

Relationships between campus experiences, practice experiences, long-term motivation and turnover intentions among Faroese student teachers



Fróðskaparrit 69 (2023): 17-37
©The Author(s) 2023 Open Access under Creative Commons by Attribution License. Use, distribution and reproduction are unrestricted. Authors and original publication must be credited.
www.frodskapur.fo/

Sambandið millum undirvísingina á læraraútbúgvingini, starvslæruroyndir, langtíðarmotivatión og tankar um at skifta útbúgvingarleið millum læraralesandi í Føroyum

Eyvind Elstad¹ (University of Oslo), **Hans Harryson** (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya), **Knut-Andreas Abben Christophersen** (University of Oslo), **Are Turmo** (University of Oslo)

Abstract

Teacher education comprises subject education, pedagogical studies and training in schools. This complexity is demanding for all teacher training institutions. The present study examines empirical relationships in teacher education in the Faroe Islands. It explores the associations between the relevance of campus pedagogy studies, the integration of theory and practice during field experiences and the provision of personalised support by school practice supervisors. Structural equation modelling is employed to analyse the results of a survey of 105 student teachers and reveals positive links between both the relevance of campus teaching and practice mentors' integration of theory and student teachers' long-term motivation. However, no relationship is observed between personalised support from practice mentors and student teachers' long-term motivation. As anticipated, the relevance of campus teaching, integration of theory by practice mentors, and the level of personalised support are negatively associated with intentions to discontinue teacher education.

¹ E-mail: eyvind.elstad@ils.uio.no

Úrtak

Læraraútbúgvingin er sett saman av undirvísingarfakum, pedagogiskum fakum og starvslæru. At fáa hesar trýggjar partarnar at renna saman er ein stór avbjóðing í øllum læraraútbúgvinum. Henda vísindaliga kanningin tekur stóði í læraraútbúgvingini í Føroyum. Granskaraliðið hevur kannað sambandið millum, hvussu viðkomandi tey lesandi halda tey pedagogisku fakini vera í útbúgvingini, hvussu lesandi og starvslæruvegleiðarin arbeiða við ástøði/praksis-avbjóðingini í starvslærutíðini og ta persónligu vegleiðing, sum tey lesandi fáa frá starvslæruvegleiðaranum, meðan tey eru í starvslæru. Ein bygnaðarlíknandi myndil (en. Structural equation modelling) er nýttur til at greina 105 spurnabløð, sum føroysk læraralesandi hava svarað. Kanningin vísir fyrst, at bæði innihaldið í teimum pedagogisku fakunum og førleikin hjá starvslæruvegleiðaranum at skapa samband millum ástøði og praksis hava jaliga ávirkan á langtíðarmotivatiónum hjá teimum lesandi. Kanningin vísir tínæst, at tann persónliga vegleiðingin, ið tey lesandi fáa frá starvslæruvegleiðaranum, sær ikki út til at hava stórvegis ávirkan á langtíðarmotivatiónum. Sum væntað hava innihaldið í pedagogisku fakunum, førleikin hjá starvslæruvegleiðaranum at skapa samband millum ástøði og praksis og tann persónliga vegleiðingin, ið lesandi fáa frá starvslæruvegleiðaranum, ikki nakra beinleiðis ávirkan á, um lesandi umhuga at gevast við útbúgvingini.

Keywords: Teacher education, campus teaching, field experiences, coherence.

Leitorð: Læraraútbúgving, ástøðilig undirvísing, starvslæra, samanhangur.

Introduction

A good school is essential if society is to lay a foundation for pupils to acquire vital knowledge and skills and to develop social intelligence to enable them to function fully and well in society (Borko et al., 2010). Teacher retention and attrition are critical areas of investigation for education scholars because they directly impact the quality of education, student outcomes, resource allocation, teacher preparation, policy formulation, workplace satisfaction, and long-term educational planning (Buchanan et al., 2013). Addressing these factors can lead to a more stable, effective, and sustainable education system.

Teachers play a crucial role in school success, and it is teacher training institutions that prepare teachers for the important tasks they have to perform (Hattie, 2012). This is not least important in the case of the Faroe Islands, which has a small, largely native-born population, and where good teachers may be essential for preserving the area's culture and language, along with ensuring good citizens of the larger Kingdom of Denmark.

Research indicates that prospective commitment to a profession plays a pivotal role in fostering exemplary professional conduct (Khan et al., 2010), and this holds true for teachers (Hong, 2010). Effective educators exhibit both intellectual and emotional dedication to their profession. Emotional commitment is closely tied to their sense of professional identity, encompassing

their sense of belongingness to the broader teacher community and their affiliation with the specific school and department where they work (Day, 2013; Day & Gu, 2010).

While student teachers may not yet be an everyday part of a school community, it is possible to surmise that they typically harbour aspirations of a future career in teaching when they embark on their initial teacher training. The emotional commitment of student teachers to their future roles as educators reflects their budding occupational identity, their fervour for teaching and their aspirations for a fulfilling career in education (Heinz, 2015).

Regrettably, these aspects are frequently overlooked in educational policy discussions, and the consequences of neglecting them can be costly for schools, individual student teachers and society as a whole.

