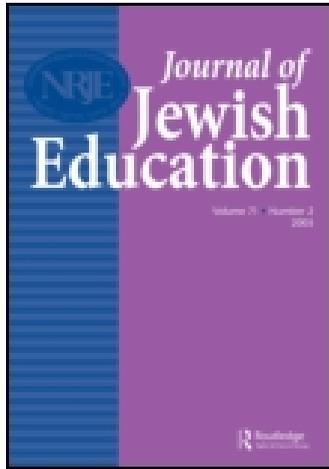


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Jewish Day School Teachers: Career Commitments in the 21st Century

ERAN TAMIR AND SALLY A. LESIK

This research identifies four profiles of Jewish day school (JDS) teachers and analyzes their association with teacher retention in JDSs and Jewish education. We employed a comprehensive sample of JDS teachers from the Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS; N = 552) and the DeLeT Longitudinal Project (N = 77) which tracks JDS teachers prepared by the DeLeT programs at Brandeis University and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR). The study identified two distinct profiles of teachers among EJSS teachers, which we termed (a) very engaged teachers, and (b) disengaged and unsupported teachers. Moving to DeLeT teachers, we identified two different profiles: (a) well supported teachers, and (b) very engaged and unsupported teachers. While these profiles describe a somewhat gloomy story of Jewish day schools, they also offer a glimpse of hope, if further proactive steps are taken.

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INTRODUCTION

Jewish day schools (JDS) have undergone significant transformations over the past two decades. Except for the last few years, which have been affected by the economic recession, JDSs have seen a steady growth in the number of students and schools for several decades (Schick & Chai, 2009). The composition of JDSs has also changed in unexpected ways with non-Orthodox, particularly community schools, gaining a larger and more prominent role in the field (although remaining a minority compared to Orthodox schools; Schick & Chai, 2009). Yet, it is unclear whether this expansion also changed the way JDSs recruit, support, and develop teachers.

The Commission on Jewish Education in North America (1991) identified the need for such changes nearly 20 years ago:

Creating a North American infrastructure for recruiting and training increasing numbers of qualified personnel; expanding the faculties and facilities of training institutions; intensifying on the job training programs; raising salaries and benefits of educational personnel; developing new career track opportunities; and increasing the empowerment of educators. (p. 17)

A decade later, Holtz, Gamoran, Dorph, Goldring, and Robinson (2000), who studied JDSs in three major cities in North America, raised concerns about the lack of rigorous teacher preparation and insufficient professional support provided to JDS teachers and recommended investing in large-scale professional development for JDS teachers (Dorph & Holtz, 2000).

Acting in the spirit of these recommendations, Jewish educators and philanthropists teamed up to establish new teacher preparation programs such as DeLeT (Day School Leadership through Teaching) and the Pardes Educators Program, as well as other mentoring and professional development initiatives, like the Jewish New Teacher Project, which were all designed to help retain teachers and improve the quality of instruction in JDSs. In addition, as professional development, mentoring, and induction programs have expanded in public school districts, it is possible (although not empirically proven) that JDSs may have become more open to adopting these frameworks in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the retention of their teachers.

Recent studies designed to evaluate the impact of programs like DeLeT (e.g., Tamir, 2010; Tamir, Feiman-Nemser, Silvera-Sasson, & Cytryn, 2010, Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011) or the Pardes Educators Program (Kopelowitz & Markowitz, 2011) highlight the unique values and benefits associated with these programs. For example, a previous study on DeLeT program alumni (Tamir, 2009; Tamir et al., 2010) described their reasons for becoming day school teachers, including their commitment to work

with children and contribute to the Jewish community. DeLeT alumni also reported that they held their preparation in high regard, and were committed to teach in JDSs and stay in Jewish education for relatively long terms (Tamir, 2013). Nevertheless, despite these positive signs, the impact of these programs remained unclear. In particular, we know little, on a comparative level, about the impact of these teacher education programs on teachers' intentions to stay in teaching, and whether teacher preparation correlates with teachers' schools conditions, and their commitments to Jewish values and the Jewish community.

