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Second career teachers: Job satisfaction, job stress, and the role of self-efficacy

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HIGHLIGHTS

- We examined job well-being in second career teachers 7–10 years after graduation.
- Second career teachers have higher self-efficacy beliefs than first career teachers.
- Second career teachers report higher job satisfaction than first career teachers.
- For second career teachers, self-efficacy is more relevant for job well-being.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates job satisfaction and stress in second career teachers (SCT) compared to first career teachers (FCT) and the role of self-efficacy in this context. Analyses are based on 297 teachers (35% SCT). SCT reported being highly satisfied and experiencing low levels of job stress. Moreover, *t*-tests revealed that SCT are more satisfied with their job than FCT. As the significant interaction self-efficacy and career path shows, self-efficacy has a higher impact on job stress in SCT than in FCT. Findings are discussed in terms of their relevance for the professional development of SCT.

1. Introduction

In the past decade, recurrent shortages of qualified teachers have been a relevant and widely discussed topic in the media as well as in the field of teacher research (e.g., Borman & Dowling, 2008). Many countries have adopted specific measures in order to meet this challenge and attract skilled candidates for the teaching profession. One widespread approach has been the implementation of specific access paths to the teaching profession designed to attract working people who consider teaching as a second career. While some research has been conducted on the professional development of second career teachers during teacher education and career entry, little is known about their further development and careers, the conditions that foster their professional development and their retention in or attrition from the teaching profession. The current study aims to address this research gap by focusing on job satisfaction and job stress of second career teachers several years after graduation from teacher education in Switzerland and by exploring the role of self-efficacy beliefs in this context. Gaining profound insights into these relationships is crucial since job satisfaction and stress influence teaching effectiveness (Kokkinos, 2007). It is also highly relevant because job satisfaction and stress indicate how well teachers can handle job demands. Thus, examining job satisfaction and stress in second career teachers reveals whether investments made to attract working people are well spent.

In the next sections, we will briefly outline the current state of research in the four areas that are most relevant for our research questions: Job satisfaction, job stress, self-efficacy and second career teachers. Before describing the specifics of our study, we will explain the theoretical framework model used as a guideline for our analyses.

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1.1. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as "the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs" (Spector, 1997, p. 2) or as the "state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met" (Evans, 1997, p. 833). Evans suggests two distinct components of job satisfaction as possible sources of a sense of personal achievement: job comfort and job fulfillment. There are several theoretical models explaining the factors that lead to high job satisfaction in the teaching profession (e.g., Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Lent & Brown, 2006). Although these models differ in detail, there is consensus in the literature that job satisfaction is influenced by external factors such as work conditions as well as internal factors such as self-efficacy beliefs.

Despite their reputation of being an occupational group that is especially prone to stress and strain (Rudow, 1999), many teachers report being satisfied with their profession (Klusmann, Kunter, Trautwein, Luedtke, & Baumert, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). According to the international TALIS survey (OECD, 2014), an average of 91% of teachers reports being satisfied with their job, by and large. As Skaalvik and Skaalvik conclude (2015), the daily interactions with pupils, the diversity of tasks, the collaboration among the teaching staff as well as professional autonomy are named as primary sources of satisfaction. However, there is a range of factors that has been shown to influence the extent to which teachers are satisfied with their jobs. Teachers of students with many behavioral and emotional problems report lower job satisfaction (e.g., Emery & Vandenberg, 2010; OECD, 2014). Classroom stress and instructional self-efficacy seem to play a role as well: Job satisfaction decreases with increasing classroom stress while high instructional strategies self-efficacy was associated with greater job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Empirical evidence suggests that teacher satisfaction is an important determinant of occupational success and teacher retention (e.g., Ingersoll, 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014) and – from a general organizational psychology perspective – job satisfaction is one of the strongest correlates of job performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001).

1.2. Job stress

Lazarus (1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) transactional stress model has been used as basis for many studies investigating stress in the workplace. It was adapted to a theoretical model of teacher stress by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978). Both models point out that subjective perception and appraisal processes mediate the relationship between situational demands and the individual's stress reaction. In this context, stress is defined as a negative affect resulting from working as a teacher (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978), especially when the situations and demands are perceived as potentially exceeding the individual's abilities to cope (Otto, 1986). Although other models conceptualize stress as potentially positive, by adopting the form of eustress (e.g., Nelson & Simmons, 2003) the understanding of stress in everyday life as well as in the research tends to focus on the distress component. The latter reflects the above-mentioned undesirable mismatch of demands and resources, which has negative consequences for individuals as well as organizations (e.g., Bradley, 2014).

The appraisal of work stressors is determined by the teacher's individual characteristics and previous experiences but also by environmental factors such as available coping resources and workload (Košir, Tement, Licardo, & Habe, 2015; Rudow, 1999). Thus, the demands of a teaching position can be perceived as burdensome or merely challenging, depending on contextual factors as well as social and personal resources. With a view to the consequences likely to result from the experience of stress, high stress and strain are related to lower levels of job satisfaction, to a higher risk for teacher attrition (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014) and if persisting over a long period of time they can result in burnout (e.g., Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). Besides, job stress not only affects teachers' well-being but is also inversely related to teacher effectiveness (Kokkinos, 2007).

