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# **Who would be a teacher?**

**A review of factors motivating and demotivating  
prospective and practising teachers**

**Margaret Spear  
Katy Gould  
and  
Barbara Lee**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aims of this review were to investigate the factors that motivate and demotivate prospective and practising teachers, and to examine the influence that these factors have on the recruitment and retention of teaching staff.

The broad research questions were:

- ◆ What are the factors that attract people into teaching?
- ◆ What are the factors that influence whether teachers stay in teaching, seek promotion or leave the profession?
- ◆ How could the attractiveness of a career in teaching be increased?

The review was carried out through the NFER Research Development Fund. The research took place during 1999. To ensure relevance in terms of both context and issues addressed, four main criteria were used for the selection of studies to be included in the review:

- ◆ that they were carried out within the specific context of the education system in the UK, with a particular focus on England and Wales
- ◆ that they were published subsequent to the passing of the Education Reform Act in 1988 – frequently stated to have had a deleterious effect on the morale of teachers
- ◆ that they referred to the target population of teachers
- ◆ that they addressed the broad research questions of the review.

## MAIN FINDINGS

### Reasons for choosing a career in teaching

There is evidence to suggest that up to a third of undergraduates consider teaching as a career. A teaching career scores highly for undergraduates on the opportunities given for having creative input, benefiting society, applying degree subject and working with individuals. The appeal of teaching as a career is not, however, equal for all undergraduates. Students intending to go into teaching are more likely to be female, young, have achieved weaker A-level grades, be at an old university rather than a new one, be studying English rather than science, engineering or technology and be expecting lower degree results.

Studies focusing on the reasons given by PGCE students and beginning teachers for choosing a career in teaching revealed a high level of consistency. The most commonly given reasons were job satisfaction and working with children. The reasons rated as least important included working hours, holidays, salaries and security. It seems that prospective teachers are principally attracted to the profession by the rewarding nature of the work involved, as opposed to the pay or conditions on offer.

## **Teachers' career moves**

The review explored the motivation behind teachers' decisions to stay in teaching, seek promotion, leave the profession or take early retirement. The factors found to be important to those teachers who planned to stay in teaching included the recognition of their work, events related to pupils' learning and the approval of line-managers, family and friends. Headteachers were motivated to stay in their posts by the prospect of future levels of reward, and improvements to structural factors such as the resourcing of schools and provision of advisory and support services.

Teachers' decisions to seek promotion within the profession were largely based on a desire to broaden their experiences, obtain greater freedom in their work, take on new challenges and increase their power and influence in order to improve the education of children. There were gender differences in the reasons given by teachers for pursuing promotion, with male teachers being more likely to view increased salary as a motivating factor, whilst female teachers were more attracted by the social aspects of the post. Prospective and practising teachers planning to leave the profession both cited heavy workloads, poor pay and the low morale within the profession as reasons for their decision. In addition, those teachers taking early retirement blamed stress, work overload and excessive bureaucracy.

## **Teachers' morale**

Studies analysed during the review revealed that teachers believe their own morale to be largely determined by their quality of life within the school, rating factors such as good relations with pupils and helping pupils to achieve as very important. When asked to name those factors that they felt could have a positive effect on the morale of the profession as a whole, teachers' responses largely related to factors external to the process of teaching itself, focusing on a more positive portrayal of the teaching profession by the media, increased pay and conditions and less pressure. It seems that to improve both the morale of individual teachers and the ethos of the profession as a whole, a range of measures is needed, addressing both experiences integral to the work of teaching, and factors linked to the structural and social context within which that work is carried out.

## **Teachers' job satisfaction**

The main factor found to contribute to the job satisfaction of teachers is working with children. Additional factors included developing warm, personal relationships with pupils, the intellectual challenge of teaching and autonomy and independence. In contrast, teachers viewed job dissatisfaction as principally contributed to by work overload, poor pay and perceptions of how teachers are viewed by society. For headteachers, the main factors contributing to job satisfaction include their relationships with others, having responsibility and the success of their school. As with teachers, heads cite work overload as a major factor contributing to job dissatisfaction.

Studies have found variations in the job satisfaction levels of teachers, depending on certain individual and school characteristics. Gender differences include female teachers having higher overall job satisfaction than their male colleagues, and being more satisfied than men with the curriculum and the recognition they receive for their efforts. Male teachers are more satisfied than women with their influence over school policies and practices. Primary teachers are less satisfied than secondary teachers with the balance between their work and personal lives, whereas secondary teachers are less satisfied with their influence over school policies. Teachers in rural areas report higher levels of job satisfaction than those in urban schools.

### **Application of theoretical framework**

A principal theoretical framework of job satisfaction is Herzberg's (1966) two-factor model. Nias (1989) discussed the explanatory power of the model and suggested that the addition of a third category of factors ensured a closer fit with teachers' experiences of job satisfaction. Application of the resulting three-factor model to the findings of the studies analysed in the review revealed a high level of congruence. The main conclusions of this application are that in order to experience high job satisfaction, teachers need an intellectual challenge, their autonomy, to feel that they are benefiting society, to enjoy good relations with their colleagues and to spend a sufficient proportion of their time working with children. Enhanced pay, improved status, a less demanding workload and fewer administrative responsibilities should result in lower levels of job dissatisfaction among teachers, but will not necessarily bring about higher levels of job satisfaction.

### **Future research**

This review has revealed an uneven base of research focusing on the factors that motivate and demotivate prospective and practising teachers. There is a paucity of cross-sectional or longitudinal studies of the attractions of teaching. These studies would enable conclusions to be drawn about possible links between teachers' job satisfaction and their expectations before joining the profession. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, such research would allow those aspects of teaching that motivate and demotivate at various stages of teachers' careers to be targeted for improvement in order to provide them with a working life characterised by high levels of motivation, morale and job satisfaction.



# 1. THE LITERATURE REVIEW

## 1.1 Introduction

The recruitment of students to initial teacher training courses has been in decline over most of the last decade, a problem that has been particularly acute at the secondary level. Difficulties have also been encountered in retaining teachers in the profession. Both newly qualified and experienced teachers have left the profession for a variety of reasons, such as stress, low morale and job dissatisfaction. Senior managers have sought early retirement. These difficulties in recruiting trainees and retaining teachers have led to teacher shortages in both primary and secondary schools.

The recent Green Paper – *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (GB. DfEE, 1998) – sought to address the problem of teacher shortages. One of its stated objectives was ‘to recruit, retain and motivate high quality classroom teachers’. To achieve this, the Government proposed the following actions:

- Better rewards for teaching
  - changes to pay levels and career structures.
- Better leadership
  - changes to pay, conditions and development.
- Better training
  - changes to initial teacher training and professional development.
- Better support
  - greater use of teaching assistants and school support staff.

The aim of these measures was to bring the following to the profession:

*Higher status, better prospects, a rewarding career structure, less bureaucracy, more freedom to focus on teaching, a new professionalism, greater individual accountability, more flexibility and higher standards.* (p. 9)

However, there is no research evidence within the Paper to support the assertion that this emphasis on pay, conditions, professional development and career structures has the greatest potential for raising the morale and status of the teaching profession and making the profession more attractive to intending and practising teachers. The question needs to be raised as to whether these are the factors most likely to motivate teachers to raise educational standards, to commit themselves to professional development and to seek promotion.



## 1.2 Research objectives

The main aim of this review is to identify the factors that encourage teachers to continue in teaching, which contribute to their job satisfaction, and which help to maintain their morale. In addition to this emphasis on the positive aspects of teaching that encourage teachers to stay within the profession, the review also investigates the factors that attract people into teaching in the first place. Thus the focus is very much upon the factors that enhance teaching as a career, from the perspectives of both possible prospective teachers and practising teachers. Motives behind teachers' other career moves are also explored, in particular their reasons for seeking promotion and early retirement.

The interrelatedness of teachers' career moves with teacher morale and job satisfaction, and the interlocking of their suggested causes, dictate that the review should be wide ranging in nature. Therefore, the detailed objectives of the review are to:

- outline teachers' reasons for choosing teaching, staying in teaching and seeking promotion
- identify explanations for career moves amongst primary and secondary teachers
- establish factors contributing to teacher morale and job satisfaction
- offer suggestions to improve the attractiveness of careers in teaching
- identify further research required.

## 1.3 The literature search

The review is based upon research articles in academic journals and opinion pieces from the educational press which refer to work conducted in the UK (particularly England and Wales) with reference to primary and secondary schoolteachers. The review focuses on articles published between 1988 (the date of the Education Reform Act) and 1999 (the year in which the review was completed). The year 1988 was chosen as a start date because it is frequently asserted that the changes to the educational system in England and Wales resulting from the passing of the Education Reform Act (ERA) in that year have had a deleterious effect upon the morale of teachers (see section 2.2).

The identification of articles based on post-ERA research is problematic since most research conducted soon after the ERA will have been published much later. The research published shortly after the ERA was mostly conducted before the Act. However, the writing and publishing of opinion pieces tends to be more immediate. Therefore, in the absence of any more meaningful or precise cut-off point, 1988 was selected. Work predating

1988 is sometimes referred to since much theoretical writing was published in earlier decades, and some of the experimental work published then has not been repeated more recently.

The factors affecting teachers' motivation and morale in England and Wales, and the values and history of the education system within which they operate, combine to produce a context specific to the UK. To ensure relevance, therefore, this review has focused on literature produced within that context, excluding work carried out in, or based on, the education system of the USA. Database searches were for this reason confined to International ERIC (which was at that point a combination of the British Education Index, British Education Theses Index, Australian Education Index and Canadian Education Index) and the NFER library's own bibliographic databases. Material from other Commonwealth countries, with their shared educational values and history, was consulted. On occasions this material is referred to in the review for comparative purposes.

The keywords used in the searches were as follows:

- ◆ teacher motivation
- ◆ job satisfaction
- ◆ teacher morale
- ◆ teacher recruitment
- ◆ teacher retention
- ◆ teacher promotion.

The extensive number of references generated by keywords such as teacher recruitment and promotion was narrowed down by the inclusion of only those that referred to teachers' expressed reasons for the career moves they were considering. Other keywords, for example teacher morale and teacher motivation, produced much shorter lists of references and all of these were consulted, with the exception of articles referring to teachers of non-National Curriculum subjects.

The two main criteria for the selection of studies for analysis were based on relevance: firstly, that studies referred to the target population of teachers, and secondly that they matched the objectives of the review. Where studies were selected on the basis of these criteria but felt to be weak methodologically, this is highlighted in the discussion. All the relevant material from the selected studies was summarised and recorded on to structured grids. Appendix 1 contains adaptations of these summaries.

The finished review refers to over 90 articles, papers and books published between 1988 and the time of writing. The material is organised into two themes. The first accounts for teachers' career moves (presented in Chapters 3 and 4), and the second theme details the concepts of teacher morale and teacher job satisfaction (Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

## 1.4 The methodology and analysis of the studies reviewed

In order to summarise the findings of research studies, it is useful to be able to compare and combine data from a number of different sources, but this can be difficult when the studies are very disparate. Such was the case for the studies referred to in this report. They vary in a number of respects, and some of the most obvious are listed below.

- Context of the study – for instance the type of school (primary or secondary), the locality or geographic region, key features of the education system. Restricting the review to studies conducted in England and Wales helped to minimise contextual effects.
- Characteristics of respondents – demographic variables frequently included are teacher sex, age, teaching experience and level of post.
- Data collection methods – the commonest being interviews, open-ended survey questions and closed questions in questionnaires.
- Response rate – if low, there is a danger that the views of those who replied may be different from those of people who did not.
- Type and focus of questions asked – e.g. the question ‘How important do you think each (item) is in safeguarding and/or enhancing **your own** morale and motivation?’ from Varlaam *et al.* (1992) enquires into a teacher’s own morale, whereas the question ‘How important would the following be, in your view, in maintaining or enhancing **teachers’** morale and motivation?’ refers to the morale of teachers in general.
- Type of analysis – the most fundamental difference being between quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.

The variables listed in the preceding paragraph could all influence the results obtained from studies of teachers’ career motives, their job satisfaction and morale. Consequently, some of the teacher and school characteristics, e.g. teacher sex and school type, are referred to separately in this review (see in particular Chapter 7). Other important features of studies, for example the method of data collection or the analytic approach, have been specified so that the information can be taken into account when interpreting and comparing results.

## 1.5 The structure of the report

The following section, Chapter 2, provides a context for the review, outlining the current teacher shortages in England and Wales and analysing reasons for them. The five subsequent sections, Chapters 3 to 7, cover the main issues arising from the review. The main discussion of the findings is in Chapter 8, followed by suggestions for future research in Chapter 9. A main reference list (aggregating those at the end of each chapter) is provided at the end of Chapter 9. The appendix completes the review, containing summaries of studies relating to job satisfaction.

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## 2. BACKGROUND: TEACHER SHORTAGES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

### 2.1 Teacher shortages

In order to capture the patterns of teacher recruitment most effectively, this chapter refers to both official statistics from the Department of Education and Employment (GB. DfEE, 1999) and surveys carried out on behalf of *The Times Education Supplement*.

Recruitment into initial teacher training courses has been in decline throughout most of the 1990s. Apart from during the recession years of the early 1990s, the Government has consistently failed to achieve its own recruitment targets in the shortage subjects of mathematics, science, technology and modern languages (Howson, 1997). The number of students starting initial teacher training courses fell by more than six per cent between 1997 and 1998 (Russell, 1998). However, the problem is most acute at secondary level, especially in key subjects such as mathematics and science. In 1998, there was a 48 per cent shortfall in the number of graduates entering Postgraduate Certificate in Education courses (PGCE) to become teachers of both mathematics and design technology, and 25 per cent in those wanting to teach science (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1999).

These shortfalls have occurred despite the efforts of the course providers and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to recruit trainee teachers. For instance, in 1997 a television and cinema advertisement campaign was launched with the slogan 'No one forgets a good teacher'. In 1998, the Government announced the introduction of financial incentives for graduates training and going on to teach mathematics and science at secondary level. These steps were designed to boost teacher recruitment in the short term. Recent initiatives aimed at increasing both the recruitment and retention of teachers are discussed more fully in Chapter 8.

Problems occur not only in recruiting students to teaching but also in retaining teachers within the profession, both teachers who are newly qualified and those who have considerable experience. Each year newly qualified teachers (NQTs) enter a complex job market with no guarantee of finding a teaching post (Howson, 1999). Each year the profession loses experienced teachers who are talented and committed (Dean, 1996; Sutcliffe, 1997), and each year a number of senior managers take early retirement due to ill-health (Mooney, 1999).

Difficulties with retaining teachers and recruiting trainees can only compound the teacher shortages reported in some areas of the country, especially in London (Howson, 1999). A *TES* survey conducted in 1997 indicated that 'the overall proportion of schools with vacancies (a third of

secondaries, a quarter of primaries) is manageable', although headteachers reported that the situation was deteriorating (Sutcliffe, 1997). However, particular concern was expressed by both primary and secondary schools over the quality and number of applicants to posts. More than a quarter of secondary and a fifth of primary schools encountered difficulties in recruiting suitable staff. The problem was worst in key secondary subjects, with many such posts receiving three applicants or fewer. In a *TES* survey conducted the previous year, a third of primary headteachers and 47 per cent of secondary heads said they could not recruit staff of the calibre they needed to teach the National Curriculum (Dean and Rafferty, 1996).