The findings reported in this study focus on the relative impact of various factors (e.g., principal support, teacher collaboration, salary level) on the intentions of current day school teachers from DeLeT and from a large comparison group to make a long-term commitment to teaching in a Jewish day school and to Jewish education. The factors included in our model are informed by previous research in general and Jewish education and a conceptual framework which argues that teacher career commitments and satisfaction are shaped by the interaction of teacher's background (person), professional preparation (program), and school conditions (setting or context), (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Grossman, 2008; Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough, 2008; Zeichner & Gore, 1989; Zeichner, 1993).

Our analysis of a comprehensive sample of JDS teachers from the Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS; $N = 552$) and the DeLeT Longitudinal Project ($N = 77$) portrays Jewish day schools and their teachers as operating in a complex, and sometimes challenging environment.¹ We discerned four distinct profiles across the two samples. From the EJSS sample, we identified two distinct profiles of teachers: (a) *very engaged* teachers and (b) *disengaged and unsupported* teachers. The first profile includes teachers who experienced unfavorable working conditions, but still enjoyed children and reported a strong commitment to the Jewish community which led them to stay in Jewish education. The second profile describes disengaged and unsupported teachers who experienced unsatisfying school conditions, did not enjoy teaching children, and did not consider their relationships with the community to be important. This profile of teachers had a low correlation with intentions for staying in JDSs. Moving to the DeLeT teachers, we identified two profiles of (a) *well supported* professionals and (b) *very engaged and unsupported* professionals. Both profiles strongly correlated with an intention to stay in teaching. The first profile of *well supported* professionals describes DeLeT teachers who enjoyed strong structures of

¹Note that, unlike the DeLeT alumni survey, the EJSS survey was designed only to current educators and teachers. In order to create a matched sample we took out from the DeLeT data teachers who left teaching. In doing so we knowingly leave out those teachers who were already burnt out (as a result of various reasons, like unsatisfactory preparation or lack of support) and decided to leave the profession (for an analysis that includes both current teachers and teachers who left day school teaching, see, Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011).

support which helped them develop professionally. The second profile of *very engaged and unsupported* professionals describes DeLeT teachers who experienced unfavorable working conditions, but still enjoyed helping students grow. This profile too was positively related to an intention to stay in day school teaching.

Next, we discuss why teacher retention is important and what could contribute or hinder it. Then, we lay out the conceptual framework of person, program, and setting which informed our model and analysis. We describe the goals of the study, the sources of data and their limitations, and discuss the method. Finally, we lay out the findings of the study, specifying the profiles of the teachers currently teaching in day schools, and concluding with the implications of the study for the field.

TEACHER RETENTION AND THE COST OF TEACHER ATTRITION

The Cost of Attrition

Retention of high quality teachers is considered a top priority for educators and policy makers around the country. Research in general education provides mounting evidence that high quality teachers can improve student-learning outcomes (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2006; Rivkin et al., 2005).² Studies also show that teacher effectiveness grows rapidly during the first few years in the classroom (Rivkin et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004). On the other hand, these years are also considered the most challenging for beginning teachers who are expected to teach while they are still learning on the job (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Ingersoll (2001) and others, analyzing survey data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), found that, by their fifth year, roughly 40% of those who entered teaching leave the profession. Ingersoll also argued that the problem is not a teacher shortage in the United States, but an inability to retain new teachers.

Numerous studies detail the costs of teacher attrition. First, attrition drains the resources available for public and private schools. Instead of investing in new curricula or smaller classes, schools have to spend more on recruitment, mentoring, and inducting beginning teachers who come for a short while and leave, sometime at a staggering pace. More than a decade ago, a report from Texas estimated the cost of teacher attrition at 329 million to 2.9 billion dollars annually (Texas State Board for Educator Certification, 2000). In today's dollar value, the estimated cost to states and districts is roughly equivalent to 433 million and 3.8 billion annually. Beyond

²These studies define high quality teaching as the capacity of teachers to help their students meet or exceed a minimum expectation on a multiple-choice exam. While these measures have been enthusiastically adopted by policy makers in districts, states, and the Federal administration, school teachers and many scholars argue that the tests are a poor tool for measuring student learning and teacher effectiveness.

the monetary cost there are lost educational opportunities for students who could have been exposed to a more effective teaching and reached better learning outcomes. Finally, there is the emotional cost for young children who see their teachers leave and be replaced every year (e.g., Rinke, 2008). In short, teacher attrition has led to overstretched school budgets and millions of students being denied the right to learn with more experienced and effective teachers.