1.3. Self-efficacy beliefs

A fairly large body of research has been devoted to the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on teachers' professional development and job well-being (e.g., Kleinsasser, 2014; Saleem & Shah, 2011). Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy beliefs as an individual's conviction about his or her capabilities to accomplish a task when faced with a challenge. Mastery experiences are thought to be one of the most important sources of self-efficacy beliefs. This applies to general self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) as well as to domain-specific beliefs such as teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Teacher self-efficacy is defined as a teacher's perceived competence to cope with challenges and difficulties accumulated within the teacher profession (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). While repeated experiences of success, regardless of the domain, enhance self-efficacy beliefs in general, the mastery of specific tasks fosters the additional development of domain-specific efficacy beliefs. When studied over the life course, general self-efficacy has been shown to be one of the more stable aspects of personality (Gecas, 2003) growing slowly with accumulating competence and typically forming a curvilinear pattern with a rise in young adulthood, a peak in middle age and a decline towards the later years of life (Gurin & Brim, 1984). Self-efficacy beliefs in teachers are influenced by many factors such as years of professional experience, challenging classroom circumstances, aspects of school climate and cooperation in the school team (OECD, 2014).

There is ample empirical evidence that general as well as teacher-specific self-efficacy beliefs are relevant to the perception of teachers' job stress and strain (e.g., Høigaard, Giskeb, & Sundslic, 2012), job satisfaction (Rudow, 1999; Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015) and students' academic achievement (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006). High self-efficacy beliefs are also considered a key factor in teacher resilience (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011) and inversely related to burnout (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014). The social cognitive career theory by Lent and colleagues (Lent & Brown, 2006; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) sees general self-efficacy as a central determinant for career choices, making it a promising conceptual framework for the study of second career teachers.

1.4. Second career teachers

As second career teachers are often specifically trained and employed to fill the recurring gaps between supply and demand in the classroom, they are in equal measure confronted with high hopes as well as misconceptions concerning their skills (Mayotte, 2003; Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). Some empirical data suggest that career switchers' previous training and career experiences are reflected in desirable qualifications and skills such as more pronounced intrinsic motivations for teaching (Freidus, 1994; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Williams & Forgasz, 2009; Zuzovsky & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2014), higher communication skills and empathy towards pupils and parents (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991) as well as a greater interest in further education and professional development (Weinmann-Lutz, Ammann, Soom, & Pfäffli, 2006). At the same time, other results emphasize the problems that career

switchers are facing as part of their transition to a new professional environment. For instance, second career teachers report frequent feelings of frustration because they have underestimated the demands of their new profession (Freidus, 1994). Furthermore, they have been found to be less effective in teaching certain subjects (Boyd et al., 2011). In addition, second career teachers do not seem to always receive the support they need due to their age and the widespread notion of teacher education programs that their experiences would translate automatically into skills relevant to teaching (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991). Overall, most studies looking at the way second career teachers cope with work-related challenges and stressors agree that, due to their earlier work experiences, they bring valuable skills and knowledge into the teaching profession (for an overview, see Tigchelaar et al., 2008 or Williams, 2013). However, the advantage in work and life experiences, which is characteristic for second career teachers, does not automatically transfer into better teaching skills. It can only condense into a professional repertoire if reflected upon and purposefully implemented in the classroom (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991; Mayotte, 2003).

According to Lent and colleagues, individuals with highly pronounced self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to change their career (Lent et al., 1994), which in turn implies that second career teachers might have higher self-efficacy beliefs than first career teachers. Indeed, Weinmann-Lutz et al. (2006) found significantly higher general and teacher self-efficacy beliefs in first term teacher education students with previous careers compared to their first-career peers. However, to the authors' knowledge, it has not been investigated whether these differences persist after graduation from teacher education.

Regarding job satisfaction, empirical findings on second career teachers are sparse. Teacher education students with a previous career show more intrinsic motivation for teaching and the teaching profession than first career teacher education students (Freidus, 1994; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Resta, Huling, & Rainwater, 2001; Zuzovsky & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2014). Since motivation is related to job stress and job satisfaction (Beltman et al., 2011), it is conceivable that second career teachers might show less stress and higher satisfaction. To the authors' knowledge, there is only one study that has investigated the difference between second and first career teachers with regard to job satisfaction (Joller-Graf, 2000). It shows that second career teachers are actually more satisfied with their job and show fewer intentions to leave the teacher profession than first career teachers.

In sum, although they form an important recruitment pool for the teaching profession, little is known about second career teachers' professional development and well-being. The literature addressing their professional development focuses mainly on teacher training and career entry. Yet, as Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) point out, it is important to gain insight into work experience and well-being at different stages of teachers' careers, since teacher attrition follows a U-shaped curve, with the highest attrition rates observed either in the first five years or late in the career. Especially for second career teachers, according to Ingersoll (2001), might be susceptible to a revolving door effect, it is important to learn more about their job well-being and the associated influencing factors at career stages that go beyond the very first steps as novice teachers.

