

## Factors contributing to pre-service teachers' reluctance to specialize in early primary education

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### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received Apr 23, 2024  
Revised Sep 1, 2024  
Accepted Sep 19, 2024

#### Keywords:

Bahrain Teachers College  
Career choice  
Pre-service teachers  
Student reluctance  
Teacher reluctance

### ABSTRACT

This study identifies different factors that contribute to Bahraini pre-service teachers' interest to specialize in early primary education. The sample of study comprised 108 year one and 49 foundation students enrolled in Bahrain Teachers College at the University of Bahrain. A stratified random sampling technique was used to insure the representation of all students from the foundation and the 1st year level. Results of the study showed that the most significant factors contribute to the pre-service teachers' lack of interest in choosing early primary education specialization were, work environment factors such as classroom and school environment, early primary school students-related factors, personality-factors which relate to pre-service teachers' personal qualities, and social factors such as lack of recognition, society and the influence of friends and colleagues. School administrators and decision makers can use the findings to improve the working conditions and environment in early primary education. The findings of the study provide baseline knowledge and data, empirical findings, and recommendations that can benefit administrators and Ministry of Education to improve the working conditions and environment in early primary education teaching profession.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Professions are often influenced by direct or indirect factors that convince individuals and guide their career decisions. The perceived values and motivation to be associated with a particular profession have been identified as potential factors affecting candidates' decisions in various empirical studies [1]–[3]. The teaching profession is no exception to this reality. That is why countries around the world establish teacher preparation colleges, as well as policies, teacher licensing, and legislation to govern these institutions [4], [5].

It has been observed that there is a consistent decline in the number of university students choosing teaching as a career [6]–[9]. The United Nations (UN) has warned about the significant shortage of primary school teachers in certain regions of the world, such as Sub-Saharan African countries. Given the urgency of this issue, policymakers must prioritize investment in strengthening the teaching profession. Such investment is crucial not only to reducing high teacher attrition rates but also to equipping educators with the resources and support needed to help all students meet the rigorous academic standards of the 21st-century [10]. The gulf cooperation countries (GCC) education industry report, produced by the Investment Bank Alpen Capital, highlights some key challenges, including the shortage of skilled teachers. This shortage continues to pose a potential challenge for educational reform in the GCC [11].

The above research findings emphasize the importance of studying students' reasons for choosing the teaching profession and their beliefs about it, especially considering their potential as future teachers. Additionally, research has shown that students' level of interest in a particular subject or career can vary across different disciplines. It is possible to nurture students' interest in a field or career by providing them with support and increasing their interest in the specific area of specialization [12]. Several factors contribute to students' interest, as highlighted by previous studies [1], [2], [5]. Furthermore, in their study, Thoman *et al.* [13] concluded that various factors, such as the learning environment, academic performance, parents, peers, teachers, future specialization, and personality, have the potential to influence students' interest [14], [15]. Additionally, research investigating the impact of the learning environment and its monitoring, conducted by Kunter *et al.* [16] found that the clarity of rules in the learning environment positively affects learner interests. This is further supported by studies conducted by Badmus [17] and Olamide and Olawaiye [18].

Among the factors that influence pre-service teachers' interests are the perceived value of the profession. In their study, Kataria [14] found that the key factor influencing pre-service students' future choice of a given profession is passion for a given subject area. Availability of teaching opportunity after college degree was also found to be the strongest factor influencing pre-service students' future choice [19]. Interestingly, Habibullah *et al.* [20] in their study found that students' future career choice is influenced by personal preference, taking care of other family members, and self-confidence.

Social factors also were believed to exhibit influence on the pre-service students' interests. Peer advice and encouragement, parents, and family members exhibited considerable impact on students' career choices and interests [21], [22]. Also, having relatives in the same field, parental wishes, relative wishes, and other variables were observed as accountable factors for students' career choice [20]. Empirical evidence has suggested that personality factors play pivotal role in influencing learner career choice [18]. Thus, preferred career can be chosen in large part based on personality [23], [24]. In order to explore career options early in life and avoid waiting until learners are forced to make a decision, students' personalities must be self-motivated [20], [24]. Findings of a study that compared the role of personality factors in students career choice in two universities (in Africa and Asia), revealed that personality factors swayed students career preference with the highest preference accounted for the conscientiousness factor/trait [25].