Why Do Teachers Stay or Leave Teaching?

Research on public schools suggests that teachers are more likely to leave or change schools when they lack appropriate opportunities for professional growth and advancement, when they feel isolated, and when they do not feel supported by peers and administrators (Johnson et al., 2004; Little, 1990). Teachers who leave also tend to report working in underresourced schools serving low-income minorities, where leaders are not effective and do not offer adequate instructional support (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Rinke, 2008). Furthermore, teacher attrition is also related to low compensation and teachers' high academic ability as demonstrated in SAT or ACT scores (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Murnane, 1991).

Do Jewish day school teachers stay or leave for the same reasons as public school teachers? Unfortunately, we do not know. There are no comprehensive, systematic longitudinal data sets about day school teachers comparable to those produced by the National Center for Educational Studies. Instead, we have a few quantitative studies from the past about Jewish day school teachers (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Rich, & Rosenak, 1999), a few small-scale surveys of teachers who graduated from particular programs for Jewish educators (Wachs, 1998)³ and JDS teachers (Kopelowitz & Markowitz, 2011), and a few qualitative studies like Carol Ingall's (2006) book, *Down the Up Staircase*.

In 2007, the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) commissioned the Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS) which is the most recent comprehensive survey of Jewish educators in North America (Ben-Avie & Kress, 2008). This study, like a previous one by Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Tammivaara, and Goodman (1998), identified low levels of teacher preparation and professional development and cautioned about the looming threat of teacher attrition to Jewish day schools (Ben-Avie & Kress, 2008).

Recently, the DeLeT Longitudinal Survey⁴ identified factors associated with teacher retention and attrition in JDSs. Comparing DeLeT graduates

³Saul Wachs's (1999) research involved a small-scale, longitudinal inquiry of alumni who graduated from Gratz College and were prepared to take on Jewish education and teaching positions.

⁴For more details about this project, go to: (<http://www.brandeis.edu/mandel/research/deletracking.html>).

who remained in JDSs to DeLeT graduates who left JDS teaching, the study concluded:

. . . those who stay in Jewish day school teaching are likely to do so because of more commitment to the Jewish community, greater perception of effective teacher preparation experience, and better school support in comparison to those who leave teaching. (Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011, p. 76)

These initial findings concerning school conditions and support are consistent with similar studies conducted with public school teachers (Ingersoll, 2001; Ladd, 2011). Nonetheless, the fact that JDS teachers who stay in teaching express a significantly higher level of commitment to the Jewish community compared with those who leave day schools is worth noting because it reflects a unique motivation driving teachers to teach in JDSs. Still, these findings are limited because they rely on a relatively small sample of teachers who teach in a relatively select segment of “liberal” (non-Orthodox) day schools.

Finally, because this research analyzes data regarding current teachers, we consider what we know about beginning, mid-career, and veteran teachers. Does the fact that these teachers stay indicate that they feel supported and satisfied and are likely to teach for the long run? Which profiles of teachers are more or less correlated with an intent to develop a long-term teaching career in JDS? The short answer is that we do not know. The lack of dependable knowledge motivated us to conduct this study in order to understand better the factors associated with long-term career commitments among JDS teachers.

Answering these questions help us better understand why teachers who choose to stay in JDSs, what their motivations are, and how they perceive their schools. For example, are such teachers satisfied with their working conditions? Do they enjoy helping children learn? Do they feel a stake in the Jewish community? Or do other factors such as salary, age, gender, religious affiliation influence their decision to remain in day school? These are critical questions, because they focus on those teachers who currently teach and presumably form the backbone of JDSs for years to come.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We start with the assumption that teacher retention results from the interaction of three sets of factors—teachers’ background, their professional preparation, and the working conditions that surround them (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Grossman, 2008; Humphrey et al., 2008; Zeichner & Gore, 1989; Zeichner, 1993). While we have identified variables associated with

each of these sets of factors, our findings mainly focus on variables related to personal background, school setting, and offer a crude analysis on the impact of teacher preparation (because we do not have data on the preparation of EJSS teachers).

