Motives for choosing initial teacher education by students in Poland and Portugal – theoretical and empirical background[1]

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Abstract. A discussion on the quality of initial teacher education held in the European Union and a declining number of candidates for teacher training programmes are the reasons for an empirical exploration of candidates' motives to choose a teaching career. International research provides knowledge on the topic, hence the article's focus on theoretical and empirical analysis of Polish and Portuguese students' motives for choosing ITE, as compared to their place of residence. 308 students (163 from Poland and 145 from Portugal) participated in the survey. The article presents survey results, which point to the dominant role of students' own interests in choosing a degree in teaching. The prevailing number of respondents declared a village as their place of residence. When choosing a degree in teaching, the surveyed group was mainly influenced by their teachers and peer environment.

Motywy wyboru studiów pedagogicznych przez studentów w polsce i portugalii – kontekst teoretyczno-empiryczny

Słowa kluczowe: studia pedagogiczne, motywy wyboru studiów pedagogicznych, studenci studiów pedagogicznych, motywy wyboru studiów, miejsce zamieszkania

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Streszczenie. Tocząca się w krajach Unii Europejskiej dyskusja na temat jakości kształcenia nauczycieli oraz utrzymująca się w wielu krajach członkowskich tendencja zmniejszającej się liczby kandydatów na studia pedagogiczne skłaniają do podjęcia eksploracji empirycznej problematyki motywacji kandydatów do podejmowania studiów pedagogicznych. Poszerzonej wiedzy w tym zakresie dostarczają badania międzynarodowe, stąd artykuł poświęcony jest analizie teoretyczno-empirycznej problematyki motywów wyboru studiów pedagogicznych przez studentów w Polsce i Portugalii z uwzględnieniem kontekstu ich miejsca zamieszkania. Oba kraje są członkami UE i realizują jej założenia strategiczne. W badaniach uczestniczyło 308 studentów, w tym 163 z Polski oraz 145 z Portugalii. Artykuł finalizowany jest wnioskami, wynikającymi ze zgromadzonego materiału, które wskazują na dominującą rolę własnych zainteresowań studentów w procesie wyboru studiów pedagogicznych, w tym najliczniejszą grupę stanowią zarówno w Polsce, jak i Portugalii, studenci deklarujący wieś jako miejsce zamieszkania. W badanej grupie, na wybór studiów pedagogicznych mniejszy wpływ miały tradycje rodzinne niż nauczyciele i środowisko rówieśnicze.

Introduction

A motive is a decisive factor in achieving goals, be it professional, educational or personal ones. It is referred to as an impulse, stimulus and state, while in literature it is defined as "internal forces, permanent features or behavioural responses to stimuli and a set of beliefs and affections" (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002, p. 5), which "triggers human activity and physiological, mental, social and spiritual processes" (Ostrowska, 2004, p. 421). An element that links definitions of the concept is dynamics (stimulation, organisation, action) and orientation, i.e., aiming at a goal or something they try to achieve or avoid' (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002, p. 5).

Motivation is "a combination of motives observed in an individual" (Okoń, 2007, p. 258), which is directed towards the achievement of a goal, which is understood "as the need to perform well or the striving for success and evidenced by persistence and effort in the face of difficulties, achievement motivation is regarded as a central human motivation" (Dictionary of Sociology, 2014, p. 553). When analysing the concept of a motive, you can determine it by taking into account the number and range of activities necessary to achieve it, coupled with the final result and its intensity based on the energy necessary to activate an individual to focus on a goal. Motives are either inherent or acquired. When considering an objective, a motive can be biological, social, religious, cultural, ideological, material and tangible (Ostrowska, 2004, p. 421).

Theoretical context of motivation to choose a teacher training programme

"The study of motivation has traditionally had to do with analysis of various factors which incite and direct individuals' actions" (Atkinson, 1978, p. 6). Research shows that there are three types of reasons: external, altruistic and personal ones (cf. Brown, 1992; Kyriacou & Kobori, 1998; Chuene et al, 1999, Kyriacou Ch., Coulthard, Å. Chultgren & P. Stephens, 1999; Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000; Watt and Richardson, 2008; Yüce et al. 2013; Balyer and Özcan, 2014). *External reasons* relate to aspects of work that do not involve teaching, namely holidays, remuneration, and status. This means that external reasons relate to economic conditions, service provision and social status. Students choose teaching career because it is considered a prestigious occupation. *Altruistic reasons* place teaching as a job useful to society, so the main motive for choosing the profession is a desire to help children to succeed and society to develop. *Personal reasons* relate to professional activity, i.e., teaching children, and subject interests (Kyriacou, Coulthard, Chultgren & Stephens, 1999; Balyer and Özcan, 2014; Lai, Ko and Li, 2000).

