

# Why I Want to Teach: Exploring Factors Affecting Students' Career Choice to Become Teachers

**Armina B. Mangaoil**  
mangaoil.ab@pnu.edu.ph

**Arthur S. Abulencia**

**Wensley M. Reyes**

**Teresita T. Rungduin**

Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences  
Philippine Normal University

**Abstract** This is a qualitative study which explores different factors affecting the career decision-making of Grade 10 students leading to a choice of becoming a teacher. A total of 388 students participated in the study with 40 students from Metro Manila who conveyed they are pursuing teaching as a career. Data analysis involved coding and categorizing of responses with defining of emerging themes related to students' motivation to teach. It had two levels of data collection: survey questionnaire to gather student's perceptions about teachers and teaching as a profession and a focus-group discussion to validate salient themes that emerged from the responses to the survey questions. The findings revealed that early exposures to the role of teachers and influence of close family members contributed to the preference to pursue education as a program in tertiary education . Moreover, the student-participants had positive regard for teachers and the teaching profession. The students described their teachers as having positive personal characteristics, which served as model for them. On the other hand, the positive and negative perceptions regarding the teaching profession surfaced. Lastly, the study recommends that orientation programs include parents of students and model teachers of the schools to strengthen the students' interest to pursue teaching.

**Keywords:** career-decision making, perceptions, preference, social perceptions

## **Introduction**

Teaching is regarded as a noble profession. Studies on teacher education examined teacher preparedness, professional and personal qualities, and cognitions about teaching vis-à-vis education reforms (Abulon, 2014; Canizares, 2015; Janer, Deri, Dio, Marbella, & Ricafort, 2015). Likewise, teachers' motivations, aspirations, and early career development have increasingly been the focus of research attention in the climate of escalating teacher shortages and concerns regarding teacher quality; with a dearth of research on secondary students' perceptions of the teaching career and reasons for pursuing the teaching career

The Commission on Higher Education Data (CHED, 2016) show that 791,284 students go to Education Science and Teacher Training courses when they start tertiary education. Of the 791,284 students, 74% (585,550) are female while 26% (205,734) are males. In the studies conducted among pre-service teachers, a number of constructs were investigated to describe and analyze teacher qualities and professional competencies. Among the constructs studied were teaching beliefs (Abulon & Rungduin, 2015); competence (Canizares, 2015); and conceptions of good teaching (Bustos-Orosa, 2008) are considered significant areas in pre-service education that had been examined and analyzed in various studies (Abulon & Rungduin, 2015; and Bustos-Orosa, 2008) in the Philippines. Results revealed teacher characteristics that are believed to facilitate teacher effectiveness and graduate success with recommendations for the development of content mastery, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of learning process to develop effective teaching.

Despite the number of students who chose to teach, the teaching profession is perceived to be less lucrative compared with the other fields with increasing salary gap between teaching and the other professions as a main consideration (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Data on students' preferred college courses revealed an inclination towards actuarial sciences, engineering, architecture, computer-based, and management-related courses (CHED, 2016). Studies on motivations to teach (Watt & Richardson, 2007; Abulon, 2014) indicated extrinsic, intrinsic and altruistic motives, with wanting to influence lives as the one of the primary altruistic motivation.

### **Purposes of the Research**

This study aimed to determine motivations students have in choosing teaching as a profession. Likewise, it documented the differences in perceptions and beliefs about teachers and teaching from students who chose to be teachers. The research serves as basis for policy enhancements when it comes to admission, marketing and career guidance concerns especially in promoting teaching as a profession. This study sought to answer the following statements of purpose:

- (1) identify perceptions and beliefs of Grade 10 students about teachers and the teaching profession;
- (2) determine social perceptions, personal, and situational factors associated with career decisions leading to teaching.

### **Framework of the Study**

The study aimed to explore students' social perceptions, and their beliefs towards the teaching profession. This study also aims to enrich the career decision-making literature by showing motivations related to choosing teaching as a career.