A low dropout rate among student teachers is essential for ensuring a consistent supply of qualified and well-prepared educators, which, in turn, positively impacts the overall quality of education in a nation. With a low dropout rate from Faroese teacher education programs of 5.6%², it is important to investigate student teachers' intentions to remain in or leave the profession (Harryson, 2023a, p.29). The fact that there is a low dropout rate in the Faroe Islands is a sign that the students have a sincere desire to complete the teacher training and to become teachers. They are mostly motivated to complete the education, and what is investigated in the article is whether it is a matter of intrinsic motivation or external motivation or a mixture of the two forms of motivation. When individuals who are in the process of becoming teachers opt not to pursue teaching upon completing their courses or exit the profession after a few years in the classroom, there can be significant expenses, as considerable resources are spent on training teachers. Turnover intention says something about the thoughts students have about leaving, and it is important to know which factors are related to such thoughts. This type of insight may form the basis for preventive measures.

Teacher education programs in all countries typically encompass three aspects, which include education in subjects the formation of pedagogical knowledge and skills through on-campus studies and observation, and teacher training through school placements. Two crucial aspects of teacher training are long-term motivation to become a teacher and the inclination to leave their studies. These two aspects are closely related, as research suggests that strong motivation to become a teacher is linked to a weak tendency to consider quitting and vice versa (Christophersen et al., 2016). Given their importance, both long-term motivation and turnover intentions are endogenous variables in the

² If we consider the 4-year teacher education program, studies show that since the teacher training program was merged with the Faroese university in 2008, the average dropout throughout the 4-year teacher education program has been below 20 % (Olsen et al., 2022, p. 29).

present study. The study aims to investigate the relationships between these two variables and student teachers' experiences with campus teaching, field placements, and personalized support. Student teachers' experiences with campus teaching, field placements, and personalized support in school practice are important factors influencing their affective commitment to the teaching job and turnover intentions for several reasons.

Firstly, campus teaching plays a significant role in shaping student teachers' perception of the teaching profession. Positive experiences with campus teaching, such as the relevance and quality of instruction, often lead to greater motivation and commitment to become a teacher (Christophersen et al., 2016). On the other hand, negative experiences or a lack of relevance may reduce their motivation and increase the likelihood of turnover intentions (Korthagen, 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Secondly, field placements provide student teachers with practical experiences in real classroom settings (Zeichner & Bier, 2012). These placements enable them to apply their theoretical knowledge, develop pedagogical skills, and gain valuable insights into the challenges and rewards of teaching. Positive experiences and support during field placements contribute to their affective commitment to the profession, while negative experiences or a lack of support may undermine their commitment and increase thoughts of leaving the teaching profession.

Thirdly, personalized support during internships is crucial for student teachers' professional development and well-being (Zeichner, 2010). Supervisors who provide guidance, mentorship, and constructive feedback help student teachers navigate the complexities of the profession and build self-efficacy. Supportive relationships with supervisors and mentors contribute to their affective commitment to teaching. Conversely, a lack of personalized support may lead to feelings of isolation, dissatisfaction, and increased turnover intentions.

Overall, student teachers' experiences with campus teaching, field placements, and personalized support in internships significantly impact their affective commitment to the teaching job and their turnover intentions. These factors shape their perceptions, skill development, and support networks, ultimately influencing their decision to pursue a career in teaching or consider alternative paths.

Contextual description of education in the Faroe Islands

This study was carried out in the Faroe Islands, an island group in the northern Atlantic Ocean between Scotland and Iceland that are an autonomous part of the Commonwealth of Denmark. According to the Home Rule Act of 1948, there is extensive internal self-government in the Faroe Islands. Teacher training has a special priority at the University of the Faroe Islands, because supplying

enough qualified teachers to local schools is extremely important for maintaining the Faroese language, which is spoken by an estimated 75,000–80,000 people³, primarily the nearly 55,000 inhabitants of the Faroe Islands (Statistics Faroe Islands, 2023), cultural distinctiveness (the Faroese have preserved a large part of their traditional culture) and the nation's ability to develop its economic prosperity and form of society through a democratic governance system.⁴

Folkeskolen and further education create knowledge prerequisites for maintaining and developing economic activity (Harryson, 2023b; Volckmar, 2019). Schools play an important role in Faroese society. Faroese is the mother tongue of those who grow up on the islands, but children also learn Danish at school. There are nine years of compulsory school (43 *Folkeskole*) for children aged 7 to 16 (7104 students, Government of the Faroe Islands, 2022; Vijayarathan, 2022). In addition, all students have the right to continue into grade 10. Two upper secondary schools, folk high schools, a technical school and a business school provide further education. Basic and specialised education is provided for nurses, teachers and engineers at the university. The University of the Faroe Islands was established in 1965 and offers studies in a number of disciplines, but some forms of university education must be taken elsewhere, usually Denmark. In 2007, the Faroe Islands experienced what was colloquially termed a 'PISA shock' when the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment fell below the country's educational expectations (Matti, 2009). This led to significant changes in both the school system and teacher training.

³ Since the Faroe Islands are part of the Kingdom of Denmark, this means that all Faroese are on paper Danish citizens. In July 2023, there were 54,522 people living in the Faroe Islands - of which 51,302 people were Danish citizens. That is 94.1 percent of the total population (Hagstovan, 2023). Faroese is the main language in the Faroe Islands, and the Faroe Islands have been (and remain) more monocultural than many of the neighbouring countries. But in the last decade, the number of foreigners has grown significantly on the islands - from 2.2 % in 2010 to 5.9 % in 2023 (Hagstovan, 2023).