The results of studies conducted in Norway, Sweden and the USA confirm that the choice of teaching career is influenced by personal, external and altruistic reasons (Giersz, 2021). However, another empirical review confirms the predominance of altruistic and personal reasons for choosing ITE (Thomson, Turner and Nietfeld, 2012; Richardson and Watt, 2005). This trend is predominantly observed among women. Men and individuals coming from large families with low socio-economic status are driven by external reasons (Balyer & Özcan, 2014; Yüce, Şachin, Koçer & Kana, 2013). Studies show similar motives for choosing teaching as a career (Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein&Baumert, 2012), also with taking respondents' place of residence into account (Htang, 2019). In the USA, Australia, Germany and Norway, the highest rating was given to "perceived teaching ability" and "intrinsic value", while the lowest rating was given to "social influences" (Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein & Baumert, 2012).

Research confirms that when deciding to take up ITE, part-time students "[…] are mostly guided by their own interests" (Kust, 2015, 312). Other studies show that students who declare an interest in subjects they study, show high levels of intrinsic, socio-altruistic and pedagogical motivation (Glutschand and König, 2019). In the studies, you could observe significant differences in motivation

between students who intended to take up teaching before applying for admittance to a teacher training institution and those who did not declare such intentions (Htang 2019). People who choose teaching are guided by various factors observed in particular communities and cultural expectations, and mostly are driven by a desire to have a decent job that contributes to a better society (Watt and Richardson, 2017).

Academic intrinsic motivation is analysed in the learning process, which at the higher education level is understood as "the enjoyment of school learning, and performance of activities for their own sake, in which pleasure is inherent in the activity itself. It is characterised by an orientation toward mastery; curiosity; persistence; task-endogeny; and the learning of challenging, difficult, and novel tasks" (Gootfried, 1985,1990; Gootfried, Fleming & Gootfried, 2001). Such training sustains motivation in teacher education and contributes to raising the quality of student preparedness for teaching.

An important element of motivation is its strength, which determines commitment to ITE, including the quality of learning and expected outcomes, which may relate to external outcomes (e.g., "If I study hard, I should do well in the test"), to internal outcomes (e.g., "If I study hard, I will feel good about myself") and to progress in learning (e.g., "If I study hard, I will learn more") (Schunk, 2019, p. 17). Indicating one of the above answers provides information about a student's approach to their studies, which affects the quality of their learning. It also provides information about the kind of teacher the student wants to be, the quality of work they intend to represent, and the level of professionalism they will strive for. Hence, motivation's strength is a decisive factor in determining the degree of preparedness for the profession.

The stronger the motivation, the more effective individual performance and determination to achieve the goal. Research confirms that "despite numerous difficulties, respondents did not give up on their desires and were not discouraged" (Michalak, 2007, p. 266). A high level of determination is a result of interests, which stem from focussed activity that can become a well-established habit, which over time can turn into a passion. Research shows that some teachers declared interest in working in the profession already in their childhood or early adolescence, "some of them even dreamt of becoming a teacher" (Michalak, 2007, pp. 207, 261–262), wanted to work with children, and were inspired to acquire thorough knowledge in teacher education (Michalak, 2007; Flores, 2014).

Adolescence is the time for deepening knowledge in the areas of interest and becoming ready to take a decision that is autonomous to a varying degree.

Research confirms the impact of other people, e.g., parents, relatives, teachers, peers, and of economic conditions (Balyer, Özcan, 2014; Rotkiewicz, 1991, p. 11 ff.), which either forms "pressure" or "freedom of choice". Taking into account the degree of decisions' independence, informed, personal motives prevail, despite the considerable impact of and inspiration from family and teachers (Dróżka, 2004, Rotkiewicz, 1991, p. 11 ff.). When choosing ITE, pressure may arise from concern for the family. Research confirms that women give up their careers in other professions to take up teacher education to be able to raise kids. When opting for ITE, some men are motivated by a desire to pursue a better lifestyle, work closer to home and have a more rewarding career (Richardson, Watt, 2005).

