

# “Yes, I want to be a teacher”: Exploring how male student teachers negotiate their professional identity as future teacher

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## **Abstract**

Teaching profession is perceived as a female domain as it is dominated by female teachers. This study aims to explore why male student choose teacher education programme at higher education, and how social context influence the development of professional identity as future teacher particularly during teaching training. Data collected from focus group discussions with nine male student teachers during their teaching practise at three secondary schools in the state of Perak. Data were transcribed verbatim, and thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes on social influence and professional identity male student teachers tried to negotiate. Findings suggest that male student teachers motivated to embark in teacher education programme as a result of peer influence. During commencement in teacher education programme, majority of student teachers were influenced by group pressure in order to comply and conform with teaching profession. Results also showed that the majority of male student teachers perceived themselves as ‘parent and friend to school pupil’.

**Keywords:** higher education, male student teacher, professional identity, social influence

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the purpose of teacher education programme in Malaysia is to prepare balanced and well-rounded future teachers for the needs of the nation (Bahagian Pendidikan Guru Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2016). These aims are in line with the government effort to prepare skilled and qualified human capital as a way to meet the demand of the country. Among the government efforts to produce quality teachers are to enhance the teachers recruitment and selection process, strengthen teacher preparation programme, and improve the welfare and career path of teachers (the 10th Malaysia Plan, 2010).

Although there are various ways implemented by the government to attract young people towards teaching profession, there were only few male students applied for teacher education programme. The decreasing number of male students in teacher education programme contributed to the gender imbalance in teaching profession. Statistic shows that until June 2014, there were only 30.3 % male teachers working in both primary and secondary school throughout Malaysia (Educational Management Information System, Ministry of Education, 2014). However, lack of male teacher in the education system is a not a local but global issue. Ranging from develop to developing countries, statistics showed that female teachers dominated the teaching profession. For example, in the UK until Mac 2014, Northern Ireland and Wales only have 32% and 24.7% male registered teachers respectively. Malaysia neighbouring country such as Singapore also experienced the shortage of male teacher. Until May 2014, Singapore reported only 30% male teacher from overall teacher population (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2014). These statistics showed that teaching become a gendered profession, whereby it is assumed as typical female occupation.

Previous researches suggest no evidence that hindered male student teachers from become a member of teaching profession. Among others, Abu Bakar (2009) and Nor et al (2011) found that male student teachers at one teacher preparation programme have same level of generic skills for teaching such as communication and decision making. Moreover, there were no significant gender differences of the students’ specific skill such as the use of

Information Technology and Communication (ICT) tools for teaching purposes during enrolment in teacher education programme (Luan, 2008; Wong, 2007; Zakaria et al, 2007). Past research also revealed that male trainees had abilities in mastering content knowledge more than their female counterparts (Nordin & Sapiee, 2010) during the commencement in teacher education programme. Likewise, Abu (2010) also found that male trainees willing to accept posting in the rural areas after graduation compared to the female trainees. These evidences reject the assumption that teaching is appropriate for female as it suits the feminine characteristics. In addition, these findings also suggest that when entering teacher education programme, male student teacher become aware of specific body of knowledge and skills related to teaching.

A few studies have been reported which have explored why male student teachers choose teacher education programme (e.g. Abdullah & Stephen, 2013), however such studies have not sought directly to identify the professional identity that male student teacher tried to negotiate. It is this issue that present study was design to focus on.

## **THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY**

Professional identity is categorised as one dimension of the social identity, and explains how an individual tries to determine their own occupational group or category membership based on what they consider to be common characteristics of group membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The contents of those common characteristics often refer to several professional constructs such as attitudes and behaviour that exist in a specific group (Haslam, 2001; Haslam et. al 2000; Turner, 1982) as well as values, skills and knowledge and attitudes that can differentiate between the same and different occupational group (Glaser-Segura, Mudge, Bratianu & Dumitru, 2010). In the teaching profession, professional identity is used to view teachers' concept or image of self (Knowles, 1992) and this image is built through a long and complex process which may begins in childhood (Cohen-Scali, 2003). The process is perceived as complex as it will shape and reshape according to the context (Flores & Day, 2006; Cohen-Scali, 2003). In sum, professional identity can be viewed as an image or self, influenced by perception of certain characteristics about an individual's professional group. The formation of professional identity involves the continuous and complex process of determining the common characteristics of the specific profession.