The personal category includes: (a) demographic and background variables—such as teachers' religious affiliation, age, academic degree, and length of teaching experience; and (b) a set of items aimed at assessing teachers' intrinsic rewards⁵—like, "I enjoy working with children" and "I enjoy helping children to learn." When teachers are asked about the things that keep them in teaching, these items have consistently ranked at the top for over four decades in multiple surveys and across different school contexts (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Watt & Richardson, 2007). We also included a variable that assesses teachers' commitments to the Jewish community and sense of belonging to the Jewish community, which were found in a recent study to have positive relationship with teacher retention (Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011).

The program dimension in this study is illuminated primarily through the comparison of DeLeT teachers and EJSS teachers. Being able to distinguish and compare DeLeT and EJSS teachers is important because it may suggest the extent to which DeLeT teachers vary from the general population of JDS teachers. Although this analysis is exploratory, it may point out differences between the general population of day school teachers (as represented in the EJSS sample) and DeLeT teachers, in terms of teacher commitments to students, the Jewish community, and teaching in JDSs. These differences, in turn, may illuminate the ways in which teacher preparation programs contribute to Jewish day schools and the field of Jewish education (either through targeted recruitment of motivated individuals and/or through effective clinical preparation).

The setting category includes teacher perceptions of their working conditions, including the religious affiliation of their school; the number of hours they work; their salary; professional development opportunities; school resources; administrative support; and respect from peers, parents, administration, the Jewish community, and society. Based on recent studies in Jewish and general education (e.g., Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011; Ladd, 2011), we anticipated some positive relationships, particularly between school support, as well as teacher collaboration and teacher retention.

⁵Lortie (1975) who wrote the seminal book, *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*, describes intrinsic rewards, as "... entirely of subjective valuations made in the course of work engagement; their subjectivity means that they can vary from person to person. But they are also constrained by the nature of the occupation and its tasks" (p. 101).

STUDY GOALS

Since retaining high quality Jewish day school teachers is considered a serious challenge for the vitality and growth of JDSs, this study seeks to understand how factors related to individual teachers, their teacher education programs, and their school setting are associated with retention among JDS teachers as represented in the EJSS data and DeLeT teachers. Furthermore, we want to find out whether teachers' intention to remain in Jewish day schools is positively or negatively related to particular factors. In order to answer these questions, we employed a statistical method called partial least squares analysis (PLSA) which scans teacher responses across the data and identifies patterns of predictor variables that are related to teacher retention (for more details, see the Data and Methodology section below). One possible outcome is for the predictors (sets of variables listed above) to be weakly associated with teacher retention, which practically means that retention is not related to or associated with these predictors. A second possible outcome is that PLSA would identify several profiles, where sets of different predictor variables merge together to associate with retention. For example, one profile may illustrate a group of teachers whose retention is associated with poor working conditions, while another profile illustrates retention as associated with experiencing high levels of support and respect from peers and administrators.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Comparing EJSS and DeLeT Surveys

This study compared survey responses of Jewish day school teachers from the Educators in Jewish Schools Study ($N = 552$) and the DeLeT Longitudinal Survey ($N = 77$).⁶ While these two studies did not use identical survey items, they often measured similar phenomena. We carefully selected, matched, and paired items from both surveys which seemed close in meaning and purpose (see the Appendix for the list of matched items). Methodologically, this approach is not ideal, but given the need to know and the scarcity of funding for such research in Jewish education, we decided that this is a feasible and responsible approach that can yield important exploratory findings.⁷

⁶While the DeLeT Longitudinal study had an exceptionally high response rate (90%), EJSS was designed to collect a large data set representative of the entire field. Alas, EJSS investigators encountered a common problem in Jewish education research; that is, weak cooperation from the big subsector of Orthodox schools. This resulted in good response rate for non-Orthodox schools and considerably lower response rates for the Orthodox schools. For more details concerning sampling, data collection, and missing information in the two surveys, see Tamir et al. (2010) and Ben-Avie and Kress (2008).

⁷One disadvantage of using such a methodology includes a higher likelihood of producing measurement or question error, which in turn may result in lower and less significant effects (loadings).