Teacher perceptions on teacher qualities reveal that content knowledge and a teachers' disposition matter in being perceived as a "good teacher" (Bustos-Orosa, 2008). Across the literature reviewed, Filipinos have high regard towards teachers, teachers are perceived to be respectable and are seen as model citizens by the community (Bustos-Orosa, 2008). Reverence is culturally rooted as reflected in values of respectfulness and gratitude, which is commonly observed when secondary students and pre-service teachers (Abulon & Rungduin, 2015) are asked about their motivations in choosing teaching as a career. These qualities are likewise perceived to be important in other Asian countries (Wang, Lin, & Ching, 2015) with the kind and quality of in-service professional development as well as pre-service education enhancing the qualities and characteristics.

With teachers being viewed as positive and powerful role models of Filipino values, the teaching profession is viewed to be anchored on the main responsibility of educating the child. In the process of teaching, student learning should be enhanced by the efforts of teachers who are more knowledgeable in their field and are skillful at teaching others (Darling-Hammond, 2000). With good teaching, values are emulated to be observed by students, thus inspiring them.

In relation to motivations to career decision-making, a number of incoming college students experience career indecision often manifested in choosing a career (Shin & Kelly, 2015). In the Philippines, parents have influence in the career decisions of their children, which have been also observed and discussed in studies saying that students discussed career their plans with their family and they acknowledged the role their families played in their decision to choose a particular path (Workman, 2015). In terms of studies on motivations for choosing teaching as a career suggest that the following reasons were relevant: (a) 'work with children/adolescents,'; (b) 'intrinsic value' focusing on

the satisfaction a person feels when a student understands what is being explained; (c) ‘shape future’ or being able to influence students; (d) ‘perceived teaching ability’; and (e) ‘make social contribution’ were the motivation factors on which future teachers agreed most strongly (König & Rothland, 2012).

This study first explored perceptions and beliefs of students when it comes to their teachers and the teaching profession, and are thought of as the platform for motivation to consider teaching. Likewise, the study delved into determining cognitions of teachers and the students’ personal and circumstantial factors prompting them to regard teaching as a career

### **Methodology**

Qualitative in design, the study made use of the content analysis method in perusing through the responses to the questionnaire and the focus-group discussions (FGDs). two levels of data collection. The first level involved the distribution of the survey questionnaire, which aimed to investigate on students’ career decision making leading towards the choice of the field of education. It was done during the students’ homeroom time, where approximately 20 to 45 minutes were allotted for the researchers to gather data. A filter question on interest in pursuing a career in teaching was provided, and students who answered “yes” (40 out of 388) were asked to participate in the FGD, which is the second level of data collection. FGDs were conducted to substantiate and validate the salient themes that emerged from the responses to the survey and explore and substantiate reasons in choosing teaching. Per school, one FGD with three to eight student-participants was conducted during lunch breaks in rooms provided by the guidance counsellor or the principal. Assurances on anonymity of respondents and

provision of discussion of the results of the study were part of the letter of request sent to the school heads.

The respondents included 388 Grade 10 students from six (6) public and private secondary schools (three public and three private) in Manila, who were all provided with a consent and an assent form (for students younger than 18 years of age). Students came from different socio-economic backgrounds and were all based around Manila and its nearby areas. They were endorsed by the selected schools. Out of 388 students, 40 students expressed interest to teach.

The researchers developed a questionnaire with five open-ended items to measure students' perceptions about teachers as well as their associations with teaching. An expert in testing and in qualitative analysis reviewed this research-developed questionnaire and the FGD questions. Also, a try-out of the questionnaire and the FGD process were undertaken in the institution where the researchers are based and as per results, refinements to the questionnaire were made (e.g., using the word "teacher" instead of the Filipino translation, *guro*).

Data analysis was done using Qqualyzer, a qualitative software analysis program. Data coming from the transcriptions of the interview and questionnaires provided to the students were encoded and categorized by Qqualyzer. The first set of data comprised of the open-ended questionnaires given to the 388 Grade 10 students. Data from the first set were coded and thematized. Thematizing included looking for the correspondence or common words associated with teaching and how these were contextualized in the responses. Qqualyzer provided information on the frequency of words used. The second set of data was consisted of transcriptions of FGDs with the students (n=40) who were considering to take teaching as a career. Responses were coded, analyzed and emerging themes were culled from the data. Qqualyzer was used

in coding the responses while the analysis and formulation of emerging themes were through expert discussion and common and salient response analysis. Initially, responses of students from private and public schools were separately analyzed; however, no distinctions were seen between the two groups and responses when aggregated, responses were analyzed again to form general themes and definitions.