Furthermore, it is believed that specialization plays a significant role in influencing the career interests and performance of pre-service teachers. Research has shown that when high school students specialize in specific courses, it has a positive impact on their scores in scientific literacy assessments and helps them develop clarity on the path to pursuing careers in education [26]. There are varieties of factors that affect pre-service teachers' preferences for grade levels such as teacher quality as pointed out by Konstantopoulos [27]. Other variables also influence pre-service teachers' choice include parental and community support [28], [29], availability of educational resources [30], and class size [31].

This study examines the challenges faced by pre-service teachers at Bahrain Teachers College when choosing early primary education as a possible area of specialization in the future. In recent years, the results of the streaming exam have consistently shown that choosing early primary education is the least preferred option among pre-service teachers. This is a significant issue as it can ultimately result in a shortage of specialized early primary education teachers in Bahrain. The study addresses a recurring issue that has been recognized by administrators and decision-makers both at Bahrain Teachers College and the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify the various factors that contribute to the lack of interest among pre-service teachers at Bahrain Teachers College in choosing early primary education as their specialization. By achieving this objective, the study aims to provide suggestions that could potentially address the identified issue. In order to accomplish this objective, the study formulates the following research questions:

- What factors contribute to the lack of interest among pre-service teachers at Bahrain Teachers College in choosing early primary education specialization?
- Are there any significant differences in the factors that contribute to the lack of interest in choosing early primary education specialization?
- Are there any significant differences in the factors contributing to the lack of interest in choosing early primary education specialization due to pre-service teachers' year of study, cumulative grade point average (CGPA), and their interest in choosing early primary education specialization as their first choice?

The findings of this study can help us understand why there is a lack of interest in choosing early primary education specialization, as well as identify the factors that motivate students to choose other specializations. Moreover, the outcome of the study can be seen as a starting point, providing us with baseline knowledge and data on the current topic. As a result, this study may offer empirical findings and

recommendations that can benefit administrators and decision-makers in their efforts to improve working conditions and the overall environment for early primary education teachers.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Participants

The participants in the study consisted of foundation students enrolled in the Bahrain Teachers College teacher preparatory academic program. To achieve the purpose of the study, the sample was limited to year one students and those enrolled in the foundation program, where the specialization decision has not yet been made for most of these students. Therefore, a stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representation of all students from the foundation year and the first-year level. The sample consisted of 108 students (95 female, 13 male), (59 year one, 49 foundation). Table 1 describes the student sample in relation to different demographic variables.

Table 1. Sample distribution based on gender and year of study

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	13	12
	Female	95	88
Year of study	Year one	59	54.6
	Foundation	49	45.3

### 2.2. Data collection instrument

The data for this study were collected using factors contributing to lack of interest questionnaire, which was specifically developed for this purpose. The questionnaire includes 20 statements that aim to measure potential factors that contribute to the lack of interest among pre-service schoolteachers at Bahrain Teachers College in choosing early primary education specialization. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to assess the responses to the 20 statements. These statements are categorized into six domains, they are: i) personality-factors, such as (working in early primary education needs personal qualities that some people do not have); ii) specialization related factors (nature and teaching of early primary education specialization), such as the school curriculum and topics for early primary education students are too board; iii) early primary education school students-related factors, such as (early primary education students are not easy to manage and control); iv) work environment factors (classroom and school related factors), such as teaching in early primary education is very demanding; v) social factors, such as early primary education teachers do not have enough recognition and respect from society; and vi) future factors (professional upgrading), students' future expectations toward early primary education specialization, such as being early primary education teacher means less career advancement in the future.