⁴ In the executive order for teacher training, it is stated in Section 1, "that the purpose of the teacher training is to train primary school teachers in accordance with the current regulations for the Faroese primary school". And § 2 states, "that the Faroese university (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya) which offers teacher training in the Faroe Islands" (Barna- og útbúgvingarmálaðiráð, 2021). Section 35 of the Folkeskoleloven (1997) states that "to be able to work as a teacher in the Faroese folk school, one must have passed the teacher training course at the Faroese university or a Danish teacher training course". - This refers to section 35 subsection 2, where it says "that if you have a Danish teacher's training, you can take a supplementary course in Faroese before you get a permanent job in the Faroese primary school". It is the Faroese university that offers the supplementary course in Faroese. The course counts 15 ECTS, and a large majority of the participants are Faroese who have taken a teacher training course in Denmark. The course is offered every 3 years.

While the institution had been conducting research and teaching at the higher education level for several years, it had not enjoyed university status (Joensen, 1990). It was officially designated as a university in 1987, retaining its original Faroese name while adopting the international title the University of the Faroe Islands. As part of this evolution, in 2008, the institution responsible for teacher training underwent a transition from a standalone teacher training institute to becoming part of the University of the Faroe Islands. Teacher education was aligned with the university's formal structure, offering a bachelor's (Harryson, 2023b) degree program in a bid to enhance teacher professionalism (University of the Faroe Islands, 2022).

In 2021, the Faroese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Culture initiated an independent review of the university. This review was conducted by a commission comprising members from neighbouring countries and other small nations. The outcome of the review deemed the University of the Faroe Islands to be 'working well', albeit with areas identified for potential improvement (Foley et al., 2022). The teacher training institution is continuously concerned with improving its performance (University of the Faroe Islands, 2022), and this article may contribute to the existing studies that can help in that process. In what follows, we elaborate on the theoretical framework for the study.

Theoretical framework

An adoption of organizational psychology and motivation theories provides a sound theoretical foundation for studying the commitment and motivation of employees in any field, also teacher education (Deci et al., 2017; Kanfer et al., 2017). These perspectives offer a structured approach to examining the intricate interplay between individual attitudes, organizational factors, and the overarching purpose of work. Further, the chosen theoretical perspectives align closely with the research objective of this study and allow for an exploration of the psychological and motivational factors influencing student teachers' commitment to their future profession.

Factors influencing long-term motivation for the teaching profession

A long-term motivation for the teaching profession and positive attitudes towards the teaching role are fundamental prerequisites for enduring teacher professionalism. There are valid reasons to believe that student teachers, to varying degrees, harbour long-term motivation and a forward-looking commitment to their future teaching roles (Goldstein & Lake, 2000; Hong, 2010). Commitment to one's profession is pivotal; employees in any field should possess attitudes and motivation that align with the purpose of their work (Day & Gu, 2010). A prime example of such commitment is a student teacher's enduring dedication to becoming a lifelong educator. It is challenging to envision how every situation encountered by teachers during their years in the classroom can

be distilled into clear instructions found in curriculum guidelines and employment contracts. Unlike the quality-assessed production used in manufacturing industries, gauging the quality of a teacher's performance is complex and nuanced. While schools and school systems may indirectly gauge a teacher's performance, evaluating a teacher's professional judgment and work is not conducive to direct measurements (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016).

The strength of long-term motivation and positive attitudes may be shaped during teacher training, both in the campus-based components of the program and during internships, influencing long-term motivation and turnover intentions among student teachers (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010).

Teacher education comprises a blend of on-campus courses and sessions of supervised teaching practice in schools. Many scholars contend that pre-service teachers' perceptions of the coherence between these components are vital in preparing them for their future roles as educators (Grossman et al., 2008; Hammerness, 2006). The present study operates under the assumption that positive experiences both on campus and during teacher training in the field will foster long-term motivation for teaching while reducing intentions to leave. The research conducted for this study aims to provide convincing evidence related to this premise. The study is designed to explore the statistical associations between campus-based and field experiences in teacher practice and pre-service teachers' commitment to teaching and their intentions to remain in the field.

The quality of compulsory school education is undeniably intertwined with the quality of teacher education. Numerous theoretical propositions and extensive empirical evidence consistently point to a positive connection between well-educated teachers and improved student learning outcomes (Boyd et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Feuer et al., 2013; Gansle et al., 2012). However, it is worth noting that the evidence supporting this assertion is a subject of controversy and sometimes marked by ambiguity (Mitchel & King, 2016), which arises because effectively assessing a teacher's performance is challenging: it requires considering indicators related to both students' academic achievement and their overall well-being.

The present study's focus aligns with global concerns regarding initial teacher education. Teacher retention and attrition have a significant impact on shaping the teaching workforce (Buchanan et al., 2013). Among the critical factors to consider are student teachers' attitudes towards their future profession, their commitment to it and their intentions to either remain in or leave the field. The long-term motivation and commitment of student teachers to become teachers over the long-term is paramount, as it influences their attitudes and motivation, which in turn affect the quality of their work (Bartlett, 2001; Khan et al., 2010). Since assessing a teacher's performance is not straightforward, having both pre- and in-service teachers maintain a positive attitude and motivation becomes even more crucial, and long-term motivation with a sense of dedication plays a vital role in shaping this attitude. Factors like a

positive relationship with the school organisation, enthusiasm for teaching and a sense of dedication combine to provide a foundation for high-quality educational practices (Day, 2004). In the following, we will present our hypotheses.

Deduction of hypotheses

Typically, student teachers start by observing a teacher's lessons and gradually progress to teaching segments or entire lessons themselves (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). A school supervisor oversees these teaching sessions, which are often followed by supervision meetings with the pre-service teachers. Additionally, it is common for student teachers to engage in pre-lesson supervision in which they discuss and justify their lesson plans. Peer supervision and group supervision are part of the standard procedures.