While it is widely accepted by researchers that identity differ with human individuality (e.g. Keat, Selvarajah & Meyer, 2011), professional identity may also be influenced by social factors. The most promising social factors, as suggested in the literature, known as social influences. Socio psychologists have defined social influence as a change in individual thought that results from interaction with others (Rashotte, 2007). Prior work on social influence and identity suggests that there are two prominent social interactions that may affect an individual's identity: firstly, the interaction with the available information that individuals acquire from the environment, and, secondly, the interaction with significant others (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Izuma, 2013). Thus, it is argued that male student teachers' professional identity not only depends on the individual characteristics and quality, but, most of the time, it is acquired from the information available from the social environment, influencers, or significant others. Studies on student teacher's motive to choose teacher preparation programme for example provide evidence of social influences whereby students' decision to choose teacher preparation programme is influenced by parents and family members (Harun, 2006; Azman, 2013).

Additionally, even though an individual's evaluation is deemed to be stable entity, the process of building the memory structure involves a long-term socialisation process, including social interaction with the environment (Petty, Tormala, Brinol & Jarvis, 2006; Rudman, 2004). Thus, it can be hypothesised that social influence has a great impact on male student teachers' professional identity.

Abrams & Hogg (1990) propose a process as to how information interrelates with social influence and impacts upon individual's identity. Termed as informational social influence and normative social influence, the former explains how individuals respond to the available information from the environment to evaluate specific type of profession. Subsequently, the latter clarifies how other significant people influence professional identity 'Other people' here is termed as one information source.

To elaborate, informational social influence suggests that people negotiate their identity as a result of the sufficient information to which they are exposed (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Thus, this process requires cognitive efforts to process the available information as the information provides "evidence about reality" (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955, p. 629). However, at any time when there is no validity of information, people tend to make comparisons with other people, particularly the group members, in order to establish conformity towards a specific object (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). There is empirical evidence that supports the basis of informational influences in determining professional identity. Among others, it has been acknowledged that some students make a decision to enter teacher education programmes when they have been informed of the reality of teaching such as the opportunity to get a job after graduation (Harun, 2006). Additionally, students justify that teaching is respectable profession as they experienced learning with good teacher before, thus provide them with valid reason to agree with the status of the profession (Mohamad Dahan & Ghazali, 2007).

In addition, other people who are significant to students, such as parents, peers and teachers, might influence their professional identity. Deutsch & Gerrad (1955) define this type of influence as an "influence to conform to the positive expectations of another" (p.629). Thus, male student teachers may align their identity to favour their group members. Abrams & Hogg (1990) claim that this influence, termed as normative social influence, may brings short-term attitude changes when compared to informational social influence, as people are pressured to comply and get along with one's group. Further, unlike informational social influence, which relies on self-evaluation using available information to assist the negotiation of professional identity, normative social influence operates by social communication from group members or group pressure (Turner, 1978). Numerous studies suggest that normative social influence is the main influence on students' view of the teaching profession. Most of the studies, particularly in Malaysian settings, reveal that students approach teaching as their family members request them to do so (Harun, 2006). Some student may be pressured to comply with the parents and family request in order to get along with the group (i.e. family members).

However, prior work also reveals that social influence may sometimes not have a significant impact on an individual's identity, if people only want to comply with the profession without intending to change their attitude (Kelman, 1958). Put differently, some people may adhere to social influence in order to be accepted by a group, but they do not consider following the norms of the given group.

Students' initial attitudes towards the profession are formed at the time they decide to apply and enroll in teacher education programmes; however, this is just the first step that

affects students' progress to become a teacher. Once student teachers enter teacher preparation programmes, questions arise as to what professional identity they possess towards teaching, and what factors influence any changes of attitude? Further, what is the effect of social influence, as explored in the previous subsection, on changes in students' attitudes while they are progressing in teacher preparation programmes?

It is clearly stated in the research findings that during commencement of teacher preparation programmes, students are involved in various learning processes and are consequently aware that they become more familiar with teaching work, particularly related to teaching methods (Buchanan & Stern, 2012; Knoblauch & Chase, 2014; Nilssen & Solheim, 2015). For example, Nilssen and Solheim (2015) report that student teachers enjoy the moment during field work when they have opportunities to learn how to attract pupils to study and are fascinated to understand the syllabus of teaching in more detail. Other work emphasises that student teachers improve teaching skills through a peer review approach, whereby peer students evaluate their teaching methods. Additionally, Knoblauch and Chase (2014) also suggest that, through teaching training, student teachers are able to enhance their capabilities to teach.

