



Probing Undergraduate EFL Students' Motivation to Teach as Career Decision Making: A Narrative Inquiry

Arya Tata Prabawa¹, Dewi Rochsantiningsih², Nur Arifah Drajati³

^{1,2,3} Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Jawa Tengah

Corresponding E-Mail: aryatataprabawa@student.uns.ac.id

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Abstract

The teacher shortage has increased in the last couple of years, and the teacher profession has become less attractive to students. This phenomenon can be seen from the contrasting data comparison between the number of students entering education majors against the increasing number of teachers needs in 2022-2024. To understand college students' motivation to teach, this study intends to uncover what motivates English Foreign Language (EFL) students to make career choices towards the teaching profession and what EFL students' plans are after completing their studies. Utilizing a narrative inquiry, the data were collected from four students through written narratives and semi-structured interviews at a private university in Indonesia. Based on the findings, one student wants to become a teacher as their first choice, with plans to find a teaching job. Another two students decided to become teachers as their second choice; both have their ideas about the teaching profession, with one planning to commit to another profession, while the other is looking at the situation. The last student does not want to become a teacher because of internal and external influences, planning to look for another profession as his choice. This makes it necessary to take action on how the teacher preparation program needs to evaluate, and the government needs to make the teaching profession more appealing to undergraduate EFL students.

Keywords: Career Decision Making, Narrative Inquiry, Teacher Motivation, Teaching Profession

Introduction

From the Directorate General of Teacher and Education Workforce (Arifa 2020; Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology 2023), Indonesia will have a shortage of teachers and retired teachers starting in 2022 and continuing

through 2024, with an increase of around 12%. When compared between 2022 and 2024, as shown in Figure 1.1, the teacher shortage in 2022 is 1,167,802, with 77,124 teachers retiring, and in 2024, the ministry projects an increase in the teacher shortage by 12.41% to 1,312,759, with 69,762 teachers retiring (Arifa, 2020; MoECRT, 2023). This data contrasts with National Higher Education Statistics (Directorate General of Higher Education Research and Technology 2022), the percentage of students enrolling in teacher education is ranked highest, and specifically, EFL programs are ranked higher than in other sectors. In addition, the specific study program English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is ranked seventh place (Directorate General of Higher Education Research and Technology, 2022). While the percentage of students enrolling in EFL programs is higher than in other teacher education sectors, there are still concerns about the number of teachers in the workforce and students' willingness to become teachers.

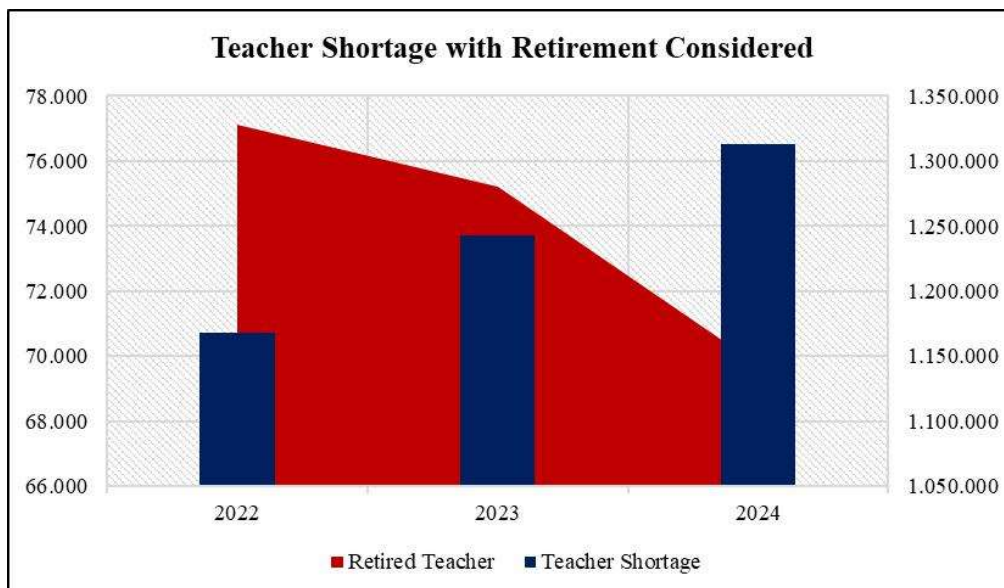


Figure 1.1. Histogram of Teacher Shortage by Factoring in Retirement in Three Years

With this problem arising, it is better to fix the prestige of the teaching profession to appeal to the prospective candidates and trainee teachers, and enhance retention, knowledge, and skills to optimize teacher performance (OECD 2020; Taylor 2023). If this trend continues, it will harm children's life chances due to a teacher shortage (See et al. 2022), and the inconsistent policies might have also played a role in the inadequate results and the teachers' discontent with their profession (Yumarnamto 2019). In creating teachers of the highest caliber, the government and higher education institutions (HEIs) must find ways to draw and keep bright students enrolled in teacher education programs (Suryani 2020) because they play a pivotal role in enabling graduates to pursue sustainable careers and be ready for the workforce (Tomlinson and Jackson 2019). It must push the

undergraduate EFL students to be able to perceive, reflect, and understand her/himself personally and occupationally as someone who enacts the responsibilities required of a teacher, connects with the social ties of the profession, and is devoted to the career into the future (Richardson and Watt 2018).

In the context of Indonesian undergraduate EFL students, several studies have already discussed this topic. Suryani and George (2021) examined Indonesian university students in teacher education programs, revealing that some students enter without intending to teach because of some factors such as social influences, perceptions of teaching, and career prospects outside of teaching. Another research, Syaripudin and Apandi (2023) utilized life-history narrative writing to explore EFL preservice teachers' preconceptions of teaching and teachers in Indonesia, revealing the influence of personal and sociocultural factors on their motivations for entering teacher education programs. Dewi and Fajri (2023) also investigates the initial motivations and professional identity formation of pre-service EFL teachers at an Indonesian university, emphasizing the importance of integrating teaching practice to enhance their skills and commitment. By understanding students' motivations, providing personalized support, and addressing practical aspects of the teaching profession, the research suggests ways to better prepare future English teachers for successful careers in education.

In the context of Indonesian students' teachers, this topic has already been discussed (Dewi and Fajri 2023; Suryani and George 2021; Syaripudin and Apandi 2023), most of the research is conducted using qualitative surveys (Suryani and George 2021), life-history narrative (Syaripudin and Apandi 2023), and a case study (Dewi and Fajri 2023), but still little utilize the narrative inquiry method. In-depth research has also been discussed with more dominant female gender participants (Dewi and Fajri 2023; Ivanec and Defar 2023; Parra-Martínez 2021; Suryani 2020) and balanced gender participants (Syaripudin and Apandi 2023). This indicates that less research is being conducted with more male gender participants, as previous research has several limitations. To fill this gap, the researchers researched EFL program university students in one of the private universities in Surakarta that are already teaching courses and practicum. This research tried to find out and understand the undergraduate EFL students' teacher motivation to enter the teaching profession as a career choice and their future plans after graduation.