Partial Least Squares Analysis (PLSA)

This study used a partial least squares analysis (PLSA; Laitinen, 2006). Compared with other statistical techniques that are typically used in analyzing and comparing survey data, such as ordinary least squares regression, PLSA can be used whenever there is a large collection of predictor variables that may be highly correlated with each other, or when there are missing responses for some of the survey questions (Vinzi, Chin, Henseler, & Want, 2010). In other words, instead of ranking the different individual factors that enable or inhibit teacher retention, we conceptualized teacher retention by identifying distinct profiles of teachers and determining sets of variables that tend to share a relationship with retention. This approach highlights how different teachers from DeLeT and EJSS perceive and approach day school teaching and which teacher profiles do and do not correlate with staying in day school teaching and Jewish education.

The basic idea behind PLSA is the formation of components from the predictor variables, where each component is a linear combination of the predictor variables, and these components are orthogonal to each other (Garthwaite, 1994). This leads to fewer components than there are predictor variables and these components convey most of the information in the predictor variables that are used to predict the response(s). PLSA can also be used in an exploratory fashion to build theory and to describe the relationship between the response(s) and predictor variables by finding only a few factors that are the most efficient in explaining the variation in the set of response variables (intention to stay in day school teaching for DeLeT and intention to stay in Jewish education for EJSS teachers) and the set of predictor variables (e.g., teachers' background and working conditions; Laitinen, 2006).

Cross-validation techniques are used in PLSA to estimate the predictive ability of a set of potential models to determine how many components should be retained in the model. This is done by first calculating a predicted *R*-squared statistic for each individual model and then selecting the model that has the greatest predicted *R*-squared (Garthwaite, 1994; Laitinen, 2006; Vinzi et al., 2010). For this analysis, the predicted *R*-squared was 38.0%. Because we did not know the number of components in advance, we used a leave-one-out cross-validation to evaluate the optimal number of components for the EJSS survey data, and this procedure selected two components (Vinzi et al., 2010).

Since there were two components identified for the EJSS survey data, we then decided to run a PLSA on the DeLeT data specifying two components. We did this in order to compare and contrast the variables in the two components for both the EJSS and the DeLeT surveys.

FINDINGS

Comparing DeLeT and EJSS Teachers: Descriptive Statistics

In what follows we offer brief results for the matched variables from EJSS and DeLeT that are included in our analysis (for a full description of the variables included in this analysis, see the Appendix). We first report descriptive statistics on the dependent variable—namely, the intention to develop a lifelong career in Jewish education (EJSS survey) and the intention to develop a lifelong career in Jewish day school teaching (DeLeT survey). This is not a perfect match and we are fully aware that teachers are more likely to say they are committed to stay in Jewish education than to say they are committed to stay in day school teaching, simply because teaching in day schools is a subset occupation within Jewish education and not vice versa.⁸ Nonetheless, despite being asked specifically about staying in teaching, DeLeT teachers were more likely to respond positively and commit to a longer career in the classroom (3.9) compared to EJSS teachers (3.7) who responded to a question about their commitment to stay in Jewish education (which includes teaching and other jobs) on a scale of 1 to 5 (for a complete list of descriptive statistics see Table 1).

Next, we provide descriptive statistics (presented as means) for all person-related variables, which were divided into two subcategories of *background* and *intrinsic and ancillary rewards*. In terms of background, DeLeT teachers are slightly more likely to be females (.857 compared with .822),⁹ considerably more likely to be non-Orthodox (.710 for DeLeT compared with .499 for EJSS), and are on average younger. The average years in teaching for DeLeT teachers is slightly lower (3.138 for DeLeT compared with 3.577 for EJSS) and a slightly smaller percentage of them hold a graduate degree and a teacher certification.¹⁰ On the other hand, DeLeT teachers were more likely to take Jewish studies courses in college (.295 for EJSS compared with .349 for the DeLeT teachers). As far as *intrinsic* and *ancillary* rewards go, it seems that EJSS teachers were more likely to have been drawn to day school teaching because it allows them to live by the Jewish

⁸In other words, we hypothesize that if EJSS teachers were asked an equivalent question about their commitment to stay in teaching, their average response would have been lower. Similar findings have been found in other studies conducted among urban public, urban Catholic, and Jewish day school teachers. When these teachers were asked about their commitment to stay in teaching and about their commitment to stay in education at large, the number of those willing to stay in education was larger (Tamir, 2009, 2010).

