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Teachers with Multiple Jobs: A Preliminary Typology on the Basis of Estonian Teachers' Life Stories

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Abstract

In many fields, the percentage of professionals having one or more jobs in addition to their full-time primary job is increasing worldwide. With numerous members earning relatively modest salaries, teachers are a professional group among the most affected by this tendency. Traditionally, “moonlighting” (the commonly used term for having an additional job) is considered to be highly problematic in terms of a teacher’s ability to fulfil their teaching responsibilities. However, little attention has been paid to the potential that “teacher-moonlighters” could have in contributing to school life by using their out-of-school work experience. This article introduces a small-scale narrative study with teachers from Estonia and proposes a preliminary typology of teachers having multiple jobs. Providing examples from narrative life history interviews, it is argued that certain types of teachers have the potential to enrich school life. Two dimensions appeared to be most indicative for categorizing teachers with multiple jobs: “permanence” and “self-actualization through multiple jobs.” The researchers argue that these dimensions are promising for further discussion of teacher career patterns in which multiple jobs can be seen not as obstructive, but as contributing to teachers’ professionalism.

Keywords: Estonian teachers, multiple jobs, life stories.



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Introduction

Having multiple jobs and several income-generating activities is an increasing trend. Concerning the teaching profession, research on this topic has increased, particularly over the last 20 years, and covers an increasing number of countries (e.g., Kimmel & Conway, 2001; Timothy & Nkwama, 2017).

For several decades following the initial classical studies on teachers' moonlighting appeared (Guthrie, 1969), the phenomenon was overwhelmingly described as counterproductive to teacher professionalism. Ballou (1995) referred to several studies that depicted "moonlighting" – the commonly used term for working an extra job – as detracting from teachers' professionalism, which led to disrespect for "moonlighters" in the eyes of their colleagues. Ballou (1995) further claimed that moonlighting was a complex phenomenon and that there was no "typical moonlighter."

In the current study, the researchers introduce the results of a small-scale narrative study with Estonian teachers who have held multiple jobs. Professional life story interviews with eight teachers enabled a preliminary typology of teachers with multiple jobs to be developed based on two dimensions: *permanence* and *self-actualization*. The life history methodology used in this study relies upon the research tradition initiated and developed by Goodson (2013).

Terminology

Guthrie's original definition (1969) of "moonlighters" included both those teachers who were employed outside of the school and those who earned income through self-employment. Since Guthrie's study, researchers have continued to refer to the phenomenon of teachers having jobs outside school as "moonlighting" (e.g., Ballou, 1995; Pearson, Carroll, & Hall, 1994; Raffel & Groff, 1990; Timothy & Nkwama, 2017). More recently, and possibly following the increasing trend of having multiple jobs (Averett, 2001), less stigmatized terms have started being applied such as "outside job" (McGinley, 1979), "multiple job holdings" (Dickey, Watson, & Zangelidis, 2010; Kimmel & Conway, 2001; Raffel & Groff, 1990), "multiple employment" (Timothy & Nkwama, 2017), "multiple careers," "slash careers," and "slash jobs" (Alboher, 2012).

Teachers with multiple jobs

The percentage of teachers having multiple jobs is difficult to estimate, since it is still an under-researched area (Timothy & Nkwama, 2017), and in some countries (e.g., Germany, Greece and the Netherlands) it is not even a relevant topic. One large meta-analysis (Winters, 2010) showed that the percentage of teachers with additional jobs varied from 15% to 65% in the US. In Tanzania, for example, 39% of teachers had secondary income-generating activities (Timothy & Nkwama, 2017). Given that moonlighting is frequently a short-term enterprise, the proportion of "moonlighters" might actually be higher than commonly perceived (Kimmel & Conway, 2001). According to Raffel and Groff (1990), 17% of moonlighting teachers held managerial positions in their out-of-school jobs, 37% were active in education-related jobs, and 14% held sales positions. In African countries, the preferred secondary activities of urban teachers included trade and urban agriculture (Timothy & Nkwama, 2017).

Guthrie's original study (1969) also revealed that having an additional income-generating activity tended to be continuous (for 75% of "moonlighters").