## **Results**

### **Perceptions and beliefs of Grade 10 students about teachers and the teaching profession**

#### ***Knowledge-sharing and gate-keeping***

Most of the student-participants have positive regards for teaching as a profession and had the impression that teaching is a process of transferring knowledge to learners. The participants viewed teachers as the source of knowledge in all the professions as they are the main persons who help the students to become more equipped with knowledge and skills. According to them, “*Ang pagtuturo ay ang pagbibigay ng sapat at de-kalidad na kaalaman sa mga aralin, F (15)*” [Teaching as knowledge sharing to help students become more competent in understanding the different disciplines.]

The student-participants perceived that teaching is not only about communicating knowledge or skills but also involves the whole person development. For them, teaching is to provide controls and security-checks when it comes to socially-appropriate behaviors. This perception might seem to be controlling students but it focuses on developing socially responsible learners. One participant clearly stated that “*Ang pagtuturo ay pagdidisiplina ng mag-aaral, Idisiplina at mabigyan tayo ng aral.*” *F (15)* [Teaching utilizes not only intellectual goals but also imparting disciplinary knowledge to the learners].

The students remembered their teachers as person who inspire excellence among students. Furthermore, the participants also perceived that teaching is also a way of encouraging student to learn from one another. They have agreed that their teachers are the bridge towards the world of learning. This was supported in the study of Abulon (2010), iwhere she found out that one of the most common themes among students perception of teaching is: An opportunity for sharing knowledge and experiences.

### ***Teaching Effect Change***

When asked about their perception in teaching as a profession, one student-participant proudly expressed her thoughts that teaching can produce change, a profession that provides an opportunity to contribute positively to the society. *“Ang pagtuturo ay pagbibigay ng kaalaman para hindi maging mangmang ang kabataan....Nagtuturo para baguhin ang kalagayan ng mga Pilipino” F (16)* [Teaching has the biggest role in developing a learner to uplift their lives and become a competent individual].

The participants perceived that teaching as a socially worthwhile and important job. They contextualized that it primarily focused on the desire to help the learners to become successful and to improve the society therefore, transforming the world. Emphasizing that a model person is someone with personal attributes, virtues, and teaching methods that nurture favorable teacher-student relationship (Clemente, 2010).

### ***Teaching as a Responsibility and a Profession that Gives Direction***

The participants believed that teaching is seen as a personal responsibility in developing within the learner the values of optimism and determination to face life’s challenges. *“Turuan kaming mabuhay sa makabagong mundo at paano*



*makipagsapalaran at magpalawak sa paglinang ng kaisipan at pagtuturo ng mabuting asal.” (M, 15) [Teaching is seen as a responsibility in ensuring that the next generation would be equipped with the needed life skills.] Teaching gives a sense of direction to the learners. The student-participants mentioned “*Magbigay ng paraan para malaman ang tamang landas, matutunan ang tama at maling daan.*” [Teaching is perceived to be a process of helping students discover their own paths]. Some of the participants admire teachers for working relentlessly in guiding the learners to instill in them that life has a certain value and believed that they can achieved much in life as well as accomplish something better.*

### ***Beliefs of the Students about a Teacher***

The student-participants perceived that teachers are task- and work-oriented. They also have high regard to teachers who knows how to transfer learning and knowledge. For them, a teacher is one who imparts information to students, a facilitator of learning that leads to discussions, asking open-ended questions, guiding process and task. They believed that teachers have deeper commitment in sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Teachers feel adequate when they successfully imparted what they ought to impart to the learners. “*Naglilingkod at nagbabahaging kaalaman. Nagtuturo ng tamang kaalaman.*” M (15) [Teachers being defined as people who provide the necessary pieces of information for them to learn]. The participants viewed the teacher to have a convincing power to teach the learners to value what one values or to explore the world with oneself or through oneself. They also stated that a teacher is the one who guide them to develop their fullest potential and to be the best they can be.