1.5. Theoretical framework model

To establish a theoretical foundation for our research questions we drew on the model of teacher stress and strain by Rudow (1994), which is based on the model of teacher stress by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978). In Rudow's model, individual teacher's resources – which he calls „preconditions for action" – influence the perception and appraisal of specific job demands thus shaping the experience of job stress and/or job satisfaction and, eventually, influencing teacher attrition. A teacher's relevant individual resources are not only his or her pedagogical qualifications and professional knowledge but also his or her beliefs and motives, social skills, professional experience and physical as well as emotional well-being. These resources are shaped during teacher education but also throughout an individual's professional career. We slightly adapted Rudows' model for second career teachers, emphasizing the role of resources accumulated not only during teacher training or teaching itself but also during their previous professional biography and their individual career path, particularly previous work experience and knowledge as well as social support networks. The adapted model is presented in Fig. 1.

Based on the theoretical and empirical aspects concerning job stress, job satisfaction and the influence of self-efficacy beliefs as well as the current state of research concerning second career teachers, outlined above, we thus assume that teacher's individual resources that are relevant for the mastering of the professions' specific challenges are not only shaped by teacher training but also by the individual's whole biography. This is valid for both first and second career teachers. The experience, knowledge, beliefs and values acquired during a lifetime of learning and development

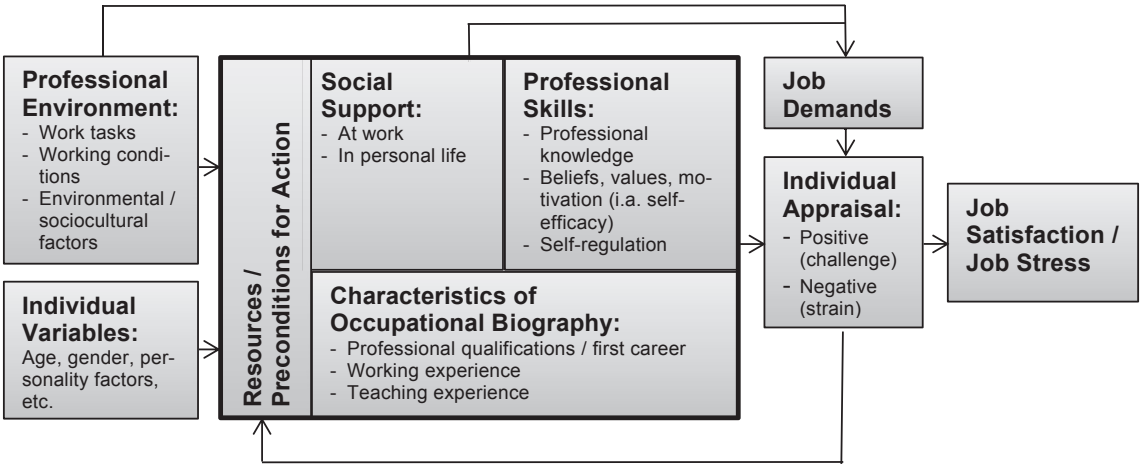


Fig. 1. Model of job stress and satisfaction in teachers, adapted from Rudow (1994), as well as Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978).

Table 1
Group differences between second and first career teachers in study variables.

Variable	Total sample		Second career teachers[a]		First career teachers[b]		t-tests for independent samples			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p*	*d*
age	34.22	6.56	39.10	8.47	31.55	2.69	115	−8.85	<.001	1.38
years experience	7.75	1.99	7.83	2.79	7.70	1.40	129	−0.45	.66	0.07
% employment	73.05	25.54	73.97	24.20	72.55	26.29	289	−0.45	.65	0.06
General self-efficacy	31.09	3.66	31.67	3.64	30.78	3.65	295	−2.00	<.05	0.24
Teacher self-efficacy	30.62	3.42	30.96	3.58	30.44	3.32	292	−1.26	.21	0.15
Job stress	2.07	0.50	2.00	0.53	2.11	0.48	294	1.80	.07	−0.22
Job satisfaction	4.37	0.93	4.51	0.98	4.29	0.89	292	−2.00	<.05	0.24

Note. [a]$n = 104$; [b]$n = 193$.

shape the resources, or preconditions in Rudow's terms, that influence how a teacher appraises and handles the daily job demands. This appraisal not only leads to negative or positive experiences concerning job demands, and thus to increasing job satisfaction or stress, but in turn also hones or impairs the available resources. The mastery of challenges can strengthen and/or expand resources, while the perception of job demands being stressful can weaken them.

1.6. The current study

In the current study, we address three research questions:

1. How do second career teachers experience job satisfaction and job stress?
2. Are there differences between first and second career teachers regarding job stress and job satisfaction?
3. What is the role of general and teacher self-efficacy in job stress and job satisfaction and does career path (first vs. second career teachers) moderate this relation?

Based on the empirical findings and the theoretical model outlined above, we assume that self-efficacy beliefs are significantly related to job well-being. In concrete terms, we hypothesize that second career teachers report less job stress and more job satisfaction than their first career colleagues due to higher general self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, general as well as teacher self-efficacy beliefs are positively associated with job satisfaction and job stress (Høigaard et al., 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Wang et al., 2015). Since general self-efficacy increases with age and sense of competence (Bandura, 1977; Gecas, 2003), and since career changes are associated with high levels of general self-efficacy (Lent et al., 1994; Weinmann-Lutz et al., 2006), second career teachers are likely to have higher general self-efficacy beliefs than first career teacher. We presume that this does not apply to teacher self-efficacy, as both surveyed groups (first and second career teachers alike) consist of trained teachers who completed identical teacher training programs and thus can be expected to have shared similar opportunities for teaching-related mastery experiences.