Previous studies have confirmed that the major reason for "moonlighting" was teachers' low salaries and poor financial circumstances (Dickey et al., 2010; Timothy & Nkwama, 2017; Wisniewski & Kleine, 1984). However, some research has shown that teachers do not actually moonlight less when their salaries rise (Ballou, 1995), and no significant correlation was found between teachers' salaries and the percentage of moonlighting teachers (Raffel & Groff, 1990). Some evidence suggests that teachers' additional jobs often pay less than the teaching job and that the skills required for these jobs are often unrelated to – and lower than – teachers' qualifications, e.g., a college degree is not required (Averett, 2001).

Besides financial reasons, moonlighting can be motivated by the teacher's wish to develop certain interests or even by the intention of leaving the teaching profession altogether (Wisniewski & Kleine, 1984). Also it has been claimed that holding multiple jobs enables teachers to acquire various transferable skills, to avoid frustration from having only one kind of work, or to improve their general skillset such as time-management and negotiation skills (Alboher, 2012).

In terms of the differences between female and male teacher-moonlighters, data from the 1990's suggested that male teachers tend to have additional jobs more often than female teachers (Ballou, 1995; Raffel & Groff, 1990).

Raffel and Groff (1990) proposed two models of teachers' moonlighting: the *constraining* and the *constructive* models. Constraining or "reluctant" moonlighters are primarily motivated by financial factors. They usually work at non-professional positions and the additional jobs negatively affect their motivation to continue working as teachers. Constructive or "willing" moonlighters are primarily motivated by self-development and are seeking a change away from the teaching profession. They often work at positions that require a high level of qualifications, and the additional work practice often positively affects their motivation to continue working as teachers (Raffel & Groff, 1990).

Results regarding the effects of moonlighting on teachers' classroom performance have been inconsistent (e.g., Ballou, 1995). Some evidence suggests that moonlighting does not significantly affect the amount of homework that moonlighting teachers assign to their students (Ballou, 1995). Teachers who moonlight devote only one hour less per week to their teaching duties than teachers who do not moonlight (Winters, 2010). However, moonlighting tends to increase teachers' psychological and physical fatigue and reduces the time available for reading, reflection and intellectual growth (Ballou, 1995; Raffel & Groff, 1990). Only 9% of Raffel and Groff's respondents (1990) reported that moonlighting impaired their teaching performance, but considerably more teachers reported negative impacts on their moral and mental health (27%), physical wellbeing (33%), and reading and private studies (39%).

Estonian context

Estonia is a north-east European country with roughly 1.3 million inhabitants. In the 2016-2017 school year, a total of 14,581 teachers worked in Estonian schools of general education. Of them, 14% were male. Almost 50% were at least 50 years of age, and 45% were part-time teachers (Lillemägi, 2018). Around 32% of the full-time teachers also held supplementary jobs: 14% were at the same school and 18% out of school. These results were based on the answers of 8.2% of the total teacher population in schools of general education

in Estonia, but the sample also included teachers who taught general subjects in vocational schools (e.g., mother tongue, Math, or English) (Ernst & Young Baltic AS, 2016). It was also reported that 53% of teachers with additional jobs out of school worked in the field of education, 18% in the arts, entertainment and spare time affairs, 37% as high-level specialists, 15% as managers, 15% as specialists, and 13% as officials of some kind (Ernst & Young Baltic AS, 2016).

Recently, teachers' salaries have noticeably increased in Estonia. The average salary and the national minimum marginal salary were 49% higher in 2016 than in 2012, and as of 2016 the average salary of teachers was higher than the general average salary (Serbak, 2017). The student-teacher ratio has ranged between 11.9 (in 2012) and 12.6 (in 2007), stabilizing at 12.4 by 2016 (NationMaster, 2018.). Together with Belgium, Germany, and Latvia, Estonia is among the countries with the lowest number of students per teacher (NationMaster, 2018). Maintaining this positive trend places a great deal of pressure on the financing of teaching positions.

During the Soviet era, from 1944 until 1991, work positions for teachers were guaranteed by the state. Since the restoration of Estonian Independence in 1991, newly graduated teachers have had to find their own work positions (Mikser, Kärner, & Krull, 2016). As the current study's respondents all started their teaching careers during the Soviet era (in the 1980's), all of them originally had secure work places.