The questionnaire was pilot tested with 22 students who had similar characteristics to the students involved in the study. Students were asked to identify any difficulties they encountered when answering the questions and to suggest alternative ways to simplify any statements. Based on the students' feedback, certain statements were removed or revised. Once the data was collected, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which resulted in an acceptable reliability value of 0.78 [31]. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software version 24. Means standard deviation, frequencies, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson correlation were calculated to answer the research questions.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To investigate the research questions concerning the factors that influence the lack of interest among pre-service teachers at Bahrain Teachers College in selecting early primary education as their specialization, we calculated the mean and standard deviations for all six domains of the questionnaire. The factors were then ranked based on their mean scores. Among the six factors, pre-service schoolteachers identified the work environment as the primary factor that affects their disinclination towards choosing early primary education as a career path ( $M=4.02$ ,  $SD=0.60$ ). This was followed by school-related factors specific to early primary education, which had a mean score of ( $M=3.77$ ,  $SD=0.66$ ), and then personality factors with a mean score of ( $M=3.70$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ). It is noteworthy that social and future factors were rated moderately as contributing factors, with mean scores of ( $M=3.18$ ,  $SD=0.76$ ) and ( $M=2.97$ ,  $SD=0.88$ ), respectively. Specialization factors were revealed as the least influential in their decision-making process regarding early primary education. Refer to Table 2 for further details.

Table 2. Factors contribute to Bahrain Teachers College pre-service schoolteachers' lack of interest in choosing cycle 1

No.	Six main factors (rank order)	Mean	SD
4	Work environment factors (classroom and school related factors)	4.02	.60
3	Cycle 1 school students-related factors	3.77	.66
1	Personality-factors	3.70	.63
5	Social factors	3.18	.76
6	Future factors (professional upgrading), students' future expectations toward cycle 1 specialization	2.97	.88
2	Specialization related factors (nature and teaching of early primary education specialization)	2.84	.95

Are there significant differences in the factors contributing to the lack of interest in selecting early primary education specialization that determine variations across the factors influencing the lack of interest among pre-service schoolteachers? ANOVA and t-test analyses were performed, as presented in Table 3. The examination of demographic variables among pre-service schoolteachers showed that there were no significant differences between male and female students regarding their year of education, grade point average or GPA, and specialization. Notably, the t-test results indicated no significant difference between the two student groups in the initial year and foundation year, except for D5, across the categories outlined in Table 3 (ranging from D1 to D6). Before proceeding with the independent sample t-test, a Levene's test was conducted to assess the equality of variances.

Table 3. Independent samples t-test for factors contributing to pre-service schoolteachers' lack of interests

Dependent variable		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total	Equal variances assumed	3.984	.049	1.942	101	.055	3.71263	1.91175	-.07976-	7.50503
	Equal variances not assumed			1.975	97.736	.051	3.71263	1.87998	-.01825-	7.44352
D1	Equal variances assumed	1.855	.176	.147	101	.883	.01875	.12756	-.23430-	.27180
	Equal variances not assumed			.150	98.293	.881	.01875	.12514	-.22958-	.26707
D2	Equal variances assumed	.668	.416	-.927-	101	.356	-.17758-	.19163	-.55773-	.20257
	Equal variances not assumed			-.939-	96.794	.350	-.17758-	.18915	-.55300-	.19784
D3	Equal variances assumed	6.677	.011	-.865-	101	.389	-.11203-	.12957	-.36906-	.14500
	Equal variances not assumed			-.909-	100.703	.366	-.11203-	.12329	-.35661-	.13254
D4	Equal variances assumed	.000	.985	1.218	101	.226	.14484	.11892	-.09106-	.38073
	Equal variances not assumed			1.214	91.717	.228	.14484	.11928	-.09208-	.38175
D5	Equal variances assumed	1.432	.234	3.362	101	.001	.49352	.14679	.20233	.78470
	Equal variances not assumed			3.511	100.995	.001	.49352	.14057	.21466	.77237
D6	Equal variances assumed	3.329	.071	1.073	101	.286	.19100	.17809	-.16228-	.54428
	Equal variances not assumed			1.122	100.956	.264	.19100	.17022	-.14667-	.52867

Note: D1=personality factors, D2=specialization factors, D3=students-related factors, D4=work environment factors, D5=social factors, and D6=future factors

In the analysis, a p-value of 0.176 was observed in the D1 row, indicating equal variances. Therefore, it was concluded that the variances are equal since the value exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05. Moreover, when focusing on the row corresponding to equal variances assumed, the significance value did not drop below 0.05, remaining at 0.883. Therefore, it can be concluded that the means are not significantly different. As for personality factors, the findings suggest that there is no significant difference between students in year one and the foundation year regarding the factors influencing their career choice.