Method

This study used a qualitative research approach based on its research purpose. Qualitative research attempts to comprehend or analyze phenomena by examining the meanings that individuals attach to them (Denzin et al. 2024). The qualitative approach itself has various forms, one of which this research used, narrative inquiry, as it attempts to capture the 'whole story' of studied subjects or phenomena (Mertova and Webster 2020). Looking at the subject of this research, this research implemented biography narrative inquiry to explore the

undergraduate EFL students' experiences and stories during their teaching courses and teaching practicum, utilizing Barkhuizen et al. (2014) framework.

This study was conducted in one of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs of a private university in Surakarta. This institution was chosen because it is accessible and reachable for researchers to conduct research. The selection of participants for this research utilized convenience and purposeful sampling (Creswell and Creswell 2023; Creswell and Poth 2018). The criteria of this research are the participant are specifically male gender that had completed the teaching courses, including the TEFL classes, and had completed the teaching practicum, included microteaching class and teaching internship, as this takes on the fourth-year students, and willing to articulate and share their experiences and aspirations with the researcher. The participants in this research were fourth-year students, including four undergraduate EFL students who met the criteria to participate in this research and had a unique story of their journey from different backgrounds. The participants ranged in age from approximately 20 to 23 years old. To ensure the participants' confidentiality and anonymity, they were given pseudonyms to protect their identities. The data was collected from October to December 2024.

Three techniques for collecting data used in this research are the narrative frame, interviews, and focus group discussions. These techniques were purposefully selected to uncover the participants' stories from their experiences. A narrative frame is a written story template with a sequence of incomplete sentences and different-length blank spaces (Barkhuizen et al. 2014). The template aims to elicit reflections from participants, who then fill in the blanks with their own experiences and thoughts to create a coherent story. After the participant completes the narrative frame, the researcher starts going over the data again and then speaks with the participants to gain further understanding of their experiences or to confirm the narrative frame by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants as a follow-up to the narrative frame. In the analysis of narrative data, Barkhuizen et al. (2014) coding consists of three steps: reading the data multiple times, coding and categorizing data extracts, and rearranging the data according to theme topics. The data of this research was analyzed using the approach of deductive thematic analysis, which is based on Braun and Clarke (2022). The researcher also used a method of triangulation (Polit and Beck 2017), and member checking ensures the data validity, trustworthiness, and rigor.

Results

Teaching Motivation as Career Decision

As a result of their motivation to choose teaching as their profession, all participants had different factors influencing their choice, including those who chose teaching as their future profession. Each participant has different factors backing up their decision, even though some are similar in that they are

experiencing the teaching profession. This factor appeared after they had completed the teaching courses and practice, as part of their experiences. Each individual has a career choice corresponding to their motivation to look into the teaching profession. One of the participants considers the teaching profession a primary career choice, two consider the teaching profession a secondary choice, and one decides not to take it for their own reasons. Each of the individual points is delivered below:

Antony Career Decision Story

Antony, a 24-year-old student who has placed the teaching profession as his first choice, with some considerations supporting the intention. He is experiencing his past moment in learning at university and presenting himself in the teaching program of "Kampus Mengajar" by the government, which is a factor in manifesting his motivation in perceiving the teaching profession. From the different experiences and outside influences that influence a person's ideas, convictions, and drive towards a teaching profession, Antony has several notable aspects. In taking positive and negative impressions about being a teacher and taking teaching courses, Antony acknowledges, based on his experience, that he acquired both. His experience has a balance of both positive and negative experiences. Moreover, he thinks there are more positive experiences because he finds teaching gratifying in his own experience.

A: "As for me, negative impressions during my English studies or becoming an English teacher, some do have an influence. However, they do not significantly affect my choice to become an educator. In fact, I try to find solutions to these negative impressions so that they can be reduced or even eliminated. That's what I think." **(FGD-Antony)**

While he acknowledges that some negative impressions exist in the teaching profession, they cannot potentially affect their choice to become teachers. He intends to reduce negative impressions by looking at how to handle them carefully. Regarding past learning experiences, Antony's choice to be a teacher was influenced by inspirational figures who made inspirational as want to be a teacher in the future.

A: "For me, an inspirational figure can come from anywhere. As mentioned earlier, from elementary to junior high, and up to university, there might be someone I look up to and think, 'I want to be a teacher because of that person.' For me, it can be from anywhere, even from current technologies. Personally, I honestly want to be a teacher because there are inspirational figures from my relatives, like my older siblings, my grandparents, and my father, who were teachers. That inspired me." **(FGD-Antony)**

His inspiration came from his family, from teachers in a majority family that made him want to become a teacher as good as he looked. According to Antony, inspiration can originate from any source, including his family and modern technology. Another person is a teacher from his previous study named Mr. Mono, giving inspirational and non-monotonous knowledge. This broad perspective draws attention to the variety of factors influencing his motivation. In viewing the English teacher profession, he mentions that the profession has to be constantly learning and has some societal expectations. He considers the teaching profession to be highly regarded as intelligent individuals.

Based on his experience in taking the teaching practice, Antony understands that becoming an English teacher involves facing a burden. Becoming a teacher is difficult, especially because one needs to develop a special skill.

As a teacher, especially in this digital age and I said a lot about administration, as a teacher, you still need special skills, such as the skills to make modules, the skills to work on the administration at school what is lacking, then again the skills to direct classes, manage classes, and manage students during outings, or activities outside of school, for example extras or something like that. It still requires skills. **(Interview - Antony)**

According to Antony, to be a teacher, one needs skills such as managing the class and administration both in and outside school. As there is a high demand for this kind of skill in the teaching profession, Antony does not imply his decline to choose the teaching profession but rather his understanding of what he will face when he becomes a teacher. Moreover, his understanding is that being an English teacher is somewhat of a high burden that not only involves the development of the English language, which requires learning new words that need to learn but also involves a wide variety of students.

When it comes to the salary of becoming a teacher, Antony expressed a lack of understanding when positioning the salary in the teaching profession. He expressed that the salary of becoming an English teacher, whether new or novice, is sufficient.

For now, yes mas, as an English teacher and still WB (Wanabhakti [non - permanent teachers]) for personal may still be lacking, yes mas, even yesterday there was a view for what yes for a teacher salary increase, but these things also look at work risks looking at other things too. For me personally, yes, it is lacking, but yes, how else for the future, maybe I will just make do with it, mas. **(Interview - Antony)**

Although he expressed that becoming an early English teacher does not guarantee a sufficient salary, he understands that he should continue choosing the

teaching profession. He believes that in certain circumstances, the teacher's salary will increase as he continues in the profession. Furthermore, he believes that teachers, especially English teachers, have an equal standing in society to other professions, as he points out that teachers are not all-knowing.