The studies cited above suggest that students' socialisation into the profession, whereby they receive and process lots of information, will be a platform for them to negotiate identity accordingly. This is not to say that identity are solely derived from individual characteristics, but perhaps it is meaningful to consider the influence of social interaction in attitude acquisition as numerous studies suggest that students interact with others during the commencement of teacher preparation programmes. If normative social influence is considered as having the most influence on male student teachers' identity, the individual's relationship with social and reference groups will become importance factors to consider. For students in higher education institutions, reference groups seem to be family and campus peers, particularly friends (Rots, Aelterman & Devos., 2014; Sinclair, 2008). Sinclair (2008), for example, finds that peer students become main sources of information, which affect changes in students' views towards teaching. The authors find that some of the group members opt for career changes and this information affects students cognitively, as they might change their belief that there are other professions that are more important or interesting, other than teaching. Students might respond positively or negatively to these influences. Further research emphasises how peer groups become influential factors that determine identity; however, there is also evidence that the influence is not long lasting, and the positive feeling towards teaching becomes a momentary feeling, as they have no intention to become a teacher (Harun, 2006).

Besides peer students, Rots et al. (2014) and Yu (2015) find that teacher educators become the source of information about teaching, as students are more likely to withdraw from the profession when teacher educators are not supportive and do not encourage students to stay in teaching. Studies conducted in Malaysia, such as those of Harun (2006) and Mohd Dahan & Ghazali (2007) however find that the pupils at school influence the student teachers' approach to teaching. Pupils influence student teachers' decisions by making them think that school is the only place that can change the social status of young people.

Besides the normative influence, some researchers try to determine students' attitudes based on the informational influence. Prior work reveals that the academic programme and the various faculty members and courses to which students are exposed, also represent sources of influence, which are more informational (Nilssen & Solheim, 2015). Added to the literature is the information gathered from peer review (Buchanan & Stern, 2012). Peer

review is not considered as normative social influence, as the reviewer is not treated as a member in the same group. Additionally, the role of the reviewer is to validate the information that students have, rather than to pressure student into making certain decisions.

Besides the two influences, it is argued that there are other bases of influence, termed as referent informational influence (Hogg & Abrams, 1990), which may explain, in depth, how male student teachers negotiate their identity. One of the arguments to support this statement is that social influence may result in internalization: the process whereby people accept the norms established by the profession, which are influential on them (Kelman, 1958). The acceptance is derived from an individual's value system, whereby they perceive that the norms of the group (i.e., the teaching profession) as congruent with themselves. Kelman (1958) argues that the internalisation of a profession's norms will result in development of professional identity. Thus, referent informational influence may suggest that male student teachers approach teaching because they intend to conform to the norms of teaching that has been established.

It is obvious that most of the literature on professional identity overemphasises the effects of informational and normative social influence on students' identity, particularly related to professions. As emphasised in the preceding paragraphs, information and normative influence become the main sources of influences that affect identity development. Referent informational influence is rarely seen to make a significant contribution, even though the literature implicitly suggests that identity will be developed because of this type of influence. It is hypothesised as the most influential social influence, as prior studies indicate that prospective members of the group will actively seek out and respond to information about the nature of the group norms. People do so because they want to define themselves in a group that they belong to and act in coherent ways with their reference group. The studies cited above (Buchanan & Stern, 2012; Knoblauch & Chase, 2014; Nilsen & Solheim, 2015), regarding the ways that students try to understand their work as teachers, provide evidence that students try to act accordingly with the group norms.

It is also suggested that, whenever the norms of the group is not clear, people tend to do the self-prototyping (Abrams & Hogg, 1990), or other significant people in the group will become a prototypical object or role model; thus, the basis of the influence is represented by the prototype, or typical example, or stand that illustrates one's group. This prototype becomes the source of information that guides the attitudes of the group members (Dashtipour, 2012). This argument is supported by numerous prior works, which state that prototypes help to define membership of the profession, and help in the emergence of professional standards (Turner & Oaks, 2010). The most cited role models among teacher education students are their former excellent teachers who inspired them throughout their lives (Eick & Reed, 2002). Besides former teachers, teacher educators have been defined as role models that give insight about the prototypical attributes (Lunenberg, Korthagen & Swennen, 2007).