Since regaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia and other former Soviet Eastern European countries have undergone major social, political and economic transformations that have substantially affected education and teachers (Cerych, 1999). Among the consequences of these transformations have been an enormous growth in teacher autonomy as a declared policy aim, but also a rapid increase in teacher responsibility for centrally defined learning outcomes of their students, which has generated a feeling of excessive external control and insecurity among teachers (Erss et al., 2014; Mikser et al., 2016). This insecurity may have caused teachers to consider "moonlighting" as a way of decreasing the risks of being stigmatized or left unemployed.

Methodology

The aim of this study was to understand the meaning and importance that teachers place in their work-life narratives on jobs that they have held in addition to their full-time teaching jobs.

Eleven interviews were conducted with eight teachers. With three teachers, second interviews were also conducted since they did not sufficiently cover the topic of their additional jobs in their initial interview. Although the number of participants was low, they were selected very carefully based on the following criteria:

- Their primary job was teaching;
- They had at least 25 years of teaching experience – to minimize the risk that the primary reason for holding additional jobs was to change careers (Wisniewski & Kleine, 1984);
- They had or have had multiple jobs during their teaching careers.

Seeking appropriate respondents, a database from a previously conducted survey study (Mikser & Goodson, 2017) was employed. A total of 888 Estonian teachers from schools of general education completed questionnaires, and 489 of the respondents were found to have

had teaching experience of more than 21 years. A total of fifty-two teachers met the criteria for being interviewed. Eight teachers (five women and three men) who met all the criteria were invited to be interviewed. Three of the respondents taught Music, one taught Literature, one taught Math, two taught History and one taught Industrial Arts and Physics.

For the analysis, the respondents were designated with a six digit moniker s (e.g., 101M01). The first three digits show the serial number of the respondent (starting from 101 to eliminate the loss of numbers starting with 0); the fourth digit indicates the participant's gender (M = Male; F = Female); and, the last two numbers denotes the number of the interview conducted with the same respondent (either 01 or 02).

In order to achieve the goal of the study, life history methodology was applied, as developed by Goodson (2013). The work-life narratives focused on professional life histories, applying interviews as a data collection method (Goodson, 2010).

In the first phase, one-to-one interviews were conducted with the participant teachers, who were asked to tell their personal life stories, including how they had become teachers, with minimal intervention by the interviewers (Goodson, 2013). The interviews, conducted in the Estonian language, lasted from 50 to 150 minutes and were recorded, transcribed and sent to participants for confirmation (Goodson & Gill, 2011). The interviewers' focus on multiple jobs was not disclosed, so the importance of the respondents' additional jobs could be discussed freely.

In the second phase, additional interviews with three of the teachers were conducted to cover the additional job topic more deeply.

The principles of thematic analysis were applied in the analysis, combining the deductive and inductive approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). In order to achieve the study's aim of uncovering the meaning and importance of the teachers' additional jobs, the researchers considered it appropriate to analytically predetermine three themes that were searched for in each respondent's narrative: (1) personal life, (2) teaching life, and (3) additional job life. (A roughly similar division had been employed in previous studies, for example by McAlpine (2016)) Each respondent's periodization of these three themes emerged inductively, without being elicited by the authors. For each respondent, a graphic grid was then completed for further analysis, with the three themes listed on the horizontal axis and the periods listed in the vertical axis (see Table 1).

Table 1. Themes in a teacher's (101M) life story

Year	(1) Personal life	(2) Teaching life at school	(3) Additional job life
1970	1970-1979 studying at a boarding school (R) 1979 mother died		
1980			1984 private Math tutor
1985	1986-1988 army service in the Soviet Union	1986 graduated as a Math teacher (TPU)	
1990		1988-2000 Math teacher at a general school (P)	1991-1994 Math expert at a national institute
2000		2000-2004 Math teacher in another general school (K)	

2005		2004 Math teacher at a third general school (L)	2005 compiling a school textbook
2010		2006 promotion to the position of senior teacher	
2015			2015 teacher in-service training at a university

Results

We first focused on the meaning and importance attributed by teachers to additional jobs from the perspective of their own professional careers. Although many respondents reported financial issues as their primary motive, the teachers also mentioned other benefits that over time became important motives for holding multiple jobs.