Antony expressed confidence in his ability to become an English teacher in assessing his abilities. He also expressed that continuing his teaching profession would help him gain skills as he completed teaching courses and a teaching practicum.

I believe in my abilities and capabilities as a teacher because I have also studied at university and from colleagues also through internship training, there are still other views and there are additional skills for me personally. **(Interview - Antony)**

In addition, he also gains trust from others that he has additional skills suitable for becoming a teacher. This shows that he is gaining self-confidence, and others consider him suitable to become an English teacher. Then, he understands that his ambition to become a teacher is also expressed as a manifestation of his childhood dream. Antony is also grateful to God as he is on the right track to becoming a teacher.

I agree to that, because from childhood I don't know why maybe now this is the manifestation of my dreams from childhood. From a young age, I wrote if we were asked what we wanted to be a teacher, thank God, now I am also teachers. **(Interview - Antony)**

He sees that his choice is because of his desire to become a teacher since childhood. This makes his choice a fulfillment of his childhood dream. Antony also expressed that becoming an English teacher is a secure job that can be applied in other professions, as the English teacher learns the English language, which is universal to any situation.

If so far, I think the most stable is still English, because what is it, it is a universal language, even though many people have learned it by themselves, there are still differences with those of us who study theoretically in the material. [1] Yes, it's safe, even though there is also now AI, it's still as smart as AI is human-made, there are still shortcomings, and as an English teacher, if we can't graze AI English, it's the same as we can't find what we want. [2] **(Interview - Antony)** T: As for whether the teaching profession is profitable or not, we know some professions that existed in the past have been replaced by technology. I believe that teachers might also be replaced by technology eventually. **(FGD-Antony)**

Although he considered teaching a profession in demand in any situation, especially teaching a language, he also expressed that teachers can be replaced by artificial intelligence (AI). Even though he expressed that, he still sees shortcomings in technological development. In thinking about the transferable teaching profession, Antony sees that teaching skills can be transferred into other situations, such as administration and computing. In addition, he emphasizes the English language, which he can apply to other professions besides teaching. In commenting on how flexible and balanced the time between family and professional life as a teacher, Antony has an opinion on that.

Yes, for me personally, the teaching profession is still able to balance the needs of work and family needs. It does not rule out other professions like that, but in my opinion the teaching profession is more flexible and more balanced between meeting family and good at work. **(Interview-Antony)**

He explained that being a teacher allows one to balance the needs between work and family. Individuals can meet with their family at home and be professional in the office. In contributing to society, Antony has expressed that he became a teacher to fulfill his idea and his ambition to become a person who can positively impact all people.

Yes, why did I choose the teacher because there is a positive impact, yes, it is true that it has a positive impact in addition to providing what yes, the knowledge that we can channel to others is also running from my own beliefs, yes, here, please forgive me, Muslim, yes, there is a verse conveyed by verse or hadith conveyed by the apostle that “convey knowledge

even if only one verse” well in my opinion it must have such an impact, it must have a positive impact on providing more understanding.
(Interview - Antony)

He became someone who could have a positive impact. He is one of the teachers who can help people understand knowledge. His belief that conveying knowledge, even just a tiny bit, can be helpful to others strengthens this. He also wants to become someone who inspires students and guides them, besides their parents at home. He desires to be looked up to as a mentor and someone the students use as an example or role model. Furthermore, Antony also agreed that being a teacher involves supporting, fostering, and contributing to the development of the learning toward children’s learning.

Yes, I agree that being a teacher is a desire and contributes to children’s development. Because teachers provide understanding that may not be

obtained by the family so children understand more from the teacher and can develop knowledge from the family and from the teacher into new knowledge that can make them grow again. **(Interview-Antony)**

Antony emphasized the role of the teacher as someone who provides the students with a further understanding and new knowledge they may not have obtained from their parents. The teacher has a significant role in developing the children's learning. Antony also sees the teaching profession as someone who promotes and supports equality and fairness in education, not lowering or elevating students' values. Not all students are lower than or above other students in every aspect, whether their background, parents' position, ability, or anything else.

Antony prioritizes the teaching profession as his career choice. He strongly desires and is interested in being an English teacher, so it is noticeable that he chose this profession as his first career choice.

Then, in choosing a future career, the English teaching profession is my (first) choice because I have a desire and interest also in the field of teaching, which is my first choice. **(NF-Antony)** Yes, from what I personally remember from the brothers and others, most of the teachers are actually the first choice profession, but there are also human names, there are still other plans or other plans. Even though it is the first choice, there is still also a backup, such as if the first choice is not able or unable to become a teacher, there are other options, but still the first choice. **(Interview-Antony)**

Antony, in his explanation, wants to be an English teacher because of his desire and interest in teaching. He points out that his family also takes a profession as a teacher, but he also points out that even though he chose to be a teacher in the first place, he also considered a backup plan. He thought about the potential to fail if he became a teacher, and he considered another option, but he still pursued teaching as his prime choice.

Irawan Career Decision Story

Irawan is a 22-year-old student who has chosen the teaching profession as his second choice, with some considerations backing up his intention. His choice took a different turn as someone born into a teaching family background. From the different experiences and outside influences that influence a person's ideas, convictions, and drive towards a teaching profession, he has a positive experience. Although he experienced a few unpleasant experiences, he did not connect the negativity embedded in his mind, which became a burden. Moreover, he thinks having negative experiences when entering the teaching profession is natural, but it will not be a one-of-a-kind deciding factor in the future.

Of course not, but I have a bit of a new view and ideas, because before I also received education at elementary school to vocational school, I felt various types of treatment given by each teacher. And there were a few unpleasant experiences, but I made a new point of view to not channel in the future. **(Interview-Irawan)** In my opinion, negative impressions are common because being an educator, we realize that before starting, there will be both positive and negative aspects. It depends on how the educator perceives them." **(FGD-Irawan)**

Both positive and negative impressions can occur when experiencing the teaching profession, but it depends on how an individual overcomes and perceives those kinds of impressions. He sees the teaching profession as developing him into a better person and improving his knowledge, which better shapes his personal and professional abilities. In how Irawan was given inspiration to be a teacher, he explained that there has not been any person who inspired and motivated him to be a teacher. In addition, he takes any positive values from various sources in the future. Although he has no inspirational figures, he still gets support and guidance from his parents, especially his mother, to pursue a teaching profession. Furthermore, Irawan believes that the teaching profession significantly improves his life in developing his personality and knowledge.

Thinking about how the teaching profession requires significant expertise, Irawan believes that becoming a teacher requires special skills, such as a strong work ethic and creative thinking, to support the teaching method and deliver smoothly. Irawan also agreed that teaching is a demanding profession in several aspects.