The referent informational influence, therefore, gives insight that attitude can be grounded in the group that we belong to. The group membership will determine what the group members should and should not do (Turner, 1991). For example, Sinclair (2008) identifies that through information about the real work of teachers students gathered during practicum; student's self-evaluation regarding the prototype of the profession has changed. Sinclair refers to one condition in teaching – the nature of work. The author finds that teaching conditions, such as the nature of teaching work, influences students' evaluation of teaching, changing the direction of their self-evaluation as having the prototype of the

profession; this results in a decreased favourableness towards teaching. In contrast, but identical with Sinclair, Bakar et al. (2008) invoke that engaging with the prototype directly through teaching experience enhances students' engagement with the profession; therefore, influence the development of professional identity among student teacher.

## **METHOD**

This study employed qualitative research paradigm as the author aims to discover the meaning male students award to the teaching profession and their experiences in teacher education programme as a platform to become a teacher. This paradigm is not involved the experiment and statistically significant relationships between variable (Barbour, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Miles & Huberman, 1994), rather looking at the explanation provided by subject involved in the research (Barbour, 2014).

As the purpose of this study is exploratory, a convenience sample was considered acceptable. The author used her social network as teacher educator to approach nine participants undergoing their practicum/teaching practise in three different schools (AB, TP and SP). The study was conducted at school in which the participants undergoing their teaching practise. There were three groups of participants, and the group consist of students undergoing teaching practise in AB, TP and SP school. Each group contains 3 students, and the discussion lasting about 45 – 50 minutes. Participants were aged between 23 – 25 and were in their final week of practicum. They participated in semi-structured focus groups, whereby the author style of interviewing was non-directive with open questions and follow up probes, allowing participants to freely give voice to their experiences (Madriz, 2000). The discussions were audio taped.

Firstly, participants were asked to introduced themselves and narrate the personal and social factors that influence their application to teacher education programme. Next, participants were asked about their experiences in teacher education programme including in the teaching practise. Finally, they were asked about the significant others that assist or hinder the professional socialisation process during their commencement at teacher education programme.

Discussions were transcribing verbatim and imported into NVivo. When coding, the author informed (but the constraint) by a conceptual framework derived from the literature, rather inductively build an emergent framework from the data (Attriride-Stirling, 2001). Iterative processes were employed, identified the category of motives and socialising agents of students. Thematic analysis also used to seeking patterns on students' socialisation process at higher education. As the data were coded according to participants' narrative, each participant was given a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality and protect their anonymity<sup>1</sup>.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The qualitative paradigm employed in this study has disassembled more details about male student teachers' motive to enter teacher education programme and how social

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<sup>1</sup> Student codes: S1TP = student no 1 in focus group conducted at TP school. S for student's number and the other words refer to school's name

influences give significant impact on their development of professional identity as future teacher. The discussions presented below will include both the motives and professional identity development male student teachers try to negotiate during commencement at teacher education programme. Firstly, in general, result from thematic analysis suggests that regardless of the reason to enroll in teacher preparation programme, all students shared the common aims for enrollment, which is to get the credential or teaching certificate that will enable them to teach.

The thematic analysis also provides evidence that male student teachers' identity development is associated with both personal characteristics and social factors. Two students claimed that they attracted to teaching as they believe that teaching is congruent with their personality, thus explain that the development of professional identity is grounded in the personal individuality such as interest, traits and personality. However, student's individuality also stem from the long term socialisation process (Petty, Tormala, Brinol& Jarvis, 2006; Rudman, 2004) which involves the long term socialisation. It is apparent from the student's expression that their interest, traits and personality is influence by the social environment as they develop from observation and experiences. Further, model influences, former life experiences and vocational reason suggest that the significant others have a significant impact on attitudes. It is apparent from the data that family members have a significant influence on student's decision to choose teaching. Further, vocational reason in particular involves student's interpretation that their attitude is grounded in the group membership as they mentioned that they attracted to become a member of teaching profession because of the professional attributes of teaching. These results showed that all social influences have significant impact on the early process of male student teachers' conformity with teaching profession and their initial identity as future teacher. Two students expressed their belief about the compatibility between their attribute and characteristics of the teaching profession such as:

Started in 90's the situation of young people was so alarming. Social problems are more glaring especially amongst the Malays. Drug abuse, sex before marriage, smoking and bullying. Being a teacher and has a connection with the young people at school is a way to further educate them with the Muslims as well as Malaysian values [S2 TP]

I love children and looking forward to working with them [S3 SP]

While only two participants mentioned they were interested in teaching when they decide to enroll in teacher education programme, the rest of the participants were not really sure about their interest towards their assumed professional destination. For example :

... discuss with family, my dad asked me to apply for teacher education programme. Become a teacher is just to satisfy family's inspiration. [S1 SP]

I love architecture since I remember. I love arts. My parents however urged me to apply for teaching training [S2 SB]

In addition, a few participants perceived teaching profession as vocational in nature, without any emotionally attached. One student stated that:

Schools are everywhere..... so I will still have a job. [S1 TP]

Similarly, his colleague mentioned about the specific benefit of being a teacher:

Long holiday [S2 SP]

To conclude, results from thematic analysis suggest that teacher education students' reason to embark in teacher education programme can justify their initial identity as future teacher, measured by their interest to become a teacher.

Next, the discussion on male student teachers' process of professional identity development starts with an exploration as to how students acknowledge the norms of the profession. Consistent with the literature which highlighted the general norm of the teaching profession, male student teachers in this study also perceived that the status of the profession is an important defining feature of it. Students perceived that teaching is a noble and respected profession for various reasons, one of the most common being that teachers help to educate younger generations. There were various ways male students teachers negotiate their professional identity during commencement at teacher education programme. Firstly students implicitly expressed that their behaviour is guided by the National Philosophy of Education, as they mentioned that they have a responsibility to develop the potential of young generations in an holistic and integrated manner, as stipulated in the philosophy. These features serve as a standard of teaching, or the norm. Thematic analysis helped to determine how students self-categorised themselves towards the norms of teaching. It is apparent that when students evaluated the teaching profession, they put themselves as "who am I as a teacher?" For example, one student mentioned how satisfied he was when had the opportunity to teach. S3 AB eagerly expressed that 'you cannot have that feeling unless you experience it'. His colleague, S1 AB, stated how he tried to understand the school children in class and "what creates barriers for them (school children) to learn?"

Two students who were initially unsure whether to approach teaching or not at the time they enrolled in the teacher preparation programme, developed positive attitudes towards teaching as they felt that they were very important to the school children. One of the students, S1 TP, with open palms and face upward stated:

Yes, initially, I wasn't interested in teaching. However, during teaching practice, I felt guilty when the school children in my class hoped to learn something from me, but I was not interested to teach. Oh God. Slowly, I forced my self to love teaching. Now I can't wait to become a teacher!

In addition, one student, S3 TP, expressed with tears in her eyes:

I worked in a bank before, the workload [...]. Oooo, it was very stressful and I was getting very grumpy and over-sensitive. I quit and applied to be a substitute teacher at school. Teaching teaches me how to be more patient. How could you get mad with children who come to school with hope and just want to learn?

Similarly, his colleague, S1 DPLI2, stated:

People will change when they become a teacher. Becoming a teacher means that they become a role model for school children. It is different when you are involved in another profession.

Another colleague, S1 SP, had an unfavourable attitude towards teaching at the time he chose the teacher preparation programme as he chose this programme of study due to his mother's influence. However, in contrast with S3 AB and S1 AB, the socialisation process had no impact on her engagement with teaching. With arms crossed in front of her chest, exhibiting defensiveness, S2 AB stated,



Until now I am not interested in teaching, but I will soon be a teacher, as I will get the credential in teaching. My mother will be very happy. I will do all the teaching work, that is the responsibility, but I am sure I will not enjoy my work.

To conclude, narratives presented above suggest that male students teachers have different ways to conform with the professional norms. The obvious way is they try to internalise the value and attitude needed for become a teacher.

