

Transition Experiences of First-Year Initial Teacher Education Students: Barriers and Enablers

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Acknowledgements:

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Transitions, Resilience & Wellbeing into Caring Professions



- **Overarching Research Purpose**

- Transitions, wellbeing and resilience experiences of students during education and beginning years of their caring profession

- **Data Collection Waves**

- 1st (Oct-Dec 2019): Essay assignment, interviews, survey
- 2nd (Oct-Dec 2020): Interviews, survey

- **Data analysis**

- 1st Wave: Coding and analysis reported in this presentation.



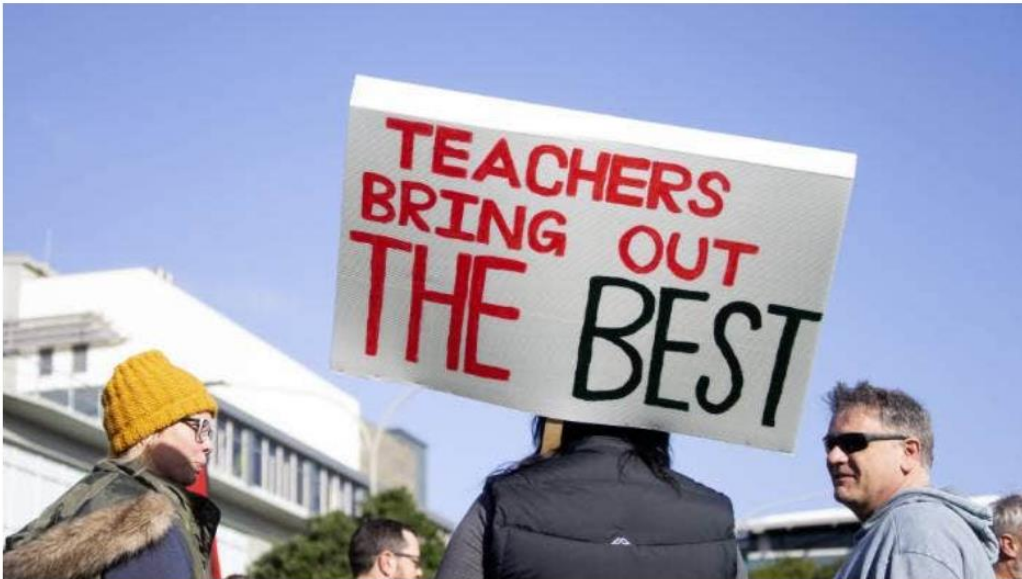
Teacher Shortage in NZ

stuff

national

Covid-19 teacher return no silver bullet for overstretched sector, says union

Laura Wiltshire · 17:33, Oct 29 2020



“We certainly have had people come back as a result of Covid, but what we are actually talking about is additional staffing coming into the education system to be able to meet the needs of children. It isn’t just about being able to fill the current gaps.”

- Teacher Shortage
 - Still not fixed by Covid-19 pandemic
- 2019 Government one-off \$9.5 million
 - To address teacher supply
 - Recruit new graduates into teacher training
 - Support more teacher graduates into permanent teaching positions
- Covid-19 exacerbated teacher shortage
 - Inability to recruit foreign teachers (e.g. Australia, UK, South Africa)
 - Bigger MoE focus on recruiting new teacher trainees
- Raises considerations for ITE Providers
 - How to attract, retain, support students

First-Year Transitions

- More is known around university student transitions generally:
 - Great personal investment
 - Significant social displacement
 - Financial implications
 - Withdrawals most commonly occur during first semester, even first 6 weeks
- Less is known about pre-service teacher transitions specifically
 - Preparing 'profession-ready' graduates
 - Notions of 'readiness'
 - Transition into the classroom/learning space

Research Question

Research Purpose:

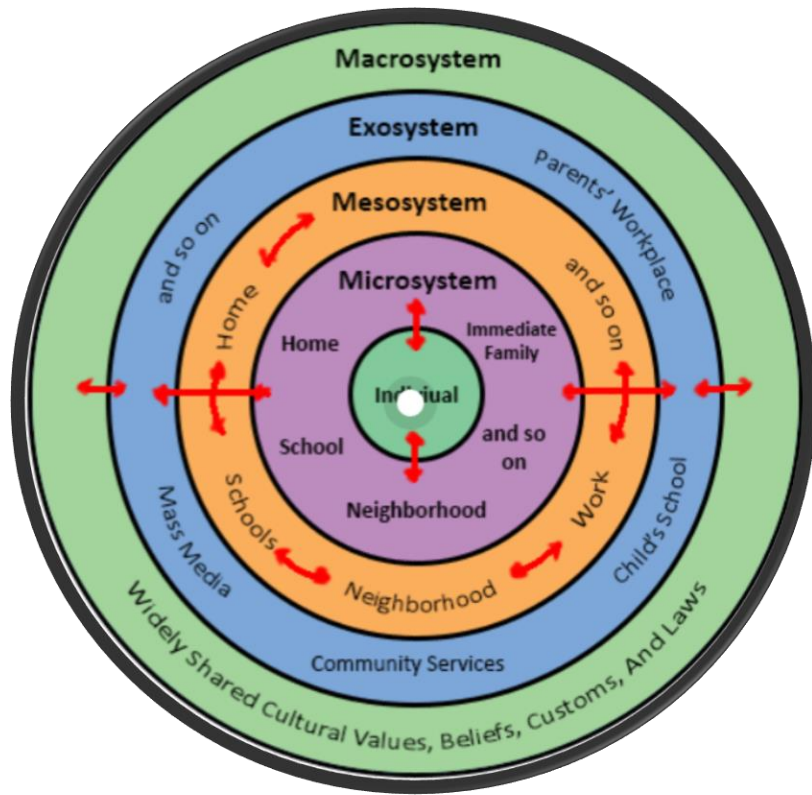
To gain an understanding of factors affecting how individual students adapted at the start of their programme

Research Question:

What transition enablers and barriers do pre-service teacher education students identify as significant at the beginning of the first year of their undergraduate programme?



Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory



Context	Description	Examples of application
Individual	Attributes and characteristics of the person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences • Resources • Temperament • Motivation • Agency
Microsystem	The immediate contexts occupied by the individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home • Friendship groups • University
Mesosystem	Connections between two or more microsystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home–university • University–friendship groups
Exosystem	Contexts the individual does not directly occupy, but which impact on the individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood • Mass media • Government agencies
Macrosystem	Broad socio-economic, cultural and political context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws • Customs & traditions • Social & cultural values
Chronosystem	The idea that human ecology changes over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External (e.g. separation from parents) or internal (e.g. physiological changes as an individual grows older)

Data Collection & Analysis

- **Phase 1 Ethical Consent**

- Invited 60 ITE students
- 24 students elected to participate.

- **Transitions Assignment**

- Compulsory 'transitions assignment'
- Students invited to use Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory as a tool to identify barriers and enablers related to their personal transition into full-time study in the Bachelor of Teaching Programme.
- Barriers were defined for students as factors that inhibit effective transitions
- Enablers were defined as opportunities that facilitate effective transitions

- **Thematic Analysis**

- Identified emerging themes related to experiences within each of Bronfenbrenner's contexts.

- **Covid-19**

- Phase I data collection occurred pre-Covid-19.
- Our ongoing research seeks to make comparisons between this data set and the next which will include Covid-19 pandemic responses and consequences