Headteachers and deputy headteachers are also in short supply. Primary schools find it particularly difficult to attract suitable applicants. Mooney (1999) reported that over 65 per cent of advertisements for primary headteachers in the academic year 1997/98 received ten or fewer applicants, and in London the average was five. Nationally, over 25 per cent of posts had to be readvertised. In London, 43 per cent of primary schools failed to appoint after their first advertisement and some schools had advertised their headship vacancies up to five times. In the meantime, the posts were filled by acting heads. According to Howson (1997), other headship posts were being filled by acting heads without their ever having been advertised. This practice would have the effect of concealing the true extent of vacant headships as recorded by advertisement rates. Deputy headships are often treated similarly. Carvel (1999) reported that about one in 12 deputy posts in primary schools were being filled by acting deputies pending a permanent appointment. There may be several reasons for making temporary appointments to posts that have not been advertised, one of which could be to save money. Howson (1997) commented that:

*Allowing a deputy to 'act up' and appointing an acting deputy may create at least one salary to be saved at the classroom teacher level thus relieving pressure on the budget. (p. 25)*

## 2.2 Reasons for teacher shortages

Teacher shortages and recruitment problems, according to a *TES* survey (Sutcliffe, 1997), are exacerbated by:

*the combined effects of years of budget cuts, a funding system which penalises schools staffed by experienced teachers, an ever growing workload, and continuous pressure from politicians and inspectors. (p. 10)*

Besides financial restraints, schools have also had to deal with competition from other employers and 'the combined effects of low staff morale, cynicism and stress' (Sutcliffe, 1997). Humes (1993) wrote that the numbers of teachers leaving the profession (especially young teachers), the numbers seeking early retirement, and absenteeism and turnover rates are symptomatic of low morale and dissatisfaction. Menlo and Poppleton

(1990), Mercer and Evans (1991) and Fresko *et al.* (1997) have also mentioned the link between teacher loss and job dissatisfaction. Evans (1997a) juxtaposed all these factors when she wrote that:

*Widespread demoralization and dissatisfaction, job-related stress, a steady exodus, teacher shortages and problems of recruitment have all been reported as prevalent among this profession in recent years. (p. 320)*

Many reasons have been proposed to account for the low morale and dissatisfaction of teachers and the recruitment and retention problems currently encountered by the teaching profession (Grace, 1991; Mercer and Evans, 1991; Humes, 1993; Hofkins, 1994; Dean and Rafferty, 1996; Evans, 1997a, 1997b; Sutcliffe, 1997; Young, 1997; Barnard, 1998; GB. Parliament. HoC, 1999). They include:

- low pay
- lack of career development
- perceived low status
- adverse perceptions of teaching and excessive criticism from politicians, the media and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools
- changes brought about by the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), including the introduction of a specified number of contractual hours, the introduction of the National Curriculum and the accompanying testing arrangements
- lack of professional autonomy
- increased bureaucracy leading to more paperwork
- innovation fatigue
- undermining of professional competence
- pressures for greater accountability, e.g. the publication of examination results, the introduction of teacher appraisal
- stress of OFSTED inspections
- the increased power and responsibilities of school governors
- introduction of Local Management of Schools
- diminishing resources
- unsatisfactory working conditions
- growing class sizes
- problems of truancy, disaffection and indiscipline among pupils
- changes to pension rights
- threatened deprofessionalisation resulting from changes to initial teacher education
- pressures to keep abreast of current issues and initiatives.

Since there is a shortage of relevant, up-to-date research on the causes of low morale, many of the above reasons have been proposed in opinion pieces, rather than in research reports based upon empirical studies. Despite this, such views are widely disseminated by the media, by teachers' unions and by politicians. However, the commonly advanced causes of low morale, dissatisfaction and demotivation amongst teachers may not necessarily be the most significant causal factors.

## 2.3 Summary

Throughout the 1990s, recruitment into initial teacher training courses has been in decline. In addition, there have been considerable difficulties in retaining both newly qualified teachers and those with considerable experience within the profession. The resultant shortages of teachers have been particularly acute in certain areas of the country, especially London, and with regard to specific secondary subjects such as mathematics and science. Reasons given for problems related to the recruitment and retention of teachers include financial constraints, increasing workload, low morale and dissatisfaction.

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## 3. CHOICE OF TEACHING AS A CAREER

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores why young people choose teaching as a career. Their reasons are examined from the perspective of different groups, such as trainee teachers and practising teachers. Both positive and negative factors affecting motivation are explored.

### 3.2 Undergraduates' views of teaching as a career

There is evidence to suggest that up to a third of undergraduates consider teaching as a career, although this level is likely to fluctuate with national economic circumstances, such as unemployment rates. A large-scale study of 1,428 final year undergraduates, from a range of universities across the United Kingdom, found that 14 per cent had already chosen, had applied or were applying for school teaching (Hillman, 1994). Compared to the other seven careers investigated (industry, accountancy, civil service, law, retailing, social work and university lecturing) school teaching was the second most popular, after industry. School teaching was still being considered by another 17 per cent of the respondents. The combined figure of 31 per cent was matched very closely in an earlier study of 275 physics undergraduates (Stewart and Perrin, 1989), where four per cent were actively considering teaching and 28 per cent indicated that teaching was a possibility.

However, a study among 273 final year geography undergraduates by Unwin (1990) produced evidence of more negative attitudes towards teaching. Only three per cent thought it likely or highly likely that they would be teaching at the primary level in five years time, but the prospect of teaching at the secondary level was slightly more popular. Compared to other careers, only six per cent of students indicated that teaching appealed most, although twice that figure recorded teaching as either their second or third most appealing career. In contrast, 17 per cent chose teaching as their least appealing career, a figure even higher than those choosing manual jobs as their least favourite type of occupation. Another fifth rated teaching as their second or third least popular career. A total of 38 per cent of undergraduates in Unwin's study turned their backs on teaching. This proportion is very similar to that found in Hillman's study (1994).

In looking across a range of studies, it is clear that teaching as a career does not appeal equally to all undergraduates. Those intending to go into teaching are more likely to:

- be female (Smithers and Hill, 1989; Stewart and Perrin, 1989; Unwin, 1990; Hillman, 1994)

- be young, i.e. under 22 years old (Hillman, 1994)
- have attended a grammar school than an independent school (Hillman, 1994)
- have achieved weaker A-level grades (Wellington, 1982; Fidler, 1993)
- be expecting lower degree results (Hillman, 1994)
- be at an old university rather than a new one, e.g. a former polytechnic (Hillman, 1994)
- be studying English rather than science, engineering or technology (Hillman, 1994).

In addition, intending teachers are less likely to come from an ethnic minority or to have parents who are or were teachers themselves (Wellington, 1982; Smithers and Hill, 1989).

Factors influencing undergraduates' consideration of teaching as a career option have been investigated by Hillman (1994). According to those students who were intending to go into teaching, the two most important positive influences were work experience and people who the students had met. Family and friends formed the third positive influence. The media portrayal of teaching did not influence the decisions of those students who were already committed to teaching, but it emerged as the major negative factor influencing those who were reluctant or determined not to teach. Careers advice had most effect upon students who were still considering teaching as a career.

Undergraduates' perceptions of the characteristics of teaching have also been reported by Hillman (1994). Teaching scored highest on the following criteria:

- opportunity for creative input
- benefit to society
- application of degree subject
- working with individuals.

It scored lowest on:

- salary and associated benefits
- opportunities for travel
- prospects for promotion
- good working environment.

Hillman noted that teaching was rated highest for characteristics that were generally deemed by undergraduates to be relatively unimportant in determining their choice of career.

The criteria used by students to assess teaching as a profession vary with their attitude to teaching as a career. Unwin (1990) found that geography undergraduates with a positive attitude to teaching mentioned a different set of criteria to students with a negative attitude (see Table 3.1). The only overlap between the two sets of criteria encompassed job satisfaction, poor salaries and the low social status of teachers. From these results, Unwin suggested that to improve geography undergraduates' attitudes to the teaching profession and hence their likelihood of choosing teaching as a career, both the salaries and the social status of teachers needed to be raised.

**Table 3.1 The criteria used by undergraduates to assess teaching (Unwin, 1990)**

<b>CRITERIA USED TO ASSESS TEACHING</b>	
<b>Students with positive attitude</b>	<b>Students with negative attitude</b>
Job satisfaction	Poor salaries
Social responsibility	Low social status of teachers
Salaries	Job satisfaction
Enhancement of pupils' skills	Poor promotion prospects
Qualifications required	Conditions of employment
Importance of education	Pupils' behaviour
Social status of teachers	Government policies
Need for good teachers	

The attractions of a teaching career to physics undergraduates were investigated by Stewart and Perrin (1989). They found that 80 per cent were attracted by the long holidays, 63 per cent mentioned job satisfaction, 37 per cent considered working with young people to be appealing, and 27 per cent mentioned a pleasant working environment. Smithers and Hill (1989), investigating the attractions of teaching to recent school leavers, found that 44 per cent of the reasons given by their sample of 177 students leaving sixth form referred to helping people and seeing them learn. Other reasons were imparting knowledge and teaching chosen subject (23 per cent) and good holidays and hours (13 per cent).

Some differences emerged between the perceptions of women and men (Hillman, 1994), with women giving teaching significantly higher scores for salary, utilisation of degree subject, and quality of the work. When rating the importance of criteria related to choosing a career, compared to men, women again favoured criteria relating to the quality of work, especially variety of work, good working environment and working with individuals. The men tended to give higher ratings to 'more material criteria',

such as prospects for promotion and salary. In an earlier study of 523 A-level students from England and Wales identified as prospective teachers, Bradley (1983) also found that males were more concerned about salary than females.

### 3.3 Prospective teachers' reasons for choosing teaching

Studies of the principal reasons for wanting to become a teacher given by PGCE students and beginning teachers show remarkable consistency over time. The two main factors, according to the PGCE students surveyed by Stewart and Perrin (1989) and Reid and Caudwell (1997) were job satisfaction, selected as being important by 96 per cent of respondents, and working with children. Other factors, in decreasing order of importance, were:

- students' views of teaching as a good, challenging career
- students wanting to sustain, share and use their knowledge
- students' wish to improve children's life chances
- students being inspired by their own teachers.

The least important reasons were to do with:

- holidays
- working hours
- salaries
- security
- wanting a change of career
- having few other opportunities
- having nothing better to do.

A survey for the supply teacher agency TimePlan Education Group of 650 newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (reported by Barnard, 1998) produced similar results to those of Reid and Caudwell (1997). Ninety per cent of the NQTs were attracted by the rewarding nature of teaching, and half were passionate about their subject. Only a third were attracted to teaching by the job security element and one-fifth by the salary.

Analysis by gender, age and subject grouping of the 453 students included in the Reid and Caudwell study (1997) produced comparatively few differences of any magnitude. Regarding gender, female students were more likely than male students to choose the following as very important reasons: enjoyment of the working atmosphere; the challenge of teaching; a continuing interest in their studies; being inspired by their teachers; and

hours that fit in with parenthood. Men were more likely to refer to responsibility and a change of career. Despite an overall finding that holidays were not important to PGCE students in their choice of teaching, Reid and Caudwell found that men were more likely to cite this as a reason. Reid and Caudwell concluded that nearly all the PGCE students had positive and professionally sound reasons for choosing teaching as a career. They observe:

*It is encouraging that incipient teachers hold such positive reasons for joining the profession and it well belies the somewhat commonly held adages that 'those who can, do; those who can't, teach' and that teaching is a second or fall-back career choice. (p. 56)*

Ongoing research by Button (TES, 1999) into male student primary teachers' reasons for choosing teaching revealed that the most important factor influencing their decision was their liking of children. Other reasons were wanting children to achieve high standards and to be happy at school; feeling that male teachers are respected by society; and liking the caring atmosphere of the primary school. In addition, they were seeking a career that is stimulating, challenging and of benefit to society. Less important were factors relating to pay, holidays and promotion prospects.

The stage in their life at which PGCE students chose teaching was investigated by Stewart and Perrin (1989). They found that over half of their sample of secondary physics student teachers had chosen to teach after following another career, and nearly a third chose teaching whilst engaged in higher education. Very few had chosen teaching during their secondary education (six per cent) or before their secondary education (one per cent). In contrast, as many as half of a group of female deputy headteachers first developed a commitment to a career in teaching during their childhood (Grant, 1989). For some, this ambition was influenced by the perception that women's employment opportunities consisted of 'a choice between teaching, nursing or secretarial work'.

In order to recruit more teachers, increasing reliance is being placed upon training people who enter teaching from other occupations. Serow and Forrest (1994) explored the career motives of a group of 40 prospective late-entry teachers in the USA. Like younger recruits, the late-entry teachers were primarily attracted by teaching's intrinsic rewards. Interestingly, gender differences were discernible. Women were more likely to express a desire to help or influence their pupils, or to observe that their personalities matched closely the characteristics associated with teachers. Men, on the other hand, were more likely to refer to prior teaching experience (as a tutor, camp counsellor, or university teaching assistant), their interest in a specific subject, or the influence of other people. The authors make the observation that the only common factor to prompt a majority of the sample to make a career change was the appeal of teaching.

### 3.4 Practising teachers' reasons for having chosen teaching

A survey by Lyons (1981) provided some insight into secondary schoolteachers' recollections of why they chose a career in teaching. The most frequently cited reasons all referred to essential characteristics of the job. The teachers mentioned their academic subject interest, the appeal of being in contact with children and their enjoyment of the actual teaching process. The next most frequently cited reasons were less positive. Some reported a family history of teaching, a liking of teaching but a dislike of alternative jobs, and that teaching had been suggested by other people. Altruistic motives came next, such as 'the most important thing in this life is to open doors for people'. A smaller number of teachers reported that they had always wanted to be a teacher, or that they were attracted by the working conditions, in particular the hours, the holidays, the pay and the job security.

A more recent study by Poppleton (1989) shed light on the social and moral values that accompanied teachers' decisions to enter teaching. These included doing work of moral worth, being of service, guiding and shaping children's learning and development, and passing on knowledge and cultural mores to the next generation. A more wide-ranging study by Jones (1990) affirmed that a majority of the practising primary teachers surveyed had become teachers because they liked children. As before, the replies of male and female teachers were not identical. Women were more likely to have been attracted to teaching by good role model teachers when they were very young. There were also some indications that their choice of other occupations had been limited. Men, on the other hand, were more likely than women to have been influenced by their parents and to have had no competing career preferences.

### 3.5 Perceived drawbacks of teaching

A limited number of UK studies have investigated the perceived drawbacks of teaching as well as the attractions. The TimePlan Education Group survey (reported by Barnard, 1998) found that more than half of the NQT sample were worried about paperwork, class sizes, the pay and status of teachers, and the budgets and resources at their schools.

