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To be or not to be a teacher: Factors determining the decision among Slovenian university students

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This study investigates the motivation and perception of the teaching profession among final year Bachelor students of social sciences and languages. Students who intended to pursue a master's degree in teaching reported on their motivation to teach, their beliefs about teaching and their satisfaction with their career choice. Students who had decided not to study to become a teacher reported on their beliefs about teaching and answered an open-ended question about the reasons why they did not want to study to become a teacher. Using the FIT- Choice Scale to measure motivational factors and perceptions of the teaching profession, the study shows that altruistic and intrinsic motives primarily drive students towards the teaching profession, whereby they rate their own abilities as teachers highly. In contrast, extrinsic factors such as job transferability and time for the family are of lesser importance. Despite recognising the expertise required, participants perceive the social status and salary in the teaching profession to be comparatively low. The qualitative analysis reveals issues such as low intrinsic and personal utility value, concerns about the demanding interaction with children and their parents, and the perception of extensive teacher training programmes by students who are not interested in the teaching profession. The implications of this study offer important insights for policy makers and teacher education programmes to consider the factors that influence students' decision to enter the teaching profession.

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