Enablers for Students' Transitions into ITE Programme

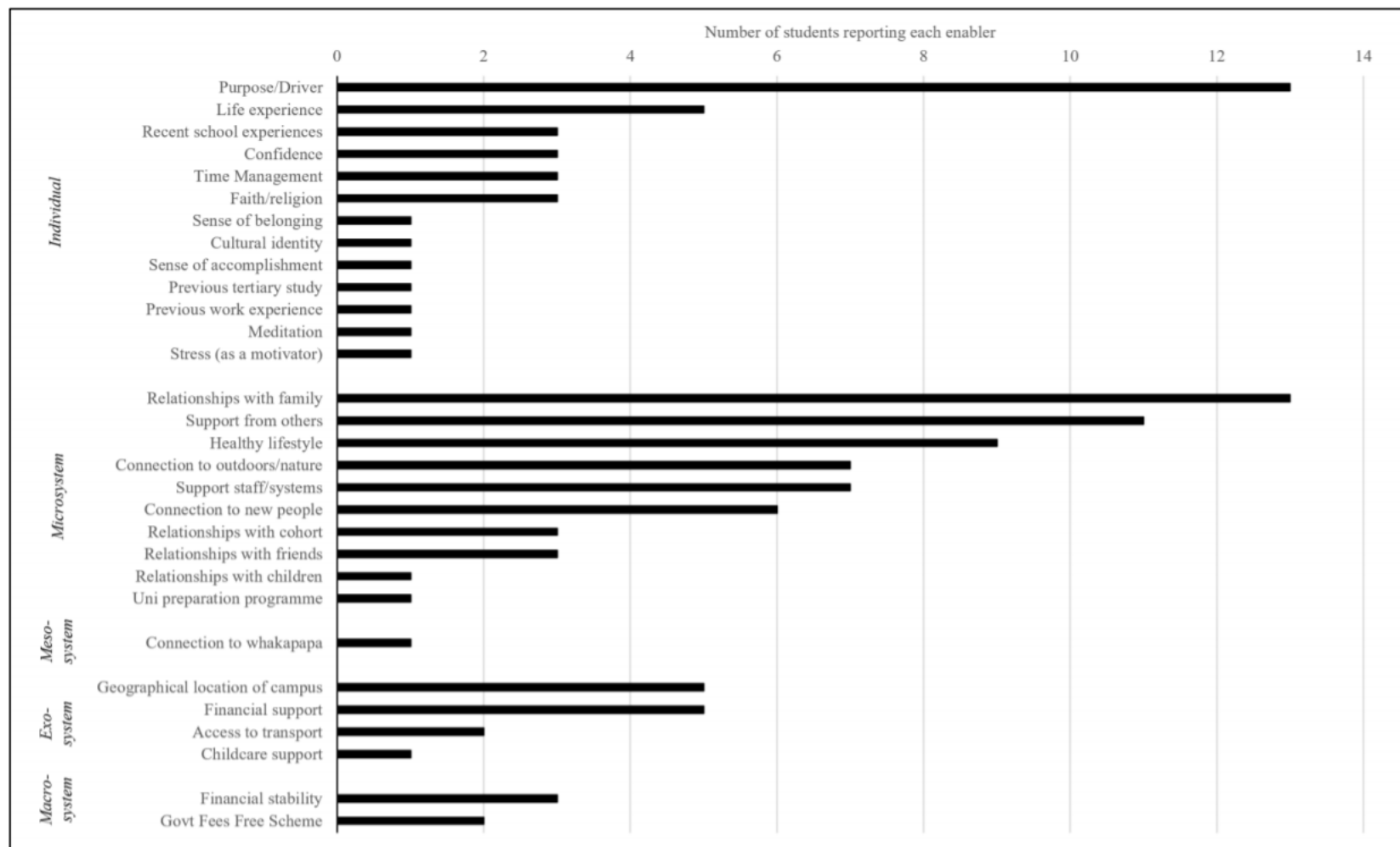


Figure 1. Enablers for Students' Transition into their ITE Programme

Findings: Enablers

Enablers

- Clustered around the individual and microsystem contexts
- Highlighted how a ‘strong sense of purpose’ and ‘supportive family relationships’ facilitate effective transition experiences.

“When I think of my spirituality, I view this as my ‘purpose’; my morals and view on the world...I’m extremely passionate...to be able to share knowledge and empower the younger generation...” [Participant A10]

“I come from a family of teachers and their own enthusiasm for their roles as teachers gave me the courage to make this change. They are ... the roots from which I have grown, and they continue to help me see how I can find my place in this new environment of university and then into teaching.” [Participant A15]