Field placements play a positive role in retaining pre-service teachers. The nature of supervision sessions during field placements varies with the supervisor's perspective on their task. These sessions can be viewed as a combination of personalised formative feedback and theory-practice interaction. The humanistic approach in supervision focuses on the well-being of the student teacher and provides practical advice on teaching techniques. However, field placements' broader goal is to bridge the gap between theory and practice, equipping pre-service teachers with theoretically informed practical skills for lesson preparation, implementation and evaluation (Zeichner, 2010).

Mastery of the theory-practice relationship in professional programs like teacher education should serve as an inspiring challenge for pre-service teachers to learn through reflection on practical experiences, using theoretical concepts as lenses (Korthagen 2010). Supervisors are expected to assist student teachers in this practical synthesis, helping them understand the curriculum's practical relevance. Thus, supervision should emphasise educative supervision with a dual focus – allowing mentees to find supervision relevant in their classroom and bridging both theory-practice interaction and personalised formative feedback (Zeichner & Bier, 2012). Student teachers' perceptions of the relevance of theory to their professional practice depends on whether school supervisors link their content to the knowledge base created during the campus-based portion of teacher training (Korthagen, 2010). There is reason to believe that pre-service teacher practice can foster prospective commitment to teaching and reduce intentions to leave the profession.

Offering personalised formative feedback during supervision may enhance pre-service teachers learn and help them tackle the challenges they will face as educators. Further, we explore coherence in theory and practice (Grossman et al., 2008). We assume that the associations between campus experiences and field experiences are positively related (assumption).

Table 1
Overview of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: A positive relationship between the perceived relevance of campus teaching and the long-term motivation of Faroese student teachers to pursue a teaching career.

Hypothesis 2: The perceived relevance of campus courses is negatively correlated with the intentions of Faroese student teachers to leave the profession.

Hypothesis 3: A positive connection between theory-practice and Faroese student teachers' long-term motivation to become teachers.

Hypothesis 4: A negative relationship between theory-practice and the intentions to leave among Faroese student teachers.

Hypothesis 5: A positive link between providing formative feedback during supervision and pre-service teachers' commitment to becoming teachers.

Hypothesis 6: A negative association between providing formative feedback during supervision and intentions to leave the profession.

Assumption: A positive association between student teachers' campus experiences and field experiences.

Empirical investigation

In the present study, we delve into the experiences of student teachers enrolled in a comprehensive four-year program for prospective compulsory school educators at the University of the Faroe Islands. We specifically homed in on how these student teachers perceived the various facets of the program, which comprises campus-based pedagogy courses and school-based practice, and how these perceptions influenced their long-term motivation and intentions to remain in or leave the profession. This analysis forms part of a larger research project exploring the preferences of Faroese student teachers, which is a component of a broader research initiative that collected data across all the Nordic countries.

Research design, methods and materials

A cross-sectional approach serves as an appropriate research strategy for investigating statistical associations when examining student teachers' long-term motivation and intentions to leave as the dependent variables. Our approach enables data collection from nearly the entire population of Faroese student teachers at a single time point. It proves particularly valuable when the research aims to assess the prevalence of a specific phenomenon or explore

relationships between variables at a particular moment. When exploring the statistical links between student teachers' long-term motivation and intentions to leave and other factors like on-campus and field experiences, a cross-sectional approach offers insights into these relationships. By gathering data from the entire population of student teachers at one time, researchers can analyse the relationships between dependent and independent variables. However, it is crucial to note that cross-sectional studies have limitations, such as their inability to establish causal relationships between variables. Consequently, it is imperative to employ other research strategies, such as longitudinal studies or randomised controlled trials, to further investigate the causal connections between student teachers' long-term motivation, intentions to leave (or remain in) the profession, and other factors.

The empirical investigation in this study involved conducting a survey at the only teacher education program in the Faroe Islands. The survey questionnaire was designed in Faroese. Participation in the survey was voluntary, but a notably high percentage of student teachers enrolled in the four-year teacher education program chose to complete the anonymous, paper-based survey. These participants represented various cohorts at the University of the Faroe Islands and took traditional campus-based classes with in-person sessions. The survey was designed to capture students' reflections on the relevance of their studies during the practice period, their interactions with practice supervisors and related experiences. A total of 105 student teachers took part for an impressive response rate of 93%. While the number of participants is low in absolute terms, but we have data from the entire population and can thus perform various types of descriptive analyses, calculate population statistics and draw conclusions directly from the population data without the need for testing hypotheses.

Measurement instruments

To construct our questionnaire, we drew from existing measurement instruments in the literature and incorporated recent developments (Haladyna & Rodriguez, 2013). The questionnaire was shaped by instruments related to turnover intentions from Kuvaas (2007) and long-term motivation with a sense of emotional dedication called 'affective commitment' by Allen and Meyer (1990). We translated the questionnaire into Faroese from Danish with minimal alterations. In the survey, student teachers responded to items on a seven-point Likert scale, with four as a neutral midpoint. Internal consistency for each concept was strong, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.69 to 0.88 (see Table 1).

The mean of long-term motivation (ID) is quite high, while that of turnover intention (TI) is quite low. This means that the long-term motivation is very strong among Faroese student teachers and that intentions to leave the profession are very low. However, the descriptive statistics (table 2) show that

the responses to the individual items on turnover intention (TI) vary from one to seven. This means that some student teachers are actually thinking about ending their studies.