Speaking of burdens, of course, every job has its own burdens. However, as far as I have experienced, being a teacher can be quite energy-draining, especially for the lower-class strata. **(Interview - Irawan)** I: "Regarding this, I agree with what Windy said. In my opinion, before an educator begins teaching, they should prepare, especially regarding emotional stability, as it will affect the subsequent learning process." **(FGD-Irawan)**

In looking at becoming an English teacher, Irawan understands that being a teacher has the same burden as other professions. Although he believes that every profession has the same burden, he understands that when one becomes a teacher in the lower strata, the burden can be onerous and energy-draining, as he experienced. In addition, he believes becoming a teacher demands emotional stability as he faces students with different backgrounds and abilities. It makes sense that unstable emotions affect the teaching and learning process. Moreover, Irawan believes in several aspects of the benefits and rewards of being a teacher. When asked about the social standing of the teaching profession, he believes that

teachers are the same as other professions. Irawan understood that in society, becoming a teacher, especially if one has already become a civil servant (PNS), creates a stigma that the teaching profession differs from others. However, he explicitly said that on a broader scale, the teaching profession is as honorable as any other profession. Regarding the salary of becoming a teacher, Irawan has noted some things.

I: Regarding this, I emphasize both positive and negative aspects. Positively, considering the various levels of teaching positions, the income might be sufficient. Negatively, to reach that level, significant effort is needed, starting from the bottom. As for choosing teaching as a career, perhaps for now it is a choice, but in the future, we don't know how things will turn out. **(FGD-Irawan)**

Based on his statement, Irawan has a different opinion. On one side, he believes that the teaching profession has various levels of positions, which might be sufficient for income. On the other hand, he thinks that reaching a certain level to make a sufficient income requires much effort from the bottom, as the bottom level is insufficient. This might not disturb his current choice as he pursues the teaching profession, but this might be considered in the future. In addition, when Irawan assesses his abilities and competencies in becoming a teacher, he is confident in his aptitudes.

I: Regarding confidence, honestly, I am confident in teaching, not just in the learning process, but in anything. However, I emphasize my confidence in the learning context. I do not have excessive confidence because even while teaching, I am still learning. **(FGD-Irawan)**

From the statement above, Irawan shows confidence in his ability to learn and teach in front of the class. Although he believes in himself, he is still not overconfident and gives room for improvement and further learning in his abilities. When talking about his choice as his intrinsic enjoyment and fulfilment, Irawan has mixed feelings about it.

Talking about personal calling, I see two main reasons for choosing to become a teacher. Some feel compelled to become teachers, while others genuinely intend to change the education system in Indonesia. [1] As for myself, I currently see myself somewhere in between: wanting to improve the education system while also feeling the pressure from my immediate environment. [Just going along] [2] **(Interview-Irawan)**

Irawan experiences internal conflict stemming from his dual perspectives. On one hand, he desires to contribute to enhancing the education system in Indonesia;

on the other hand, he feels pressure from those around him, which leads him to pursue a teaching career involuntarily. Furthermore, Irawan sees the teaching profession as a profession that will be stable and sustainable in the future, especially as an English teacher. He explained that the career path of being a teacher is clear and linear, especially since there is a high demand for English teachers nowadays. It is well known that being an English teacher allows for side jobs as a translator, shadow teacher, and other opportunities that require English language skills. This makes the profession applicable to another profession.

If it can be said so, I might conclude that the soft skills I acquired in my education, which emphasized becoming a teacher, could be applied to other jobs. I did not just learn the knowledge but also the soft skills provided by my lecturers, which I could implement in other professions. **(Interview-Irawan)** I: Regarding this, maybe 2-3 years ago, I would have said yes, but now English has a new competitor, which is Mandarin. So that might be something to consider. **(FGD-Irawan)**

Based on Irawan, the teacher's ability and knowledge apply to another profession based on the soft skills he acquired during college. Although the English teachers are sustainable and applicable, Irawan is also concerned about another primary language that might become a competitor in the workplace. When asked how to balance the time spent between personal or family with the professional teaching time, Irawan is concerned about the unbalanced time that might be faced as a teacher. He explained that with the online attendance system implemented, the time spent with the family is being decreased and allocated to many tasks from the school.

When asked about his decision as a manifestation of someone influencing and guiding the development of students, Irawan agreed that was his strong reason. Given the current condition and situation in Indonesian education, he wants to become someone who inspires and guides children moving forward. Irawan also wants to contribute to the development of children's learning, as he sees the teacher has a significant role in that area. He experiences that teachers are the main instrument in improving the students and learning something new, as part of their development. He also wants to contribute positively to society, as being a teacher is a role that can achieve that. Irawan believes that a teacher can positively impact by providing new knowledge, especially for children or individuals from low-income backgrounds. Moreover, it also serves as a manifestation of the Indonesian constitution in educating the nation. This is different when asking about how teachers are a profession that supports equality and fairness in education.

Talking about the same issue, I might not be able to answer much because I am still new in this environment. Perhaps from my

surroundings, I can take examples from some teachers. There are a few teachers who are vocal about it, but most do not express it. (**Interview-Irawan**)

Irawan could not determine how he stood on the topic being asked, considering himself a beginner in the educational environment. Although he cannot decide, he is taking into account his surroundings, where some teachers are vocal about equality and fairness, while others are not expressing their views on it. Furthermore, in his choice of profession in the future, he considered that other jobs could provide a much better opportunity that was still linear with the English language he had already studied.

Maybe in terms of today, I'm in the middle, because I'm not really, actually I'm also thinking about how I want to be a teacher, but I'm also not really expecting anything more. In this case, I have a plan B that I should do, so I don't think too much about being a teacher. Regarding this, maybe I can venture into, actually not far from learning, maybe I can get out of the education environment, but still teach. Regarding this, considering that I'm majoring in English, something linear maybe they can provide. At the moment they can provide some kind of job options that I might be able to make an option. (**Interview - Irawan**)

Based on that statement, Irawan considers the teaching profession his second choice because he does not have high expectations for it. He is looking for an opportunity in a profession that allows him to teach, but not in formal settings like schools. Based on his experience, Irawan acknowledges that being a teacher has its advantages and disadvantages. He still cannot firmly decide on his future path as he is considering other options that might offer him more advantages.

Pulung Career Decision Story

Pulung is a 20-year-old student who places the teaching profession as his second choice, with some considerations that back up the intention of Pulung. He was born into a non-teaching family background, but his family expected him to be a teacher. Pulung likely intends to teach as he joined a government program, "Kampus Mengajar," which focused more on teaching. He intends to place the teaching profession as a second choice as he wants to be a lecturer, with the consideration from himself that he does not have any likeness to teaching children and teenagers who attend elementary, middle, and high schools. In making sense of his motivation, he does not disregard the negative impact of his experience when conducting the teaching practice.