Smithers and Hill (1989) found that the two most important factors deterring recent sixth-formers from teaching were the indiscipline and attitudes of pupils, and the poor salary of teachers. Other, less influential, reasons were the lack of variety, unsuited personality or not liking children, general conditions, workload and low status. Smithers and Hill particularly stressed the drawbacks of relatively poor pay and the heavy demands of teaching. They reported that:

*Time and again the people we interviewed said they had considered teaching but had rejected it because they thought they could earn more money and have a better life elsewhere. (p. 20)*

Poor pay and low status have been identified as major barriers to entering the teaching profession in earlier studies too (Finch, 1986).

A study of 115 third-year physics undergraduates published by Wellington in 1982 revealed that the students seemed to be 'repelled' by teaching, rather than 'attracted' by jobs in industry. The reasons they gave for not wanting to teach were concerned more with the perceived drawbacks of teaching than the perceived attractions of industry or research. Categorisation of the reasons produced four major groupings – to do with the students, their education, the subject, and career prospects. Firstly, many students felt that they did not possess the 'personal qualities' commonly associated with schoolteachers and that therefore they were not 'of the right temperament' for teaching. Secondly, a large number referred to their own education, contending that teaching would be a 'waste of a degree course'. Thirdly, many explained that physics is a difficult and unpopular subject in schools. Fourthly, many thought teaching was a 'dead-end job', without career prospects and lacking in status. Wellington suggested that the students' poor image of teaching derived from their own school days.

*Their unfavourable 'job image' was often a generalisation from their own experience as pupils. These generalisations (though logically invalid, nevertheless psychologically powerful) will prove much harder to eradicate than exaggerated press reports or intellectual snobbery. No amount of good publicity or public relations exercises will undo a student's vivid recollections of his own experiences as a pupil. (p. 22)*

### 3.6 Summary

Undergraduates regard job satisfaction as a particularly important attraction of a teaching career. They also rate teaching highly on the following features – benefit to society, imparting knowledge, application of degree subject, working with young people and, to a lesser extent, long holidays. The main reason prospective teachers choose a career in teaching is because they want to work with children. Other reasons frequently given are job satisfaction, a challenging and rewarding career, sharing knowledge of their subject, and improving children's life chances. The least important reasons are to do with job security, salary, promotion prospects, and holidays.

The reason most frequently given when practising teachers recollect why they became teachers is that they liked working with children. Other reasons refer to their academic subject interest, being of service, and guiding and shaping children's learning and development. The greatest perceived drawback to teaching is the poor salary. Other factors which deter undergraduates from a career in teaching are poor promotion prospects, the low status of teachers, poor working conditions, a personality unsuited to teaching, the indiscipline of pupils and the heavy workload of teachers.



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## 4. STAYING IN TEACHING AND SEEKING PROMOTION

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the motives behind teachers' career moves. The specific career moves examined are teachers' decisions to stay in teaching, to leave the profession, to seek promotion, or to take early retirement. Their reasons are examined from the perspective of different groups, such as trainee teachers and practising teachers. Both positive and negative factors affecting motivation are explored.

### 4.2 Staying or leaving teaching

#### 4.2.1 Teachers' reasons for staying in teaching

Earley and Baker (1989) collected information on the retention of headteachers by conducting a questionnaire survey of LEAs in England and Wales. Sixty-four responded, giving a response rate of 62 per cent. As a result of ideas gained from a metropolitan district, they concluded that the most significant factors relating to the retention of headteachers and deputy headteachers were:

*future levels of reward; adequate resourcing of schools; proper advisory and support provision; and a coordinated INSET programme related to national and local priorities. (p. 4)*

Bloomfield and Selinger (1994) asked an unspecified number of mathematics teachers, both from the UK and abroad and at different stages in their careers, what teaching experiences motivated them most. They found that the motivation of mathematics teachers was maintained by incidents concerning pupils' learning. Teachers were encouraged to keep going by pupils wanting to continue studying mathematics, pupils' dawning of understanding, pupils' improved attitudes to both the subject and teacher, and pupils becoming more independent learners.

Fraser *et al.* (1998) emphasised the importance of social relationships to teachers. If teachers feel undervalued and under-appreciated by the public, then social relationships among colleagues within the school environment become even more important. Similarly Nias, in a 1989 study involving 99 primary schoolteachers from England and Wales, concluded that if a teaching post is not 'socially satisfying', a teacher may wish to move.

### **4.2.2 Student teachers' reasons for not taking up teaching posts**

A recent report by Robinson and Smithers (1998) revealed that approximately 80 per cent of 1997's newly qualified teachers had a teaching job in England by March 1998. The rate at which newly qualified teachers failed to enter the profession varied by phase – about a quarter of secondary NQTs did not take up teaching posts, as opposed to about one-fifth of primary NQTs. There were also subject variations. The figures for secondary mathematics showed that 20 per cent of trainees did not achieve qualified teacher status and a further ten per cent did not enter teaching. If the percentage of trainee teachers who fail to qualify is also included, then the wastage from initial teacher training courses is even greater. Based on DfEE figures, Howson (1999) reported that only two-thirds of trainee teachers who were due to qualify in 1996 were working as teachers by the end of March 1997. This figure was considerably lower than the 73 per cent recorded the previous year, and was subject to regional variation. Student teachers from Wales and London were least likely to enter teaching (54 per cent and 63 per cent respectively).

Patterns of student teacher withdrawal from secondary PGCE courses were studied over a four-year period at Nottingham University (Sands, 1993). The greatest number of withdrawals occurred following the students' exposure to school conditions on teaching practice. As is still the case, the shortage subjects of physics/science, mathematics and modern languages lost the most students. When the students were asked why they were quitting, most of their answers referred to their experience of teaching, which had caused them to question their ability for teaching or their commitment to it. Factors which prompted these doubts included: teachers' workloads, conditions in schools, teachers' pay and the image and morale of teachers. These constant stresses, which caused some student teachers to leave, were also commented upon by the students who had completed their courses. In the survey of NQTs commissioned by the supply agency TimePlan Education Group (reported by Barnard, 1998), 12 per cent indicated that their training course had reduced their desire to teach, with some of them referring specifically to lack of support during teaching practice. Others attributed their loss of enthusiasm to 'moaning' teachers who were always complaining about low pay, heavy workloads and high stress.

### **4.2.3 Practising teachers' reasons for leaving teaching**

Once newly qualified teachers have taken up teaching posts, there is a significant and continuing level of loss from the profession. A study of 165 former PGCE students 16 years after they qualified from the University of Cambridge School of Education (Heafford and Jennison, 1998) showed that only 45 per cent had remained in teaching throughout the period. A further 30 per cent had followed a career which combined teaching with other education-related posts. Of the remaining 25 per cent, about half had never entered teaching. The remainder had started in teaching, but most of them left within the first four years. Many of the group who left the field of education completely made a deliberate decision to follow a career outside

teaching. In many cases they were prompted to do so by their lack of success in teaching, either on the PGCE course or subsequently. Questionnaires completed by the ex-teachers indicated that other factors influencing their decision had been the low status of teachers, the lack of pupil motivation and their low level of financial reward.

Nearly a fifth of the mathematics teachers who obtained their PGCE at York University over a nine-year period left teaching (Newson, 1993). The top three reasons given by those of the 52 teachers involved in Newson's study who had left teaching were poor career opportunities, poor salary scale and increased administration. Lock (1993) reported that over ten per cent of newly qualified biology teachers from the Oxford University Department of Educational Studies had left the teaching profession in just over two years. They were lured from teaching by better salaries, promotion, prospects, work conditions, status and personal satisfaction.

Large-scale, methodologically sound studies of practising teachers' reasons for leaving the teaching profession are not plentiful. One that was conducted was a detailed study of teacher loss by Smithers (1990) which included interviews with 141 teachers who were leaving or changing posts. These teachers expressed considerable dissatisfaction with teaching as a career. The major reasons for discontent, in terms of the frequency and intensity of mentions, were work overload, poor pay, lack of respect within the community, poor working environment and loss of autonomy. The contracts of service issued to teachers following the Pay and Conditions Act (GB. DES, 1987) made them feel like mere employees. The teachers also mentioned discipline problems within schools, having to teach outside one's subject and 'grumbling colleagues'. When the newly appointed teachers in Smithers' study were interviewed, they also expressed worries. They referred to the volume of work, the pay and status of teachers, the lack of equipment, working conditions in schools and the low morale of teachers. Smithers thus observed that, whether teachers were coming or going, they shared similar concerns.

A telephone survey, based on closed questions, of 508 non-practising primary and secondary teachers in Scotland found that over half of the women (55 per cent), but none of the men, had left teaching because of childcare or domestic commitments (Robinson *et al.*, 1992). This was the most frequently given reason for leaving teaching. Others included:

- personal circumstances such as moves to different parts of the country, illness or early retirement;
- disillusionment with teaching caused by, for example, dissatisfaction with the educational system, stress, low morale, lack of support, pupil indiscipline and lack of promotion opportunities;
- failure to obtain a permanent post; and
- a career move.

Pay and status did not feature directly, although lack of promotion opportunities, which is related to pay issues, was mentioned.

## 4.3 Seeking promotion

### 4.3.1 Reasons for seeking a headship

A substantial study of over 400 new secondary school headteachers by Earley and Weindling (1988) revealed that some had held an ambition to become a headteacher from an early stage in their career. Indeed, some had set themselves a target to secure a headship by the age of 35 or 40. Early in their teaching careers, these heads had taken deliberate steps to obtain the necessary curriculum and pastoral experience to equip and qualify them for headship. The most frequent reasons given for seeking headship by these and other heads who had harboured longstanding ambitions to become a head were that they liked to be in charge or to hold responsibility, they enjoyed seeing tasks through to completion, and they enjoyed persuading other people to adopt new ideas. A second group of respondents had not deliberately planned to become headteachers. They explained that they had either become aware of their potential as a deputy headteacher, they happened to be around at the right time, they felt the need for a fresh challenge, or they had received encouragement and support from their previous headteacher. Female heads were more likely than males to mention the last reason. Earley and Weindling make the observation that:

*Heads, as critical reality definers and gatekeepers, can play a significant role in teachers' careers, most obviously in relation to appointments and promotions. (p. 9).*

Evetts (1987), through interviews with 15 women primary or secondary headteachers, and Kremer-Hayon (1987), through interviews with 20 women teachers, also found that encouragement and support from significant authority figures such as headteachers and inspectors were especially important to the promotion of women.

A small-scale study of six headteachers from small primary schools with fewer than 100 pupils revealed that they had all chosen to be teaching heads for very similar reasons. They wanted to continue teaching, to be autonomous, to fulfil an educational vision and to 'make a mark' (Hayes, 1996). Jones (1990) undertook a more broadly targeted study of 50 headteachers and 100 deputy headteachers and classroom teachers from primary schools in one Welsh LEA, a study that achieved a response rate of approximately 66 per cent. Jones found that teachers were attracted by the challenge of obtaining promotion. Gender differences emerged in the influence of financial and social factors: men found the financial aspects of promotion more enticing than did women, whereas the majority of women were more attracted by the social aspects of teaching. They even indicated that they would not consider applying for promotion if they felt that they might be unhappy in the work. In addition, women especially enjoyed working with children, so the prospect of less contact with them was a big disincentive to seeking promotion.

In a recent study of 87 primary school and 102 secondary school deputy headteachers only 32 per cent said that they were very likely to apply for

headship in the next five years and 42 per cent said that they were unlikely to apply (Mooney, 1999). A study of 26 secondary deputy headteachers by Maddock (1998) found that exactly half were motivated towards seeking a headship. The others were only slightly interested in applying for headship (four deputies) or were definitely not interested (nine deputies). Those who were interested in gaining headship described a wide range of factors which motivated them. Unfortunately, these factors are presented with no indication of their frequency or ranking, and only limited indications of their importance. This weakness seriously detracts from the value of the study. Bearing this in mind, the findings are presented here, as in the original article, in a largely undifferentiated form.

Prospective heads were attracted by the challenges of headship, increased leadership and responsibilities, and an extended management role. They were driven by a sense of service, of mission and of community. Maddock (1998) wrote that they were intensely committed to educational improvements and noted that this commitment was a powerful factor motivating them towards headship. The most powerful external influences upon the prospective heads were their families, headteachers they had worked with and their teaching colleagues. Less influential motivating factors were the improved status and self-esteem associated with a headship, the greater power and the larger salary.

#### **4.3.2 Reasons for seeking promotion below headship**

There are few studies of factors that motivate teachers to seek promotion below the level of headteacher and deputy headteacher in England and Wales. Those that have been carried out are frequently small-scale exploratory studies.

Women teachers' motives for seeking promotion to deputy headteacher were explored by Grant (1989) during interviews with all the women deputies in comprehensive schools in a Northern city, a total sample of 38. The women cited a number of reasons for seeking promotion. Often they were connected to family, domestic or personal factors, or circumstances over which the interviewees had no control, for example school closures. They also spoke of wanting a new challenge or a change, either to broaden their experiences or to allow them to foster particular strengths or interests. Many had been encouraged by friends and colleagues. Few of the women teachers in the study were motivated by a desire to achieve power for themselves; instead, the majority hoped to use it to enable others.

*They expressed their interest in power in terms of wanting to make a contribution, to make things better and, in two cases, to use power as a liberating force to empower others. They perceived that they could remove obstacles, set up consultation mechanisms and facilitate staff development. (p. 121)*

Grant concluded that the women deputies had not sought promotion for its own sake. Rather, their career moves had been influenced by factors outside their control, and by their concerns for job satisfaction.

The findings from a large-scale Australian study conducted by Maclean (1992) confirm the results from the disparate studies of English and Welsh teachers' reasons for seeking promotion. The Maclean study is particularly significant due to its large sample size and high response rate. Replies were received from 717 teachers, which represented 66 per cent of all promoted teachers in the state of Tasmania. The sample included teachers from both primary and secondary schools, as well as a small number of teachers employed in supervisory, advisory or administrative positions, such as Education Officers. This group of promoted teachers gave the following reasons (not in order of relative importance) for why they sought promotion:

- in order to realise the aspirations which attracted them to teaching in the first place, e.g. the desire to help children to develop their abilities
- the belief that they could perform well at a higher level on the promotion ladder
- the desire to earn more money
- the realisation that they could do the job better than those already in post
- the need for a new professional challenge to allay boredom
- that they were driven by a sense of pride and competition
- as a result of encouragement from others
- to gain recognition of their competence
- to achieve power and influence.

Maclean reports that the main aim of the majority of the teachers, if attained, would result in greater job satisfaction. Thus the most important reasons for teachers seeking promotion were:

- a wish to increase their influence and power in order to improve the education of children
- a desire to have greater freedom in their work, and
- a need to face new challenges so as to combat the threat of boredom.

