reprimanding* and *enforcing*.

Based on the MITB, Wubbels , Créton and Hooymayers, (1985; see also Wubbels & Levy, 1993) also developed an instrument, the *Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI)* to map students' and teachers' perception of teacher interpersonal behaviour. The items are connected to eight scales, representing the eight sectors and two dimensions in Figure 3. The Dutch version of the QTI was developed in several rounds of interviews with teachers and students and by testing different sets of items between 1978 and 1984 (Wubbels et al., 1985) and in its final version consisted of 77 Likert-type five-point scale items.

Many studies have used QTI to assess students' and teachers' perceptions of teacher interpersonal behaviours (Wubbels et al., 2006). These studies show an interesting pattern. First, in all countries, students perceive more dominance than submissiveness and more cooperation than opposition in their classes. Second, in all countries, students report twice (or more than twice) the amount of Proximity compared to the amount of Influence, meaning that teachers are perceived as more cooperative than they are perceived as dominant. Of course, interesting differences between studies and countries can be noted, with Dutch teachers being perceived lowest on both dimensions, Singaporean teachers being perceived highest on Proximity and Bruneian teachers being perceived highest on the Influence dimension (Telli, den Brok & Cakiroglu, 2007).

3. Method

Sample

To select participants, we invited teachers through large internet fora by using a network of schools from teacher training institutes and by advertising in teacher magazines/journals. In total, 187 teachers (from 60 schools) responded to our calls, of whom 128 completed the questionnaire. The participants differed in subject taught, age (m=44.49, SD=10.61), gender (87 male teachers and 100 female teachers) and years of experience (m=12.62, SD=11.15).

Instrumentation

For the translation of the original English FIT-Choice instrument the Dutch translation of Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus (2012) was slightly adjusted by the authors. A pilot study conducted among secondary school teachers showed some problems in answering some of the items, and resulted in combining some of the items of the original FIT Choice questionnaire into one item due to the experienced overlap and confusion by respondents. Respondents could answer the items on a 7-point scale from 1 ('does not at all apply to me') to 7 ('completely applies to me').

Table 1 presents the subscales, reliabilities and number of items involved in the present study.

Table 1: Scales, items and reliability of the FIT-Choice scales (between brackets the number of items of the original version are reported)

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Ability	3	.65
Intrinsic career value	3	.49
Fallback career	3	.61
Job security	3	.87
Time for family	2 (5)	.64
Job transferability	2 (3)	.62
Easy option (bludging)	2	.72
Shaping the future of children	3	.72
Enhancing social equity	3	.86
Making a social contribution	2 (3)	.86
Working with children	4 (3)	.79
Prior teaching and learning experiences	3	.86
Social influences	3	.80
Expert career	3	.70
High demand	3	.76
Social status	2 (6)	.70
Teacher morale	3	.58
Social dissuasion	3	.67
Satisfaction with choice	3	.49

To measure teacher-student interpersonal relationships, the 24-items version of the QTI (Wubbels et al., 2012) was administered to teachers. Every item consists of a five-point scale (1 = *never* and 5 = *always*). Examples of items are: "This teacher has humor" and "This teacher punishes us". The teachers selected one class to complete the QTI to map the students' perceptions of their teachers' interpersonal behavior on an aggregated level. In addition teachers themselves completed the instrument twice, once indicating how they perceived their own behaviour in this particular class (self-perception), and once how they would like to be seen (ideal perception). In Table 2 the subscales, reliabilities and number of items involved of the QTI are presented.
Reliabilities of the two dimension scores were .86 for Control and .92 for Affiliation (student perceptions).

Table 2: Scales, items and reliability of the QTI

Sector		Cronbachs alpha		
	Number of items	Student perceptions	Teacher Self-Perceptions	Teacher Ideal-Perception
DC Steering	3	.96	.85	.66
CD Friendly	3	.92	.70	.66
CS Understanding	3	.92	.63	.51
SC Complying	3	.91	.77	.64
SO Uncertain	3	.96	.81	.74
OS Dissatisfied	3	.93	.69	.78
OD Reprimanding	3	.85	.60	.53
DO Enforcing	3	.83	.76	.72

Analyses
First, descriptive analyses were conducted for both the FIT-Choice scales as well as the QTI data. Second, we computed correlations between each of the FIT-Coice scales and the two dimension scores for the QTI for the ideal, self and student perceptions, respectively. Finally, we conducted six separate regression analyses, with the QTI dimension scores as outcome variables and the FIT-Choice scales as predictors.