P: "So far, for me personally, there have been no negative impressions in my teaching career. During my micro-teaching practice and teaching at elementary school in the Kampus Mengajar program, teaching has been enjoyable for me. Although elementary school children can be quite active, as long as we can manage them and make them enjoy the lessons, it can be a very rewarding experience for us." **(FGD-Pulung)**

Based on his experience, even though he practiced with elementary students, he did not show his unwillingness to teach or negative impressions while he was teaching. He felt he gained more positive impressions, which he regarded as valuable lessons for his understanding of how the teaching profession works. In someone who inspired the previous learning and teaching activity, Pulung has a past teacher who made him appreciate the English language itself, though he doesn't categorize this as inspiring. Moreover, Pulung considers teaching a profession that is highly respected by others, and specifically, he views English education as an enjoyable profession because he likes the English language itself.

As for the expertise, knowledge, and skills required to be a teacher, Pulung agreed, pointing out that technological expertise is needed. A teacher needs to keep up with technological advances to improve teaching ability and continuously learn English effectively. In addition, he mentioned the ability to work under pressure, adaptability, and problem-solving skills. Also, when discussing the workload as a teacher, he did not show any signs of feeling burdened with the tasks of being a teacher.

In my opinion, the workload isn't too heavy because I really enjoy teaching. Continuous professional development is also important because the professionalism of a teacher is crucial to ensure teachers aren't lazy or negligent. As an English teacher, it's essential to continuously develop my English skills. [Developing in line with knowledge updates and teaching practices] **(Interview - Pulung)** P: "Continuing from what Windy, Tony, and Irawan said, every job has heavy burdens. It depends on how we work under that pressure and find solutions. Managing emotions is crucial. We must regulate our reactions to problems and pressures, and related to professionalism, we must continually develop it. We must always learn because if a teacher is not professional, how will their students be?" **(FGD-Pulung)**

He considered the teaching profession not to have a heavy workload and that continuous professional development is important for ensuring the profession and maintaining one's relationship with it. He points out that this differentiates teachers who are categorized as lazy and negligent toward their profession and, ultimately, toward their students. It also needs effective emotion management, as

professionalism is crucial in front of the class. In sensing the status of the teaching profession in society, Pulung expresses that teaching is an honorable position. He said that a teacher is respectable because they provide education to people, impacting society and shaping individuals to become great people. When addressing the salary of a teacher, he is ultimately hesitant.

For me personally, the salary of an English teacher is adequate, neither high nor low, because my needs are not many, so I think it's enough for now. **(Interview-Pulung)** P: I agree with what Mas Windy, Mas Tony, and Mas Irawan said, because different levels receive different salaries, and some might find it sufficient, while others might not. This also influences my career choice. **(FGD-Pulung)**

At first, he sees a salary as a teacher as more adequate, and he seems to understand because he does not have any financial burden, as he considers himself still young. This sense of need also evolved when he gained another point of view on salary from different participants in the FGD. He began to realize that being a teacher is more segmented, ultimately affecting a teacher's salary. With this influence, he also began to waver, and this might have been his sign of demotivation to become a teacher.

When Pulung evaluates his skills and potential for a teaching career, he has confidence in both his teaching abilities and his command of the English language. He is seen as capable of teaching due to his college education and the advancement of his skills.

For me personally, I believe I am very capable of becoming an English teacher because I think my English level is already intermediate, not beginner, although not yet advanced. Additionally, I am very up to date with the latest technology, and I can create teaching media that suits the situation of the students I will teach. **(Interview-Pulung)**

Pulung believes that he is capable of becoming an English teacher, as his proficiency in the English language is at an advanced level. Furthermore, he is able to adapt and stay up to date with technology, creating teaching media that is suitable for the students he will teach. Pulung also agreed that the teaching profession is his personal calling as he pursues educating students.

P: As for me, becoming a teacher is definitely a personal calling because the teaching profession is not one that pursues high salaries but one that requires us to educate the nation's children. Not everyone can want to be a teacher for that reason. **(FGD-Pulung)**

Pulung has a reason for considering the teaching profession his personal

calling. He does not pursue the salaries, as he agreed that the teaching profession is low in Indonesia, but rather wants to teach more because of his dedication as an individual. Furthermore, in considering the stability and sustainability of the teaching profession, Pulung concurred with this. He believes that teachers have a profession that is very stable and capable of advancing in their careers. He also stated that although the teaching profession is not a wealthy occupation, it is sufficient to meet daily needs. Thus, the teaching profession is also being agreed upon by Pulung as a profession that can be transferred to another profession or take a side job.

P:I also believe that besides being an English teacher, there are many other professions that require English because it is a universal language. One can become a tour guide, content writer, interpreter, and many other professions. **(FGD-Pulung)**

Pulung believes that besides being an English teacher, they can take any side job or pursue another profession, as the main route is the ability in the English language. He also gives an example of any other profession requiring the same English language ability. In addition, Pulung also believes that being a teacher involves balancing professional responsibilities at school with personal and family time. He stated that being a teacher does not require overtime or staying away from home, and that teachers have fixed hours.

When asked about his desire to choose the teaching profession, Pulung expressed a strong inclination to pursue this path. Pulung presents himself as an inspiration to students. He aspires to guide and develop his students, as he wishes for them to become valuable citizens capable of working abroad. Furthermore, Pulung wants to become a teacher who can have a positive impact on society. He wishes to introduce the English language to people and help develop their future by creating opportunities for global employment through English. Ultimately, he wants his students to pursue higher education and work outside Indonesia. Moreover, Pulung believes his choice of teaching profession is a manifestation of supporting equality and fairness in education in Indonesia. He believes the teaching profession is very supportive and aligns with the principle of equality by not allowing power to be abused against students, which goes against social norms and educational standards. He also remarks that if the balance is not achievable, the students will not grow to be valuable citizens. Although Pulung has a strong desire, one thing stuck with him that led him to place the teaching profession as his second choice.

P: As for me, I became a teacher because I want to help and contribute to the students' learning development. For example, in my service at the

elementary school, many fourth graders cannot read or do multiplication or division. This drives me to find solutions for enjoyable learning methods so they can be guided to read and do math well, preparing them for junior high school. **(FGD-Pulung)** Honestly, my first choice is to become a lecturer, because to become an English teacher I am not happy teaching junior high or high school so I will continue my Masters, then become a lecturer. **(Interview-Pulung)**

Pulung does not have confidence and enjoyment when teaching much younger students, especially in high school and below. This led to his decision to continue his studies for a master's degree and pursue a career as a lecturer. Although he was unhappy with teaching children, he still wanted to help and contribute to the students' learning development and find solutions for enjoyable learning methods so they could succeed in their educational journey. Furthermore, considering his career, he took teaching as his second choice, with his first choice being to become a lecturer.