2. Methods

2.1. Sample

The data reported here were collected during the study Berufsleute als Lehrpersonen, conducted at the University of Teacher Education PHBern, Switzerland. The study was conducted according to the ethical standards of the University. Four cohorts of former teacher education students – a total of 912 people – were contacted again 7–10 years after graduation, either by email or letter. 400 participants took part in the survey, 297 of which were still working as teachers at the time of the survey. All following analyses presented here are based on the subsample of teachers who remained in the profession. Seventy-eight percent were female, 35% were second career teachers. The average professional experience as a teacher was 7.75 years ($SD = 1.99$) with an average teaching-related workload of 73% ($SD = 26$). Table 1 provides further information on sample characteristics.

Most second career teachers had obtained one professional qualification before entering the teacher education program (87%), 11% two, 3% three and 1% had more than three earlier professional qualifications. Ninety-four percent of the second career teachers had worked in their previous profession(s) with an average of 7.17 years of work experience ($SD = 7.87$). Six percent of second career teachers had not gained work-experience in their previous profession. With 28%, a majority of all earlier vocational qualifications came from the field of health, culture and education professions, according to the nomenclature of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (BFS, 2003). Another 26% of earlier qualifications came from management and administration, banking and the insurance industry, 17% from professions in the manufacturing and production industry and 11% from engineering and other technical professions, including the information technology field. The remaining 18% came from professions in the hospitality industry (6%), trade and traffic (5%), agriculture (2%) or construction business (2%). In 3% of the cases, the profession of second career teachers could not be categorized according to the nomenclature of the BFS.

2.2. Instruments[1]

2.2.1. Job stress

To measure job stress, we used the scale *job stress* ("Berufliche Belastung") by Enzmann and Kleiber (1989). This instrument assesses overload, internal blocking, dissatisfaction with work and problems with colleagues and supervisors. The scale was originally developed for specialists in psychosocial care. However, it has also been applied to teachers (e.g., Nitsche, Dickhäuser, Fasching, & Dresel, 2013; Schmitz, 2000). The scale comprises 15 items that are rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from „I absolutely do not agree" (= 1) to „I absolutely agree" (= 5). Examples of items are „I often feel overwhelmed with work" or „I experience serious time pressure at work". Since the scale was originally developed for specialists in psychosocial care, one item had to be adapted for use in the current study. In the original formulation "I often feel guilty towards my clients", the expression "clients" was changed to „students and/or parents". The scale can be used as one single scale or three subscales (dissatisfaction with work; excessive demand,

[1] All items are presented in Appendix A.

feeling of being monitored; Enzmann & Kleiber, 1989). Owing to the low Cronbachs'α of the subscale feeling of being monitored (α = .44) and in line with the study by Nitsche et al., we preferred the unidimensional approach. Thus, for following analyses a mean score of all items was calculated. The general scale job stress had a Cronbachs'α of .84, which is considered to be high. For their three wave study, Schmitz (2000) reported retest correlations between .70 and .75 over one year and significant correlations between the general scale job stress and the dimensions of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (.51 ≤ r ≤ .79).

2.2.2. Job satisfaction

We used the *general job satisfaction scale* ("Allgemeine Berufszufriedenheit") by Merz (1979). This scale aims at assessing the cognitive-emotional evaluation of the profession in general and not the satisfaction with specific work conditions or with a particular job appointment. The scale was specifically designed for teachers. It includes 12 items that are rated on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from „I absolutely do not agree" (= 1) to „I absolutely agree" (= 6). Examples of items are "I am proud of my occupation" or "For me, there is no better profession". For following analyses, mean scores were calculated as recommended by Merz (1979). In the current study, the scale had a Cronbachs'α of .93. Apart from the internal consistency of the scale (Cronbachs'α = .92), Merz (1979) also tested for split-half (r = .93) and retest (r = .92) reliability as well as validity. The scale highly correlated with Kunins' job satisfaction item (Kunin, 1955; r = .64) and the nine item SAZ scale for measuring work satisfaction (Fischer & Lück, 1972; r = .74).

2.2.3. Self-efficacy beliefs

Two scales were used to measure self-efficacy beliefs: The internationally established *general self-efficacy scale* by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1999) and the *teacher self-efficacy scale* by Schwarzer and Schmitz (1999). Whereas the general self-efficacy scale assesses the self-evaluation with regard to how a person generally handles difficulties and obstacles in everyday live, the teacher self-efficacy scale estimates how a person deals with difficulties within the teacher profession. Both scales are 10-item psychometric scales. Both instruments apply a four-point Likert scale, ranging from „I absolutely do not agree" (= 1) to „I absolutely agree" (= 4). For both scales we used mean scores and multiplied them with the number of items, as suggested by Schwarzer and colleagues (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1999; Schwarzer & Schmitz, 1999). In the current study, internal consistencies were high with Cronbachs'α = .84 for the general self-efficacy scale and α = .73 for the teacher self-efficacy scale. The study by Schmitz (2000) reported retest reliabilities between .74 and .78 for the general self-efficacy scale and .67 and .76 for the teacher self-efficacy scale over the course of one year. Moreover, in a study with samples from 25 countries, Scholz, Doña, Sud, and Schwarzer (2002) confirmed the validity of the general self-efficacy scale. For teacher self-efficacy, correlations with the extra time teachers voluntarily spent with their students were high (Schmitz & Schwarzer, 2002).