"The demanding labour market is a strong motivator to take up studies", as "a university degree still boosts employability" (Michalak-Dawidziuk, 2016, p. 147). The decision to choose ITE can be a result of a pragmatic approach to teaching as a profession that offers stability and attractive working hours (Flores, 2001; Butcher&Lewis, 2002; Knobloch, 2005; Stiegelbauer,1992; Hayes, 2000).

In motivation, pressure does not necessarily stand for a necessity, but can result from a natural situation, e.g., being brought up in a teacher family, where an individual copies parents who are teachers. Therefore, growing up in a family of teachers does not result in conscious pressure, but in natural copying of role models (Rotkiewicz, 1991, p. 31). Also at schools, students can choose their teachers as role models, because of their specific qualities, such as knowledge, personality or teaching the subject of interest to them.

The choice of ITE can also result from a chance or failure in other studies or profession (Wiłkomirska, 2002).

Research shows low levels of interest in teacher training among candidates (Darling-Hammond, Sykes, 2003; Watt, Richardson, 2011), including very low interest among male candidates, which results in feminisation of teaching (Richardson, Watt 2005; Azman, 2013). This creates gender imbalance, especially among teachers working in primary schools. The reasons for this are the low status of the teaching profession, low salaries, lack of career prospects, and high levels of unemployment in this sector, hence the belief that teaching is more suitable for women (Flores, 2013; Flores, 2014; Richardson, Watt 2005).

Literature review presented above shows the importance of motivation when deciding on ITE. The answer to the question *why does a candidate want to take up a degree programme in teaching?* can provide information that will determine the quality of their learning, even before they start their studies. This knowledge helps avoid disappointments during teacher training and practice.

Polish and Portuguese background

When analysing motivation for choosing ITE, student admissions should be considered. In Poland, admissions involve a committee and are based on entry on a student's list. Individual universities determine admission conditions, procedures and deadlines, and acceptable results of the secondary school leaving examination. To improve the quality of teacher education, consecutive reforms are introduced. At present, ITE is regulated by the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 2 August 2019 on the standard of initial teacher education, which, in addition to theory, places emphasis on psychological and pedagogical training and on teaching practice.

In Portugal, the Bologna Process resulted in a new policy on initial teacher education, which was set out in Decree-Law 43/2007, "as to grant teachers a socio-professional status and to improve the quality of teachers, in order to face the challenges of training and education within the Portuguese society" (Flores, 2014, p. 331).

The new requirements for becoming a teacher in Portugal point to the primacy of subject knowledge and to a research-based approach to teaching and teaching practice, with mastery of the Portuguese language, in speaking and writing, being a common quality of all student teacher candidates (Flores, 2014, pp. 331‑332).

In Poland and Portugal, similar phenomena are observed, including a surplus of teachers (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2018, p. 30), low salaries, frequent education system reforms, constant teacher evaluation and an employment structure featuring 6% and 1% of teachers under 30. The feminisation of the profession occurs on a similar scale and has continued for many years. In Poland, the percentage of women in the occupation was 76% in 2005 and 77% in 2018. In Portugal, it remained at the same level in 2005 and 2018 and amounted to 74% (OECD 2020, pp. 438‑439).

Literature does not feature a comparative empirical study on the motivation to choose ITE in Poland and Portugal, so the presented results fill the gap and serve as an inspiration for further exploration of this research area.

Methodology and methods

The study analysed the motives for choosing ITE by students in Poland and Portugal. This article presents the results of a survey into the motivation

of teacher students for choosing the degree programme compared to their place of residence. The following research questions have been asked:

What motivated students to enter an ITE programme?

How does the choice of the studies compare to where the students live?

In order to carry out the study, a diagnostic survey method and a survey questionnaire were used.

Date sources and survey sample

The surveys was carried out between November 2019 and March 2020 at the University of Minho in Braga (Portugal) and at the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw (Poland). The survey sample consisted of 308 students, including 256 females and 52 males, of part-time ITE programme. 145 students, including 109 women and 36 men, responded to the survey at the University of Minho. At the Maria Grzegorzewska University, 163 respondents took part in the survey, including 147 women and 16 men.

Survey results

Below, you can find the results of the survey carried out at the University of Minho in Braga and at the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw.