Analyzing the respondents' interviews, two main general dimensions appeared: (1) *permanence* of holding multiple jobs, and (2) *self-actualization* through the supplementary job. Combining these two dimensions, the data analysis enabled the researchers to distinguish between four types of teachers who had held multiple jobs (see Figure 1).

Permanence as a factor in holding multiple jobs

Holding multiple jobs varied from continuous working in two positions to short-term occasional jobs. Those teachers who started with multiple jobs in early stages of their teaching careers worked at multiple jobs continuously throughout their careers. Other teachers held their additional jobs only temporarily, and this served their short-term financial or social needs.

Teachers who continuously held additional jobs described them as integral parts of their professional careers. Teachers with only temporary additional jobs, on the contrary, tended to feel uncomfortable when talking about the additional jobs and seemed apologetic about having taken these jobs (see excerpt from 107F under Type II).

Self-actualization through multiple jobs

Some teachers held additional jobs that contributed to their professional development and self-realization. They described their additional jobs with pride, emphasizing their professional prominence, confirmed by their achievements outside of their school employment. Even though they still considered teaching to be important for their professional development, they regarded the experience of the additional job as also crucial to their development. They regarded their out-of-school professional experience as contributing to their school work practice. However, other teachers saw their additional jobs as occasional and not important for their professional development. At times, they considered their out-of-school jobs to be somewhat burdensome, but still necessary, as the jobs enabled them to continue working as teachers. In these cases, they considered teaching to be a prestigious job.

Preliminary typology of teachers with multiple jobs

Teachers mentioned many different jobs they had held such as a member of a municipal council, builder, insurance agent, private teacher, textbook author, national examiner and head of a local election committee. The additional jobs were placed into four different groups on the basis of the aforementioned dimensions (see Figure 1).

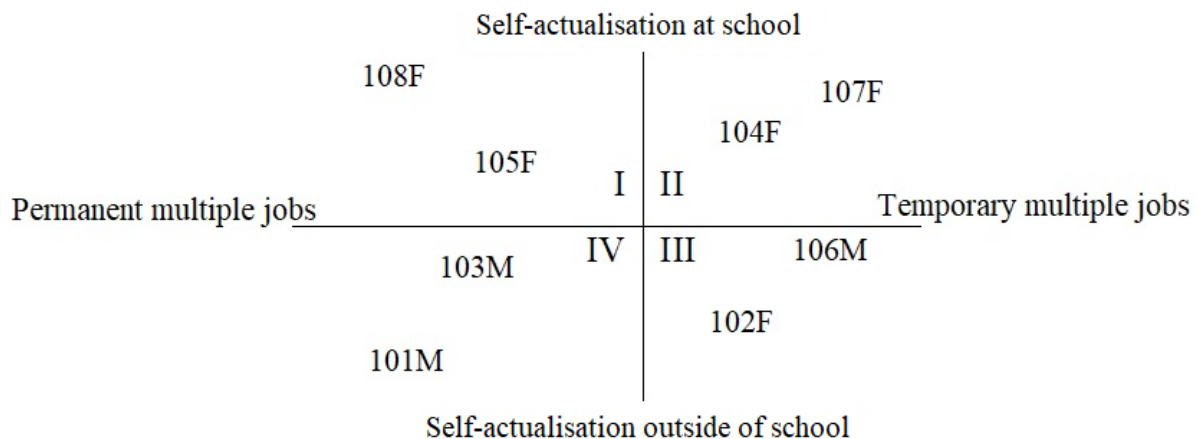


Figure 1. Four types of teachers with multiple jobs

Teachers holding multiple jobs permanently and found self-actualization at school

Teachers of the first type realized their potential at school. They took pride in their teaching and the achievements of their current and former students (e.g., examination and test results, and the careers of their students), but also in the teaching process (e.g., using new methods, creating learning tools and developing the learning environment). They had always held additional jobs in parallel with teaching. The additional job might be in the teaching field (e.g., a music teacher offering private lessons or conducting a choir), or not connected to teaching at all (e.g., leading a local election committee). Despite permanently holding additional jobs, these teachers identified themselves primarily with the teaching profession. They kept their additional jobs clearly separate from their professional teaching practice.