4. Results

Table 3 presents the descriptive results for the QTI scales and the FIT-Choice scales. Please note that the QTI dimensions can range from -3 (very low) to +3 (very high), while the FIT-Choice scales can range between 1 and 7.
As can be seen in Table 3, students perceive their teachers on average positively on both interpersonal dimensions. Please note that a score of 0 indicates that teachers are perceived equally dominant and submissive, while a positive score denotes that teachers are perceived more dominant than they are submissive. The values are comparable to those reported in prior Dutch samples, in that respect. The value for affiliation is slightly higher than that of control. Teachers' perceptions are slightly higher, but comparable to those of the students. Teachers' ideal perceptions are higher for both dimensions than the actual perceptions, which is not strange, as they represent the ideal style of a teacher (how they would be seen in the ideal situation).
When looking at the FIT-Choice scales, high values are found for: ability, intrinsic career value, working with children, expert career, high demand and satisfaction with choice. Shaping the future of children is also scored relatively high. Low scores, on the other hand, can be observed for fallback career, job transferability, easy option, social influences and social dissuation.

Table 3: descriptive information on the scales of the QTI and FIT-choice

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ideal Control	.53	.18
Ideal Affiliation	.73	.20
Teacher self Control	.22	.30
Teacher self Affiliaton	.36	.34
Students Control	.24	.21
Students Affiliation	.35	.31
Ability	5.56	2.10
Intrinsic career value	5.23	1.02
Fallback career	2.41	1.34
Job security	3.98	1.65
Time for family	3.41	1.89
Job transferability	2.74	1.55
Easy option (bludging)	2.74	1.61
Shaping the future of children	4.81	1.19
Enhancing social equity	3.93	1.48
Making a social contribution	4.37	1.67
Working with children	5.33	1.04
Prior teaching and learning experiences	4.36	1.61
Social influences	2.21	1.32
Expert career	5.67	.90
High demand	5.82	1.02
Social status	3.68	1.00
Teacher morale	3.99	1.51
Social dissuasion	2.52	1.39
Satisfaction with choice	5.73	.95

In Table 4, correlations between the FIT-Choice scales and the QTI dimensions are given.

Table 4: Pearson correlations between FIT-Choice scales and teacher ideal perceptions (an asterisk denotes a significant correlation at .05)

Variable	Ideal Control	Ideal Affiliation	Self Control	Self Affiliation	Student Control	Student Affiliation
Ability	.067	.020	-.094	.049	.000	.023
Intrinsic career value	.039	.063	.090	.070	.214 *	.132
Fallback career	.004	-.060	.088	-.046	-.033	-.164
Job security	.073	-.156	.065	-.025	.063	-.109
Time for family	.089	.117	-.019	.062	-.023	-.046
Job transferability	.040	-.025	-.040	-.014	.047	-.058
Easy option (bludging)	.070	-.066	.079	-.070	.000	-.143
Shaping the future of children	.192 *	.013	.000	.005	.054	-.159
Enhancing social equity	-.004	.096	.039	.108	.104	.017
Making a social contribution	.097	-.033	-.102	-.054	-.033	-.111
Working with children	-.041	.024	.001	.204 *	.099	.162
Prior teaching and learning experiences	.018	.017	-.089	-.175	-.012	-.064
Social influences	.065	-.087	-.243 *	-.044	-.162	-.008
Expert career	.002	.042	.005	-.057	.038	.032
High demand	.096	-.176	-.008	-.225 *	.037	-.174
Social status	.067	.143	.023	.080	.018	.103
Teacher morale	-.072	-.091	-.037	-.034	-.018	-.102
Social dissuasion	.113	-.208 *	-.012	-.141	-.043	-.125
Satisfaction with choice	.057	.109	-.139	.127	.003	.176

As Table 4 shows, correlations between most FIT-Choice scales and the QTI dimensions are low, and statistically non-significant. This means that the values attached to the different motives to become a teacher appear hardly associated with how teachers are perceived by students in the classroom, with how they perceive themselves or with what kind of teacher they would like to be or become, in terms of the teacher-student interpersonal relationship. Exceptions are the intrinsic career value, which is positively associated with students' perception of their teachers control. Thus, the more teachers have chosen teaching to become a good teacher for their students, the more they have interpersonal control in the classroom. Other positive associations can be found between shaping the future of children and ideal control, and between working with children and self-perceived affiliation. Negative associations can be found between social dissuation and ideal affiliation, and between high demand/difficulty and self-perceived affiliation.