### **4.3.3 Reasons for not seeking promotion**

Teachers' reasons for not applying for promotion were investigated by Marsh (1989). The study sample was made up of responses from 629 primary teachers and 551 secondary teachers. The main reason given by both male and female teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Strathclyde was that they had no desire (to date) to advance their career. Other reasons, in decreasing order, were being too young or inexperienced, having entered the profession late because of a career change or late career start, feeling unable to accept more responsibility at this stage, and the feeling that having taken time out from teaching to rear children would automatically disadvantage them. These answers seem to have been heavily influenced by the aims of the study, which sought to investigate the motivations of applicants and their underlying assumptions and perceptions about the equity

of the procedures and opportunities for male and female teachers in Strathclyde. In addition, the use of a fixed-choice question format restricted the respondents' replies.

An extensive debate has taken place regarding the lack of applications for promotion from women teachers. A particularly apposite comment has been made by Darling (1992) in response to a working party report produced by the Education Department of Strathclyde Regional Council which asserted that whether or not women applied for promotion was strongly related to 'their own voluntary decision'. He states that:

*To offer as an explanation for non-application that many women do not want to apply for promotion is singularly unilluminating, but perhaps this claim can be taken to suggest that these teachers take a different view of their work.*

Grant (1989) suggests that women are rejecting promotion opportunities because they do not seek power. Darling (1992) suggests an alternative explanation: true satisfaction from teaching is most likely to be found in the process of classroom teaching because it is in the classroom that the teacher is ultimately in charge. Maybe women, more than men, recognise this and choose to reject promotion with its associated stress and 'mind-numbing administrative chores'. There is little evidence to suggest that women value control and autonomy, although there is much evidence to show that women regard contact with their pupils to be a major source of job satisfaction (Jones, 1990), and that administrative work is viewed less favourably. Not wanting to take on more administration was given as a reason by both women and men in Tasmania for not wanting promotion (Maclean, 1992).

A survey of both male and female primary and secondary school deputy headteachers found that those deputies who did not want to apply for headship were put off by the burdens of headship and the loss of close relationships with pupils (Mooney, 1999). Fisher (1995) also considered the factors that deter deputies from applying for headships. He quoted a National Association of Headteachers regional officer who blamed conditions in schools – lack of adviser support, the Parent's Charter, and having to cope with children with special needs. Within primary schools 'the heavy burden of office' has been amplified by constant revisions to the National Curriculum. Fisher concluded by observing that deputy heads were put off applying for headships by small pay differentials as well as stress. One deputy is quoted as saying 'Why should I take on all that aggravation for ten per cent more money?' and another said 'The difference in salary wouldn't keep me in the Paracetamol I'd need'. But what of the future of deputies who reject promotion? In considering this, Maddock (1998) wrote:

*What are the personal and career prospects for them? Contentment and continuing contribution? Disenchantment and disengagement? What effects will they have on their pupils, colleagues, schools? (p. 24)*



When a person is in a specific role for a long time, they are liable to find the work routine and boring, and to feel that there is nothing new to be learned. This phenomenon is known as 'content plateauing' (Milstein, 1990). 'Structural plateauing', from which headteachers might suffer, occurs when individuals perceive that they are unable to obtain further promotion. Milstein wrote that other consequences of plateauing could be teachers who are less satisfied and more frequently absent. They may work fewer hours and perhaps wish that they could leave their school or even the teaching profession.

## 4.4 Early retirement

The majority of the following explanations for early retirement are taken from opinion pieces. This is because most of the articles addressing the occurrence of early retirement are of this nature.

Leech (1995) has drawn attention to the fact that the number of teachers leaving the school system is increasing, due to resignation, redundancy, early retirement with enhancement and early retirement on the grounds of ill health. The number of infirmity retirements nearly doubled over the period 1987/8 to 1993/4 (Leech, 1995). By 1997, a *TES*/Brunel University survey revealed that more than one-third of teachers who resigned were suffering from ill health (Sutcliffe, 1997). Thus the scale of the problem is considerable. During the ten-year period prior to 1996, over 150,000 teachers left the teaching profession due to infirmity retirement or early retirement alone (Williams, 1996).

The early retirement of teachers is often attributed to stress (Pilkington, 1991; Devrell and Jinks, 1994; Leech, 1995; Draper and McMichael, 1996). Indeed, Evans (1991) quoted an independent study of 1,800 teachers which found that 28 per cent were taking anti-depressant drugs, 26 per cent regularly took sleeping pills and 23 per cent had suffered a serious illness during the previous year. According to the previously cited commentators, the stress afflicting teachers is believed to be caused by:

- increasing demands for accountability
- increasing demands for improved personal performance
- changes to society's view of the role of schools
- increased workloads
- increased paperwork
- decreased support from local authority advisers
- increased governor power
- increased parent power
- increased staff power
- more challenging children
- the volume and frequency of changes within the educational system.

Pilkington (1991) writes of 'initiative overload'. He explains:

*They are not always known as initiatives; they can come as 'reforms', 'necessary changes', 're-organisations' or 'rationalisations'. Whatever they are called, they pile on top of one another; increasing the work load, changing familiar patterns and routines of work, bringing insecurity, making massive demands on time and effort and, all in all, seeming to ensure that teachers do virtually anything apart from the actual teaching of children. (p.15)*

It is time spent in the classroom actually teaching that teachers most want (Devrell and Jinks, 1994). The national initiatives that teachers have had to cope with in recent years include the introduction of GCSE in 1988, the development of TVEI in 1982, the Education Reform Act in 1988, the National Curriculum in 1988, statutory records of achievement in 1993, and local management of schools in 1988. In addition, there will probably have been local initiatives and in some cases local reorganisation of schools as well. The marketisation of the education system has led to schools and departments competing against each other. Pilkington (1991) believes that such ideologically inspired changes have contributed significantly to disillusionment and low morale in schools.

In addition to stress, Leech (1995) contends that the greater emphasis on improving teacher competence and the greater awareness amongst teachers of the option of early retirement have also contributed to greater numbers of teachers seeking and securing early retirement.

The foregoing explanations for early retirement have all been taken from opinion pieces. In contrast to these is an article by Draper and McMichael (1996) which was based on focus group interviews with 14 primary headteachers who had retired early (i.e. before completing 40 years in the profession). Draper and McMichael found that the headteachers' decisions regarding their retirement had been affected by 'pushes' from the educational system, 'pulls' towards retirement and 'pushes' against deciding to retire. The two major pressures towards a retirement decision came from job expansion or work overload, and levels of bureaucracy. Other pushes included loss of job satisfaction, deteriorating relationships within school, eroded contractual rights, weak local authority support and external pressures. Pulls towards retirement were classified as facilitators, namely, enticing family conditions or adequate financial arrangements. There were also perceived gains, such as greater control over time, more opportunity to develop personal interests, better health and having more time to spend with one's family. Pushes against retirement centred around the loss of role and status, a challenging job, structuring of one's time, and relationships with teaching colleagues, parents and the community around the school. Draper and McMichael concluded that early retirement amongst headteachers seemed to stem from job stress, lack of management support and current retirement trends. Rainey (1996) suggested that teachers have to display considerable endurance, perseverance and commitment to survive the daily rigours that teaching provides.

Large numbers of teachers taking early retirement can pose several problems. Smithers, quoted in Dean and Rafferty (1995), is concerned lest specialist teachers are lost who cannot easily be replaced. Fisher (1995) reported that while increasing numbers of headteachers take early retirement, it becomes more difficult to fill the vacant headships as fewer candidates apply. Storey (1996) expressed the concern that much knowledge and experience is lost through early retirement, commenting that:

*Those who talk so glibly of raising standards should ask themselves who is going to set those standards when they allow such devastating loss of expertise each year. (p.12)*

However, early retirement is not without benefit to the educational system. Williams (1996) pointed out that it enables schools to restructure or replace older teachers with younger, cheaper ones. It also gives young teachers the chance to obtain promotion quickly.

## 4.5 Summary

Student teachers and NQTs are deterred from pursuing a career in teaching by unsuccessful teaching experiences, teachers' heavy workloads and low pay, and the low morale of teachers. Practising teachers say they leave teaching because of heavy workloads, low pay, the low status and morale of teachers, pupil indiscipline and disaffection, poor working conditions, loss of autonomy, pressure and stress, and lack of promotion opportunities.

Teachers are attracted to headship by the challenge of the post and the increased responsibility. They are usually committed to instigating educational improvements. Encouragement from others is a significant factor in spurring some teachers to apply for headship. Teachers seek promotion to posts below headship for the challenge, to broaden their experiences and improve their competence, and to increase their influence and power so as to be better able to improve the education of the children in their school. Encouragement from friends and colleagues is a contributory factor for some teachers. Deputy headteachers are deterred from applying for promotion by the burden of headship. Moreover, they do not want to lose contact with the pupils, nor do they want to take on more administration. A possible result of deputy headteachers' rejection of promotion is 'plateauing', a loss of enthusiasm for and engagement with their role.

The most commonly given explanations for early retirement are stress, work overload, excessive bureaucracy, and current retirement trends.

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## 5. TEACHER MORALE

### 5.1 Introduction

In spite of widespread concern about the morale and motivation of teachers, there is a shortage of up-to-date research into teachers' morale, especially in Britain, and into the factors which affect morale (Evans, 1992; Varlaam *et al.*, 1992). Bailey and Bailey (1993) observe that recent literature on morale has not provided clear and comprehensive empirical conclusions. Instead, the literature tends to focus on reasons for being interested in morale or remedies for improving it. As a consequence, this section, which reviews recent empirical studies of the determinants of the morale of teachers in England and Wales, is inevitably slim. The section is split into:

- factors affecting teachers' own morale;
- factors thought to be affecting the morale of other teachers; and
- the influence of teacher and school characteristics upon teachers' morale.

### 5.2 Factors affecting teachers' own morale

Varlaam *et al.* (1992), in a survey of 547 headteachers and 2,472 teachers from across England and Wales, found that nearly all the factors considered very important by teachers in safeguarding and enhancing their own personal morale and motivation were concerned with the quality of life in school (see Table A14c in the appendix). Overall satisfaction with the 'job' and good relations with pupils, together with helping pupils to achieve, topped the list of 'very important' factors. Teachers wanted their workload, including paperwork and record keeping, to be manageable, and to have sufficient time free for their family and private life. Most teachers stressed the importance of a well-managed, smooth-running school. Good relations with colleagues and being valued by management were also regarded highly by about 70 per cent of the 2,472 teachers. When compared to the perceived importance of all the other factors, 'good pay' and 'the status of teachers in the community' appeared in the bottom half of the list.

Other studies have also suggested links between styles of leadership/management in schools and the morale of staff. Evans (1997b) contends that management and relationships with colleagues have a greater influence on teachers' morale than central reforms. Case studies of English primary schools by Evans (1992, 1997a and b, 1998a and b) found that the following factors influenced teachers' morale: leadership, collegiality, professionalism match, relative perspectives and realistic expectations. Evans explains that:

*Issues such as the introduction of the national curriculum ... and other centrally-imposed reforms, were ... relegated to subsidiary levels of importance in teachers' assessments of what affected their morale and/or job satisfaction. (1997b, p. 839)*

A questionnaire survey carried out by the Primary Schools Research and Developmental Group (1987) found that primary teachers, in their replies to open-ended questions, mentioned good relations with colleagues based on cooperation and teamwork, sound leadership from a supportive headteacher, encouragement and appreciation from the management team, and good working conditions. The teachers also wanted to enjoy job satisfaction, a professional salary and career structure, freedom from media criticism and job stability.

### **5.3 Factors perceived to affect the morale of other teachers**

Varlaam *et al.* (1992) asked teachers to rate the importance of a number of factors to the morale and motivation of teachers in general (see Table A14c in the appendix). Almost three-quarters of the respondents gave a rating of 'very important' to a 'more positive portrayal of the teaching profession by the media', putting this factor at the top of the ranked list. Considerably lower proportions (though still over half) thought that reducing work time outside school hours, increased pay, the establishment of a professional body for teachers and more opportunities for promotion within classroom teaching would also be very important influences on teachers' morale and motivation. These factors suggest that conditions and pressures of work are as important as pay in enhancing the morale of the teaching profession. The factors least likely to improve the morale and motivation of teachers were thought to be increased pay and status differentials, and performance-related pay (whether tied to an individual teacher's performance or to that of the school).

The motivation and morale of senior staff in primary, secondary and special schools were investigated by Earley and Baker (1989) in a questionnaire sent to 630 headteachers. In contrast with the findings of Evans (1997b), it was the opinion of these headteachers that low morale amongst senior staff was associated with the number and speed of recent education reforms and the lack of resources to implement them. This had resulted in overwork and stress for many of the headteachers and their deputies. Amongst senior staff in primary schools, poor morale was frequently attributed to shortage of non-contact time and concern about the changing role of heads and deputies. Heads of primary and special schools were most likely to believe that bad publicity contributed to low morale. Others factors thought to influence morale included the volume of paperwork, 'interference' by governors, LEA or parents, lack of clarification of roles and a poorly defined career structure. The factors considered most likely to improve morale were more adequate support and resourcing, and improved salaries and conditions of service.

## 5.4 Influence of teacher and school characteristics upon teachers' morale

The study by Varlaam *et al.* (1992) explored the views of the nature of teachers' morale held by different groups of teachers, characterised by such factors as sex, age, experience, level of responsibility, and type and size of school. Considerable consensus was found between the different groups, and the differences that did emerge could have been largely predicted. All the differences reported in the study were statistically significant at the five per cent level or better.

When considering factors important to their own morale, female teachers were more likely than male teachers to mention being kept informed about what is going on in the school, being valued by colleagues and by management, and having a manageable level of paperwork/record keeping. Wide variations were also found between women's and men's views about improving teachers' morale. Women were more likely than men to suggest that more ancillary support, better in-service training for the curriculum and improving the portrayal of the teaching profession in the media would enhance morale. In contrast, slightly more men than women believed that increasing pay would help. It is possible, however, that these differences in the responses of male and female teachers are influenced by the fact that women are more likely to work in the primary sector, and men in the secondary.

Varlaam *et al.* (1992) divided the respondents into five age groups – under 25 years, between 26 and 40, between 41 and 50, between 51 and 55 and over 55. They found that more older teachers than younger teachers considered that having sufficient time for family and private life and the school having a clear sense of direction were important to their personal morale. On the other hand, the younger teachers were more likely to appreciate having adequate resources and being valued by the management. Turning to factors believed to improve teachers' morale, more younger teachers than older ones thought that improved pay would be very important, but fewer of the younger teachers felt that creating a professional body would have a great impact.

Teachers from the different sectors displayed little variation in their ranking of the factors important to their own morale. However, some differences emerged in teachers' ratings of factors believed to enhance morale in the teaching profession as a whole. Infant and primary teachers tended to give different patterns of response compared with teachers from the other sectors. For instance, higher proportions of infant and primary schoolteachers rated 'more ancillary support' as being very important to teachers' morale and motivation. Other differences are set out in Table 5.1.