As the first step, to answer the research question: *What motivated students to enter an ITE programme?* Cramer's V analyses were performed. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Contingency table for the association between students' motivation for choosing ITE and their place of residence

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
Own interests	No	24	6	16	18	14	78
		7.8%	1.9%	5.2%	5.8%	4.5%	25.3%
	Yes	80	15	49	43	43	230
		26.0%	4.9%	15.9%	14.0%	14.0%	74.7%

Table 1 (continued)

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
Realising a childhood dream	No	81	17	52	46	51	247
		26.3%	5.5%	16.9%	14.9%	16.6%	80.2%
	Yes	23	4	13	15	6	61
		7.5%	1.3%	4.2%	4.9%	1.9%	19.8%
I continue family tradition	No	100	21	60	57	54	292
		32.5%	6.8%	19.5%	18.5%	17.5%	94.8%
	Yes	4	0	5	4	3	16
		1.3%	0.0%	1.6%	1.3%	1.0%	5.2%
Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme	No	102	20	61	58	47	288
		33.1%	6.5%	19.8%	18.8%	15.3%	93.5%
	Yes	2	1	4	3	10	20
		0.6%	0.3%	1.3%	1.0%	3.2%	6.5%
Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher	No	99	19	59	59	52	288
		32.1%	6.2%	19.2%	19.2%	16.9%	93.5%
	Yes	5	2	6	2	5	20
		1.6%	0.6%	1.9%	0.6%	1.6%	6.5%
Total		104	21	65	61	57	308
		33.8%	6.8%	21.1%	19.8%	18.5%	100.0%

Source: Author.

A significant test result, where $V = 0.22$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.004$, was recorded for the answer "Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme", meaning that observed numbers significantly differ from expected numbers. A non-significant test result was noted, where $V = 0.06$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.911$ for "Own interests", $V = 0.12$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.363$ for "Realising a childhood dream", $V = 0.09$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.629$ for the answer "I continue family tradition" and $V = 0.10$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.536$ for "Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher", which means that observed numbers do not differ from the expected numbers.

Own interests: 230 respondents (village – 80; town with up to 5,000 residents – 15; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 49; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 43; city with more than 500,000 residents – 43).

Realising a childhood dream: 61 respondents (village – 23; town with up to 5,000 residents – 4; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 13; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 15; city with more than 500,000 residents – 6).

I continue family tradition: 16 respondents (village – 23; town with up to 5,000 residents – 4; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 13; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 15; city with more than 500,000 residents – 6)

Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme: 20 respondents (village – 2; town with up to 5,000 residents – 1; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 4; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 3; city with more than 500,000 residents – 10).

Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher: 20 respondents (village – 5; town with up to 5,000 residents – 2; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 6; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 2; city with more than 500,000 residents – 5).

Below, you can find the results of the survey conducted at the Maria Grzegorzewska University (Poland).

As the first step, to answer the research question: *What motivated students to enter an ITE programme?* Cramer's V analyses were performed. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Contingency table for the association between students' motivation for choosing ITE and their place of residence (Poland)

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
Own interests	No	9	5	8	5	14	41
		5.5%	3.1%	4.9%	3.1%	8.6%	25.2%
	Yes	34	5	25	16	42	122
		20.9%	3.1%	15.3%	9.8%	25.8%	74.8%
Realising a childhood dream	No	35	7	26	15	50	133
		21.5%	4.3%	16.0%	9.2%	30.7%	81.6%
	Yes	8	3	7	6	6	30
		4.9%	1.8%	4.3%	3.7%	3.7%	18.4%

Table 2 (continued)

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
I continue family tradi-tion	No	42	10	28	17	53	150
		25.8%	6.1%	17.2%	10.4%	32.5%	92.0%
	Yes	1	0	5	4	3	13
		0.6%	0.0%	3.1%	2.5%	1.8%	8.0%
Secondary school class-mate(s) have chosen this degree pro-gramme	No	43	9	29	19	46	146
		26.4%	5.5%	17.8%	11.7%	28.2%	89.6%
	Yes	0	1	4	2	10	17
		0.0%	0.6%	2.5%	1.2%	6.1%	10.4%
Fascination with a prima-ry/secondary school teacher	No	41	9	31	21	51	153
		25.2%	5.5%	19.0%	12.9%	31.3%	93.9%
	Yes	2	1	2	0	5	10
		1.2%	0.6%	1.2%	0.0%	3.1%	6.1%
Total		43	10	33	21	56	163
		26.4%	6.1%	20.2%	12.9%	34.4%	100.0%

Source: Author.