Interestingly, these results contradict the findings of previous studies [23]–[25] which emphasized the significant role of personality factors in pre-service schoolteachers' career choices. However, it is important to note that this study provide insights into specific contextual factors that differentiate this study from the aforementioned studies. Future research could further explore these differences and potential contributing factors.

In row D2, a  $p$ -value of 0.416 was observed, indicating equality of variances as it exceeds the threshold of 0.05. Upon examining the row associated with equal variances assumed, a  $p$ -value of 0.356 suggests that the means are not significantly different. These results imply that, with regard to specialization-related factors, there is no significant difference between students in year one and the foundation year.

It is noteworthy that our findings contrast with those of Stylos *et al.* [26], whose study concluded that specialization-related factors not only impact the career choices of pre-service schoolteachers but also influence their academic performance. However, it is essential to highlight that our study shed light on unique contextual variables that distinguish our results from those of the foregoing study. Further research is warranted to explore these differences and investigate potential contributing factors.

In row D3, the  $p$ -value for student-related factors is 0.011, below the standard significance level of 0.05, suggesting a potential violation of the assumption of equal variances and indicating differences between the groups under comparison. We further examine the row corresponding to the assumption of unequal variances, where the  $p$ -value is 0.366, exceeding the significance threshold. The lack of significance in the mean comparison indicates no substantial distinction between students in year one and the foundation year concerning student factors in early primary education schools. This result suggests that school-related factors may not have a significant impact on the career choice of pre-service schoolteachers.

Comparing our results with prior studies, it has been noted that some studies have emphasized the influence of student-related factors on pre-service teachers' career decisions. These studies highlight the significance of understanding the interaction between students and prospective educators. However, conflicting results have also been reported, suggesting that the impact of student-related factors may vary depending on the educational context, cultural differences, or individual preferences [15], [21], [22].

In summary, our findings suggest that, based on the specific student factors in early primary education schools analysed in this study, there is no significant difference between year one and foundation year students in terms of their influence on pre-service schoolteachers' career choices. However, further investigation and consideration of additional factors are crucial to grasp the complex nature of career decision-making among pre-service teachers. The results of the statistical analysis indicate that the  $p$ -value in the D4 row is 0.985, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This suggests that the variances of the groups being compared (students of year one and foundation) are equal. Consequently, the row corresponding to equal variances assumed is checked, and the significance value is found to be 0.226, which is again greater than 0.05. Based on this, it can be concluded that the means of the two groups are not significantly different.

These findings challenge the results of previous studies [17], [18], which established a significant influence of learning environment factors on pre-service schoolteachers' choice of career. The current study's findings suggest that work environment factors may not have a significant impact on the choice between year one and foundation for pre-service teachers. This discrepancy highlights the need for further research to better understand the factors influencing pre-service teachers' choices, difference in the cultural contexts and the potential variations across different school contexts and populations.

The statistical analysis indicates that the  $p$ -value in the D5 row is 0.234, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This suggests that the variances of the groups being compared (students of year one and foundation year) are equal. However, when checking the row for equal variances assumed, the  $p$ -value is 0.01, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the mean scores of the two groups are significantly different.

This finding suggests a significant difference between first-year and foundation year students regarding social factors. It indicates that social factors, such as peer advice and encouragement, parents, family members, friends, and relatives, influence pre-service schoolteachers' career decisions. This finding aligns with previous studies [20], [22], which also emphasized the significant role of social factors in shaping career decisions among pre-service schoolteachers.

These results emphasize the need to consider social factors when analyzing pre-service teachers' career choices. Understanding the impact of these factors can help educational institutions and policymakers develop effective strategies to support pre-service teachers. It is important to recognize the role of social networks and relationships in their decision-making processes. Future research should focus on studying specific social factors and investigating how they interact with other variables to influence career decisions in education.