**Table 5.1 Variations in teachers' perceptions of factors thought to enhance morale within the teaching profession by school sector**

Factors accorded greater importance by:	
Infant and primary teachers	Other school and college teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More ancillary support</li> <li>• More positive portrayal of the teaching profession by the media</li> <li>• Reduced working time outside school hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More/new opportunities for promotion within classroom teaching</li> <li>• Improving pay for all teachers</li> <li>• More opportunities for promotion to posts of additional responsibility</li> <li>• Better career opportunities</li> </ul>

Headteachers and deputies attached greater importance to 'the school having a clear sense of direction' and 'good relations with colleagues' as factors contributing to their morale and motivation than did other teachers. They were less inclined than other teachers to consider 'more/new opportunities for promotion within classroom teaching' to be very important for the morale and motivation of the profession as a whole.

## 5.5 Summary

Teachers believe that their own morale is largely determined by their quality of life in school. They want good relationships with their pupils, good relationships with their colleagues, sound leadership from a supportive headteacher, and a manageable workload.

To enhance morale in the teaching profession as a whole, teachers suggest that a more positive portrayal of the profession by the media is needed. Other important factors mentioned include increased pay, better conditions of work and less pressure. Apart from the last mentioned item, teachers seem to believe that their own morale is influenced by a different set of factors to that of other teachers. Curiously, the factors thought to affect the morale of teachers in general are remarkably similar to the factors frequently mentioned by politicians and the media (see section 2.2). However, teachers diverge from politicians in their judgement that performance-related pay and increased pay and status differentials are unlikely to improve the morale of the teaching profession.

Teachers hold very similar views of the nature of their own morale and of the morale of teachers in general regardless of their sex, age, experience, level of responsibility, or type and size of school. Where differences occur, they are generally in line with what might be expected. For instance, more older than younger teachers consider that having sufficient time for their family and private life is important to their personal morale.

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## 6. JOB SATISFACTION

### 6.1 Introduction

Studies have shown that there are common factors contributing to teachers' job satisfaction. This chapter explores those factors that contribute to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction that teachers and headteachers feel towards their jobs. The discussion of these factors will be illuminated by reference to three main theoretical frameworks relating to job satisfaction.

### 6.2 Theoretical approaches to job satisfaction

Thompson *et al.* (1997) identified three types of theoretical framework relating to job satisfaction. The first of these is made up of content theories of job satisfaction, which attempt to explain job satisfaction in terms of needs that must be satisfied or values that must be attained. These needs or values can be either intrinsically related to the nature of the work itself, or extrinsic factors to do with the characteristics of the organisation or context within which the work takes place. The second framework identified by Thompson *et al.* consists of situational theories, which attempt to explain how categories of variables (typically task characteristics, organisational characteristics and individual characteristics) combine to relate to job satisfaction. The third framework is made up of process theories, which attempt to explain job satisfaction in terms of how categories of variables such as expectancies, values and needs relate to or combine to cause job satisfaction.

A theory of job satisfaction used widely within the educational literature is Herzberg's (1966) 'two factor theory'. This fits into the above classification of frameworks as a content theory. Herzberg contended that it was more effective to think of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction not as opposite ends of a single continuum, but rather as two independent phenomena, contributed to by different aspects of a particular job. He argued that the presence of factors intrinsic to the nature of the work itself, known as 'satisfiers', created job satisfaction. Job dissatisfaction was the result of factors that derive mainly from the context in which the work is being carried out. Herzberg contended that the absence of factors that lead to satisfaction does not necessarily create dissatisfaction. Likewise, the removal of a dissatisfying factor lessens dissatisfaction but does not contribute to satisfaction. For satisfaction to increase, improvement to the satisfying factors is required.

The main criticism of Herzberg's two-factor model is that it is an oversimplification of the factors contributing to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and that the discreteness of the two continua is overstated. Nias (1989) argued that job satisfaction in teaching is more complex than indicated in the Herzberg model, since 'the work itself' includes involvement in the school as a social system. She contended that it was possible for

some factors external to the nature of the work carried out to have an effect on job satisfaction, and consequently proposed a third group of factors, known as 'negative satisfiers'.

It is not possible to analyse systematically the research reviewed in terms of either Thompson *et al.*'s broad framework or Herzberg's theory since the studies were not carried out within those models. However, it is possible to isolate factors or groups of factors that correspond with categories identified by these frameworks, and in some cases to relate findings of studies to those that would be anticipated by the theoretical models. Where appropriate, such examples will be highlighted in the following sections.

### 6.3 Job satisfaction of classroom teachers

Nearly all the English studies published between 1988 and 1998 (see Appendix) showed that teachers derived more job satisfaction from working with children than from any other aspect of their job. Good relationships with colleagues were also very important and, in the case of Scottish teachers (Fraser *et al.*, 1998), were seen as the most important facet of their satisfaction with teaching. In addition, a large-scale international comparison revealed that the development of warm, personal relationships with pupils was the prime source of influence on the quality of professional life for teachers not only in England, but also in West Germany, Japan and Singapore (Menlo *et al.*, 1990). In the United States, the practice of developing warm, personal relationships with students was the second strongest influence on the professional life quality of teachers.

These elements – working with children, good relationships with colleagues and the development of warm personal relationships with pupils – would all be classified as intrinsic satisfiers within the framework of Herzberg's two-factor theory. This is because they are all elements fundamental to the nature of teaching, and have all been found to contribute positively to the job satisfaction of those carrying out that work.

The intellectual challenge and opportunities offered by teaching were ranked second in importance by the teachers from England investigated by Poppleton (1989) and the Scottish teachers studied by Fraser *et al.* (1998). The teachers in Heafford and Jennison's study (1998) gave second ranking to the item 'use of subject knowledge' and in Newson's study (1993), the mathematics teachers studied placed 'work with maths' in fourth position. Together, these results indicate that the intellectual challenge of teaching makes a major contribution to teachers' job satisfaction.

Several studies have drawn attention to the importance of autonomy and independence in teachers' job satisfaction. A sample of mathematics teachers investigated by Newson (1993) gave top ranking to individual initiative. In the Fraser *et al.* study (1998), autonomy was ranked third. Although this study was based on Scottish teachers, it is included along with the English studies because of its substantive nature and recent publication date. Opportunities to be creative and innovative featured as important in the

study by Varlaam *et al.* (1992). A much older study by Lyons (1981) also produced similar results, with personal responsibility and independence appearing as an important facet of job satisfaction.

A fourth area that contributes significantly to overall job satisfaction is that of school organisation and management. These aspects feature prominently in the findings of Poppleton (1989), Varlaam *et al.* (1992) and Chaplain (1995). Poppleton observed that:

*Perceptions of school management as being supportive, competent and sensitive are positively related to job satisfaction whatever the degree of importance attached to it. (p. 81)*

On the other hand, poor management of a school tends to result in frustration and disillusionment.

The inclusion of the factors of school organisation and management in discussions of job satisfaction does not fit well with Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg would argue that these factors are external to the experience of the work itself, and are related instead to the context in which it is carried out. These factors would then be included in the two-factor model as 'dissatisfiers' – factors that can cause dissatisfaction but are unable to contribute directly to job satisfaction, which must come from experiences intrinsic to the work itself.

Such intrinsically work-related experiences were felt by teachers questioned by Chaplain (1995) and Lyons (1981) to contribute to job satisfaction. Those teachers stated that they derived satisfaction from the actual teaching process. In other studies, teachers referred to their pupils' achievements and progress. In Varlaam *et al.*'s study (1992), 'giving pupils a sense of achievement' was ranked fourth and in Evans' study (1997), 'watching children progress' contributed to teachers' job satisfaction.

Having responsibilities, for areas such as management or training was mentioned as positive by teachers in some studies (Poppleton, 1989; Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Evans, 1997). However, these facets of job satisfaction did not receive very high rankings. The only responsibility to achieve a higher ranking was that of the pastoral role – ranked fourth in both the study of secondary school teachers by Poppleton (1989) and that of primary and secondary teachers by Heafford and Jennison (1998).

The roles and responsibilities involved in teaching were also explored by Menlo and Poppleton (1990) in a large-scale, five-country study of the work perceptions of secondary schoolteachers. The study was carried out within the situational theoretical framework and a number of process and product variables, e.g. work conditions, teacher roles and responsibilities, personal and demographic characteristics and school context characteristics, were identified. These categories of variables were then shown to work together to relate to job satisfaction.

Job security was valued quite highly according to some of the older studies (Lyons, 1981; Newson, 1993), but not so much in the more recent studies. A feeling of being valued and of having one's efforts recognised contributed to job satisfaction in two of the studies (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Fraser *et al.*, 1998). External factors such as career prospects, salaries and salary prospects, together with working conditions, hours and holidays, tended to receive very low rankings, indicating that these factors contributed little to job satisfaction.

## 6.4 Job dissatisfaction of classroom teachers

Work overload seems to be the principal feature of teaching that contributes to job dissatisfaction (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Fraser *et al.*, 1998; Heafford and Jennison, 1998). Teachers complain about the excessive paperwork and record keeping they have to do (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992). As a consequence, they feel that they spend too great a proportion of their time on administration (Newson, 1993; Fraser *et al.*, 1998; Heafford and Jennison, 1998). These specific dissatisfactions are no doubt contributing to teachers' heavy workloads. In a recent survey of primary teachers commissioned by the Association of Teachers, two-thirds of the respondents said that they had insufficient time to do their job properly (Rowinski, 1998). Another outcome of work overload is the unsatisfactory balance between work and personal life experienced by many teachers (Fraser *et al.*, 1998). Teachers maintain that they have insufficient time for their families and private lives (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992) and to pursue their personal interests (Lyons, 1981).

Poor pay was listed by Newson (1993), Varlaam *et al.* (1992) and Heafford and Jennison (1998) as contributing to job dissatisfaction, but its importance was less than that of the factors discussed above. Of equivalent importance to pay in affecting levels of job dissatisfaction are teachers' perceptions of how they are viewed by society (Fraser *et al.*, 1998). These views adversely affect the status of teachers, which further contributes to job dissatisfaction (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Heafford and Jennison, 1998).

Factors concerned with teachers' career prospects and professional development can also contribute to job dissatisfaction. Although receiving lower rankings than other factors, poor career prospects and promotion opportunities appeared in all the UK studies reviewed. Dissatisfaction with professional development was not so pervasive. However, two studies indicated that dissatisfaction can centre around the irrelevance of staff development (Fraser *et al.*, 1998) or the lack of opportunities for professional development (Lyons, 1981).

Teachers can be dissatisfied with the levels of support that they receive from the management team (Heafford and Jennison, 1998) and through not feeling valued by management (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992). This dissatisfaction was identified by Nias (1989) as a negative satisfying factor, one that is external to the nature of the work carried out in the classroom, and has a negative impact on job *satisfaction*.

The final set of factors identified by studies as contributing to job dissatisfaction relates to classroom teaching. Some teachers complain about the inadequacy of resources (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Fraser *et al.*, 1998; Heafford and Jennison, 1998), disruptive pupils (Newson, 1993; Heafford and Jennison, 1998) and their physical working conditions (Heafford and Jennison, 1998).

## 6.5 Job satisfaction of headteachers

Tables A5, A7, A9, A10 and A13 in the appendix report findings from studies that investigated the job satisfaction of headteachers and the aspects of their work which contribute to their job satisfaction. All the studies involving primary headteachers show that their relationships with people – children, teachers, parents, governors – contribute most. Revell (1996) reports that spending time with children provides primary headteachers with their most deeply felt satisfaction. According to Mercer (1997), ‘having good relationships with others’ is also important to secondary headteachers.

Both primary and secondary headteachers value their autonomy. Secondary headteachers refer to ‘being able to control one’s environment’ (Mercer, 1997), ‘having responsibility’ and ‘establishing structures for innovation’ (Mercer, 1993). The headteachers in the study of Varlaam *et al.* (1992) valued their involvement in shaping their school’s aims and direction, and having the opportunity to be creative and innovative. Primary heads in England appreciate having the opportunity to practise their own ideas (Hill, 1994), and Irish heads said they gained job satisfaction from their leadership role, their responsibility and their autonomy (Mahon, 1993). Revell (1996) found that primary headteachers derive much greater satisfaction from work they do that helps to shape the school, compared to work that merely keeps the school operating, although such satisfaction is often transient.

The contribution made by individuals’ personal needs and values to the job satisfaction they experience is explored in other professions by reference to process theories of job satisfaction. However, in studies of teachers’ job satisfaction in the UK, few seem to adopt a process theory upon which to base an investigation or with which to explain research findings. Despite this, some studies have combined elements of both a situational model and process theory. The model produced by Mercer (1997) from a study of secondary school headteachers in England includes reference to the situational factors of contextual characteristics and organisational characteristics, although the personal needs and values emphasised in process theories are central to the model.

The success of their school brings satisfaction to headteachers, as does good publicity for the school (Mahon, 1993; Mercer, 1993). Other related terms include: ‘having a positive view of the quality of education provided by one’s school’ (Mercer, 1997), ‘improving pupil prospects’ and ‘sharing in the success of others’ (Mercer, 1993), and ‘giving pupils a sense of achievement’ (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992).

Two secondary themes are detectable in the facets of headship which contribute to job satisfaction. The headteachers in two studies referred to their role as managers (Mercer, 1993; Varlaam *et al.*, 1992). Although not highly ranked, heads also appreciate recognition (Mahon, 1993), being valued by colleagues (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992) and loyalty from colleagues (Mercer, 1993).

Finally, other factors relating to working conditions appeared towards the lower end of the list of factors contributing to job satisfaction (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Mahon, 1993; Hill, 1994). These factors included job security, economic security, working conditions, working hours, holidays, pay and status.

## 6.6 Job dissatisfaction of headteachers

Tables A5, A7, and A10 show that work overload is a major factor contributing to job dissatisfaction for both primary and secondary headteachers. Mercer (1993) found that secondary heads complained of being constantly bombarded from all sides, having to attend too many meetings, and not having enough time to talk to people. At the primary level, the headteacher's dual role of teacher and administrator (Mahon, 1993) results in too much paperwork, stress and job dissatisfaction (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Hill, 1994).

The context within which schools operate is a significant source of dissatisfaction to secondary headteachers (Mercer, 1997). They dislike the 'moving goalposts' of government legislation, and having to compete with other schools and colleges (Mercer, 1993). Primary headteachers also signify that the changing nature of their job contributes to job dissatisfaction (Hill, 1994). They report a lack of sympathy with government/LEA policies. The new roles of governors and parents are also sources of dissatisfaction to primary headteachers.

Lack of control or autonomy is an important aspect of job dissatisfaction, especially for secondary headteachers. They dislike 'having to deal with problems over which they have no formal control' (Mercer, 1993). In a more recent study, Mercer (1997) identified 'factors which affect the ability of a headteacher to function as s/he sees as being important' as the second most important facet contributing to job dissatisfaction amongst secondary headteachers.

Another theme to emerge from the replies of Irish headteachers revolved around economic factors. Lack of finance and resources headed their list of factors contributing to job dissatisfaction. The Irish heads also identified a lack of ancillary staff and support services as contributing factors.

