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Factors Affecting to Choose Teaching as the Career Path: An Investigation on Graduate Teachers in Western Province Schools in Sri Lanka*Jayaratne, ARWK and Kottawatta, H***Abstract**

Area of the Study

This study is mainly focused on identifying the factors affecting graduates who have chosen teaching as a career and what was their general perception on teaching as a profession.

Problem of the Study

To investigate the main factors which were influenced to choose teaching as a career path among graduates' teachers in western province in Sri Lanka.

Method of the Study

The data were collected from randomly selected sample of 100 graduate teachers in western province by using a structured questionnaire, which consisted of 47 statements with a 5 point Likert scale. The data analysis included the univariate and bivariate analyses.

Findings of the Study

According to the empirical evidence of this study, it is found that perceived teaching ability, intrinsic value, job security, time for family, shape the future of children, enhance social equity, make social contribution, work with children, prior teaching and learning experience have high influence on graduates' choice of teaching as a career and they perceived teaching as a noble profession which requires hard work along with great skills and high standards. As their perception, teaching career is has a well respected career and a high social status within the society.

Conclusion of the Study

The identified factors which had higher influence on graduate teachers' career choice can be used to improve teacher recruitment and retention, reform teacher education and professional development and finding ways to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: *Career Choice, Graduates, Teachers, Intrinsic Value*

Introduction

The multiplicity of motives behind each behavior cannot be underestimated when it comes to the choice of lifelong career. The majority of the people are engaging in a career as it assists them to satisfy their life ambitions such as earning a living, developing an interest, helping humanity, gaining social class and respectability. Other than that career is the instrument of seeking meaning, self-fulfillment and satisfaction in life (Sokro et al. 2011). Therefore the motives behind such a crucial choice vary and overlap.