A non-significant test result was noted, where $V = 0.15$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.445$ for the an-swer "Own interests"; $V = 0.17$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.317$ for "Realising a childhood dream"; $V = 0.24$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.059$ for "I continue family tradition"; $V = 0.23$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.077$ for "Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme: and $V = 0.12$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.635$ for "Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher", which means that the observed numbers do not differ from the expected numbers.

In total: 163 respondents (village – 43; town with up to 5,000 residents – 10; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 33; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 21; city with more than 500,000 residents – 56).

Own interests: 122 respondents (village – 34; town with up to 5,000 residents – 5; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 25; town with 50,500-500,000 residents – 16; city with more than 500,000 residents – 42).

Realising a childhood dream: 30 respondents (village – 8; town with up to 5,000 residents – 3; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 7; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 6; city with more than 500,000 residents – 6).

I continue family tradition: 13 respondents (village – 1; town with up to 5,000 residents – 0; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 5; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 4; city with more than 500,000 residents – 3).

Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme: 17 respondents (village – 0; town with up to 5,000 residents – 1; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 4; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 2; city with more than 500,000 residents – 10).

Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher: 10 respondents (village – 2; town with up to 5,000 residents – 1; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 2; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 0; city with more than 500,000 residents – 5).

Below, you can find the results of the survey carried out at the University of Minho (Portugal).

As the first step, to answer the research question: *What motivated students to enter an ITE programme?* Cramer's *s V* analyses were performed. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Contingency table for the association between students' motivation for choosing ITE and their place of residence (Portugal)

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
Own interests	No	15	1	8	13	0	37
		10.3%	0.7%	5.5%	9.0%	0.0%	25.5%
	Yes	46	10	24	27	1	108
		31.7%	6.9%	16.6%	18.6%	0.7%	74.5%
Realising a childhood dream	No	46	10	26	31	1	114
		31.7%	6.9%	17.9%	21.4%	0.7%	78.6%
	Yes	15	1	6	9	0	31
		10.3%	0.7%	4.1%	6.2%	0.0%	21.4%
I continue family tradition	No	58	11	32	40	1	142
		40.0%	7.6%	22.1%	27.6%	0.7%	97.9%
	Yes	3	0	0	0	0	3
		2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%

Table 3 (continued)

		Place of residence					Total
		Village	Town with up to 5,000 residents	Town with 5,500-50,000 residents	Town with 50,500-500,000 residents	City with more than 500,000 residents	
Secondary school class-mate(s) have chosen this degree pro-gramme	No	59	11	32	39	1	142
		40.7%	7.6%	22.1%	26.9%	0.7%	97.9%
	Yes	2	0	0	1	0	3
		1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	2.1%
Fascination with a prima-ry/secondary school teacher	No	58	10	28	38	1	135
		40.0%	6.9%	19.3%	26.2%	0.7%	93.1%
	Yes	3	1	4	2	0	10
		2.1%	0.7%	2.8%	1.4%	0.0%	6.9%
Total		61	11	32	40	1	145
		42.1%	7.6%	22.1%	27.6%	0.7%	100.0%

Source: Author.

A non-significant test result was noted, where $V = 0.14$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.564$ for the answer "Own interests"; $V = 0.11$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.773$ for "Realising a childhood dream"; $V = 0.17$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.377$ for "I continue family tradition"; $V = 0.10$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.843$ for "Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme": and $V = 0.13$; $df = 4$; $p = 0.678$ for "Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher", which means that the observed numbers do not differ from the expected numbers.

Analysis

The largest number of respondents indicated *their own interests* as the main motive for choosing initial teacher education. 230 respondents, including 122 from Poland and 108 from Portugal provided this answer. This group was mainly composed of students living in villages (80 students, including 34 in Poland and 46 in Portugal), followed by students living in towns with 5,500‑50,000 residents (49 students, including 25 from Poland and 24 from Portugal). The next two equally numerous groups (43 respondents) were students living in towns: a) with 5,500‑50,000 residents, including 16 from Poland and 27 from Portugal; and b) cities with more than 500,000 residents, including 42 from Poland and 1 from Portugal. The least

numerous group of respondents were students coming from towns with up to 5,000 inhabitants. They amounted to 15, including 5 from Poland and 10 from Portugal.