Finally, working conditions were found to be a source of job dissatisfaction in two studies (Varlaam *et al.*, 1992; Hill, 1994). Factors referred to were pay, working conditions, working hours, and low morale and status.



## 6.7 Summary

Three theoretical frameworks have been employed in studies of teachers' job satisfaction. Nias's (1989) addition of a third set of factors to Herzberg's two-factor model will be explored further in Chapter 8, where the findings of this review will be applied to the content theory framework.

The main factor contributing to the job satisfaction of teachers is working with children. Additional factors include developing warm, personal relationships with pupils, the intellectual challenge of teaching and autonomy and independence. In contrast, job dissatisfaction is principally contributed to by work overload, poor pay and teachers' perceptions of how they are viewed by society.

For headteachers, the main factors contributing to job satisfaction include their relationships with others, having responsibility and the success of their school. As with teachers, heads cite work overload as a major factor contributing to job dissatisfaction.

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## 7. INFLUENCE OF TEACHER AND SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS UPON JOB SATISFACTION

### 7.1 Introduction

The effect of teacher and school characteristics upon teachers' overall job satisfaction and upon the different facets of job satisfaction have been explored in a number of studies over the past ten years. Findings from studies conducted in the UK are summarised below. In common with the practices usually adopted by academic journals, only differences between groups that are statistically significant at the five per cent level are reported. Studies which recorded no differences or differences which were not statistically significant have not been included. Also, not all teacher and school characteristics have been included in this review, since the evidence for some characteristics, for example level of post, is either contradictory or very scant. Details of the samples and methodologies of the UK studies referred to can be found in the appendix.

The UK findings are supplemented with results from studies conducted in other countries. Increasing the number of studies under consideration allows trends and generalisations to be more easily detected. Wherever possible, greater emphasis is given to the UK findings, since variations in cultural and educational systems to be found in other countries may influence the results obtained there. However, despite such limitations, the overseas results can provide valuable confirmation of the UK findings.

### 7.2 Teacher gender

Amongst classroom teachers in England, women report higher levels of overall job satisfaction than men (Popleton and Riseborough, 1991; Chaplain, 1995). Identical findings have also been reported in Malta (Borg and Falzon, 1989; Borg *et al.*, 1991), Israel (Kremer-Hayon and Goldstein, 1990; Fresko *et al.*, 1997) and Lesotho (Brammoh and Moletsane, 1998). In contrast, male teachers reported being more satisfied than females with their current job in Japan (Ninomiya and Okato, 1990) and Transkei, South Africa (Mwamwenda, 1997). Kremer-Hayon and Goldstein (1990) suggested that men may attach more importance to their careers and expect more from them. However, the status of teaching is low and so men experience less satisfaction than women with their occupation.

In addition to the differences in teachers' overall job satisfaction, researchers have also detected gender differences in the various factors that contribute to job satisfaction. In England, male teachers are less satisfied than female teachers with the curriculum (Chaplain, 1995). In Scotland, Fraser *et al.*

(1998) found that men are less satisfied than women with the recognition of their efforts, and more satisfied than women with their influence over school policies and practices. Australian women find 'personal challenge' more important for job satisfaction than men do (Bailey and Bailey, 1993). They are also more satisfied with the school working conditions and culture, and more satisfied than men with their salary (McCormick and Solman, 1992).

Gender differences in the factors that contribute to job satisfaction can also be found among headteachers. Male headteachers in England are more likely than female headteachers to mention pay levels as a source of dissatisfaction (Hill, 1994). They also display more lack of sympathy with government policies than do female headteachers.

The meagreness of the above findings denotes that there are very few statistically significant differences between the specific aspects of teaching and headship that bring men and women job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It is only in ratings of overall job satisfaction that men and women frequently give significantly different replies.

### **7.3 Teacher age**

Amongst primary schoolteachers in England, Chaplain (1995) found that teachers under 35 years old and over 45 years old reported the highest overall job satisfaction. In contrast Prick (1989) found that teachers in Holland over 45 years old had overall levels of job satisfaction no different to those of younger teachers, despite their becoming less satisfied with teaching activities. Chaplain's contention that older teachers have more positive attitudes towards teaching has been supported by evidence from other countries. Bailey and Bailey (1993) found that Australian teachers aged 41–65 had higher morale than teachers aged 21–40, and in Poland, Wisniewski (1990) identified indications that older teachers were the most satisfied with their occupation. The high levels of satisfaction of younger teachers in England described by Chaplain (1995) have not, however, been reported elsewhere. Ninomiya and Okato (1990) found that younger teachers in Japan were less satisfied, and a similar result was obtained in Singapore (Sim, 1990). Specific features of the culture, educational system and training of teachers in these countries may account for the findings.

### **7.4 Years in teaching**

In 1991, Poppleton and Riseborough found that teachers in England with less than five years' teaching experience showed the greatest levels of job satisfaction. Chaplain (1995) reported that more experienced teachers in England were less satisfied with resources and school facilities, although they found no significant differences in overall job satisfaction. Fraser *et al.* (1998) found that teachers in Scotland with longer service were less satisfied with teaching than teachers with shorter service. Teachers with ten or 15 years' service tended to be more dissatisfied than teachers with

five years' experience. Their ratings indicated greater dissatisfaction with 'workload', 'balance between work and personal life' and 'recognition of effort'. The less experienced teachers were more satisfied with 'classroom autonomy', 'support on discipline', 'pupil motivation and behaviour' and 'prospects for career'. Fraser *et al.* (1998) commented:

*The more socially construed satisfiers such as recognition of effort and feeling comfortable with the balance between work and personal life appear to be more of a problem for teachers at the 10- and 15-year stage. What can be assumed is of course that teachers' personal lives are likely to have become more complex at this point in their careers. Statistically they are more likely to have married, become parents, acquired mortgages and moved house. All of this at the career point where career advance would, for some, be critical and the prospects of such advance appear to be diminishing. (p. 67)*

Taken together, and compared with the findings for teacher age, the results for teaching experience could be interpreted as indicating that the youngest teachers with up to five years' teaching experience display considerable satisfaction with their job. The next group of teachers (up to 40–45 years old) with up to 15–20 years teaching experience are the most dissatisfied group. The oldest group (over 40–45 years) with the longest experience (over 15–20 years) is still dissatisfied with certain aspects of their work, but on balance expresses satisfaction. It should be borne in mind that teachers who became too dissatisfied with their work are likely to have left the teaching profession before reaching this advanced stage of their career.

## **7.5 Promotion**

The only UK study to include promotion as a specific factor in job satisfaction is that of Fraser *et al.* (1998). This study found that promoted staff in Scotland are more satisfied with their influence over school policies and procedures and the relevance of staff development/in-service provision to their needs. Fraser *et al.* made the observation that:

*Promoted staff's views seem closer to those of the 5-year group (teachers with 5 years' teaching experience) although very few of them belong to that group. ... Promotion might be said to have a rejuvenating effect, or perhaps better, one which inoculates against dissatisfaction. Any causal relationship is, however, not clear. It may be that those who are by nature, or personality, more satisfied aspire to and achieve promotion. (p. 68)*

Non-promoted Scottish teachers were more satisfied than promoted staff with the balance between their work and their personal life, and with their prospects for career advancement. They also felt more in tune with their colleagues' views of teaching, i.e. they achieved more job satisfaction through 'congenial colleagues' than the promoted staff.

An Australian study by McCormick and Solman (1992) found that promoted teachers were less satisfied than classroom teachers with the external

demands made of them, but more satisfied with their advancement and their income. Together, the Scottish and Australian findings provide an illuminating insight into the effects of promotion upon teachers' satisfaction with different aspects of their jobs.

## 7.6 School phase and age of children

Again, the UK picture in relation to phase of schooling is provided by Fraser *et al.* (1998). Primary teachers in Scotland are less satisfied than secondary teachers with the balance between their work and personal lives, whereas secondary teachers are less satisfied with their influence over school policies. Fraser *et al.* commented that:

*There are too many unknown factors here to suggest confidently reasons for these differences. More accessible managers in primary schools comprise one. The relative autonomy and perhaps consequent isolation of subject departments from senior management may be another. It might even be that, taking the two findings together, if they expressed an extension of felt responsibility in primary teachers this might add to the sense of work encroaching on private life. (p. 68)*

A study conducted in Australia indicated that infant and primary teachers are more satisfied than secondary teachers with their school culture and working conditions (McCormick and Solman, 1992). Australian secondary teachers are also less satisfied with their advancement. McCormick and Solman suggest that primary teachers' greater satisfaction with aspects of their work may be explained by the smaller size of primary schools. In Israel, primary teachers also report greater overall job satisfaction than secondary teachers (Fresko *et al.*, 1997).

Fresko *et al.* (1997) reported that Israeli teachers who taught lower grades tended to be more satisfied with the status, income and working conditions associated with the teaching profession than teachers of higher grades. Unfortunately it is difficult to interpret these findings as details of the grades and ages of the children taught are not given, although the sample did include teachers of pre-school children (three to five years).

Borg and Falzon (1989) have reported that teachers in Malta who are responsible for pupils in the first three-year block of primary school (grades I–III) are more satisfied with their work than those teaching the second three-year block (grades IV–VI). Borg and Falzon made the following observation.

*Female teachers were found to be more satisfied than their male colleagues; and teachers of the younger classes expressed more satisfaction than teachers of the older classes. Perhaps the more relaxed, informal atmosphere of the first three years of the primary school renders the teacher's role more satisfying. Nevertheless, since there are more female teachers who are responsible for a Grade I, II or III class, and since female teachers are more satisfied with the job, this could very well account for the higher level of satisfaction in the*

*first three-year block. On the other hand, there is the possibility that female teachers are more satisfied than their male colleagues because they tend to be teaching the younger classes. (p. 278)*

## 7.7 School location

There is some evidence to suggest that teachers in rural areas express greater job satisfaction than those elsewhere in England. This is evidenced by Poppleton and Riseborough (1990), who found that job satisfaction is greater in rural schools than in urban ones, and by Poppleton (1989), who found that teachers in rural and suburban schools derive maximum satisfaction from their working conditions and career roles.

## 7.8 School size

Poppleton (1989) reported that smaller schools in England give greater rewards in terms of the teacher's role, in particular the pastoral role and the curriculum/management role. In 1991, Poppleton and Riseborough reported that job satisfaction was higher in medium-sized English schools of 1,000–1,300 pupils. A different result has been reported from Israel. Teachers there achieve higher satisfaction scores in small and large schools, and lower scores in medium-sized schools (Kremer-Hayon and Goldstein, 1990).

## 7.9 Summary

The levels of job satisfaction reported by teachers have been found by several studies to differ in terms of certain individual and school characteristics. The gender, age, experience and post held by teachers, in addition to the phase, size and location of the school in which they work, have been seen to affect both overall job satisfaction and satisfaction with specific facets of teaching.

In general, female teachers have higher overall job satisfaction than male teachers. Differences in the facets that contribute to job satisfaction include men being less satisfied than women with the curriculum and the recognition they receive for their efforts. Women are less satisfied than men with their influence over school policies and practices. In terms of age and experience, findings suggest that the oldest and youngest categories of teachers in England, and those teachers with less than five years of experience, report the greatest levels of job satisfaction.

Different factors are cited as causing job dissatisfaction at different phases of the educational system. Primary teachers are less satisfied than secondary teachers with the balance between their work and personal lives, whereas secondary teachers are less satisfied with their influence over school policies. Teachers in rural areas report higher levels of job satisfaction than those in urban schools. Results of studies investigating differences in job satisfaction across different-sized schools reveal no clear trends.

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## **8. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **8.1 Recruitment and retention of teachers**

Teacher shortages in England and Wales have become increasingly acute throughout the 1990s. Recruitment into initial teacher training courses has fallen, and there have been difficulties retaining teachers within the profession. The problem of recruiting teachers to initial teacher training has been most significant at secondary level, in particular for key subjects such as mathematics and science. The resultant shortage of qualified teachers is exacerbated by the loss of both newly trained and experienced teaching staff from the profession. Headteachers and deputy headteachers are also in short supply, particularly in primary schools.

A variety of reasons have been suggested for the difficulties in recruiting trainee teachers. The portrayal of teaching in the media was found to have a significant negative effect on the attitudes of those undergraduate students reluctant to take up a teaching career. In addition, undergraduates rated teaching with very low scores on criteria such as salary, opportunities for travel, prospects for promotion and working environment. The reasons given by practising teachers for leaving teaching included work overload, disillusionment with teaching, poor pay, stress, low morale, career progression, lack of respect within the community, and for women, childcare or domestic commitments.

### **8.2 Teacher morale and job satisfaction**

This review has revealed some correspondence between the factors teachers have isolated as having a positive impact on their morale, and those that increase their job satisfaction. Perhaps the most significant overlap has been in relation to the factor 'working with children'. This is the most important factor relating to job satisfaction, and the second most important factor contributing to morale.

Links between teacher job satisfaction and the motives behind teacher career moves are clear. Teachers choose teaching because they enjoy working with children, the intellectual challenge that this provides, and helping pupils to achieve. Teaching is also perceived to be of benefit to society. Those who stay in teaching presumably find their work satisfying, i.e. they enjoy working with children, autonomy, good relations with colleagues and an intellectual challenge. However, those who leave teaching blame work overload, poor pay, low status and poor morale. These reasons for leaving the profession are also causes of job dissatisfaction. In addition to job dissatisfaction and departure from the profession being intertwined, job

satisfaction and reasons for joining teaching are also similar. The appeal of teaching to prospective teachers and to practising teachers is located in working with children and having an intellectual challenge.

A comparison of 15 studies of classroom teachers' job satisfaction allowed a summary of the more satisfying aspects of teaching to be compiled (see section 6.3). These aspects are listed below:

**Factors contributing to teachers' job satisfaction, in decreasing order of influence:**

- Working with children
- Good relationships with colleagues
- Development of warm personal relationships with pupils
- Intellectual challenge/use of subject knowledge
- Autonomy/independence
- Opportunities to be creative or innovative
- School organisation and management
- Pupils' achievements and progress
- Additional roles and responsibilities held
- Job security
- Career prospects, pay and conditions
- Long holidays.

It should be noted that these conclusions were drawn from a comparatively small number of studies that employed a variety of methodologies and analysis techniques, and took place at different times. Wide variations in the questions asked and even the focuses of the studies may have reduced the validity of some of the findings. However, despite these problems, considerable consensus was found between findings from different studies, suggesting that teachers tend to give broadly similar answers to questions about job satisfaction regardless of the exact focus, wording or format of the question.

The seeming lack of detailed definition and distinction in the teacher answers may explain the small differences detected in both the levels of, and factors contributing to, job satisfaction recorded by different groups of teachers. The type of school a teacher is from, the pupils taught, the nature of a teacher's post, and the personal characteristics of a teacher seem to exert little effect upon the factors deemed to contribute to job satisfaction (see Chapter 7). However, there was one notable exception – headteachers. Headteachers tend to attribute their job satisfaction and dissatisfaction to a different selection of factors from those expressed by classroom teachers (see sections 6.5 and 6.6). The differences were consistent and appeared in a number of studies. Teacher gender constituted another independent

variable which tended to produce differences in job satisfaction. However, neither the direction nor the composition of gender differences was consistent across studies conducted in this country.