Teachers are second parents to their students, they want to protect and nurture the young. The student-participants consider their teacher as their second parent who

specifically guides and gives piece of advice, and acts as a friend. The participants believed that teaching is likened to parenting especially among students whose parents are not in the Philippines.

The opportunity to work with children and play a significant role in developing the potentials of the learners are motivators for the students. *“Tumatayong pangalawang magulang sa akin. Ang teacher ay ang pangalawang nanay. Taga-gabay ang guro ko sa akin.”*F (15) [Perceiving teachers in terms of their roles in the classroom and in the lives of the students. The roles are focused on being second parents to their students]. The participants consider their teachers as role models who have significant effects on them as they work everyday with their students. Villegas (2014) argue that teachers and mentors may highly influence a student in considering teaching as a profession. The inspiring, encouraging words and actions of teachers can also make a student consider to take education in college and follow the footsteps of their mentors/ teachers.

The students view their teachers as nurturers these character trait is seen to be integral in developing students who become more caring and empathic of others. One student said, *“Ang isang teacher ay gumabay at nagtuturong tama sa kaniyang mga estudyante, dahil sa kanya natutunan ng bata ang hubugin siya sa mga bagay-bagay na kung saan maaaring umunlad ang kanyang buhay.* M (16) [Teacher as a guide and as a person who would impart or enhance values among their students. These values are seen to be integral in making students better citizens of the country.] Consequently, students model the nurturing trait of teachers in terms of how they relate with their schoolmates in curricular and extra-curricular organizations. The teaching profession inherently deals with helping children and youth to positively contribute to the society (Villegas, 2014). Furthermore, studies (Watt & Richardson, 2008) claim the main task of the teachers is to

focus not only on making the students to become technically or professionally competent but also an individual who have moral integrity by instilling good values to become productive members of the society, modelling moral integrity.

The student-participants gave emphasis on teachers as most influential terms of the different issues of our country be it political or economical. “*Ang teacher ang magbabagong kaisipan ng mga kabataan para maging maayos ang kinabukasan.*”F (16) [Teachers’ roles in molding the future leaders of the country. They are perceived to be holding the answers to today’s pressing societal problems]. They believed that a teacher plays a big role in guiding the students to be optimistic and can become competent and adequate against events that may endanger them or take advantage of their vulnerabilities. Bobadilla (2014) mentioned that students view the teaching profession as a nation-building job but at the same time, brings up a rewarding experience and gives a warm feeling in the heart. A teacher continuously elevates the sense of oneness towards nation-building.

### ***Social Perceptions and Obstacles to Career Decisions Leading to Teaching***

Based on the focus-group discussions, the following social perceptions themes emerged:

The student-participants in this research have indicated various factors associated to consider a career decision leading to teaching. One reason is that they look at their *teachers as exemplars*. When their teachers are committed in sharing knowledge and experiences to the students, the students become inspired to pursue the vocation of teaching in order to follow the path of their teachers. The assistance and helping hands that teachers have extended beyond the official class hours have touched also the students to make teaching as their one option when they are going to

college. According to one student, “*Nagsilbing motibasyon para sa akin ay ang aking mga guro na nakakatulong sa akin. Marami silang naibigay sa akin kaya gusto ko na pagdating ng panahon ako naman ang makatulong sa iba sa pamamagitan ng pagtuturo.*” F(15) [My teachers who help me serve as my motivation. They have given me a lot of assistance and favour that’s why I would like also to be a teacher somebody and be the one to help others by teaching.]

The 40 student-participants deeply and carefully contemplated a career in teaching because of the ***opportunity given to them to ‘act’ or perform the role of a teacher*** in their life as students, which is usually done in secondary schools when teachers train students to be student-teachers for a week or two. In the school, there are programs or activities wherein the students have experienced for a day to be a principal, a teacher, a guidance counselor, among others. In the family or community, the students have role played what the teachers are actually doing: teaching, tutoring, assisting young kids like them to learn a lesson. These simulated experiences of students have kindled the exciting and challenging roles and functions of teachers in society. One student-participant said that teaching kids in their community was fulfilling because she was able to help them and they learned from her, “*Napakasarap sa damdamin na makatulong at may matutuhan sila sa akin. Masaya ako na maging bahaging buhay nila.*” F (16) [I have a happy feeling when I have the opportunity to help others and they learned from. I am happy that I am part of their life.]