Table 2
Overview of constructs, abbreviations, items, two independent and two dependent variables and descriptive statistics

Var (w)	Wordings	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurt	Alpha
ID								0.78
w3	I feel attracted to becoming a teacher	1.00	7.00	5.11	1.36	-0.35	-0.23	
w4	It feels good to think that one day I will be a teacher	2.00	7.00	5.87	1.19	-1.05	0.83	
w5	I am looking forward to working as a teacher	1.00	7.00	6.04	1.22	-1.61	3.03	
TI								0.88
w56	If I find a well-paid job after my teacher training, I will not work as a teacher	1.00	7.00	3.43	1.81	0.24	-0.95	
w57	I often think about career possibilities other than becoming a teacher	1.00	7.00	3.50	1.96	0.33	-1.09	
w58	If I could go back and choose again, I would choose something other than teacher training	1.00	7.00	2.27	1.45	1.10	0.58	
w59	Other careers are more attractive to me than becoming a teacher	1.00	7.00	2.91	1.64	0.67	-0.24	
PP								0.69
w35	In on-campus courses, I am given practical examples from actual teaching	2.00	7.00	5.45	1.28	-0.67	-0.17	
w38	The connection between educational theory and practice is made clear in on-campus classes	1.00	7.00	4.89	1.48	-0.50	-0.15	
IS								0.86
w45	In practice periods, I discuss with my supervisors how the subject matter can be applied in developing my teaching practice	1.00	7.00	4.08	1.65	-0.32	-0.89	
w46	In practice periods, I discuss real-world experiences with my supervisors in light of what we have learned so far	1.00	7.00	4.03	1.57	-0.20	0.80	
SS								0.84
w51	Supervision meetings at practice schools help me understand what I need do to improve as a teacher	1.00	7.00	4.97	1.63	-0.86	-0.12	
w53	Supervisors at practice schools give me clear and direct feedback about where I stand	1.00	7.00	4.56	1.88	-0.54	-0.85	
w54	Feedback from supervisors at practice schools is in close accordance with what I have actually achieved	1.00	7.00	5.52	1.33	-1.19	1.42	
w55	Feedback from supervisors at practice schools makes clear what is expected of me as a pre-service teacher	1.00	7.00	4.91	1.49	-0.73	0.23	

Analysis

We employed structural equation modelling (SEM) to explore the relationships between the variables due to its suitability for confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis. SEM is a statistical method used in research and data analysis to examine and quantify relationships between variables in a theoretical model. It provides a visual representation of dependent and independent variables about how different constructs are interconnected and how they collectively influence the observed data.

SEM combines elements of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis to allow researchers to test complex hypotheses about the relationships among manifest (observed) and latent (unobserved) variables. SEM is used to test whether a hypothesised model that represents a theory about how variables are related fits well with the observed data; that is, SEM helps researchers determine whether the model fits the data satisfactorily. The evaluation of the model-data fit relied on several indices, including the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), normed fit index (NFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and comparative fit index (CFI).

These indices indicate how closely a model aligns with the data. A model is considered a good fit if $p\text{-Chi} > 0.05$, RMSEA is less than 0.05, and NFI, GFI and CFI all exceed 0.95, while an acceptable fit is indicated by $p\text{-Chi} > 0.05$, RMSEA less than 0.08 and an NFI, GFI and CFI greater than 0.90 (Kline, 2005). We conducted measurements and estimated structural models using IBM SPSS Amos 27.

The values presented in Figure 1 demonstrate an acceptable or nearly acceptable fit. However, the values discussed in the next section suggest that the structural model approached the outer boundary of acceptable fit. Specifically, the RMSEA value of 0.049 signified an acceptable fit, the NFI value of 0.877 indicated near acceptability, the GFI value of 0.896 showed an acceptable fit, and the CFI value of 0.971 indicated a very good fit.

Results

In Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), path coefficients estimate the strength and direction of relationships between variables in a model. These coefficients indicate how much one variable influence another, as represented by the numbers on the arrows in Figure 1. For example, a path coefficient of 0.22 from perceived relevance of campus teaching (PP) to long-term motivation to become a teacher (ID) suggests that when students experience campus teaching as relevant, they are more likely to have a relatively high degree of motivation to become a teacher in the long-term (Hypothesis 1). The opposite is also true, with lower levels of relevance leading to lower motivation.

The causal direction of these relationships can go in either direction, and while we lack empirical evidence to determine cause definitively, it is plausible

that positive experiences with relevant campus teaching lead to higher motivation to become a teacher. A negative loading of -0.18 exists between perceived relevance (PP) and short-term interest in teaching (TI) (Hypothesis 2).

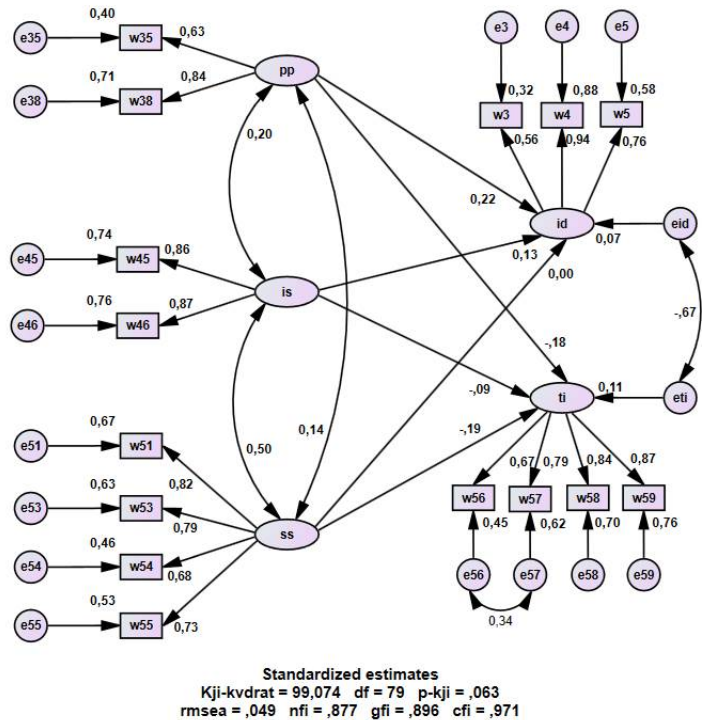
While the relationships between the experience of linking theory to practical experiences are somewhat weaker, they still exist. The path coefficient between theory-practice links (IS) and long-term motivation to become a teacher (ID) is 0.13 (Hypothesis 3), while the path coefficient between IS and short-term interest in teaching (TI) is -0.09 (Hypothesis 4).