⁹These values and those that follow represent a share of each category from 0 to 1 or they could be interpreted as percentages. In other words, .857 means that 85.7% of the teachers were women.

¹⁰DeLeT at Brandeis University started as a postgraduate program and offered a Massachusetts teaching certificate only to those graduating from the Brandeis program. To date, graduates of the Brandeis program receive a Masters degree and teaching certification. DeLeT at HUC-JIR has offered a postgraduate certificate since its inception. Later the program started to prepare students also for the California teaching credential.

TABLE 1. Descriptive statistics for the EJSS and DeLeT surveys.

Variable	EJSS				DeLeT			
	<i>N</i>	missing	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	missing	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Dependent variable								
Lifelong career	545	7	3.739	1.209	57	20	3.895	0.958
Person								
- <i>Background-</i>								
Female	544	8	0.822	0.383	77	0	0.857	0.352
Religious Orthodox	550	2	0.253	0.435	71	6	0.183	0.390
Religious non-Orthodox	550	2	0.535	0.499	69	8	0.710	0.457
Religious other	550	2	0.213	0.410	71	6	0.099	0.300
Age (less than 29)	549	3	0.155	0.362	76	1	0.290	0.457
Age (30–49)	549	3	0.392	0.489	76	1	0.645	0.482
Age (50+)	549	3	0.454	0.498	76	1	0.066	0.250
Average years in teaching	551	1	3.577	1.674	65	12	3.138	2.128
1–5 years	551	1	0.459	0.499	65	12	0.862	0.348
6–10 years	551	1	0.187	0.390	65	12	0.139	0.348
11+ years	551	1	0.354	0.479	65	12	0.000	0.000
Graduate degree	545	7	0.525	0.500	76	1	0.421	0.497
Jewish studies	552	0	0.295	0.4157	43	34	0.349	0.482
Teacher certification	540	12	0.624	0.485	77	0	0.481	0.503
- <i>Intrinsic and ancillary rewards-</i>								
Jewish life	531	21	3.731	1.207	56	21	3.464	1.537
Community	538	14	3.712	1.161	56	21	3.750	1.430
Help students	540	12	4.444	0.712	56	21	4.661	0.549
Enjoy students	539	13	4.327	0.760	56	21	4.554	0.712
Settings								
Orthodox school	486	66	0.237	0.425	45	32	0.156	0.367
PD opportunities	544	8	3.603	1.036	55	22	3.236	1.261
PD schools	502	50	0.313	0.464	56	21	0.446	0.502
PD courses	495	57	0.269	0.444	56	21	0.250	0.437
School resources	534	18	3.618	1.164	54	23	3.519	1.177
Curricular resources	543	9	3.101	1.198	55	22	3.618	0.991
Earn less than 35K	529	23	0.414	0.493	63	14	0.318	0.469
Earn 35–55K	529	23	0.401	0.491	63	14	0.587	0.496
Earn more than 55K	523	23	0.185	0.389	63	14	0.079	0.273
Hours less than 20	550	2	0.164	0.370	53	24	0.113	0.320
Hours 21–40	550	2	0.600	0.490	53	24	0.151	0.631
Hours 41+	550	2	0.236	0.425	53	24	0.736	0.445
Teacher respect	541	11	4.056	0.907	57	20	4.000	0.824
Administration respect	541	11	3.974	1.014	55	22	3.909	1.127
Parent respect	545	7	3.909	0.758	57	20	4.097	0.658
Jewish comm. respect	538	14	2.697	1.345	57	20	3.544	1.036
Society respect	540	12	2.496	1.361	57	20	2.965	1.034
Paperwork	536	16	3.284	1.225	55	22	3.018	1.178
Class size	537	15	3.661	1.231	55	22	3.745	1.280
Career advancement	534	18	3.292	1.362	55	22	2.491	1.275
Administration support	538	14	4.017	0.994	57	20	4.018	0.973

calendar (3.731 for EJSS compared with 3.464 for DeLeT). DeLeT and EJSS teachers were almost similar in viewing their teaching as an opportunity to contribute to the Jewish community (3.750 for EJSS compared with 3.712 for

DeLeT). DeLeT teachers seem more motivated by the opportunity to help students learn (4.661 for DeLeT compared with 4.444 for EJSS) and enjoy teaching students (4.554 for DeLeT compared with 4.327 for EJSS).