The findings of teacher job satisfaction studies lend considerable support to Herzberg's two-factor theory. If Nias's third factor, negative satisfiers, is added, then the review results match the theoretical predictions almost exactly. To fit this three-factor framework, job satisfaction must be shown to be due to intrinsic satisfiers and negative satisfiers, whereas job dissatisfaction should be explained by extrinsic dissatisfiers. Of the factors contributing to teachers' job satisfaction, the majority are related to the nature of teaching itself, and could therefore be classified as intrinsic satisfiers. The factors 'school organisation and management' and 'good relations with colleagues' would fit into Nias's negative satisfiers category. The only factors, therefore, that do not fit the three-factor framework are 'job security', 'pay and conditions' and 'long holidays' – all of which would be categorised as extrinsic dissatisfiers, which should only have an influence on job dissatisfaction, not satisfaction. These exceptions were, however, rated by teachers as the least important influences on their job satisfaction.

This review of studies relating to job satisfaction has revealed those factors that headteachers believe contribute to their job satisfaction (see section 6.5). There are interesting differences and similarities in the factors identified by teachers and headteachers, as the summary below illustrates.

**Factors contributing to headteachers' job satisfaction, in decreasing order of influence:**

- Relationships with others, such as children, teachers, parents and governors
- Autonomy
- Having responsibility
- Success of the school
- Feeling valued
- Recognition
- Job security
- Pay and conditions
- Holidays
- Status.

The above list of factors corresponds well with the three-factor theory of job satisfaction. The majority of the factors fit into the model as intrinsic satisfiers, with 'relations with others' and 'success of the school' included as negative satisfiers. The only exception to the three-factor model is the presence of the factors 'job security', 'pay and conditions', 'status' and 'holidays' in the list. Herzberg and Nias's model would contend that these

factors were extrinsic dissatisfiers and should therefore only influence the job *dissatisfaction* experienced by headteachers, not their job *satisfaction*. Despite these exceptions, the level of correspondence with the framework is good, especially if the very low ranking of those factors that do not fit with the model is taken into account.

There are aspects of their respective professions that both teachers and headteachers feel contribute to their job satisfaction. These include the development of good relationships with others in the school, such as teacher colleagues and pupils, and the element of autonomy they experience. Some differences between the factors mentioned by teachers and headteachers were also apparent. Teachers enjoy the intellectual challenge afforded to them by their job and their observation of pupil progress, while headteachers believe their job satisfaction is contributed to by the success of the school as a whole, and feeling valued by their colleagues.

### 8.3 Implications of theory for future practice

To make teaching more attractive to both prospective and practising teachers, Herzberg's theory suggests that improvements need to be made to the intrinsic satisfiers. The aims set out in the 1998 Green Paper *Teachers Meeting the Challenge of Change* (GB. DfEE, 1998) to recruit, retain and motivate teachers are split fairly equally between improving extrinsic dissatisfiers, such as status, salary prospects and career structure, and improving intrinsic satisfiers, through the introduction of a greater focus on teaching and higher standards. However, the proposed means of fulfilling these aims rely heavily on changes to the extrinsic dissatisfiers, for instance better pay and career structures, better support and better training. Unfortunately, Herzberg's theory suggests that this approach will lower dissatisfaction, but not necessarily increase satisfaction.

To improve job satisfaction, the Herzberg model would suggest improvements to intrinsic satisfiers and negative satisfiers. Factors mentioned by teachers as important to their job satisfaction included the intrinsic satisfiers of autonomy and the teaching process, and the negative satisfier of school organisation and management. Focusing on these factors, Mercer and Evans (1991) recommend the use of the industrial job enrichment model of removing controls from staff and granting additional authority, increasing accountability, creating natural work units, providing direct feedback and introducing new tasks. They explain that:

*These features of job enrichment were aimed at the industrial situation and consequently teachers may well scoff as [sic] suggestions such as removing controls at a time when central Government (by the imposition of the National Curriculum) seems to be increasing them. Arguably, part of teachers' current dissatisfaction might be due to the apparent attack on their professional integrity by Government which would suggest that the job enrichment model ... has something to commend it to the teaching profession. (p. 298)*

## 8.4 Current policy

This report has revealed a complex range of factors contributing to the recruitment, retention and morale problems that have combined to cause the current shortage of qualified teachers in England and Wales.

The Government has devised a number of strategies to try and remedy teacher shortages and to raise the morale of teachers. One approach is the introduction of financial incentives for postgraduate trainee teachers. In March 2000, the Government announced that, as of September that year, all postgraduate trainee teachers would be paid a £6,000 salary during their training. In addition, those training in the shortage subjects of mathematics, science, technology and modern foreign languages would receive a 'golden hello' of £4,000.

Another strand of the strategy is aimed at retaining and motivating existing teachers by the introduction of a new pay structure which has the potential to increase the salaries of those who meet criteria to cross a designated 'threshold'. A renewed emphasis on support and structures for the provision of continuing professional development is also on the Government agenda.

It is too early to evaluate the long-term impact of the strategies but initial indications of the results are mixed. While postgraduate applications to initial teacher training have increased following the introduction of bursaries (Campbell, 2000), the introduction of the threshold system has been subject to a legal challenge from the National Union of Teachers (Barnard, 2000).

This review has revealed those factors that teachers and headteachers feel have the greatest effect on the motivation, morale and job satisfaction that they experience. If those factors that contribute positively to motivation, morale and job satisfaction can be nurtured, and those with a negative effect limited, the prospects for more effective recruitment and retention of teaching staff would be increased.

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## 9. FUTURE RESEARCH

### 9.1 Introduction

This report has revealed an uneven research base. There is a paucity of relevant research relating to some of the topics under review (e.g. promotion below headship), and other topics (e.g. the early retirement of teachers) have had to rely heavily on opinion pieces. This lack of recent, relevant, empirical research indicates that more is required both to fill gaps in current knowledge of teacher motivation and to improve understanding.

### 9.2 Recruitment and retention

Large-scale cross-sectional or longitudinal studies of the attractions of teaching have not yet been undertaken. Such studies would extend understanding of the reasons for, and attitudes to, entering and remaining within the teaching profession. The questions addressed by future research could usefully include the following:

- ◆ Is teachers' job satisfaction linked to their expectations of teaching on entry to initial teacher training, as expressed in their reasons for wanting to become a teacher?
- ◆ What are the features of teaching which need to be adjusted, improved or developed in order to raise levels of job satisfaction at various stages throughout a teacher's career?
- ◆ Is the disposition to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction a personality trait experienced at different levels by individuals? Existing literature suggests that age, teaching experience and level of promotion may all influence individual teachers' job satisfaction to some extent.

A cross-sectional study examining how the perceived attractions and drawbacks of a teaching career vary through training, qualification and teaching experience would provide valuable information, enabling the Government to:

- ◆ target potential teachers of particular subjects, especially the shortage subjects of mathematics, science, technology and modern foreign languages
- ◆ identify groups of teachers most at risk of leaving the profession and take appropriate steps to increase the likelihood of retaining them
- ◆ attract teachers who have taken a career break back into the profession.

### 9.3 Teacher motivation

Research is also required to clarify which teacher and school characteristics, e.g. age, teaching experience and school phase, influence job satisfaction in the UK. A reliable evidence base of how job satisfaction varies according to other variables, such as age, would be useful. However, understanding why such relations occur would be even more useful for improving job satisfaction.

Hitherto, studies of job satisfaction, motivation and morale have only explored the job satisfaction and morale of individual teachers. By studying the motivation of groups of teachers working within the same school, it would be possible to explore the contribution of workplace factors to teachers' motivation, to identify those factors which exert the greatest influence upon teacher motivation and job satisfaction, and to make recommendations designed to enhance, or at least sustain, teachers' motivation and morale.

Studies linking teacher job satisfaction with context-specific factors are largely lacking. Besides relating job satisfaction to location factors, as suggested in the previous paragraph, the relation between job satisfaction and time-specific factors could also be investigated. For instance, are there daily, weekly or termly events that have an impact on the job satisfaction teachers experience?

The collection of pupil and school performance data, in addition to job satisfaction data, would enable links between teachers' job satisfaction and their classroom performance, and between headteachers' job satisfaction and their schools' effectiveness, to be explored. If established, such relationships would give greater credibility to research into teacher job satisfaction.

### 9.4 Professional development

Practising teachers are motivated to attend professional development courses for a variety of reasons. It would be useful to explore further the reasons behind teacher participation in professional development opportunities, and to establish whether these reasons vary according to teacher characteristics such as sex, age and teaching experience, or with course characteristics such as type of course, length of course or location of course. Findings could inform both the content of professional development courses and their structure.



## 9.5 Promotion

Few studies have explored the motives of teachers wishing to become deputy headteachers. This omission needs to be rectified since deputies not only hold positions of considerable responsibility in their schools, but they are also the future headteachers. The current shortage of headteachers, and deputy headteachers, dictates that greater efforts need to be made to increase the appeal of deputy posts.

Further research investigating the reasons why teachers seek promotion below the level of deputy headteacher would be valuable. Many questions could be explored, including the following:

- ◆ Are teachers motivated by similar reasons when seeking promotion at different levels?
- ◆ Does 'plateauing' affect teachers at all levels?
- ◆ Are men and women motivated by the same factors?
- ◆ Are there gender variations in the applications for promotion made by teachers, and what form do these variations take?

## 9.6 Teacher loss

The reasons why teachers leave teaching is a very under-researched area. There are a number of opinion pieces, but few empirical studies. This stands in contrast to students' reasons for choosing teaching, which are a better researched area. Studies of the following are needed:

- ◆ student teachers' reasons for not completing their initial teacher training course;
- ◆ NQTs' reasons for not taking up a teaching post;
- ◆ practising teachers' reasons for leaving the profession;
- ◆ teachers' reasons for seeking early retirement and variations with level of promotion.

The spotlight is currently on teachers, with regard to their crucial role in fulfilling the Government's pledge to raise standards, and in relation to the proposed new pay structure. It is therefore vital that research is carried out in the areas discussed above so that potential teachers can be attracted into the profession and existing teachers can be retained and motivated.

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# APPENDIX

## DETAILS OF STUDIES RELATED TO TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION

The studies on job satisfaction reviewed and referred to in this report, particularly in Chapter 6, are summarised below, in alphabetical order. The information provided shows the methodological approaches used, the size of the study and a summary of the findings.

**Table A1**

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	CHAPLAIN, R. P. (1995).
Respondents	Teachers
Phase	Primary in England
Achieved sample	267
Response rate	89 per cent
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Sex, age, experience
Method	Self report questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	6
Measurement approach	Rated level of satisfaction on five-point scale
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings	<p><b>Satisfying aspects for teachers:</b>  Performance as a teacher  School organisation  Curriculum  Management (headteacher)  School facilities  Teaching resources</p> <p><b>Dissatisfying aspects for teachers:</b>  Professional concerns  Pupil behaviour and attitude  Professional tasks</p>
Author's summary	The most satisfying single aspect reported by the sample was personal performance as a teacher. Central to satisfaction with professional performance was positive feedback from children, in terms of both social and academic behaviour. The least satisfying facets were working conditions and the lack of teaching resources

Table A2

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	EVANS, L. (1997a)
Respondents	Teachers
Phase	Primary
Achieved sample	12 mainscale teachers, 6 teachers and 6 'extended' professionals
Response rate	Not applicable
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Not stated
Method	Formed by observations and interviews from the above 3 studies
Question type	Open-ended
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Conceptual/interpretative
Analysis	Qualitative
Main findings	What is needed is either a definition of job satisfaction which incorporates and clarifies the ambiguity of the term, or a bifurcation of both terminology and definition
Author's summary	There is a need for greater exploration, consideration and analysis of the key concepts upon which one's work focuses

**Table A3**

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	FRASER, H., DRAPER, J. and TAYLOR, W. (1998).
Respondents	Scottish teachers
Phase	Primary and secondary
Achieved sample	190
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	49 M, 141 F
Independent variables	Sex, phase, experience, promotion
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	16
Measurement approach	Rated satisfaction on four-point scale
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Positive aspects for teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friendliness of staff</li> <li>Intellectual challenge</li> <li>Autonomy over my teaching</li> <li>Support on discipline</li> <li>Salary</li> <li>Pupil motivation and behaviour</li> <li>Colleagues' views of teaching</li> <li>Recognition of my efforts</li> <li>Prospects for career advance</li> <li>Availability of resources</li> <li>Influence over policies/procedures</li> <li>Balance between work/personal life</li> <li>Relevance of staff development to my needs</li> <li>Proportion of time on admin</li> <li>Workload</li> <li>Society's view of teachers</li> </ul>
Authors' summary	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <p>Teachers are in agreement about how they rate different facets of teaching in terms of satisfaction and there are particularly high correlations about the most and least satisfying aspects (p. 61)</p>

Table A4

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	HEAFFORD, M. AND JENNISON, B. (1998)
Respondents	Students successfully completing the Post graduate Certificate of Education at the University of Cambridge in 1978
Phase	n/a
Achieved sample	165
Response rate	165 out of 236
Sex ratio	56 per cent men, 44 per cent women
Independent variables	Type of post
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Open and closed
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Descriptive and statistical
Analysis	Qualitative and quantitative over a period of 16 years
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Factors that contribute to the enjoyment of the job:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with young children in classroom</li> <li>Use of subject knowledge</li> <li>Teaching able pupils</li> <li>Work on pastoral side</li> <li>Out-of-school activities</li> <li>Using subjects studied in university</li> <li>Nature of school surroundings</li> <li>Physical working conditions</li> <li>Provision of resources</li> <li>Wider geographical location of school</li> <li>Financial rewards</li> <li>Support of management team</li> <li>Teaching difficult pupils</li> <li>Teaching load</li> <li>Status</li> <li>Administrative aspects of job</li> <li>Possibilities of promotion</li> </ul> <p><b>Factors that detract from the enjoyment of the job:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative aspects of the job</li> <li>Teaching load</li> <li>Provision of resources</li> <li>Status</li> <li>Physical working conditions</li> <li>Financial resources</li> <li>Support of management team</li> <li>Teaching difficult pupils</li> <li>Possibilities of promotion</li> <li>Wider geographical location of school</li> <li>Nature of school surroundings</li> <li>Work on pastoral side</li> </ul>

Table A4 continued overleaf

**Table A4** (continued)

	<p>Out-of-school activities  Teaching able pupils  Using subjects studied at university  Use of subject knowledge  Working with young children in classroom</p> <p>Almost all those who had left the field of education had made a deliberate career choice and would not be easily prevailed upon to return to teaching</p>
<p>Authors' summary</p>	<p><b>Negative:</b>  The factors which most detracted from the teachers' enjoyment of their work were those which limited their ability to teach well, e.g. their involvement in administrative tasks, their being asked to take on too much, their not being provided with the resources or the working conditions to be maximally effective</p>