2.3. Data analyses

Firstly, to examine the extent to which second career teachers were satisfied with their job as a teacher and experienced job stress we performed descriptive analyses (research question 1). Secondly, in order to investigate group differences between first and second career teachers we conducted independent t-tests with the dependent variables job satisfaction and stress (research question 2). Thirdly, in order to answer research question 3, we calculated two stepwise hierarchical regression models with either job satisfaction or job stress as dependent variable, according to the recommendations by Field (2013). As a first step, we included the control variables age, gender, years of professional experience as a teacher and workload as a teacher in both regression models. In a second step, we included career path as a predictor, i.e. first vs. second career teachers. In a third step, general and teacher self-efficacy scores were included and in a fourth and last step, the interaction terms of general self-efficacy x career path as well as teacher self-efficacy x career path were included as predictors. This procedure allowed us to explore the relationships between self-efficacy beliefs, job satisfaction and job stress as well as to investigate group differences between first and second career teachers. In the regression analyses, mean substitution was used for missing data.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 1 shows the mean scores for study variables. Second career teachers did not differ from first career teachers regarding workload as a teacher and duration of professional experience as a teacher. As expected, second career teachers were older than first career teachers. As a X^2 -test revealed, first and second career teachers differed significantly regarding gender distribution (X^2 = 21.16, df = 1, p < .001), with more men than women being second career teachers (n_{women} = 65, n_{male} = 39) and men being underrepresented in the first career teachers group (n_{women} = 164, n_{male} = 27). As Table 1 shows, first as well as second career teachers reported considerably high general and teacher self-efficacy. In addition, second career teachers showed higher general self-efficacy than first career teachers. However, the effect size was small (Cohen, 1992). For teacher self-efficacy, no significant difference between first and second career teachers was found. As indicated in Table 1, first as well as second career teachers experienced little stress and were largely satisfied with their job. Second career teachers differed significantly from first career teachers regarding job satisfaction. Second career teachers were more satisfied with their job than first career teachers. The effect size was in the small range (Cohen, 1992). There was no significant difference between the two groups with regard to job stress.

Table 2 shows the intercorrelations of the applied scales for first and second career teachers. The effects are medium to high, ranging from .26 to .70 (Cohen, 1992), with the highest being the correlation between job satisfaction and job stress.

3.2. Job stress

The hierarchical regression analysis for job stress revealed no significant association with any of the control variables. In line with the t-test analysis, career path did not predict job stress. However, both self-efficacy scores were relevant predictors for stress. The higher the self-efficacy beliefs, the lower the level of job stress reported. Both facets of self-efficacy combined explained 26% of the

Table 2
Intercorrelations between study variables, separated by career path.

	g-se	t-se	jst	jsa
General self-efficacy (g-se)	–	.51**	−.41**	.27**
Teacher self-efficacy (t-se)	.49**	–	−.44**	.43**
Job stress (jst)	−.56**	−.40**	–	−.68**
Job satisfaction (jsa)	.42**	.36**	−.70**	–

Note. Intercorrelations for first career teachers are presented above the diagonal (n = 193), and intercorrelations for second career teachers are presented below the diagonal (n = 104); **p < .001.

variance in work-related stress, which can be interpreted as a medium effect size (Cohen, 1992). In model 4, both interaction terms were integrated, indicating a significant interaction of general self-efficacy beliefs and career path. As Table 3 and Fig. 2a illustrate, the association between self-efficacy beliefs and stress was stronger for second than for first career teachers. With model 4, 30% of variance in work-related stress could be explained.

3.3. Job satisfaction

The hierarchical regression analysis for job satisfaction revealed that in model 1 gender and age were significant predictors, with women being more satisfied with their job (men: $M = 4.10$; $SD = 0.96$; women: $M = 4.46$; $SD = 0.90$). Taking control variables into account, career path was not significantly related to job satisfaction. Analogous to job stress, teacher and general self-efficacy beliefs were relevant predictors for job satisfaction. The higher the self-efficacy beliefs, the higher the job satisfaction reported. In model 4, the difference between first and second career teachers in the influence of general self-efficacy beliefs on job satisfaction was significant. As illustrated in Table 4 and Fig. 2b, general self-efficacy is more strongly related to job satisfaction in second than in first career teachers. The variables included in model 4 explained 25% of the variance in job satisfaction.

4. Discussion

The current study had three main aims. Firstly, we aimed at examining how second career teachers experience job satisfaction and job stress. Secondly, referring to the hypothesis that second career teachers have higher general self-efficacy levels that positively affect job well-being, we looked at group differences between first and second career teachers. The third aim was to examine in what way self-efficacy was related to job satisfaction and stress.

These questions are meaningful for teacher recruitment and training, as second career teachers are an important recruitment pool for teacher education in many countries, with considerable resources being invested in their training. As many new teachers are known to leave the teaching profession again shortly after graduation, and since job satisfaction and job stress are highly related to attrition, it is important to learn more about how this group of teachers experiences job satisfaction and stress. The appraisal of job demands as stressful or merely challenging is dependent on many factors. Among them are the working conditions in a specific school as well as the personal resources an individual teacher brings into the profession such as professional knowledge, beliefs, values and motivations or social support networks. As these resources are shaped not only during teacher training and professional experience but also throughout an individual's overall educational and professional biography, it seems natural that second career teachers' specific resources lead to a different appraisal and mastery of job demands.