The  $p$ -value in the D6 row is 0.071, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, we conclude that the variances are equal. The  $p$ -value for the row corresponding to equal variances assumed is 0.286, which is also greater than 0.05. This indicates that the means are not significantly different. This suggests that there is no

significant difference in students' future expectations toward early primary education specialization between year one and foundation year. Table 3 provides more details.

In the total row, the  $p$ -value is 0.049, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variances are equal. The significance value for the row where equal variances are assumed is 0.055, which is higher than 0.05. Consequently, we conclude that the means are not significantly different. Overall, except for D5, there is no significant difference in students between year one and foundation year in all dimensions.

The ANOVA analyses in Table 4 show that only D2 (specialization factors) has a significant difference. The  $p$ -value for D2 is less than 0.05, indicating a significant difference in CGPA based on specialization factors such as nature and teaching in early primary education specialization. There were no significant differences in other factors related to a lack of interest in CGPA. The overall significance value is 0.988, which is clearly above 0.05 at a 95% confidence interval. Given the significant impact of specialization-related factors, it is necessary to conduct a post-hoc analysis to further investigate the significance of the differences. This analysis is important for identifying which specialization factors are responsible for this significance. The details of the post-hoc analysis are presented in Table 5. From the post hoc analysis in the Table 5, the significant difference is between 'less than 2' and '3.00-4.00' respectively. The difference is significant at the 0.05 level of significance; this is because the values obtained are 0.05 and 0.039 respectively.

Table 4. ANOVA analyses of the six dimensions of the contributing factors to the pre-service schoolteachers' interests

ANOVA						
Dependent variable	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Total	2.389	2	1.194	.012	.988	
Between groups	10250.490	104	98.562			
Within groups	10252.879	106				
Total	10252.879	106				
D1	.172	2	.086	.211	.810	
Between groups	42.424	104	.408			
Within groups	42.597	106				
Total	42.597	106				
D2	5.888	2	2.944	3.416	.037	
Between groups	89.617	104	.862			
Within groups	95.505	106				
Total	95.505	106				
D3	1.797	2	.899	2.053	.133	
Between groups	45.517	104	.438			
Within groups	47.314	106				
Total	47.314	106				
D4	.882	2	.441	1.205	.304	
Between groups	38.054	104	.366			
Within groups	38.936	106				
Total	38.936	106				
D5	.645	2	.322	.539	.585	
Between groups	62.176	104	.598			
Within groups	62.821	106				
Total	62.821	106				
D6	.830	2	.415	.522	.595	
Between groups	82.642	104	.795			
Within groups	83.471	106				
Total	83.471	106				

Table 5. Post-hoc analysis of specialization factors

Multiple comparisons Scheffe							
Dependent variable	(I) GPA	(J) GPA	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
D2	less than 2	2.50-3.00	.37648	.22094	.239	-.1722-	.9252
		3.00-4.00	.59355*	.22895	.039	.0250	1.1621
	2.50-3.00	less than 2	-.37648-	.22094	.239	-.9252-	.1722
		3.00-4.00	.21707	.21363	.598	-.3135-	.7476
	3.00-4.00	less than 2	-.59355-*	.22895	.039	-1.1621-	-.0250-
		2.50-3.00	-.21707-	.21363	.598	-.7476-	.3135

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

An independent sample t-test was conducted to investigate research question 3, which examines the differences in factors contributing to the lack of interest in selecting early primary education specialization among pre-service schoolteachers. The factors include the year of study, CGPA, and initial interest in choosing early primary education specialization. The t-test was used to determine if there is a significant difference in dimension D2 between two groups of students who answered yes or no to the question about selecting early primary education as their first choice of specialization. The obtained  $p$ -value is 0.001, which

is less than 0.05, indicating a significant difference between students who responded positively or negatively regarding early primary education as their top choice for specialization. Table 6 is the further details.

The ANOVA analysis in Table 7 shows that only D2, the specialization-related factor, has a significant difference. This is supported by a  $p$ -value below 0.05, indicating a clear distinction in the specialization sub-dimensions when it comes to the intention to choose early primary education as the primary specialization. No significant difference was found in other factors contributing to a lack of interest. When considering all factors together, there is no significant difference in other factors that contribute to a lack of interest in selecting early primary education as the primary specialization. This is because the overall significance of the obtained  $p$ -value was 0.179, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold at a 95% confidence level.