Personalized support from supervisors (SS) showed no correlation with long-term motivation (ID) but exhibited a negative correlation (-0.19) with short-term interest in teaching (TI) Hypothesis 5 is not supported, while H6 is. This may be due to the relatively short practicums included in the Faroese program, with students having only 50 hours of internships per year over three years and 30 hours in the fourth year. This relatively short time may mean that school supervisors play a minor role as role models for Faroese student teachers: the internships are 18 study weeks and a total of 180 hours distributed over the 4 study years (Námsskipan fyri útbúgvingina til fólkaskúlalærara, 2022).

It is interesting to note that there are positive statistical associations between student teachers' perceptions of campus teaching quality and the two distinct quality dimensions of practical training. The path coefficient between perceived relevance of campus teaching (PP) and theory-practice links (IS) is 0.20, while the path coefficient between PP and personalized support from supervisors (SS) is 0.14. These findings suggest coherence between how teacher students perceive the efforts of campus staff and practice mentors in realising the program's goal, and this suggests that stakeholders in the Faroe Islands teacher education program are working towards the same fundamental aims. There is a need for further research to explore how various roles within teacher education work together to achieve the program's overarching goals.

Figure 2

The structural model shows the theoretical relationships and connections between latent and observed variables and their respective measurement errors. It provides a visual representation of hypotheses about how different constructs are interconnected and how they collectively influence the observed data.



Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Faroese student teachers' perceptions of their experiences on campus and in the field are linked to their long-term motivation to become teachers and their intentions to remain in or leave the field. Structural equation modelling revealed that student teachers' perceptions of the relevance of campus teaching is positively correlated with their long-term motivation to become teachers and negatively related to their intentions to leave.

Exploring the factors associated with the long-term motivation of Faroese student teachers for their profession is of paramount importance. This study has investigated the interplay between long-term motivation, intention to remain in

or leave the teaching profession, and the experiences of Faroese student teachers during their on-campus and field training. We have data from virtually the entire population,⁵ which is why we do not need to rely on hypothesis testing to draw conclusions about population parameters.

First, our analysis reveals that the relevance of the campus-based component of teacher education positively influences long-term motivation and simultaneously reduces intentions to leave. These findings underscore the significance of teacher education programs in the Faroe Islands.

Second, our study highlights that the school-based segment of teacher education positively correlates with long-term motivation—a promising discovery. It is noteworthy that the perceived relevance of the school-based portion of teacher education also seems to impact turnover intentions.

Personalised support from supervisors appears to constrain turnover intention but does not nurture long-term motivation, while theory-practice interaction appears to influence long-term motivation. The negative relation between theory-practice interaction and intentions to leave is very weak. These outcomes are intriguing and warrant further investigations to better comprehend the nature of field experiences in teacher education. Conducting a qualitative follow-up study to explore the current landscape and its implications for commitment and turnover intentions is advisable.

We do not assert causation between the explanatory factors and the outcomes, but these empirical relationships are intriguing and suggest that enhancing the quality of teacher education at the University of the Faroe Islands might affect teacher retention and attrition rates. Improving the relevance of the educational theory courses can be achieved by integrating on-campus material into teaching practices (Korthagen, 2010). Other strategies that bridge theory and practice to cultivate the necessary teaching skills in pre-service teachers should also be explored (Korthagen et al., 2001).

It should be noted that there is no strict demarcation between on-campus and field experiences in teacher training. Developing the competencies of teacher educators to emphasise the practical relevance of teacher training is one option, although it is controversial (Zeichner, 1992, 2010). There remains an open question as to whether a more pragmatic and concrete approach to planning, executing and assessing teaching could foster long-term motivation among student teachers. Faroese practice schools typically have well-prepared supervisors who take their roles seriously, although there may be some variability among schools.

Teacher training is not unique in having both practical and theoretical components. For example, nurse training involves both campus-based education

⁵ The response rate was 93%. With other words, 7% were on sick leave or absent for other reasons. We have no indications that the few absentees were systematically different from those who responded.

and practical training in real-world healthcare settings. However, nurse training benefits from a common professional language used both on campus and in the field (Paganin et al., 2008). By contrast, teacher training faces the challenge that practice supervisors in schools may not always use the same professional language that is employed in institutional teacher training on campus, leading to potential difficulties in coherence and integration between theory and practice (Joram, 2007). While some improvements have been made in fostering partnerships between the university and schools, challenges in this regard still persist. Expanding the literature on the effectiveness of teacher preparation and its potential correlation with long-term motivation to become a teacher could help enhance teacher training and reduce turnover costs for school districts (Schleicher, 2011).