Additionally, student-participants are reflected on pursuing teaching as a career because of their ***exposure to real life experiences*** like community immersion or engaging in tutorial or Sunday school (in a church). Some respondents were also motivated to pursue teaching by some documentaries/videos found in the internet that

pertain to teachers' untiring efforts to light up knowledge and wisdom despite difficult and challenging circumstances. One student-participant said that, "*Isang araw nanood akong 'I-Witness' at ang topic ay tungkol sa 'education'. Ipinakita doon na maraming bataang kulang sa edukasyon dahil sa kahirapan. Napaisip ako na puwede kong ibahagi ang aking mga kaalaman sa mga para hindi masayang ang aking kaalaman.*" (F, 17)[One day, I watched "I-witness" and the episode is about education issue. It came into my mind that I could also share my knowledge to them so that what I have learned from school will not go into waste.]

The *influences of the parents and other significant others* of the student-participants as well as their early exposures to teaching profession are another factors that astound them to go into teaching. The student whose parents were also teachers reported being inspired by what their parents do. The students gained ways to work and have a clear understanding of the tasks teachers do by how their parents work. A student-participant conveyed that her mother is a teacher who suggested that she pursue education in college because teaching is a joyful profession. Her mother said that when one teaches, one also learns "*Yung mommy ko dahil isa rin siyang guro, sinabihan niya ako noon na guro ang aking kunin pagdating ng araw o kapag nag kolehiyo o ako dahil batay sa kaniyang experience nakakatuwa daw ang pagtuturo dahil sa araw-araw na kaniyang pagtatrabaho. Araw-araw din daw ay marami siyang natututunan dahil din sa kaniyang mga estudyante marami rin siyang natutunan sa mga ito.*" F(16). [My mother is a teacher, she told me to become a teacher someday and teach in college. She told me that she enjoyed teaching everyday. When she teaches, she learns from her students too."]

### ***Obstacles to Pursue a Career in Teaching***

The student-participants openly shared their thoughts and ideas as related to the possible obstacles in pursuing a teaching career.

#### ***Economic positioning of the teaching profession.***

The students expressed that one of their concern is the salary of teachers in relation to the scope and magnitude of their job. It seems to them that there is no sense of proportion for them. Their task is relatively heavy but the salary is meagre. One student said that, *“Well, yung feeling ko po kasi one of my relatives kasi we all know na pag nag teacher ka dito sa Philippines, parang yung pay mo, may babayaran ka pang tax, tapos ano mo pa yung pamilya mo, tapos yung sarili mo. So parang wala ka na talagang matitira. Kasi siyempre pag naging teacher ka, may ibaka pa ding dreams. So parang matagal-tagal mo pang maaabutan ‘yon. So para sa akin, yung magiging hadlang ko ngayung relatives ko din na they want me to be something else.”* [If you are teacher in the Philippines, your salary is.....(small) and you will be deducted of tax, help your family, then your personal expenses. Nothing will be left with your salary. As a teacher, you have also other dreams and you will have a long time to attain it. So, this could be a reason that my relatives would like me to be in other profession.]

***Incongruence of student’s career option (to teach) with the option offered by parents.*** The parents have different plans or career advice to their children who are interested to pursue education. The parents are generally inclined to push or railroad their children’s career to a more financially lucrative and high status profession like medicine, engineering, accountancy, among others. Although the students are animated with the nationalistic and altruistic roles of teachers, they seem to be carried by their parents’ cajoling. Some students said that, *“Siguro po yung magiging*