Table A5

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	HILL, T. (1994).
Respondents	Headteachers in one LEA
Phase	Primary
Achieved sample	287
Response rate	77 per cent
Sex ratio	55 per cent M, 45 per cent F
Independent variables	Sex, size of school
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	15
Measurement approach	Tick list
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Heads' sources of job satisfaction:</b>  Relationships with the children  Relationships with teachers  Relationships with parents  Relationships with governors  Opportunity to practise own ideas  Holidays  Economic security  Working conditions  Opportunity to pursue personal interests  Opportunity to pursue qualifications  Working hours  Pay</p> <p><b>Heads' sources of job dissatisfaction:</b>  Amount of paperwork  Work overload  Stress  Changing nature of the job  New role of parents  New role of governors  Coping with difficult children  Low morale of teachers  Lack of sympathy with government policy  Lack of sympathy with LEA policies  Status of profession in society  Pay levels  Promotion prospects  Working conditions  Working hours</p>
Author's summary	<p><b>Satisfaction</b>  Heads derive the greatest part of their job satisfaction from their relationships with people, especially the children, and from their autonomy</p> <p><b>Dissatisfaction</b>  Most of the most frequently selected causes of dissatisfaction do not seem likely to be reduced</p>

Table A6

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	LYONS, G. (1981).
Respondents	Teachers from 5 schools in England
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	122
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	58 per cent M, 42 per cent F
Independent variables	Sex, age and position
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	14
Measurement approach	Rated degree of satisfaction on five-point scale
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Satisfaction aspects for teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact with pupils</li> <li>Security in job</li> <li>The actual teaching process</li> <li>Degree of personal responsibility and development</li> <li>Relationships with colleagues</li> <li>Working conditions, hours and holidays</li> <li>The sense of personal achievement</li> <li>The administrative content of the job</li> <li>Salary prospects</li> <li>Time to pursue personal interests</li> <li>Opportunities for professional advancement</li> <li>Recognition by the community</li> <li>Time to pursue academic interests</li> <li>Recognition for work well done</li> </ul> <p><b>Dissatisfaction aspects for teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time to pursue personal interest</li> <li>Time to pursue academic interest</li> <li>The administrative content of the job</li> </ul>

Table A7

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	MAHON, D. (1993).
Respondents	Headteachers from Catholic, Protestant and non-denominational schools in Ireland
Phase	Primary
Achieved sample	94
Response rate	64 per cent
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Principals' leadership/responsibility role, the success of the school, challenge and status of job, sex, age, qualifications, geographical area and school size
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Open-ended and closed
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Rating scales
Analysis	Quantitative (SPSS)
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Aspects which headteachers believed contributed to their overall satisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationships with teachers</li> <li>Leadership role/responsibility</li> <li>Relationship with children</li> <li>Relationship with parents</li> <li>Success of school</li> <li>Challenge of job</li> <li>Status</li> <li>Autonomy</li> <li>Recognition</li> <li>Working conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>Aspects which headteachers believed contributed to their overall dissatisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of finance/resources</li> <li>Workload</li> <li>Dual role teacher/administration</li> <li>Department of Education</li> <li>Responsibility</li> <li>Parents</li> <li>Lack of ancillary staff</li> <li>Working conditions</li> <li>Children</li> <li>Lack of autonomy</li> <li>Board of management</li> <li>Status</li> <li>Stress</li> <li>Support of services</li> </ul> <p>Challenge, implementation and success of principals' leadership role and relations with parents, teachers and children emerged as the main areas of principals' job satisfaction</p>
Author's summary	Training programmes which help principals to recognise factors which reduce satisfaction would have a positive impact



**Table A8**

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	MENLO, A., MARICH, M., Collet, L., EVERS, T., FERNANDEZ, R. and FERRIS, L. W. (1990)
Respondents	Teachers from State of Michigan, USA
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	888
Response rate	63 per cent
Sex ratio	57 per cent M, 43 per cent F
Independent variables	Teaching practices and country
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Rating scales
Analysis	Quantitative analysis Comparisons with findings from 4 other countries: England, West Germany, Japan and Singapore
Main findings	<p><b>Practices giving quality of professional life Across all 5 countries:</b> Developing warm, personal relationships with students</p> <p><b>Across 3 countries:</b> The communication of clear rules and expectations for student behaviour</p> <p><b>Across 2 countries:</b> Giving prompt attention when issues of student behaviour arise Using a variety of approaches to gain student interest and participation Seeking feedback from students Making positive relationships with students</p>
Authors' summary	Teachers in different countries are neither uniformly different from, nor similar to, each other. This conclusion should reduce any tendency to view teachers within a country in stereotypical form

Table A9

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	MERCER, D. (1997).
Respondents	Headteachers located in the North East of England
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	39
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Not applicable
Method	Interview
Question type	Open
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Word count of the concepts identified in the interview data
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings	<p><b>Job satisfaction categories:</b>          Having a positive view of oneself          Being able to control one's environment          Having a positive view of the quality of education provided by one's school          Being comfortable with one's role          Having good relationships with others</p> <p><b>Job dissatisfaction categories:</b>          Role conflict          Context within which schools operate          Factors affecting the ability of the headteacher to function as s/he sees as being important          Having a negative view of oneself</p>
Author's summary	This paper offers a model of job satisfaction which mirrors more closely the situation faced by secondary headteachers in England

Table A10

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	MERCER, D. (1993).
Respondents	Headteachers in Britain
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	12
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Not stated
Method	Written output and discussion
Question type	Open-ended
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Nominal group technique
Analysis	Qualitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Features of headship which give job satisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational aspects</li> <li>Problem solving</li> <li>Job variety</li> <li>Working with the senior management team</li> <li>Establishing structures for innovation</li> <li>Working in partnership with governors, parents, the community, etc.</li> <li>Personal aspects</li> <li>Having responsibility</li> <li>Having a worthwhile job</li> <li>Recognition for the school</li> <li>Having an overview</li> <li>Improving pupil prospects*</li> <li>Sharing in the success of others*</li> <li>Obtaining loyalty from staff*</li> <li>Being the focal point of a wider community*</li> </ul> <p>* indicates equal ranking</p> <p><b>Features of headship which give job dissatisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational aspects</li> <li>Having to deal with problems over which one has no formal control</li> <li>Being constantly bombarded from all sides</li> <li>The moving goalposts of government legislation</li> <li>An inability to control the site, i.e vandalism and trespass</li> <li>Having to attend too many meetings*</li> <li>Lack of time to sit and talk to people*</li> </ul> <p>* indicates equal ranking</p>
Author's summary	<p><b>Satisfaction:</b></p> <p>The grouping of responses relating to job satisfaction implies the feeling of competence about carrying out a difficult job well</p> <p><b>Dissatisfaction:</b></p> <p>The idea of autonomy appears to be important in that there are several comments which demonstrate a failure on the part of the headteachers to achieve this aspect of the job</p>

Table A11

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	NEWSON, G. (1993).
Respondents	Mathematics teachers
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	52
Response rate	58 per cent
Sex ratio	Not stated
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	7 for positive, 8 for negative
Measurement approach	Rank items in list
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Positive aspects for the teacher:</b>  Ability to use own initiative in classroom  Working with children  Variety of work pattern  Working with mathematics  Working with other teachers  Job security  Holidays</p> <p><b>Negative aspects for the teacher:</b>  Poor career opportunities  Poor salary scale  Increase in administration  Disruptive children  Poor starting pay  Directed changes in curriculum  Lack of INSET  Time pressure/work load and conditions/  marking/stress</p>
Author's summary	<p>Mounting pressures in recent years have come in the area of 'directed' teaching and testing (National Curriculum, SATs, etc.) – possibly at the expense of being able to use individual initiative – and much more record keeping/ administration/ accountability – possibly at the expense of priority to actually working with children</p> <p>Poor starting pay was seen as less significant than the related perceived problems of salary scale and career opportunities. Problems of children and the curriculum were seen as less important than increases in administration</p>

**Table A12**

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	POPPLETON, P. (1989).
Respondents	Teachers from the North of England
Phase	Secondary
Achieved sample	686
Response rate	58 per cent
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Age range, school size, location
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	67 items, reduced to 13 factors
Measurement approach	Rating scales
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Predictors (regression coefficients) of overall job satisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher-pupil relationship</li> <li>Opportunity/challenge</li> <li>Management/morale</li> <li>Pastoral role</li> <li>Teaching support</li> <li>Collegial relationships</li> <li>Workload support</li> <li>Material rewards</li> <li>Pupil-centred pedagogy</li> <li>Training responsibility</li> <li>Behaviour control</li> <li>Professional development</li> <li>Curriculum/management role</li> </ul>
Author's summary	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Aspects of classroom practice and working conditions contribute significantly to overall job satisfaction. Teachers' roles and responsibilities, apart from their pastoral role, have little or no independent effect on their job satisfaction</p>

Table A13

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	REVELL, R. (1996)
Respondents	Headteachers
Phase	Primary
Achieved sample	25
Response rate	100 per cent
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Not applicable
Method	Interviews
Question type	Open-ended
Number of items	Not stated
Measurement approach	Conceptual/interpretative
Analysis	Qualitative
Main findings	Daily tasks determine heads' prevailing feelings Distinction between operational work and work that shapes the school Satisfaction through teaching Spending time with the children is an aspect of 'personal work'
Author's summary	One effect of the Government's reforms is to intensify those features of heads' work that offer little emotional sustenance, while eroding those that do

Table A14a

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	VARLAAM, A., NUTTALL, D. and WALKER, A. (1992).
Respondents	Teachers
Phase	Primary and secondary
Achieved sample	1,290 for positive factors, 734 for negative factors
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Sex, age, promotion, qualifications, career experience, marital status, school phase, size of school
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	38
Measurement approach	Tick three items
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Positive factors:</b>                      Good relations with pupils                      Good relations with colleagues                      Giving pupils a sense of achievement                      Job security                      Well-managed school                      Having management responsibility*                      Being valued by colleagues*                      Opportunities to be creative and innovative                      Opportunities to work in a team                      Involved in shaping the school's aims and direction</p> <p><b>Negative factors:</b>                      Work overload                      Excessive paperwork and record keeping                      Stress                      Poor pay                      Not being valued by management                      Inadequate resources                      Insufficient time for family/private life                      Status of teachers in the community                      No promotion opportunities</p> <p>* indicates equal ranking</p>

NB Tables A14a–A14c refer to the same research study with each table focusing on particular aspects of the study

Table A14b

Concept	Job satisfaction
Reference	VARLAAM, A., NUTTALL, D. and WALKER, A. (1992).
Respondents	Headteachers
Phase	Primary and secondary
Achieved sample	407 for positive factors, 127 for negative factors
Response rate	Not stated
Sex ratio	Not stated
Independent variables	Sex, age, promotion, qualifications, career experience, marital status, school phase, size of school
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	38
Measurement approach	Tick three items
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Positive factors:</b>          Having management responsibility          Involved in shaping the school's aims and direction          Good relations with colleagues          Good relations with pupils          Opportunities to be creative and innovative          Opportunities to work in a team          Giving pupils a sense of achievement*          Job security*          Well-managed school*          Being valued by colleagues*</p> <p><b>Negative factors:</b>          Work overload          Stress          Excessive paperwork and record keeping          Insufficient time for family/private life          Inadequate resources          Status of teachers in the community          Poor pay          Not being valued by management          No promotion opportunities          * indicates equal ranking</p>
Authors' summary	Headteachers draw most satisfaction from managerial factors



Table A14c

Concept	Teachers' morale/motivation
Reference	VARLAAM, A., NUTTALL, D. and WALKER, A. (1992).
Respondents	Teachers, deputy headteachers, headteachers
Phase	Primary and secondary
Achieved sample	3,019
Response rate	36 per cent
Sex ratio	42 per cent M, 58 per cent F
Independent variables	Sex, age, promotion, qualifications, career experience, marital status, school phase, size of school
Method	Questionnaire
Question type	Closed
Number of items	38
Measurement approach	Four-point rating scale
Analysis	Quantitative
Main findings (in order of frequency)	<p><b>Teachers' own positive morale/motivation:</b>                      Job satisfaction                      Good relations with pupils                      Being able to give pupils a sense of achievement                      Having sufficient time for the family and private life                      Well-managed school                      Good school discipline                      Having a manageable workload                      Having a manageable level of paper work/record keeping                      Adequate resources for equipment, books, etc.                      Being kept informed about what is going on in the school                      Good relations with colleagues                      Job security                      The school having a clear sense of direction                      Being valued by management</p> <p><b>Teachers' own negative morale/motivation:</b>                      The status of teachers in the community                      Level of paperwork/record keeping                      Workload                      Stress                      Having insufficient time for family and private life                      Inadequate resources for equipment, books, etc.                      Amount of non-contact time                      Provision for children with special educational needs                      Large classes                      Opportunities for promotion                      Pay</p>

Table A14c continued overleaf

Table A14c (continued)

	<p><b>Morale and motivation of teachers in general:</b></p> <p>More positive portrayal of the teaching profession by the media  Reduced working time outside school hours  Improving pay for all teachers  Giving teachers a professional body  More/new opportunities for promotion within classroom teaching  More ancillary support  Better in-service training for the curriculum  Better career opportunities  More opportunities for promotion to posts of additional responsibility  Better in-service training for management development  More flexibility for schools to recruit staff in shortage subjects/areas  Increasing pay/status differences between different posts in schools  Having additional pay related to individual teachers' improvement in performance  Having additional pay related to improvements in the schools' performance</p>
Authors' summary	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <p>Almost all the factors considered 'very important' in safeguarding and/or enhancing a teacher's own morale and motivation are about the quality of life in school</p> <p><b>Negative:</b></p> <p>It is notable that 'status of teachers in the community' heads the list, followed by features of day-to-day working life. Pay and conditions feature, but less prominently</p> <p><b>In general:</b></p> <p>'More positive portrayal of the teaching profession by the media' heads the list for all types of teachers</p>





## **Who would be a teacher?**

**A review of factors motivating and demotivating prospective and practising teachers**

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Why do people go into teaching? What makes teaching an enjoyable life-long career for some, while others leave the profession? This review of research investigates those aspects of teaching that contribute to, and detract from, the appeal of a teaching career for both prospective and practising teachers.

The aim of this review was to examine research that has explored the factors influencing the motivation, morale and job satisfaction experienced by teachers, and the effect of teachers' motivation and morale upon their career moves.

The report presents the findings from a wide range of research carried out since 1988, the date of the Education Reform Act. It covers the following areas:

- reasons why people choose teaching as a career;
- perceptions of teaching by prospective teachers;
- teachers' reasons for seeking promotion;
- teachers' reasons for leaving or staying in teaching;
- factors affecting teacher motivation and morale;
- factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction.

Discussion of the findings is complemented by suggestions for future research.

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