For example, one teacher (108F) proudly described challenges that she had successfully met at school, yet she had held several different supplementary jobs.

I have led two classes simultaneously in this school six times. I'm a teacher because... I teach every day, teaching children. And I like the teaching process. Each day is so different; you come to school, and sometimes you are angry.... It is like a theatre, you are like on stage, it's like working in an improvisation theatre. School things are so different each day. /---/ I received an award –a big beautiful plate– for being the best subject teacher in the Republic of Estonia. I also ran a project and brought in project money for our school. /---/

After school, Russian-speaking students came to me and studied Estonian language in the evenings. I taught for hours. Just picked up some money from the Russian-speakers. It was an additional job. But now I... don't want to do that anymore. A human being does just as much as she can and as much as she is offered. When the job was offered, I took it! It's a job, it's money.

Being a teacher provided the teacher with the opportunity to prove her worth to others, and to feel respected. The main reason for her having other jobs was the need to earn more money, and she took on any available work that was offered.

Teachers who found self-actualization at school and held multiple jobs temporarily

Teachers of this type were mainly satisfied with the teaching profession and felt that it offered self-actualization. However, they had temporarily held supplementary jobs in order to meet certain internal or external needs. The internal needs could be related to teachers' desire to do something different to "prove" to themselves that they were able to do so. The external needs usually resulted from structural changes in a school or the surrounding social environment. As soon as the situation stabilized, these teachers normally resumed teaching as their sole professional activity. One teacher (107F) belonging to this category described three different situations of having held additional jobs.

It was in the 90's, it was a time of societal transition... our salary was so small, it really was small... And at home my mum and dad were retired and... there was such a lack of money; that's why I did it [taking an additional job]. It was better paid than my main job. I taught some special classes in Estonian language as a second language. If you are a full-time teacher at school then it is not possible. But at that time, the workload at school had decreased, and teachers struggled to keep full-time jobs. So I gave some lessons to other teachers, and found a job outside the school, because I was able to do that. I used my professional skills, and they paid more. When I had a full workload at school again, I quit teaching the other courses /---/. Now I still participate in the work of the state examination committee, as I plan to retire from teaching next year, and I don't have a full workload... So I'm ensuring some additional income for my future... after I'm retired.

Although the teacher had additional jobs, she was committed to teaching. She considered teaching as providing her *main salary*, and described the responsibility she had as a full-time teacher as not leaving time for additional jobs. She also said that she found additional jobs related to her teaching field (literature and language), with the possibility of using her expertise.

Teachers who held temporary additional jobs for self-actualization

The third type of teachers took additional jobs to actualize their potential, for self-satisfaction and to increase their sense of self-pride. They used their out-of-school experience to improve the school environment and their teaching methods, as well as to communicate with parents and integrate studies with everyday practice. Usually the temporary positions did not have pre-determined timeframes. Instead, they depended on the teacher's perceived readiness to stop working at the additional job should it turn out to be too exhausting, or should the job no longer become available. However, this out-of-school work experience always stayed with the teacher, and could turn out to be useful in many future work situations.

One interviewee (102F) found professional actualization in her out-of-school job as well as in her teaching at school. At the time of the interview, she was facing more professional challenges at school, although she appreciated the recognition received from previous out-of-school achievements. The teacher repeatedly referred to the recognition from out-of-school activities, and the challenges she met:

We were a results-oriented children's music corporation. We were expected to show results and... and we did. One [job] complemented the other. It was awfully difficult, I can say now, very hard, but at the time I didn't notice it. It was... it worked out... it was even... it was fun, yeah, and it was a pleasure.

Yet she also described situations with pupils at school she felt proud of:

I was working at that time in one general school, and we also had... good singers, and one time we went on a concert tour and to a competition, because the parents insisted on it. We won one competition in Belgium. /---/ We put on a children's opera last spring at the school I work at, and it was like... all of the children participated... in the roles that suited them best. And then... I taught music through games. /---/ It was easy to work with those gifted children in a private club, but if you have these kinds of students... just the kind that show up in the morning... To do anything with them... it's like receiving an award... [laughing].