Honestly, my first choice is to become a lecturer, because to become an English teacher I am not happy teaching junior high or high school so I will continue my Masters, then become a lecturer. [1] As for external influences, there really aren't any. Becoming a lecturer is my personal choice. I want to teach in a university environment and help students understand how to respect their lecturers and prepare them for life before entering the workforce. [2] **(Interview-Pulung)**

Pulung is concerned about not becoming a teacher because he has no heartfelt connection to primary and secondary education teaching, specifically elementary, middle, and high school. He wants to pursue a career as a lecturer, teaching more adult students, helping them in their lives, and preparing them mentally for entering the workforce.

Windy Career Decision

Windy is a 21-year-old student who does not view teaching as his career. It can be understood that Windy comes from a non-teaching background, which suggests that his parents are allowing him to explore a variety of career choices. He intends to work outside of a teaching-related career and the education environment. This choice of Windy is influenced by his experience and understanding of the profession as he encountered it through his learning, teaching material, and teaching practice.

In his experience, Windy has no negative feelings regarding his teaching course and practice. He explained that he has good experiences, as he enjoys a comfortable learning environment and has positive interactions with friends, lecturers, and teachers who support him in his activities. Moreover, Windy also considers the teaching profession honorable and deserves societal respect. In his society, he

considers that the teaching profession is respected, as conveyed by using subtle language when people want to talk to a teacher. Although Windy disregards the teaching profession, he does not take any teacher that he sees as inspiring to pursue a teaching career. From his point of view, he does not have anyone to inspire him to become a teacher.

W: "In elementary and junior high school, perhaps there wasn't anyone who inspired me. But in high school, there were a few teachers who inspired me, though it was more of an admiration for their persona."
(FGD-Windy)

His prior teaching and learning experience had no teacher influence that made him want to pursue the teaching profession, but only to make him admire his persona as a better person. In addressing the need for expertise, knowledge, and skills necessary for English teachers to run the profession, Windy agreed that becoming a teacher requires special skills and cannot be achieved instantly. He explained further, as he was experiencing teaching practice in the practice school, that he also needed to develop a particular ability to control the class. When addressing the burden of being a teacher, based on his experience with teaching practice, he openly admits that teachers have a heavy burden in their careers.

Being a teacher certainly comes with a heavy burden. Based on my experience during the practice teaching or PAM, it comes back to the fact that we are new there, we are new to them or to the students, and if we expect to be familiar with them in just a day or two, that might be impossible. We need to meet with them as often as possible or during their class hours, which will make us trained teachers. If asked about the burden, perhaps the heaviest burden is the adjustment because the students are numerous with diverse characters and traits. In my opinion, that is the heaviest burden. **(Interview-Windy)**

Windy is experiencing difficulties in becoming a beginner teacher in a school environment. He needs to adjust and position himself as someone who leads and manages students' various characteristics and traits. In terms of the social status of teachers in society, Windy explains that no profession is higher than another. He believes that all professions are equal, and each of the individuals who work in specific areas has different needs from the others. Looking at the salary of the teaching profession, Windy does not seem to see that as a good sign. He understands that when he is still in a low position as a teacher, he will get a lower salary, which will not be sufficient to meet his daily needs.

In my own opinion regarding teachers' salaries, I apologize if my opinion

might be unpleasant or how it may come across, but please allow me to express it. If we consider salaries, for those at the lower levels such as honorary teachers or even tutors, who might not have a fixed income, it might not be sufficient to meet daily needs. However, for teachers at higher levels, like civil servants, their salaries might indeed be able to meet their daily needs. [Yes, it depends on the level.] **(Interview-Windy)**

It can be seen that Windy regards the teacher salary in Indonesia as less than what is supposed, and that teachers need to achieve higher levels. He sees that as a turnover when pursuing the teacher profession and how to join as a novice teacher, that it will get a lower salary. Then, he considers that as a higher-level civil servant, the salary can fulfil daily needs, but of course, getting to that level will take a lot of effort and time. In terms of his confidence level in being suitable in the teaching profession, Windy does not seem to have a higher confidence level about his teaching skills and ability.

Regarding confidence, as a teacher, we are required to always be confident, especially in front of the students. Personally, I am not or am less confident. However, because it is an obligation that requires me to always be confident in front of the students, I will try my best. **(Interview-Windy)**

In his utterances, he lacks personal confidence. When discussing the obligation of attending the teaching practice, he pushed himself to be confident and trust his teaching ability. It is also reflected in his inner choice; Windy does not see the teaching profession as his path.

W:In my opinion, no. Perhaps I chose the English education program because I wanted to learn. My initial intention was to learn, but due to unavoidable circumstances, I had to become a teacher. Therefore, I became a teacher because of the situation, not because of a personal calling. **(FGD-Windy)**

Windy recognized that he was becoming a teacher as a situational position, as he took the EFL program, and not as his calling. He admitted that he takes the EFL program because he likes to learn the English language explicitly, and when forced to be a teacher, it is an unavoidable circumstance. Furthermore, Windy has agreed that the transferability of the teaching profession, especially English teachers, is limited to another profession or taking a side job. He believes that teaching ability in discipline, punctuality, and carrying out the duty can be applied to another profession. Thus, the English language skills can also be applied to professions that require English ability. On the other hand, Windy believes that the teaching profession is not stable due to the uncertainty of recent events and conditions.

W: Well, in my opinion, whether the job or profession is safe or has a clear career path, maybe for now, it's uncertain. Especially with the recent government changes, their decisions will significantly affect us as educators. **(FGD-Windy)**

Windy believes that the teaching profession is still uncertain in the future due to the change in government. He remarks that the change in education practice and administration significantly affects teachers and educators. In certain conditions, Windy also said that the time or family time is not ideal, as the teacher has spent the time on working hours rather than family. The time that teachers spend in the school is around six to eight hours per day, which might leave teachers with only a few hours for personal and family time. Conveniently, Windy explains that he does not want to influence and guide students' development as a teacher.

Well, the main reason why I didn't choose to become an English teacher is, first of all, I lack confidence. I lack confidence in my ability to teach and even to educate. I think I am someone who is not strong in those areas, so that is the main reason. [1] Yes, so maybe it's also a lack of desire to inspire and guide children. Yes, it stems from my lack of confidence, and I feel that I am not suitable to be someone who can inspire them [2] **(Interview-Windy)** W: Personally, I don't have the intention to become an inspiring figure. However, as an educator, I might want to become a source of learning for my students. **(FGD-Windy)**

Windy stated that he does not have any confidence in his ability to teach and educate. He insisted that he is not suitable to be an inspiration to students and that he does not intend to become that kind of person. Despite that, Windy still thinks that a teacher is someone who is able to contribute to children's learning progress as they build their future. Moreover, Windy also believes that a teacher is someone who serves as a figure that positively impacts society, being placed in an honorable profession by the community. In addition, Windy believes that a teacher is expected to be a mediator for those who come from diverse backgrounds and cannot favor one over another in achieving equality and fairness. When it comes to his career choice, Windy did not choose the teaching profession but instead chose another profession that can probably utilize his English language ability.