In the Tables 5a to 5c, the results of the regression analyses on the QTI dimensions are presented (beta coefficients and corresponding p-values). In the regression analyses, apart from the FIT-Choice scales, also teacher experience (measured in years) and the size of teachers' tenures (in fte) were included.

Table 5a: Results of regression analyses on Ideal Control & Affiliation.

	Ideal Control (r squared=.19		Ideal Affiliation (r squared=.31)	
Variable	Beta coef.	P-value	Beta coef.	P-value
Teacher experience	.002	.014 *	.002	.124
Size of tenure	-.023	-.310	-.022	-.097
Ability	.008	.081	.008	.032
Intrinsic career value	.027	.126	.026	.062
Fallback career	.017	.055	-.016	-.022 *
Job security	.014	.030	.013	-.296
Time for family	-.012	-.004 *	.011	.277
Job transferability	.014	-.137	.013	.098
Easy option (bludging)	.016	.022 *	-.015	-.091
Shaping the future of children	.021	.309	-.020	-.046
Enhancing social equity	-.015	-.094	.015	.108
Making a social contribution	-.015	-.005*	-.014	-.131
Working with children	-.022	-.151	-.021	-.149
Prior teaching and learning experiences	-.012	-.096	-.011	-.021 *
Social influences	-.015	-.045	.014	-.105
Expert career	-.021	-.144	.020	.036
High demand	.020	.046	-.019	-.191
Social status	.020	.105	.019	.191
Teacher morale	-.013	-.115	-.013	-.196
Social dissuation	.014	.132	-.014	-.195
Satisfaction with choice	.026	.014	-.024	.153

As can be seen in Table 5a, most variables have very small beta coefficients, suggesting that in terms of standardized effects, there is very minor effect. However, some of the coefficients do appear to be statistically significant. The larger the experience of teacher, the more the teacher wishes to be in control. The more time the teacher wishes to be with family, the less control the teacher wishes to have. The more the teacher reports to have chosen teaching as an easy option, the more the teacher wishes to be in control. Finally, the more the teacher wanted to make a social contribution, the less the teacher wishes to be in control. As for teacher desired affiliation, there is a negative effect of fallback career and prior teaching and learning experiences: the more the teachers valued these aspects in teaching, the less affiliation they wish to display in the classroom.

Table 5b: Results of regression analyses on Self Control & Affiliation.

	Self Control (r squared=.25)		Self Affiliation (r squared=.19)	
Variable	Beta coef.	P-value	Beta coef.	P-value
Teacher experience	.003	.216	.003	.148
Size of tenure	.036	.011 *	-.039	-.069
Ability	-.012	-.107	.013	.035
Intrinsic career value	.042	.257	.046	.016
Fallback career	.026	.137	-.028	-.046
Job security	-.021	-.017 *	-.023	-.025 *
Time for family	-.018	-.166	.020	.160
Job transferability	.022	.010 *	-.023	-.026
Easy option (bludging)	.024	.241	-.026	-.068
Shaping the future of children	.033	.030	-.036	-.008 *
Enhancing social equity	.024	.094	.026	.116
Making a social contribution	-.024	-.112	-.026	-.167
Working with children	.034	.027	.037	.067
Prior teaching and learning experiences	-.019	-.148	-.020	-.215
Social influences	-.023	-.268	-.024	-.026
Expert career	-.033	-.033	-.036	-.015 *
High demand	.031	.058	-.034	-.228
Social status	.031	.179	.034	.081
Teacher morale	-.021	-.258	-.023	-.174
Social dissuation	.022	.009 *	-.024	-.085
Satisfaction with choice	-.040	-.075	.043	.072

Table 5b also provides a few statistically significant associations. Size of tenure is positively related to self-perceived teacher control. The more teachers decided to choose teaching for job transferability and the more they did so out of social dissuation, the more control they perceive to have in the classroom. Job security as a reason was negatively associated with self-perceived control. For self-perceived teacher affiliation, three negative associations were found, namely with job security, shaping the future of children and expert career. Hence, the higher teachers valued these reasons to become a teacher, the lower they perceived themselves to be in terms of affiliation towards their students.

Table 5c: Results of regression analyses on Students Control & Affiliation.