Barriers for Students' Transitions into ITE Programme

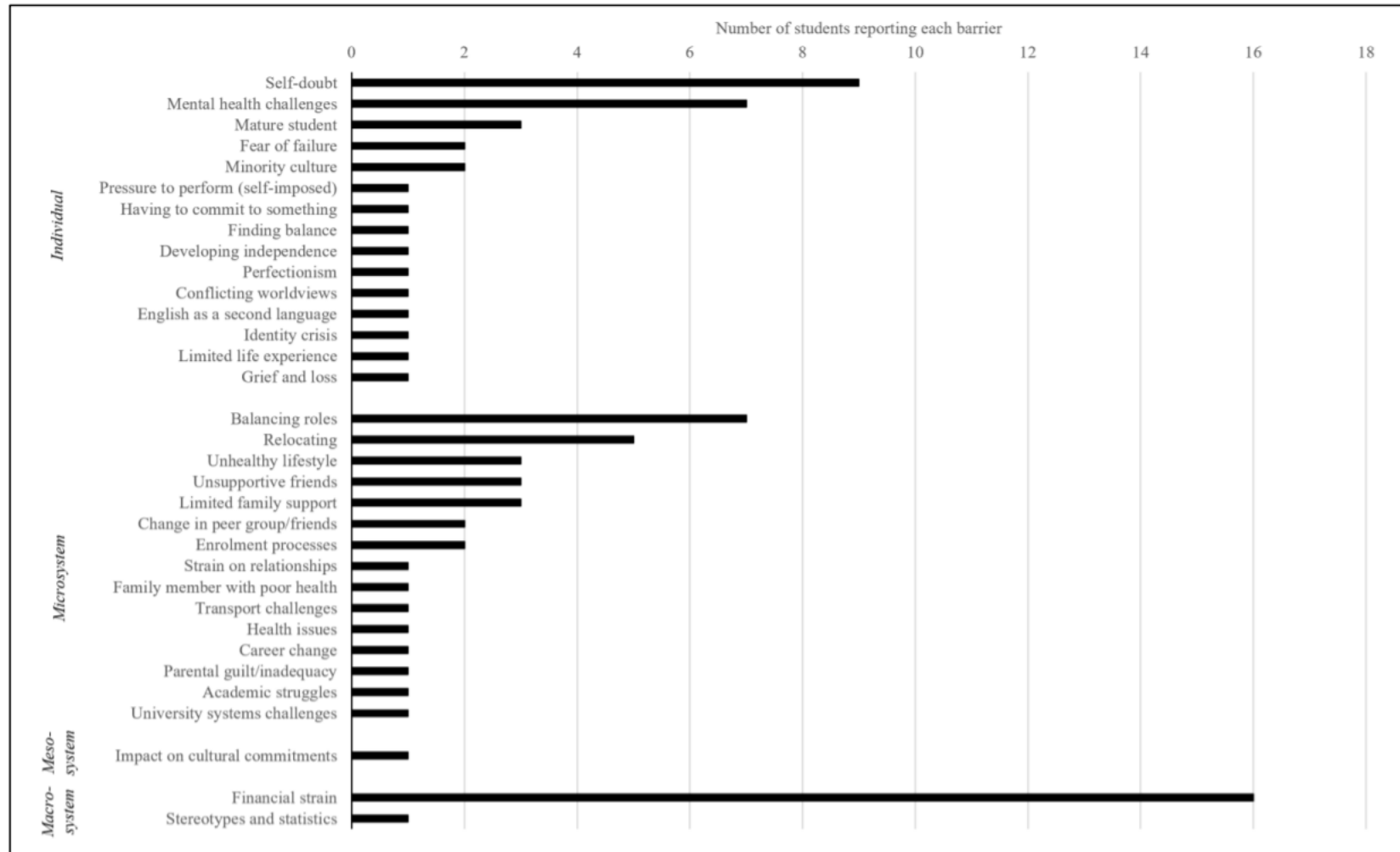


Figure 2. Barriers for Students' Transition into their ITE Programme.

Findings: Barriers

Barriers

- Clustered within the individual and microsystems
- Financial strain (attributed to the macrosystem context) also stood out as a significant transition barrier

“I really felt that psychologically I was overwhelmed with this immense pressure to find myself in this big wide world.” [Participant A3]

“I soon became stressed and over-emotional. I was thinking I couldn't do this, missed my family, and then found myself wanting to move back home where I felt safe and comfortable”. [Participant A22]

“Flatting (shared living)... costs a lot of money and I would just get by. I also lived on the opposite side of town, so gas was expensive and sometimes I didn't have enough money to come to class.” [Participant A7]

Additional Findings

- **Direct-School Leavers and Post-School Leavers**

- Illustrates complexities and variation among transition experiences related to life experience
- Life and/or previous work experience beyond school was reported as an enabler (6) and not having it was a barrier (1)
- Being a 'mature' student was a barrier (3)
- Recent school experiences was reported as an enabler (3)

- **Connection to Nature**

- Microsystem level findingfinding of a meaningful connection to nature and the outdoors (reported by 7 students).
- Perhaps association with campus location and region?

Implications



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Individual contexts: place to exercise agency



Financial Implications



Sense of Purpose

Acknowledging Students' Lived Realities



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Imagery Acknowledgements

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