Well besides being a teacher so maybe I will go into the field of FnB (Food and Beverage) maybe because it comes from I don't believe I don't believe in myself that I can educate or educate to be an inspiring figure to students, I don't believe in that so I decided not to become a teacher and whether I have another goal or choose another profession maybe in the future I will go into the field of FnB (1) From the closest family, it's

probably more about giving more options, like that. (2) (**Interview-Windy**)

Windy considered taking another profession to work in the Food and Beverage sector. This was a personal choice. Moreover, his closest family also made this choice for him, giving him another profession.

Future Plan After Graduating

Despite appreciating the views of others, each person maintains their feeling of individuality and resolve when coming to their own judgments. Both goals for the future and present circumstances are taken into consideration in flexible and adaptive career planning. All things considered, those who participated show a balanced approach that combines external influences with personal conviction and ambition with pragmatism. Every individual takes a different approach to career planning, shaped by a combination of outside influences and personal goals.

Antony's ambition to become a teacher, his first choice, led him to dedicate himself to this goal. This is how his choice to find a teaching job came about; right now, he is already applying for a teaching job at an Elementary school.

"Then in choosing a future career, the English teaching profession is my (first) choice because I have a desire and interest also in the field of teaching which is my main choice. In that case, I also have future plans such as undergoing the teaching profession first and looking for vacancies as a teacher." (**Narrative Frame - Antony**) "Yes, I have my own thoughts as a student. There are still thoughts as humans, we also have plans after this. But yes, I will continue my career as a teacher and there are also views or input from others. There is still something like that, but later it will also look at the situation and conditions too." (**Interview - Antony**)

"If from me, there are still career choices that are influenced by the environment or others, But the one who determines is still myself If I remain What, yes, Follow your conscience" (**FGD-Antony**)

From the excerpts above, Antony's career plan is to become a better teacher by studying the situation and conditions of the teaching profession and the government policy related to the teaching profession. His environment and other factors also influence his plan, but his plan is determined by himself. His plan takes precautions in the situation and conditions of the educational environment.

In Irawan's plan, becoming a teacher is his second choice. As the new education ministry has been appointed, he is still waiting for the perfect time to decide and execute his plan.

“Then, in choosing a future career, the English teaching profession is my (second) choice because I do not have high expectations, but I still try. In that case I also have plans for the future but I keep all the plans in my head.” **(Narrative Frame - Irawan)**

“For now, I might choose to be in the education environment because given that the president has been inaugurated, maybe with the new ministers there might also be new policies. Considering that, maybe I am not too rash to determine my next step. Maybe I can do it while waiting for what policies will be implemented at this time. (1-Plan) Maybe from my immediate environment, they provide an active example because by looking at my daily life, work choices and what they say, maybe it can make me a view or example for me to determine what I do in the future.” (2-Influence) **(Interview - Irawan)**

Regarding career choices, there is full control in myself, but in the surrounding environment, especially my family, I can take points of view of what they are currently doing. **(FGD-Irawan)**

From the excerpts above, Irawan is considering a new policy related to the education environment, so he is not rushing his career plan. He is cautious in his thinking about his future plans. Neither expressing his plan to the researcher clearly, he hints that environments influence his planning in the future, as an example of his work. With Pulung’s plan, becoming a teacher is his first choice. His second choice is to pursue another profession, such as being a lecturer. He detailed his plan to the researcher, saying that he would make two choices after graduating.

Then in choosing a future career, the English teacher profession is not my first choice because I want to continue my Masters first if possible so that later I can become an English lecturer. In that case, I also have future plans such as studying and preparing myself so that I can get domestic and foreign scholarships to continue my master's. **(Narrative Frame -Pulung)**

For after graduation, there are actually two choices that I can take, the first is that I will study TOEFL so that later I can apply for scholarships in the country and abroad and also I will definitely learn how to interview like this, how to answer interviewer questions later, how to answer exam tests later I also learn a lot of things like that and then for the second choice, it just so happens that last semester I also studied in data analysis and if I don’t reach S2, it is likely that I will be in the realm of data analysts first while studying and if later I have a master’s degree, later I want to become a lecturer **(Interview - Pulung)**

If from myself, of course, we must have a strong stance Even though there are many influences from around us that make us waver in our stance later, of course we must know how not to influence us. **(FGD-Pulung)**

From the excerpts above, Pulung divided his career plan into how to achieve his career aspiration. In the first plan, he will study for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) to apply for scholarships in the country or abroad to continue his master's degree. In the second plan, when he does not reach a master's degree immediately after graduating, he will be working as a data analyst to collect experience and study hard to prepare to apply for a master's degree. This is different from the rest of Windy's plan, as he does not choose teaching as his profession. After graduating, he plans to work in the FnB (Food and Beverage) industry.

Then in choosing a future career, the English teaching profession is my choice (not first) due to salary reasons and my abilities. In that case, I also have future plans such as living a life according to my passion. **(Narrative Frame -Windy)**

For my own career plan, it's still in the drafting stage so maybe it's planning so I can't reveal it right now because it's still in the planning process like that. (1 - Plan) Yes, some people, especially my closest family, gave their views on what I was planning. Actively, a number of times, passively, too. (2 - Influence). **(Interview - Windy)**

As for my next career plan, it may be influenced by my family environment.... More to the family (biggest influence) **(FGD-Windy)**

From the excerpts above, Windy constructs his career plan as a reflection of his career aspiration. In expressing his plan to the researcher, he does not clearly express his plan as he is still drafting his future plan, but he will be fulfilling his passion as his career choice. In his career plan, he has been influenced by and has other views from his family environment, but he expressed that he strongly supports his career plan. All participants' future plans after graduating are tense, balancing their aspirations from inside with their environments and external factors. Although some of the participants were not willing to explain and detail their future plans, they were still hinting and intending that they have their own future plans that they will execute after graduating.

Discussion

Teacher Motivation as Career Decision Making

From the findings, each participant had a different pursuit of the willingness to

be a teacher. Their aspect of motivation is different from each other and unique. The one who pursued teaching Antony is strongly motivated to become a teacher as his first choice. Antony has several factors that back his motivation: socialization influences, task demand, self-perception, intrinsic value, social utility value, and fallback career. While in terms of task return and personal utility value, he has several aspects that make him consider becoming a teacher.

In contrast, in taking on the route of being a teacher as a second choice, Irawan and Pulung have different reasons for the instability of the teaching profession in a change in government leaders that has an impact on the policy of the teaching profession and how well their teaching is towards young students. Pulung plans to dedicate time to another career as a lecturer before transitioning to teaching. His choice stems from a lack of self-confidence in teaching children or youth, especially in high school or lower.

The factors that back Pulung's motivation are socialization influences, task demand, self-perception, intrinsic value, and personal utility value. While in task return, social utility value, and fallback career, he has an aspect that makes him place the teaching profession as a second choice. Irawan, committed to another career, has a strong interest in teaching and is considering a switch when the right opportunity arises. They are assessing their first career choice while keeping teaching open for the future.