4.1. Job satisfaction and job stress in first and second career teachers

The second career teachers, surveyed 7–10 years after graduation from teacher education are highly satisfied with their job and experience low levels of job stress. In line with our hypotheses, our results suggest that second career teachers are significantly more satisfied with their work than first career teachers. Regarding job stress, we found no significant group difference. Second career teachers reported slightly less stress than first career teachers, a difference that was significant only by trend.

Still, these results do not yet show why first and second career teachers differ with regard to job satisfaction. Referring to the model of teacher stress and strain by Rudow (1994), we can assume that job satisfaction is shaped by a teacher's individual resources, among other things, such as professional knowledge and experience, his or her motives, beliefs and values. On this basis, the group difference between first and second career teachers can be interpreted as a consequence of divergent personal resources. Indeed, previous studies have suggested that second career teachers' earlier training and career experiences are reflected in desirable qualifications and skills such as more pronounced intrinsic motivations for teaching (Freidus, 1994; Novak & Knowles, 1992; Williams & Forgasz, 2009; Zuzovsky & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2014), higher communication skills and empathy towards pupils and parents (Freidus & Krasnow, 1991), greater interest in further education and higher levels of self-efficacy compared to first career teachers (Weinmann-Lutz et al., 2006). If second career teachers have indeed specific resources it seems conceivable that they can significantly influence job satisfaction. In order to further investigate whether second career teachers are able to benefit from specific resources that lead to higher job satisfaction, even years after graduation, we examined possible influence factors.

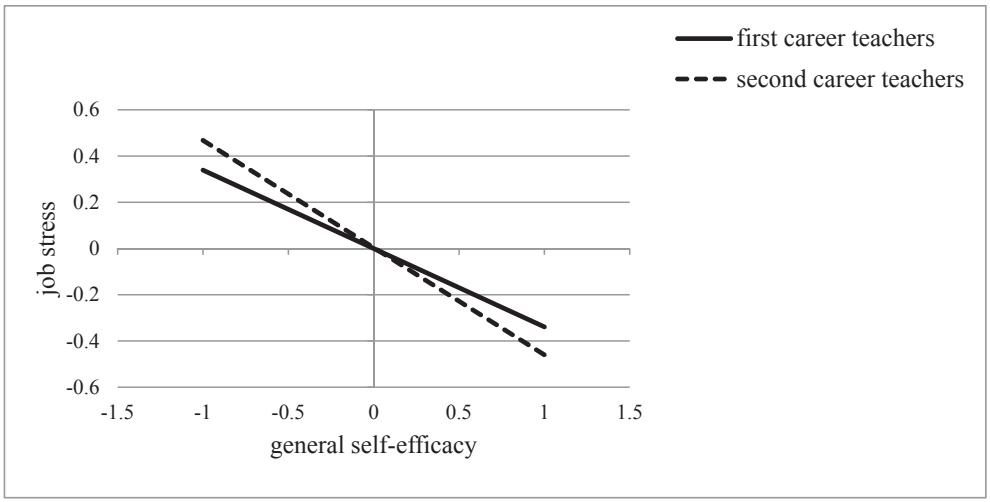
4.2. Role of self-efficacy for job stress and job satisfaction

In the light of the regression analyses presented in section 3.2 and 3.3, taking into account age, gender, general as well as teacher self-efficacy, years of teaching experience and percentage of working hours, it becomes clear that the higher job satisfaction of second career teachers is mainly attributable to their higher self-efficacy as well as to the influence of gender, with women reporting higher satisfaction than men. None of the other tested independent

Table 3
Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting job stress.

Predictor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	*p*	β	*p*	β	*p*	β	*p*
gender	−.04	.51	−.05	.39	−.03	.58	−.03	.59
age	−.11	.06	−.07	.30	−.10	.09	−.09	.12
years experience	−.08	.20	−.08	.18	−.06	.24	−.05	.31
% employment	−.01	.88	−.01	.88	−.09	.08	.09	.07
career path			−.08	.29	−.00	.97	.00	.95
g-se					−.34	<0.001	−.34	<.001
t-se					−.27	<0.001	−.27	<.001
g-se x career path							−.13	<.05
t-se x career path							.07	.25

Note. Gender: 0 = male, 1 = female; career path: 0 = first career teachers, 1 = second career teachers; g-se = general self-efficacy; t-se = teacher self-efficacy. $R^2 = .02$ for Model 1 ($p = .19$); $\Delta R^2 = .00$ for Model 2 ($p = .29$); $\Delta R^2 = .26$ for Model 3 ($p < .001$); $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Model 4 ($p = .09$).