*hadlang para hindi po, if ever man po, kasi ang gusto po talagang parents ko, kung ano man yung trabaho ko, may mararating po talaga.”* [rough translation: The obstacle are my parents, they want me to pursue a work that will bring me to...(financially success).] *“Yun main obstacle po talaga is my mom. Magkaiba po yung gusto niya para sa akin sa gusto ko po. Siyempre siya po yung masusunod kasi sa kanya po yung pera eh. Hindi ko po kayang pag-aralin yung sarili ko. She wants me to be a journalist. She thinks I have a future in writing, may chance daw po ako na maging author.”* [The obstacle is my mom. She has different plan for me, compared to my ambition. Of course, she will be followed because she will finance my study, I cannot study on my own with their financial support. I will have a better future if I will be a writer or author.] *“Yung mommy ko po. Ayaw niya pong teacher, gusto niya po mag-engineering ako. Pero hindi po ako marunong mag-drawing po. Gusto ko po talaga mag-teacher na ayaw ko din.”* [My mom would like me to pursue engineering. But I really want to be a teacher although there is still some hesitation in my mind.]

***Pursuit of other interests.*** Although student-participants have already made known their interest go into practise of teaching, they are still open to more career options that have caught their interests. They are caught with the allure of teaching but still there are other gates that they would like to explore because it equally gives them a sense of wonder. Some students have given these clear replies, *“Ako po, siguro maging hadlang parang feeling ko may iba pa po kasi akong gusto.... Bukod sa pagte-teacher. Gusto ko maging musician, gusto ko rin maging architect kasi na sa lahi naming yun.”* [I feel that I have still other desires. Aside from taking a teaching career, I like to be a musician, or architect....] *“Mayroon pa rin po akong ibang gusto. Kagaya po nung sa kanya, yung sa NASA, gusto ko din po mag law, tapos gusto ko din na mag-singer, tapos ang dami-dami talaga. Ang dami ko po*

*talagang gusting gawin. Kaya hanggang ngayon, hindi ko pa rin po talaga siya napla-plan out. Isa din po yung nagging hadlang is yung sa family din. Kasi pwedeng iba din yung sabihin nila na, malayo po kasi ako sa pamilya.”* [Despite my propensity to be a teacher, I would like also other career options like to be in NASA, to be into law profession, or singer, and many others. Up to now, I don't have yet my final plan. One thing that hinders my plan is my family because they could say otherwise.]

All these experiences or exposures of students in their school life have contributed for them to be attracted with the lure of teaching profession; the cumulative effect of these factors could trigger their strong decision later in their post-high school life to enrol in a teacher training school, although the researchers believe that this could be transitory.

## **Discussion**

A year is a long period that may influence the actual choice of career. Certain factors like experiences, peer pressure, economic considerations and the alike may influence the student's career choice. The study focuses only on the responses of participants whose declaration wishes to take the teaching profession. The congruence between beliefs and career decisions does not always follow through. The high regard to their teachers manifested by students and their inclination to the teaching profession are factors to be considered in their choice of a career. According to the students, it is considered to be the oldest profession and the noblest of them all. Despite having high regard to the teaching profession, the possibility of these intelligent students belonging to the higher economic status pursuing a teaching profession wanes as one focuses on the 'present reality of teachers'. These reasons would include being overworked and underpaid status of teachers.



The plight of teachers aggravated by the lack of confidence of their respective families to the profession only add salt to the demoralized impression of the profession. These present conditions and perceptions are deterrents in attracting students belonging to the different socio-economic classes (Watt & Richardson, 2008). The glaring contrast should not be taken lightly because the quality of teachers in the future will continue to deteriorate if this problem is not solved. Triggers to pursue the teaching include initiatives from within as a result of personal experiences and perceptions inculcated by society to students. The emergence of perceptions of teachers include teachers whose function include providing guidance to students, nurturers of values, and opening doors of what the future hold (Joseph, 2011) it discusses tertiary music education preparation for the profession and recognises the value and importance of having critical friends and mentors as a beginner teacher.

By using narrative reflection both lecturer and graduate allow their voices to be heard as they make a contribution to understand the challenges new teachers face when building their professional identity and ‘staying in the job’. The discussion provided by the graduate, outlines her experience and engagement regarding the ‘positives’ and ‘negatives’ as she establishes her professional identity. Concerns and issues raised may be similar to those experienced by others. The lecturer contends that ongoing research with graduates is necessary when preparing preservice students as they begin developing their teacher identity and remain within the profession after graduation. In general, teachers are perceived to be knowledge-sharers, responsible individuals.