	Self Control (r squared=.21)		Self Affiliation (r squared=.27)	
Variable	Beta coef.	P-value	Beta coef.	P-value
Teacher experience	.002	.120	.003	.141
Size of tenure	-.025	-.025 *	-.036	-.184
Ability	-.009	-.065	-.013	-.040
Intrinsic career value	.030	.378	.042	.021 *
Fallback career	.019	.070	-.027	-.093
Job security	-.016	-.010 *	-.023	-.001 *
Time for family	-.013	-.108	.018	.066
Job transferability	.015	.145	.021	.015
Easy option (bludging)	.017	.076	-.024	-.096
Shaping the future of children	-.024	-.078	-.034	-.299
Enhancing social equity	.018	.144	.026	.164
Making a social contribution	-.016	-.079	-.023	-.101
Working with children	.025	.067	.036	.179
Prior teaching and learning experiences	-.014	-.112	-.020	-.053
Social influences	-.016	-.245	.023	.001 *
Expert career	-.023	-.029	.033	.060
High demand	.022	.068	-.032	-.179
Social status	.022	.119	.032	.167
Teacher morale	-.015	-.169	-.021	-.263
Social dissuation	.016	.053	-.023	-.048
Satisfaction with choice	-.028	-.047	.040	.118

Table 5c only shows one statistically significant relationship between the FIT-Choice factors and the amount of control the students of a teacher perceive. The higher the teacher values job security, the lower the teacher is perceived in terms of control in the classroom. Tenure size was also negatively related to perceived control. As for affiliation perceived by students, a few statistically significant relationships were found. The more teachers value the teaching profession for intrinsic reasons, the more cooperative they are perceived by their students in the classroom. The more social influences were a reason to become a teacher, the more cooperative they were perceived. Finally, the higher job security was a reason to become a teacher, the lower the teacher was perceived on affiliation in the classroom.

5. Discussion

This study further supports the cross-cultural validity of the Fit-Choice framework. It suggests that similar motives play a role in opting for a teaching career in the Netherlands as elsewhere in the world (see Watt & Richardson, 2007; 2008). This is comforting, given the current status and discussions around teachers and their quality in Dutch politics and society. It means that no matter what this discussion is, people decide to become a teacher mainly because of its intrinsic value, because they want to help and support young people and want to learn them something, rather than for more external reasons such as salary.

This study also suggests that motives to enter the profession are relatively independent from the manner in which teachers interact with students throughout the career. Correlations between the various FIT-Choice scales and the two interpersonal dimensions were rather low, often not statistically significant. In a similar fashion, regression analyses showed few statistically significant associations, with at best very minor beta values, suggesting extremely small effects. Based on these results, it seems that both aspects deserve their own share of attention in both teacher education as well as professional development trajectories.

There may have been reasons for the absence of associations between the FIT-Choice scales and interpersonal dimensions, apart from some of the methodological ones explained below. It might be that links between motives to enter the profession and current interpersonal behaviour are not that straightforward, especially for senior and experienced teachers. In the current study, quite a large number of experienced teachers (20 years of experience or more) participated, who thus had to answer the FIT-Choice scales retrospectively. One may wonder if such answers are still valid, and they might be quite different from those of student teachers or beginning teachers. Also, one may wonder if it are specific reasons that may relate to behaviour in the classroom or rather clusters of reasons (such as they can be distinguished within the FIT-Choice framework). It may then be that several reasons add to certain preference and, with that, behaviours in the classroom. Finally, while important, interpersonal behaviours only make a small part of teaching in the classroom. But teachers are also occupied with other tasks, such as teaching subject matter, stimulating learning and self-directedness, teaching moral issues, et cetera. Hence, it might be that reasons to enter the profession rather fit with teachers' professional identities (see Canrinus et al., 2012) than with specific behaviours, meaning that it is the type of teacher and clusters of behaviours that really matter, rather than specific ones.

Obviously, this study had several limitations. First, its sample size – in ratio to the number of variables investigated – was rather small. Second, the reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha's) of several of the FIT-Choice scales were below the required value of .70; hence, the results reported for these scales should be interpreted with great care. It may be that some of the items did not work for our diverse sample in terms of experience. It may also be that some of the items need further adaptation to the Dutch context (although the scales that were adapted showed better results than some of the ones with more of the original items). Further research with other samples and, perhaps, with adjusted items, should be conducted in order to see whether the reliability problems are related to the sample or the items. It should be noted that the FIT-Choice questionnaire was only one of the many instruments in a larger project in which these data were collected, and the presence and data collection with these other instruments may have affected the answering to the FIT-Choice items as well.

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