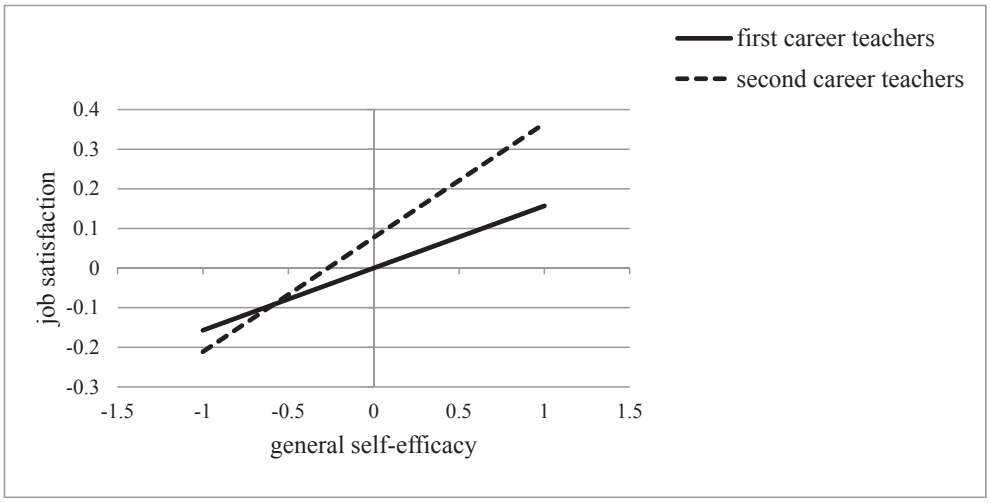


Fig. 2. Standardized regression coefficients for the relation between general self-efficacy and job stress (2a) and job satisfaction (2b) for first and second career teachers. Analyses were controlled for age, gender, years of professional experience as a teacher, workload as a teacher, career path, teacher and general self-efficacy.

Table 4
Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting job satisfaction.

Predictor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	*p*	β	*p*	β	*p*	β	*p*
gender	.20	<.01	.23	<.001	.21	<.001	.21	<.001
age	.14	<.05	.07	.34	.09	.15	.08	.19
years experience	.01	.82	.02	.72	.01	.79	.05	.93
% employment	.10	.10	.10	.10	.02	.72	.02	.76
career path			.14	.05	.08	.22	.08	.22
g-se					.16	<.01	.16	<.01
t-se					.32	<.001	.33	<.001
g-se x career path							.13	<.05
t-se x career path							−.08	.15

Note. Gender: 0 = male, 1 = female; career path: 0 = first career teachers, 1 = second career teachers; g-se = general self-efficacy; t-se = teacher self-efficacy.R^2 = .05 for Model 1 (p < .01); ΔR^2 = .01 for Model 2 (p = .05); ΔR^2 = .17 for Model 3 (p < .001); ΔR^2 = .01 for Model 4 (p = .08).

variables was predictive for job satisfaction. The introduction of the two self-efficacy values eradicated the effects of age, while all other factors – and also career path – were no significant predictors in the first place. This means that higher job well-being is not an exclusive privilege of teachers with a previous career. However, it is high self-efficacy that makes the difference. This favorable characteristic is especially common among career switchers but can also been found in first career teachers.

With regard to job stress, a similar pattern emerged: self-efficacy – but not gender – was a strong predictor for job stress. Thus, the degree to which the surveyed teachers feel optimistic about their skills and abilities to cope with problems determines their interpretation and evaluation of job-related demands and satisfaction. This is in line with the findings of earlier research (Beltman et al., 2011; Høigaard et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

In addition to the significant main effects of general and teacher self-efficacy on job satisfaction and stress, our analyses proved teachers' career path to be a significant moderator of the relation between general self-efficacy and both aspects of job well-being. For second career teachers, general self-efficacy has a stronger effect on their perception of job stress than for first career teachers. A similar effect was found for job satisfaction, where career path moderates the relation of satisfaction and general self-efficacy but not teacher self-efficacy. Considering that general and teacher self-efficacy are two closely related constructs (e.g., Schmitz & Schwarzer, 2000), this effect might seem surprising. Yet, it can be

interpreted as the result of the differing opportunities for mastery experiences that first and second career teachers experienced prior to teacher education, which fuel general self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977; Schwarzer & Warner, 2011). In contrast, both groups shared the same teacher training. At the University for Teacher Education PHBern career changers are explicitly encouraged to enter teacher education by ways of a specifically designed preparatory course after which they complete the same degree as first career students. Pre-service and novice teachers' teacher self-efficacy beliefs are shaped mainly by job-related experiences, verbal feedback and the school's general resources, with work experience increasing in significance with length of service (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The fact that the first and second career teachers in our sample have shared similar environments and experiences during their studies and first teaching years, although they differ significantly in their prior experiences due to their varying career paths, might explain the observed difference concerning the influence of general and teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Overall, our findings corroborate the hypothesis that second career teachers show higher job well-being than their first career colleagues, especially in terms of job satisfaction. While the percentage of working hours, years of teaching experience, age, gender and teacher self-efficacy did not emerge as significant predictors in our analyses, general self-efficacy did. Our results lead us to the conclusion that second career teachers are more satisfied with their job mainly due to higher general self-efficacy beliefs. While age is positively correlated with general self-efficacy, it is not age alone that makes the difference. However, it seems plausible that this positive development of second career teachers is at least in part attributable to accumulated mastery experiences (Bandura, 1977), skills from previous trainings and careers as well as the selective effect that working people with higher self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to change careers than those with low self-efficacy (Lent & Hackett, 2002). Yet, such causal relations cannot be established on the basis of the present cross-sectional data. What we can infer from our results is that high general self-efficacy seems to be a resource of second career teachers that is still effective after several years in the teaching profession and that has positive effects on job well-being.