Strengths, limitations and avenues for research

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was advantageous in endeavour with this article for several reasons: First, SEM allowed us to examine the complex relationships between different variables we used simultaneously. It explored both direct and indirect effects, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among variables within the Faroese context. Traditional methods like regression analysis and descriptive statistics do not adequately capture these complexities. Further, SEM allowed us to model the latent variables reported in our article in addition to observed variables. This is particularly useful in our research approach where latent constructs were of interest. SEM enabled us to understand how these constructs interact and influence one another, offering a more nuanced understanding of phenomena which we investigated. Third, SEM helps us evaluate the theoretical framework we used. By specifying relationships between variables and comparing the fit of the model to the observed data, we use these results to assess the validity of the theoretical framework. Further, SEM allowed us to account for measurement error in the model. We recognize that observed variables may have measurement limitations, and thus, provides a means to estimate the true values of latent constructs more accurately. By factoring in measurement error, SEM provides a more robust analysis, reducing potential bias in the estimation of relationships. Overall, the advantages of SEM in educational research lie in its ability to capture complex relationships, account for measurement error, model latent constructs, test theories, and integrate multiple data sources. These benefits make SEM a valuable tool for understanding educational processes which are measured in our article.

As with all research, the present study has certain limitations, including its parsimonious modelling approach and reliance on cross-sectional methodology. At the same time, these limitations can serve as a foundation for future research. While we opted for a quantitative approach to explore the factors influencing

student teachers' long-term motivation and turnover intentions, there is room for more extensive exploration that involve qualitative approaches. However, it is important to highlight that there has been relatively limited quantitative research conducted on student teachers' long-term motivation for the teaching profession and turnover intentions, leaving us without a sufficiently robust empirical foundation in this area.

Another limitation pertains to the reliance on self-reported questionnaire data, which inherently have an element of subjectivity. While independent assessments could offer valuable insights into employee performance (Boxall & Purcell, 2011), ensuring anonymity during such assessments can be challenging. Additionally, we were unable to complement student teachers' self-reported data with objective performance-related metrics.

Several initiatives have been implemented at the University of the Faroe Islands to improve its teacher education program. Investigating the impact of these efforts, such as fostering commitment to the teaching profession and support for students, could be a valuable avenue for further research.

Additionally, exploring how perceptions of the social status of teachers in the Faroe Islands influence students' interest in pursuing teaching as a career is another intriguing avenue. Understanding the societal respect and valuation of the teaching profession could reveal important insights that can be applied to improve the area's sole teacher training program.

References

- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x>
- Bartlett, K. R. (2001). The relationship between training and organizational commitment: A study in the health care field. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 12(4), 335–352. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.1001>
- Borko, H., Jacobs, J., & Koellner, K. (2010). Contemporary approaches to teacher professional development. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd ed.; pp. 548–556). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-044894-7.00654-0>
- Boyd, D. J., Grossman, P. L., & Lankford, H. (2009). Teacher preparation and student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 31(4), 416–440. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373709353129>
- Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011). *Strategy and Human Resource Management*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Buchanan, J., Prescott, A., Schuck, S., Aubusson, P., & Burke, P. (2013). Teacher retention and attrition: Views of early career teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(3), 124-141.
- Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED606805.pdf>
- Christophersen, K. A., Elstad, E., Solhaug, T., & Turmo, A. (2016). Antecedents of student teachers' affective commitment to the teaching profession and turnover intention. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(3), 270-286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2016.1170803>
- Cohen, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2016). Observations in evaluating teacher performance: Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of classroom observations and value-added measures. In J. A. Grissom & P. Youngs (Eds.), *Improving teacher evaluation systems: Making the most of multiple measures* (pp. 8–21). Teachers College Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hammerness, K., Grossman, P., Rust, F., & Shulman, L. (2005). The design of teacher education programs. Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 390–441). Jossey-Bass.
- Day, C. (2004). *A passion for teaching*. Routledge.
- Day, C. (2013). Teacher quality in the twenty first century: New lives, old truths. In X. Zhu and K. Zeichner (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for the 21st century* (pp. 21–38). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-36970-4_2
- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2010). *The new lives of teachers*. Routledge.
- Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior*, 4, 19-43.
- Evans, E. D., & Tribble, M. (1986). Perceived teaching problems, self-efficacy, and commitment to teaching among preservice teachers. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 80(2), 81–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.1986.10885728>
- Feuer, M. J., Floden, R. E., Chudowsky, N., Ahn, J. (2013). *Evaluation of teacher preparation programs: Purposes, methods, and policy options*. National Academy of Education. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED565694>
- Foley, M., Bugge, E., D'Amelio, M. A., Neslíð, K., Nicolau, M., & Rasch-Christensen, A. (2022). *External review of the University of the Faroe Islands, September 2021–October 2022: Report of the international review team*. The Faroe

- Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Culture.
<http://tilfar.lms.fo/logir/alit/2022.12%20External%20review%20of%20the%20university%20of%20the%20faroe%20islands%20september%202021%20%E2%80%93%20october%202022.pdf>
- Gansle, K., Noell, G., & Burns, J. (2012). Do student achievement outcomes differ across teacher preparation programs? An analysis of teacher education in Louisiana. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63(5), 304–317.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487112439894>
- Goldstein, L. S., & Lake, V. E. (2000). “Love, love, and more love for children”: Exploring preservice teachers’ understandings of caring. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(8), 861-872. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(00\)00031-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00031-7)
- Government of the Faroe Islands. Løgtingslóg um fólkaskúlan, sum seinast broytt við løgtingslóg nr. 85 frá 16. (2022 mai). Ministry of Justice.
<https://logir.fo/Logtingslog/85-fra-16-05-2022-um-broyting-i-logtingslog-um-folkaskulan>
- Grossman, P., Hammerness, K. M., McDonald, M., & Ronfeldt, M. (2008). Constructing coherence: Structural predictors of perceptions of coherence in NYC teacher education programs. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(4), 273-287. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487108322127>
- Hagstovan (2023). *Ríkisborgaraskapur*.
<https://hagstova.fo/fo/folk/folkatal/rikisborgaraskapur>
- Haladyna, T. M., & Rodriguez, M. C. (2013). *Developing and validating test items*. Routledge.
- Hammerness, K. (2006). From coherence in theory to coherence in practice. *Teachers College Record*, 108(7), 1241–1265.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00692.x>
- Hansen, H. H. (2012). *Aftursvar. Ein yrkislig mynd av teimum, ið tóku læraraprógv frá 2007 til 2011*. Føroya læraraskúli og Fólkaskúlagrunnurin.
- Harryson, H. (2023a). Árligt eftirlit við læraraútbúgvingini 2022/2023. *Námsvísindadeildin*. Fróðskaparsetur Føroya.
- Harryson, H. (2023b). Teacher Education in the Faroe Islands. In: E. Elstad (Ed.) *Teacher Education in the Nordic Region. Challenges and Opportunities*. (pp. 225-250). Springer.
- Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. Routledge.
- Heinz, M. (2015). Why choose teaching? An international review of empirical studies exploring student teachers’ career motivations and levels of

- commitment to teaching. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 21(3), 258–297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2015.1018278>
- Hong, J. Y. (2010). Pre-service and beginning teachers' professional identity and its relation to dropping out of the profession. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(8), 1530–1543. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.06.003>
- Joensen, J. P. (1990). *Fróðskaparsetur Føroya 1965-90*. Fróðskaparsetur Føroya.
- Joram, E. (2007). Clashing epistemologies: Aspiring teachers', practicing teachers', and professors' beliefs about knowledge and research in education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(2), 123–135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.04.032>
- Kanfer, R., Frese, M., & Johnson, R. E. (2017). Motivation related to work: A century of progress. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 338–355.
- Khan, M. R., Ziauddin, J. F., & Ramay, M. I. (2010). The impacts of organizational commitment on employee job performance. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(3), 292–298.
- Kline, R. B. (2005). *Structural equation modeling*. Guilford.
- Korthagen, F. A. (2010). How teacher education can make a difference. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 36(4), 407–423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2010.513854>
- Korthagen, F. A., Kessels, J., Koster, B., Lagerwerf, B., & Wubbels, T. (2001). *Linking practice and theory: The pedagogy of realistic teacher education*. Routledge.
- Kuvaas, B. (2007). Different relationships between perceptions of developmental performance appraisal and work performance. *Personnel Review*, 36(3), 378–397. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483480710731338>
- Matti, T. (2009). *Northern lights on PISA 2006: Differences and similarities in the Nordic countries*. Nordic Council of Ministers. <https://www.norden.org/en/publication/northern-lights-pisa-2006>
- Mitchel, A. L., & King, M. S. (2016). A new agenda: Research to build a better teacher preparation program. Bellwether Education Partners. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED577709.pdf>
- Námsskipan fyri útbúgvingina til fólkaskúlalærara (2022). *Námsvísindadeildin*. Fróðskaparsetur Føroya.
- Olsen, E., Harryson, H., Antoniussen, A. & Højsted, I. (2022). *University of the Faroe Islands, Reflective Analysis, 2022: Documents to inform the work of the International Team conducting the External Review of our University Supplements to the Main Reflective Analysis Case Study 1. The Faculty of Education*. Fróðskaparsetur Føroya.

- Paganin, A., Moraes, M. A., Pokorski, S., & Rabelo, E. R. (2008). Factors that inhibit the use of nursing language. *International Journal of Nursing Knowledge*, 19(4), 150–157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-618x.2008.00103.x>
- Rasmussen, J. & Dorf, H. (2010). Challenges to Nordic teacher education programmes. In B. Hudson, P. Zgaga, & B. Åstrand (Eds.), *Advancing quality cultures for teacher education in Europe: Tensions and opportunities* (pp. 51–68). Umeå University.
- Schleicher, A. (2011). Lessons from the world on effective teaching and learning environments. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 62(2), 202–221. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487110386966>
- Smith, K., & Lev-Ari, L. (2005). The place of the practicum in pre-service teacher education: The voice of the students. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(3), 289–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598660500286333>
- Statistics Faroe Islands. (2023). *Population*. Retrieved October 8, 2023 from <https://hagstova.fo/en/population/population/population>
- University of the Faroe Islands. (2022). *Reflective analysis, 2022: A document prepared to inform the work of the international team conducting the external review of our university*. <https://lms.cdn.fo/media/17262/appendices-to-the-main-report-of-the-external-review-team-ufi-23-11-22-2-002.pdf?s=v14A40frnSkGLMuq5APFjW0mDl8>
- Vijayarathan, K. (2022). Teacher challenges in Faroese compulsory schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and support from school leaders. *Faroese Scientific Journal*, 68, 56–86. <https://doi.org/10.18602/fsj.v68i.144>
- Volckmar, N. (2019). The Faroese path to a comprehensive education system. *Nordic Journal of Educational History*, 6(2), 121–141. <https://doi.org/10.36368/njedh.v6i2.153>
- Zeichner, K. (1992). Rethinking the practicum in the professional development school partnership. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 296–307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487192043004009>
- Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college- and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(1–2), 89–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487109347671>
- Zeichner, K., & Bier, M. (2012). The turn toward practice and clinical experience in US teacher education. *Beiträge zur Lehrerbildung*, [Swiss Journal of Teacher Education], 30(2), 153–170