The opportunity of shaping and nurturing individuals as well as developing themselves to be competent members of the society could be considered as triggers as well. Seeing teachers as second parents and role models contributed also to their image of who a teacher is. The positive impression

the teaching profession holds and the direct experience of these students to teachers (whether a relative or a favorite teacher in school) highly contribute to their dream of teaching. Deterrents are elements that may lessen the chances of these students to become teachers in the future. These include factors which are often societal in nature both structural and cultural. If the decision to choose their future profession rest solely on their shoulders, student-participants are very optimistic to take the path of teaching. But if certain conditions and considerations are factored, their drive to take the teaching profession lessens.

Societal structures determine and limit the economic growth of the teaching (Watt & Richardson, 2007). The salary factor is a glaring deterrent often characterized by low income coupled with the overworked-underpaid condition of the teacher. In the Philippines, this deplorable image of the teacher prevents the brightest of students to take the challenge of educating the next generation (Abulon, 2014). Through the years, the plight of teachers unattended by the government resulted not only to the gory economic situation of teachers but also stabs a sword to the ‘dignity’ of the teaching profession. The word ‘teacher’ has become a joke for those who take a better profession (Calibo, 2014). No wonder why despite the impression of teaching being the noblest profession, it fails to attract the most intelligent of students.

Adding to this predicament would be the parents’ presumably wise advice to choose a lucrative profession other than teaching. Pressure mounts during the moment of decision making. Some students, no matter how persistent to be teachers, might end up following the dictates of their parents. This situation would show how important are the parent’s inputs in choosing a future career for their children. Most likely, families with high SES tend to be more active in choosing a child’s career. Student-participants wanting

to be teachers resign in desperation just the thought of not being a teacher because of this pre-determined scenario. Triggers and deterrents determine the congruence between the student's beliefs and career decision to the teaching profession. Individual perceptions of a teacher and the choice to be one do not always translate to concrete actions to pursue the teaching profession. Personal choice and experiences are major elements to pursue teaching. Likewise, the family as a societal institution is a big factor that affects the actual decision making of these students.

The findings related to the beliefs and perceptions about teachers and the teaching professions emphasize the positive perceptions of teachers and the acknowledgment the varied and enormous responsibilities of the teaching profession. The students who chose to take teaching as a profession admitted that they were influenced by teacher exemplars, early home exposure, and an environment that prime people to think of teaching is a profession that imbues high moral ascendancy. Interesting results include (1) most of the students who reported wanting to become teachers because they were inclined to become one, which may mean that the cultural modeling of their parents and relatives who are teachers also, and (2) differences in the number of students who prefer to become teachers in the public schools compared to private schools. Majority of the 40 students who reported they wanted to become teachers were girls ( $n = 32$ ).

With the findings discussed above, policies related to encouraging students to pursue teaching involved a two-pronged process. The first process happens during the terminal year in high school which involves getting messages across to students and their parents the nature and realities of teaching. The school's program concerning career choices should not be exclusively held among students but include their parents as well. The role and influence of parents in their children's career decision making is highlighted in

the findings of the study. It is noteworthy to mention that students chose to teach because their parents provided them with socialization opportunities to experience it, however, they also identified their parents as drivers that veer them away from teaching because of its financial gains.

Career activities should promote parental involvement in terms of orienting parents regarding the benefits and new trends in teaching. Issues such as opportunities for personal and professional growth, financial gains, and nation-building should be discussed in relation to choosing a career in teaching. Salient in this process is the idea that marketing of the career should include parents. In the Philippines, where decisions on career are primarily influenced by parents (Salazar-Clemina, 2002), career choice among secondary students is based on what parents think to be profitable and their financial capability to pay for the college education.