Table 6. Independent samples test

Dependent variable		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
Total	Equal variances assumed	1.540	.219	-1.665	75	.100	-4.87051	2.92584	-10.69908	.95806
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.879	17.311	.077	-4.87051	2.59221	-10.33212	.59110
D1	Equal variances assumed	.772	.382	-.142	75	.887	-.02863	.20093	-.42890	.37164
	Equal variances not assumed			-.122	13.691	.905	-.02863	.23536	-.53449	.47723
D2	Equal variances assumed	1.626	.206	-3.336	75	.001	-.97372	.29185	-1.55512	-.39231
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.058	19.012	.001	-.97372	.23996	-1.47594	-.47149
D3	Equal variances assumed	3.106	.082	-1.846	75	.069	-.40053	.21696	-.83275	.03168
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.495	13.286	.158	-.40053	.26797	-.97819	.17712
D4	Equal variances assumed	.514	.476	.295	75	.769	.05577	.18929	-.32132	.43286
	Equal variances not assumed			.322	16.729	.751	.05577	.17299	-.30966	.42120
D5	Equal variances assumed	.669	.416	-.448	75	.656	-.11218	.25058	-.61136	.38700
	Equal variances not assumed			-.512	17.582	.615	-.11218	.21907	-.57321	.34886
D6	Equal variances assumed	.397	.531	-1.714	75	.091	-.48376	.28223	-1.04599	.07847
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.537	14.126	.146	-.48376	.31471	-1.15818	.19065

Table 7. ANOVA analysis of the six dimensions of lack of interest

Dependent variable		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Total	Between groups	292.789	2	146.394	1.762	.179
	Within groups	5816.472	70	83.092		
	Total	6109.260	72			
D1	Between groups	.328	2	.164	.448	.641
	Within groups	25.593	70	.366		
	Total	25.920	72			
D2	Between groups	7.085	2	3.542	4.505	.014
	Within groups	55.038	70	.786		
	Total	62.123	72			
D3	Between groups	.255	2	.128	.343	.711
	Within groups	26.047	70	.372		
	Total	26.302	72			
D4	Between groups	.994	2	.497	1.421	.248
	Within groups	24.496	70	.350		
	Total	25.491	72			
D5	Between groups	.499	2	.250	.559	.574
	Within groups	31.264	70	.447		
	Total	31.764	72			
D6	Between groups	.804	2	.402	.646	.527
	Within groups	43.532	70	.622		
	Total	44.336	72			

Having discovered a significant difference caused by D2, further investigation into the subunits of D2 is necessary. For this purpose, the Scheffe method was utilized in the analysis. The results indicated a notable contrast between responses of “yes” and “I am not sure,” as evidenced by a significance value below 0.05. Details can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8. Multiple comparisons

Dependent variable	(I) foundation	(J) foundation	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
						Lower bound	Upper bound
D2	yes	no	-.67749-	.30033	.086	-1.4286-	.0737
		I am not sure	-.99773*	.33285	.015	-1.8302-	-.1652-
	no	yes	.67749	.30033	.086	-.0737-	1.4286
		I am not sure	-.32024-	.24090	.418	-.9228-	.2823
	I am not sure	yes	.99773*	.33285	.015	.1652	1.8302
		no	.32024	.24090	.418	-.2823-	.9228

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

All correlations between the six dimensions in Table 9 are significant, except for the correlation between D5 and D1, D1 and D2, D2 and D4, D3 and D5, and D4 and D5. All correlations are positive, meaning that an increase in one factor leads to an increase in the other factor, and vice versa. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient analysis showed encouraging correlations among the six dimensions. Specifically, future factors were positively correlated with all dimensions: social factors ( $r=0.672$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), work environment factors ( $r=0.585$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), student factors ( $r=0.633$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), specialization factors ( $r=0.426$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and personality factors ( $r=0.55$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