4.3. Limitations

Apart from presenting promising implications and approaches for further research, the results presented in this study involve a range of limitations.

Firstly, the presented data are cross-sectional thus not supporting any conclusions about causal effects. In accordance with previous studies (e.g., Høigaard et al., 2012), we assumed that self-efficacy beliefs predict job satisfaction and job stress. For example, Schwarzer and Hallum (2008) examined the direction of effect between self-efficacy beliefs and burnout by means of cross-lagged panel correlation and showed that low self-efficacy beliefs preceded burnout. However, based on our study, we cannot completely rule out a reverse causal link between self-efficacy beliefs and job stress and job satisfaction, respectively.

A second limitation lies in the recruitment of the sample. We attempted a census of all cohorts that graduated from the University of Teacher Education PHBern between 2004 and 2007. Participation was voluntary. Although the response rate was satisfactory with close to 50%, a possible selection bias was introduced by non-responders needs to be considered. Non-participation in the study might be associated with factors relating to job well-being or, more likely, a lack thereof. Teachers who experience severe work overload are less likely to make time to fill in a lengthy questionnaire. This bias would result in the underestimation of job stress and the overestimation of job satisfaction in the whole sample. Yet, the differences between first and second career teachers would probably not be affected by such a systematic bias.

Thirdly, we controlled for age and years of experience in teaching in the regression analyses. Moreover, the assumptions for regression analyses were met (Field, 2013). Nevertheless, we cannot completely distinguish between effects that are based on age and years of experience in teaching and the ones based on general work and life experience.

Finally, as the analyses presented here only included people who were still working as teachers in compulsory education at the time of the survey, teachers who had left the profession due to high perceived stress and/or lack of satisfaction were not taken into account. Thus, we cannot deduce from the analyses presented above whether second career teachers with lower general self-efficacy beliefs were more likely to have left the teaching profession and thus did not form part of the sample.

4.4. Practical implications and future research

The findings of this study contribute to the question of how second career teachers develop in their new profession after graduation from teacher education. Our results suggest that after several years in the profession, career switchers who completed a full teaching degree develop positively, showing exceptionally high levels of job well-being. As samples of second career teachers are difficult to compare, we would like to point out that these findings cannot easily be transferred to other samples of career switchers, especially those who have completed alternative certification programs. It can be assumed that the higher general self-efficacy – if it is actually rooted in mastery experiences gained in earlier trainings and careers – would also be found in second career teachers with alternative certificates. However, one way to advance the field lies in replicating our findings regarding second career teachers with specific teacher trainings.

Self-efficacy has been known to significantly influence the perception of job stresses and strains for quite some time (Beltman et al., 2011). The fact that it is even more important for second career teachers yields several implications. To pursue teaching as a second career requires stamina and optimism. Although second career teachers as a whole seem to develop well in their new profession, the high impact of self-efficacy on job well-being in this professional group implies that second career teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs are especially susceptible to dissatisfaction and, presumably, attrition from the profession. This relation should be further investigated since the high average self-efficacy of second career teachers found in the present study should not hide the fact that the career switchers with low self-efficacy might have left teaching long ago and are thus not represented in this study. Teacher education programs for career switchers should particularly consider the relevance of self-efficacy beliefs in their recruitment and training policy, either by selecting career switchers with high self-efficacy or by fostering self-efficacy within the frame of professional training. Since self-efficacy is mainly gained through positive experience, it is essential that trainings – short alternative certification programs for career switchers included – provide ample occasions for practical training in school settings so that career switchers can apply theoretical knowledge and experience that their efforts are effective and that there are effective resources at hand when needed.

More research is needed to establish what resources, besides self-efficacy, second career teachers bring into their new profession and how these affect their professional development. Also, it is still unclear whether and in which way self-efficacy and other resources affect the attrition or retention of second career teachers and which

factors determine the decision to stay in teaching, to go back to their old careers or to move on to new opportunities. Here, more research is needed in order to know what career switchers need to establish themselves in their new career.

Although the instruments used in the current study are reliable, valid and broadly used in research (e.g., Klusmann et al., 2008; Nitsche et al., 2013; Scholz et al., 2002), they only convey a general estimation of job stress, job satisfaction, general and teacher self-efficacy, respectively. Therefore, the research on job well-being in second career teachers could be advanced by assessing the aforementioned concepts in a more refined way.

4.5. Conclusion

In the context of recurring teacher shortage, second career teachers are being focused on as a prospective recruitment pool for teacher education in many countries. The results presented in this paper show that second career teachers, who were still working as teachers 7–10 years after graduation, report overall high average levels of job satisfaction and low average levels of job stress, with job satisfaction slightly but significantly higher than in their colleagues without a prior career. The higher job satisfaction in second career teachers is mainly attributable to higher general self-efficacy beliefs. Age, gender, years of teaching experience and the amount of working hours were no significant predictors. These findings not only underline the well-known effect of self-efficacy for job satisfaction and stress in general but also the significance of an optimistic confidence for career switchers in order to be able to cope. Overall, our results show that second career teachers develop well in their new career and that they manage to maintain an advantage in general self-efficacy over the years, which seems to help them cope well with the demands of the teaching profession.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data related to this article can be found at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.07.006.

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