The next group of respondents were students for whom the main motive for choosing ITE was to *Realise a childhood dream*. 61 respondents provided this answer, including 30 from Poland and 31 from Portugal. This group was mainly composed of students living in villages (23, including 8 in Poland and 15 in Portugal), followed by students living in towns with 50,500 – 500,000 residents. 15 respondents chose this answer, including 6 from Poland and 9 from Portugal. Another group were students who declared they lived in a town with 5,500 – 50,000 residents (13 respondents, including 7 from Poland and 6 from Portugal). Two least numerous groups were students who indicated as their place of residence: a) a city with more than 500,000 residents – 6, including 6 from Poland and 0 from Portugal; and b) a town with up to 5,000 residents – 4, including 3 from Poland and 1 from Portugal.

Third place was taken by two equally numerous respondent groups. In each group, there were 20 students who as the motive for choosing initial teacher education indicated: 1) *Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme* (17 students in Poland and 3 in Portugal) and 2) *fascination with a in primary/secondary school teacher* (10 students in Poland and 10 in Portugal). In the first group, the most numerous were students who indicated as their place of residence: city with more than 500,000 residents – 10 respondents, including 10 students from Poland and 0 from Portugal; town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 4 students, including 4 from Poland and 0 from Portugal; town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 3 students, including 2 from Poland and 1 from Portugal; students living: in a village – 2 students, including 0 from Poland and 2 from Portugal and in towns with up to 5,000 residents – 1 person, including 1 from Poland and 0 from Portugal;

In the second group, where the main motive for choosing the degree programme was *fascination with a primary/secondary school* teacher, the largest number of respondents reported they lived in a town with 5,500–50,000 residents – 6 respondents, including 2 from Poland and 4 from Portugal. The second place was taken by two groups with the same number of respondents (5 in each) i.e., those who declared they lived in a village – 2 respondents from Poland and 3 from Portugal; and in a city with more than 500,000 residents – 5 respondents from Poland and 0 from Portugal. The third place was taken by two equally numerous groups (2 respondents in each) i.e., those who declared they lived in a town with 50,500–500,000 residents – 0 from Poland and 2 from Portugal, and in a town with up to 5,000 residents – 1 from Poland and 1 from Portugal.

The fourth most numerous group of respondents where students who indicated *I continue family tradition* as the motive to take up ITE. They amounted to 16, including 13 students from Poland and 3 from Portugal. The largest number of students reported they lived in a town with 5,500–50,000 residents (6, including 2 from Poland and 4 from Portugal). The second place was taken by two groups (4 students in each), in which respondents reported they lived in a town with 50,500–500,000 residents (4, including 4 from Poland and 0 from Portugal) and a village (1 from Poland and 3 from Portugal). The third place was taken by the respondents indicating as their place of residence a city with more than 500,000 residents – 3 respondents, including 3 from Poland and 0 from Portugal. The students who lived in a town with up to 5,000 residents did not choose this answer.

Conclusion

This article analyses the motives of Polish and Portuguese students for choosing initial teacher education compared to their place of residence. The results confirm that the largest percentage of respondents indicated two answers: *own interests* and *realising dreams*. Both groups were dominated by respondents who declared they lived in a village. The least numerous group were students living in towns with up to 5,000 residents. The remaining groups were formed by respondents who declared they lived in localities ranging from medium-sized towns to large agglomerations. The survey results shows that countryside influences the choice of teacher education. At the same time - adopting the view presented by Gootfried and Fleming discussed above - these results allow for predicting that these students will most likely be reliable, will make efforts when facing difficulties during their studies, and will enjoy their learning.

The importance of school in choosing the degree programme is noteworthy, as evidenced by the following two responses: *Fascination with a primary/secondary school teacher* and *Secondary school classmate(s) have chosen this degree programme.* A teacher acting as a role model or classmates with whom the respondents want to spend the next years of their educational development were most frequently indicated by respondents who lived in a village. Subsequent groups composed of residents of urban centres did not differ much in their answers. This confirms the importance of the countryside as an environment that supports the choice of ITE.

In the survey, the smallest number of respondents provided the answer *I continue family tradition*, which may result from the specificity of the survey sample, which was composed of part-time students. Decisions taken by people

who are active on the labour market result from their reflections, which means that they are more informed, autonomous and pragmatic. Mostly, the students living in towns with 5,500–50,000 residents provided this answer. They were followed by the respondents who declared they lived in a village. There is a small difference in their number, which supports the opinion that small localities are conducive to the selection of teacher education.

The results show that respondents chose a degree in teaching because of *their own interests,* while the countryside was an environment conducive for choosing this particular degree programme.

The research carried out calls for further analyses aimed at answering the question: *To what extent motivation influences the quality of learning during a teacher training programme? And to what extent does the place of residence support or hinder the process?*

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