Social factors also showed positive relationships with all factors except for future factors ( $r=0.188$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.188$ ), work environment factors ( $r=0.354$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), student-related factors ( $r=0.592$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and specialization factors ( $r=0.378$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Work environment positively correlated with future factors ( $r=0.205$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.03$ ) and student-related factors ( $r=0.386$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), while no correlation was found between work environment factors and social factors ( $r=0.134$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.168$ ), and specialization factors ( $r=0.141$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.145$ ). Additionally, student-related factors were positively correlated with future factors ( $r=0.218$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.02$ ) and work environment factors ( $r=0.522$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), while no relationship was found between social factors and student-related factors in the context of the current student. Both social factors ( $r=0.185$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.056$ ) and future factors ( $r=0.146$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.132$ ) were not connected to the work environment. Finally, a positive correlation was found between social factors and future factors ( $r=0.501$ ,  $N=108$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), indicating that pre-service schoolteachers use information obtained from parents, peers, relatives, and others to make career decisions.

Table 9. Correlations among variables

Dependent variable	Total	Correlations					
		D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
Total	Pearson correlation	1	.558**	.426**	.633**	.585**	.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N		108	108	108	108	108
D1	Pearson correlation	1	.387**	.592**	.354**	.188	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.052	.000
	N		108	108	108	108	108
D2	Pearson correlation		1	.386**	.141	.134	.205*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.145	.168	.033
	N			108	108	108	108
D3	Pearson correlation			1	.522**	.142	.218*
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.143	.024
	N				108	108	108
D4	Pearson correlation				1	.185	.146
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.056	.132
	N					108	108
D5	Pearson correlation					1	.501**
	Sig. (2-tailed)						.000
	N						108
D6	Pearson correlation						1
	Sig. (2-tailed)						

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)



Limitations in the investigation on factors contributing to pre-service schoolteachers' lack of interest in choosing early primary education include the focus solely on foundation and first-year pre-service schoolteachers at Bahrain Teachers College, excluding second, third, and final-year pre-service schoolteachers. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing their lack of interest in choosing Early Primary Education Specialization, future studies should include samples from other academic levels. Additionally, the study sample consisted of only 108 students, which is relatively small. To improve the reliability of the findings, future studies should aim to increase the sample size.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analyzed, it is evident that most factors contributing to a lack of interest are not significantly different between year one and foundation students. Therefore, all six factors related to a lack of interest should be addressed equally. However, there is a notable difference in CGPA when it comes to specialization-related factors, specifically the content and teaching methods of the Early Primary Education specialization. Therefore, more attention should be given to factors such as the essence and delivery of early primary education specialization, as they impact students' waning interest.

Additionally, there is a clear distinction between responses of "yes" and "I am not sure" regarding intentions to select early primary education as their primary specialization. Therefore, efforts should be intensified to obtain clear responses regarding opting for early primary education as the primary specialization. The majority of correlations among the six dimensions show a positive trend, suggesting that a decline in one factor results in a decrease in another. Thus, all factors contributing to the lack of interest must be addressed equally.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the foundation students enrolled in the Bahrain Teachers College teacher preparatory academic program who participated in this research.

#### FUNDING INFORMATION

This research received no funding from any government, commercial, or non-profit organizations, and was conducted independently without financial support from external grants or sponsors.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

This journal uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT) to recognize individual author contributions, reduce authorship disputes, and facilitate collaboration.

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C : **C**onceptualization

M : **M**ethodology

So : **S**oftware

Va : **V**alidation

Fo : **F**ormal analysis

I : **I**nvestigation

R : **R**esources

D : **D**ata Curation

O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft

E : Writing - Review & **E**ding

Vi : **V**isualization

Su : **S**upervision

P : **P**roject administration

Fu : **F**unding acquisition

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors certify that they have no affiliations or involvement in any organization or entity with financial (e.g., honoraria, educational grants, speakers' bureaus, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, expert testimony, patent-licensing) or non-financial interests (e.g., personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge, or beliefs) related to the subject matter of this manuscript.

## DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study is available upon reasonable request. Any restrictions on data access, including confidentiality or ethical considerations, are clearly outlined.





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