She described how she used her previous out-of-school experience in the school of general education, and how she applied similar strategies there to create the learning environment she wanted to work in.

Teachers with multiple permanent jobs and receiving self-actualization outside of school

The fourth type of teachers had always had supplementary employment, which often started during their preservice studies. They tended to treat their teaching job at school more casually, and considered the out-of-school experience to be more important. However, they described themselves as demanding teachers who required discipline and respect from their students. They described their accomplishments related to their professional careers as connected with supplementary out-of-school activities. Hence, their out-of-school self-actualization also made them self-confident in their teaching, as they worked in the same field both in school and out of school (e.g., Math and Industrial Arts).

One Math teacher (101M) who described his multiple jobs as follows:

For me, it began in the 80's... I think in 1984. I was a laboratory technician in physics. Then they offered me some courses on automatics at the third level. In that sense I had this teaching experience... I got it from this high school. True, as a student, I also gave private lessons. But in the 90's, the institute of pedagogical research was launched, and the position of Math specialist was announced, and that was interesting to me, because it was like a new curriculum. It was interesting to me, but I retained my main job at school... I mean, it was a part-time position, but I had almost a full workload at that time. /---/ So, today I'm a member of the local municipal council. I still run in-service courses. I know one Mathematician and we have written a textbook together. I also did different things for Tiger Leap.

Teachers like him tended to compare themselves to peers from other professions. They talked about their students in terms of the jobs that the students could potentially hold in the future (e.g., a low-paid casual worker *versus* a well-paid bank manager), given the students' current behavior and attitudes towards learning. Altogether, the teachers mentioned many parallels with their current students' future lives.

Conclusion and Discussion

Having multiple jobs is an increasing trend worldwide, including in the teaching profession. This makes knowledge regarding the essence and side effects of this phenomenon increasingly important. Previous studies have shown that prejudices related to teachers' holding multiple jobs are not all that relevant. The aim of the current study was to understand the meaning and importance that teachers attribute in their work-life narratives to jobs held in parallel with their full-time teaching jobs.

In this small-scale narrative study, two dimensions were detected to distinguish between different types of teachers who currently or previously had held multiple jobs: *permanence* and *self-actualization*. Along these dimensions, the researchers were able to distinguish between four types of teachers. In professional life-story interviews, experienced teachers described their additional jobs.

It is argued that the jobs held by different types of teachers might have different influences on their teaching practice. Teachers with multiple temporary jobs who experienced self-actualization outside the school (Type III) transferred their experiences to the school most often. They adapted and designed the learning environment by following models received through their out-of-school work experience. They offered powerful potential that schools could use to introduce new models and innovative practices into the everyday school environment.

The strongest connection between the school environment and everyday life was revealed by teachers with multiple permanent jobs (Types I and IV). These teachers found self-actualization from school often placed a higher value on teaching, and they were more enthusiastic about engaging their students in out-of-school social activities. They were also eager to meet new challenges at school. Those teachers who found self-actualization from their out-of-school jobs tended to guide their students to strictly follow regulations in the classroom context, emphasizing the potential connections between their students' current attitudes and their future professional lives. These teachers' potential could be more useful in filling the gap between studies and *real life*.

For teachers with multiple temporary jobs who achieved self-actualization at school (Type II), supplementary job experience seemed to be most important factor in increasing their self-confidence as teachers (i.e., the additional jobs enriched their teaching), but also in strengthening personality traits (i.e., the additional jobs increased their self-confidence). These teachers also served as role models for their students in becoming more self-confident. The experience of such teachers could be used more effectively by providing them with more challenges and varied tasks in order to fulfil their potential.

Of course, narrative research has its limitations (Goodson & Gill, 2011). While constructing their stories, the respondents might describe themselves as they perceived they were expected to be seen, and not as they really were. Looking back at the respondents' memories, the given meaning might have changed by the time of their being interviewed (McAlpine, 2016).

The findings constitute a feasible starting point for further studies and discussions about the phenomenon of having multiple jobs, an experience that impacts an increasing number of people.

Notes

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