Besides these features, it is apparent from the data that the students assigned their former teachers as prototypical members of the profession. It is the matter of fact that students have a set of belief about teaching before they embark in teacher education programme. Their experience as students for more than ten years has much more on effect compared to their four years in the teacher education programme. Study found that students who lost their direction to become a teacher try to adapt the identity of the referent group. Most students indicate that they are more likely to follow their former teachers' practices during teaching and learning processes. As expressed by S3 TP, he adored his former teacher as being a very generous teacher and hoped that he would become like her.

My former teacher during secondary school just loved her job, and she truly cared. Seeing that was the biggest thing... I want to be a teacher, be like her (former teacher).

However, the data also showed that the students did not always view their teachers as prototypical members. Some of them indicated the negative image of teachers, such as an 'unfavourable moment with an irresponsible teacher' [S1 AB] and 'a tactless teacher, did not teach properly'[S3 AB], which the students tried to avoid. Other students also mentioned that their parents, who are teachers, also became prototypical members. They acknowledged that their mother or father, who is or was teacher, is very patient, hard working and helpful with the school children. S1 SP described his father, who was once a teacher saying 'He loved with what he was doing. He had great enthusiasm for teaching'.

To conclude, male student teachers try to negotiate their professional identity as future teacher by expressed their loyalty and sense of belonging towards the profession. This means that the referent informational influence is the most influential social factor that contribute to male student teachers professional identity formation.

The main finding in this study also highlights the male student teachers' consciousness that the school is a place that promotes the development of social reproduction. Students describe how their experience during school years taught them the social inequality among the school children which becomes a source of motivation to proceed with teaching. Beside the determination to educate the school children, male student teachers also expressed the responsibility to become in loco parentis<sup>2</sup> (in the place of the parent) while at school. The students in their teaching practice understood that they have a responsibility for school children safety and well being at school, as underlined in the Malaysia Child Act 2001<sup>3</sup>. S3 TP, stated that, 'Teachers are school children parents when they are at school. We (teachers) must take reasonable care of them.

The expression of 'must' in the statement above suggests that the student was committed to his potential role as a teacher. S3 TP's perception of his role as a second parent,

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<sup>2</sup> Teachers as students' guardians. Malaysia Child Act 2001 (Act 601): 'Guardian' in relation to a child, includes any person who, in the opinion of the Court for children having cognisance of any case in relation to the child or in which is concerned, has for the time being the charge of and control over the child. 'Child', means a person under the age of eighteen years.

<sup>3</sup> The Child Act 2001 is a main law related to children.

also seen from the perspective of ‘to educate’, thus suggests the strength of the ‘education’ rather than ‘teaching’ processes. Similar with S3 TP, S3 SP, expressed that, ‘Teachers are a mother or father of students at school’. The representative statements from the students showed that they understand the importance of maintaining a safe and family atmosphere, particularly in the classroom. There are a few implications that related to the students’ desire to educate and become in loco parentis of the school children. Firstly, students expressed their motivation to like and love the children. Secondly, students indicated that they would develop and keep their positive values, behaviours, and accepted appearance as determined by society, in order to motivate school children to follow their positive attributes.

## **CONCLUSION**

Higher education provides early socialisation for students towards their assumed professional destination. Social influences, as highlighted in the previous subsection, are responsible for the process of assimilating the male student teachers’ self to the group (i.e. teaching profession) norms. When student teachers are expected to adhere with the norms of teaching, the most influential information that will help to ascertain whether students conform to that given norm is referent informational influence. Referent informational influence that “operates through self-categorisation” (Hogg & Abrams, 1988 : 175) becomes important to the process of identification and internalisation of group norm. When students acknowledge that they now belong to one group (i.e., the teaching profession), and need to conform to the group norms, the norms itself “provide crucial information about appropriate ways to think and behave” (Dashtipour, 2012:42). To conclude, the most influential social influence that will impact on students’ identity development is the norm of the profession, not other group members. The participants in this study attracted to the profession as they believed that they will be responsible for the future of young generations.

The findings of this study will redound to society by considering male student teachers who will educate future generations of the country. For parents, this study gives input on the type of future teachers that will be available for teaching the young and future generations. For academics, this study will enhance the understanding of the process of male student teachers’ motive and professional identity as future teacher. This understanding is useful and can be utilised to design curriculum and plan more effective teaching and learning activities. For the researcher, this study foregrounds the present study using literature from the disciplines of psychology, social sciences and education, thus providing cross-disciplinary research to explain professional identity development among students particularly male student teachers.

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