The factors that back Irawan's motivation are socialization influences, task demand, self-perception, and social utility value. While in task return, intrinsic value, personal utility value, and fallback career make him place the teaching profession as a second choice. Unlike the other, Windy does not choose the teaching profession as his reason for the underconfidence to teach, and the salary of being a teacher is so low from his perspective. The factors that back Windy's motivation are socialization influences, task demand, and social utility value. Considering task return, self-perception, intrinsic value, personal utility value, and fallback career, these factors discourage him from pursuing the teaching profession.

As different participants corresponded with their motivation, it can be identified that the aspect of the most correspondence was on how likely a teacher's salary is to influence their motivation. This differs from the study by Suryani (2020), which showed that salary is one of the aspects that motivates students to become teachers. Although it can be true that in specific things, such as teachers in civil service have good pay and have pensions, individuals stepping into the teaching profession for the first time often do not have a good salary or are underpaid and rarely able to fulfil their daily needs.

As much as participants intended to make teaching their second choice, this is in line with a study by Suryani and George (2021) that revealed that some students enter without intending to teach because of some factors, such as social influences, perceptions of teaching, and career prospects outside of teaching. Some students can see it as a stepping stone to other careers. As in a study by Dewi and Fajri (2023)

exploring the initial motivations of pre-service EFL teachers, it is crucial to integrate teaching practices to improve students' abilities and dedication.

It is much better to prepare aspiring English teachers for prosperous careers in education by comprehending students' motivations, offering tailored support, and addressing practical aspects of the teaching profession. According to Syaripudin and Apandi (2023), in Indonesian EFL preservice, teachers need to understand that the social and personal variables that appear in their university and schools, especially those they attended in teaching practice, influenced their reasons for enrolling in teacher preparation programs.

From this finding, it can be said that more participants are taking teaching as their second choice in their career because of various aspects that entangle them. This is how in Syaripudin & Apandi (2023), many preservice teachers in Indonesia view teaching as a backup career, and they lack any real ambition to become instructors. It can be seen that participants who have a low internal desire are more likely to choose another career. Windy is more likely to be underconfident when teaching in front of the class, leading to his choice not to pursue a teaching profession. Similarly, Pulung has a low sense of teaching in lower grades and engaging with children, especially in elementary, middle, and high school. Ultimately, he did not pursue a career as a teacher, but he still likes to teach, which makes him take on the role of a lecturer. As Saito (2024) said, teacher education students are highly motivated by the intrinsic values they have developed from their educational experiences and their innate desire to educate. This makes the intrinsic motivation one thing that undergraduate students mainly influence their decision, encompassing their perception of the teaching profession.

Future Plans After Graduating

Their future plans after graduating from the EFL program are reflected in their motivation to teach as a career decision that varies among participants. They plan to take a different route because of tension between their personal aspiration and external factors. A study by Saito (2024) revealed that students who have positive satisfaction with their teaching experience are more likely to pursue a teaching career. When students are dissatisfied with their teaching experience, it makes them detached from the teaching profession. As for the career plan, all participants have different ideas relating to their future plans, but they have the same commitment to having strong hearts and will, as this is their life. It also explained from Wang & Houston (2021) that students' teachers may intentionally emphasize the more positive aspects of the profession. Conversely, their ultimate decision to enter the field may also be shaped by how they interpret and respond to the perceived "myths" or less favorable aspects of teaching.

Other things that most notify that a strong intrinsic motivation increases the likelihood that teacher candidates would devote more time to learning resources relevant to the teaching profession, participate fully in learning opportunities during their teacher education, and exhibit a more incredible drive for learning and

success (Pekmezci and Ertaş 2024). Although participants have different ideas regarding their future plans, they are committed to having strong willpower and dedication to their chosen paths.

Understanding these motivations and experiences is crucial for developing effective teacher preparation programs that support aspiring educators in achieving their career goals. This is the same as the suggestion from Chang and Sung (2024) governments should provide strong career growth paths and raise educators' professional standing, financial incentives, and social acknowledgment. This all-encompassing approach can increase motivation in the teaching profession.

Conclusion

According to the findings, each participant has a different aspect of motivation related to teaching in their career choice. According to the findings, one student has chosen teaching as his primary career path. This individual is actively planning to secure a teaching position and is enthusiastic about contributing to education. This decision is influenced by a combination of personal passion for teaching and the desire to impact students' lives significantly. Meanwhile, two other students have chosen teaching as their second career choice.

One of these students plans to dedicate time to another career initially, especially as a lecturer, intending to transition to teaching later. His choice results from the lack of self-confidence in teaching children or youth, especially in high school or lower. The other student, though committed to another career path at the moment, harbors a strong interest in teaching and is considering making a switch when the right opportunity arises. This student is currently assessing the situation, weighing the pros and cons of their first career choice while keeping teaching open for the future.

The final student has decided against pursuing a teaching career altogether. Both internal factors, such as personal interests and skills, and external influences, including job market trends and advice from mentors, drive this decision. As a result, this student focuses on a different career path that aligns more closely with their aspirations and the opportunities available in their chosen field. This forces the government and the university stakeholders to take measures to improve the teacher preparation program's evaluation and increase the attractiveness of teaching to EFL undergraduate students.

Inadequate salaries significantly influence students' commitment to the teaching profession. The government needed to solve this problem by increasing the teacher salary appropriately and making the teaching profession appealing to undergraduate EFL students. Teachers' heavy administrative workload often demands extensive time management, forcing them to focus on administrative tasks rather than teaching and steal their time for family and personal reasons. By reducing administrative burdens and unnecessary complicated bureaucratic administration, the government can make teaching a more viable and attractive

career option for aspiring educators.

Understandably, the underappreciated teaching profession is often influenced by teachers who teach towards students, usually discarding any ethical conduct in teaching. This corresponds to the fact that undergraduate students lack notable teachers who have an impact on their understanding of the teaching profession. Not only does this affect teachers' perception inside the school environment, but it also increases a positive perception toward society. This prompts the government and university stakeholders to develop and enforce a code of ethics for teachers that ensures respect for the profession and outlines acceptable and unacceptable practices in teaching.

This study needs to explore a more balanced representation of diverse genders, addressing the limitations to gain deeper insights into both male and female perspectives on their motivations for pursuing a teaching profession. By incorporating a more balanced gender perspective, the study aims to uncover differences and similarities in motivations and challenges faced by both genders in teaching. Additionally, the study should delve more deeply into the issue of teacher turnover. It is crucial to understand why teachers leave the profession and their experiences within the educational environment in Indonesia. This includes examining internal factors like job satisfaction and personal motivations, as well as external factors like institutional support and working conditions. By addressing these areas, the study can provide valuable insights and recommendations for improving teacher retention and enhancing the overall educational environment in Indonesia.

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