Career activities should likewise focus on students' values and how their parents taught them what to value. Likewise, activities should focus on intrinsic motivation that would link their interests to what they actually value (Durik, Vida, & Eccles, 2006). When students recognize the value of teaching and see themselves as teachers, the motivation to pursue the career increases. A policy input is to nurture students' value and love for teaching early on. By taking into consideration their interests when they enter secondary schooling, the students may be able to pursue the vocation.

The second process is focused on the admission policies of colleges. Admission in teacher-education universities should be designed in ways that consider the factors to pursuing a degree in education. Such factors would include above all else, the interest to pursue teaching and the motivation to teach. Part of the admission process should focus on the motivating factors for choosing teaching

as a career and a measurement of their aptitude to become one. Orientation processes should focus on providing teacher exemplars' experiences (inviting model teachers, demonstration teachers, and outstanding faculty members) and discuss their success stories.

What is considered salient in the findings is the indication that students adjust their career plans according to their parents' choices and their socioeconomic conditions, these findings are congruent with studies that consider risks of failure and future gains in choosing a career (Leitao, Guedes, Yamamoto, & Lopes, 2013). It is with this, that part of the admission policies should be providing more opportunities for students to pursue a teaching career through scholarships. There should also be an orientation for parents about the breadth and depth of opportunities that await their children upon choosing to teach.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This research explored the factors that influence the decision making of Grade 10 students in choosing teacher education as their program of study in their college education. The early exposures of the students to the role of teachers and influence of close family members contribute to the preference to choose education as a program in college. The study is relevant in understanding what motivates students to teach and how their significant others influenced them to pursue teaching as a career. It adds to the literature on what influences the career decisions of students in the Philippines.

The Grade 10 students have a very positive regard or high esteem for teachers and the teaching profession. The student-participants were inspired to choose education as their future career because of the inspiration from their teachers and influence of close family members. The teachers exhibit positive personal characteristics which served as

model for the students. The students puts prime importance on teacher exemplars, exposure and simulation of teaching environments and the nurturing character of their teachers in deciding to choose teaching as a career.

The teaching profession is not so much attractive to high school students due to low salaries accorded to teachers. A policy suggestion to increasing the likelihood of choosing teaching as a career is to involve parents in the career decision-making of Grade 10 students. For students to be attracted and pursue teacher education program, the teachers should focus on what they do best – which is teaching and inspiring young people. Improvement of the compensation package for teachers to attract the best high school graduates to pursue teaching career and make the salaries of teachers comparative or at par with other professions like engineering, accountancy, among others should be done. Admissions policies of TEIs should consider the perceived risks of failure and future gains for prospective enrollees when it comes to choosing teaching as a career.

The research recommends collecting data from various socio economic statuses and follow through on students who actually are into preservice education. The use of standardized tools should likewise be considered to explore patterns of measurable responses.

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**Gabay tanong sa pagtuklas ng motibasyon  
sa pagiging teacher**

Pangalan:

Edad:

Kasarian:

Religion:

Ang questionnaire na ito ay naglalaman ng mga tanong ukol sa iyong pananaw sa mga teachers at sa kanilang mga gawain.

1. Sino ang teacher?
2. Magbigay ng tatlong salita na naglalarawan sa teacher?
3. Sa paanong paraan ka natutulungan ng iyong teacher?
4. Ano sa iyong palagay ang mga tungkulin ng iyong teacher?
5. Gusto mo bang maging teacher?
  - a. Bakit?
6. Sa scale ng 1-4 (1 ang gusto at 4 ang gustong-gusto), gaano mo kagusto maging teacher?

Gabay tanong sa mga mag-aaral na nais maging teacher

1. Ano ang pumapasok sa isip mo kapag nababanggit ang salitang teacher?
2. Sa iyong palagay, anong mga katangian ang dapat taglay ng isang teacher?  
Probe:
  - a. Alin sa mga katangiang nabanggit ang mayroon ka?
  - b. Alin ang kailangan mong paunlarin?
3. Ano ng mga nag-motivate sa iyo upang isiping maging teacher?  
Probe:
  - a. Bakit?
4. Sino ang mga nag-motivate sa iyo upang isiping maging teacher?  
Probe:
  - a. Bakit?
5. Anu-ano ang maaaring maging hadlang para hindi ka mag-teacher?