The second group of variables focuses on teachers' experience in their schools (school settings/conditions). As can be seen, EJSS teachers were more likely to teach in Orthodox schools (.237 for EJSS compared with .156 for DeLeT). Overall, EJSS teachers reported having more professional development opportunities in their schools (3.603 for EJSS compared with 3.233 for the DeLeT teachers). EJSS teachers also reported having participated in slightly more professional development through university courses (.269 for EJSS compared with .250 for DeLeT), while receiving less professional development at their school setting (.313 for EJSS compared with .446 for the DeLeT teachers).

In term of school resources, EJSS teachers reported a slightly higher level of resources (3.618 for EJSS compared with 3.519 for the DeLeT teachers). Yet, when asked about the level of curricular support available at their schools, DeLeT teachers reported that they received considerably more support (3.618 for DeLeT compared with 3.101 for EJSS). In terms of salaries, DeLeT teachers, despite being younger and less experienced, were more likely to fall in the \$35,000–\$55,000 range (.587 for DeLeT compared with .401 for EJSS) and less likely to fall in the less than \$35,000 category (.318 for DeLeT compared with .414 for EJSS). DeLeT teachers were also far more likely to be working more than 41 hours per week (.736 compared with .236) and far less likely to work 21–40 hours per week (.151 for DeLeT compared with .6 for EJSS).

When asked about the respect they receive from peer teachers, administrators, and parents, both DeLeT and EJSS teachers offered almost similar responses. Yet, their responses diverge when they reported on the respect they receive from the Jewish community and larger society. DeLeT teachers say they experience higher levels of respect from the Jewish and larger community compared to EJSS teachers.

Finally, we compared teachers' reports on their interactions with school administrators and on school policies. The findings suggest that DeLeT and EJSS teachers felt equally supported by their administrators (4.018 compared with 4.017). The two groups of teachers also responded similarly to the levels of paperwork they dealt with and the size of their classes. DeLeT and EJSS teachers differed considerably when asked about opportunities for career advancement available at their schools (2.491 for DeLeT compared with 3.292 for EJSS teachers).

Results of PLSA Analysis

Employing PLSA, we identified two distinct profiles for teachers in the EJSS data and two corresponding profiles in the DeLeT data (see Components

TABLE 2. *X*-loadings for the two components for the EJSS and DeLeT surveys.

Variable	EJSS		DeLeT	
	Profile 1: <i>Very engaged teachers</i>	Profile 2: <i>Disengaged and unsupported teachers</i>	Profile 3: <i>Well supported teachers</i>	Profile 4: <i>Very engaged and unsupported teachers</i>
Orthodox school	.0200	-.0747	.0000	.0155
Female	-.0062	-.2132*	.1766	-.0723
Jewish studies	.3491*	.3468*	-.0813	.0763
Orthodox	.2368*	.2080*	.0550	.1464
Non-Orthodox	.0812	-.0169	.0325	-.1836
Age: Less than 29	-.0130	-.0028	-.0892	.0039
Age: 50+	-.0497	-.1160	-.0107	-.0812
Years of work: 1–5	-.1031	-.0228	-.1145	-.0157
Hours of work: > 20	.0309	-.0863	.1044	.0455
Hours of work: 41+	-.0230	.0920	-.1097	.4139*
Graduate degree	-.0302	-.0426	.0126	.1755
Certification	-.1739	-.0865	.1673	.1246
Less than \$35,000	-.1085	-.1558	.0095	-.4667*
More than \$55,000	.0703	.0638	-.2014*	-.2121*
PD visit schools	.0609	-.0683	.0731	-.1322
PD college courses	.1094	.0181	.0749	.0235
PD opportunities	.1632	-.2288*	.3760*	-.1538
Curricular resources	.1936	-.2553*	.2344*	.1482
Contribute to the Jewish community	.5052*	.1026	.0256	.1807
Help students	.3534*	-.2532*	.1480	.2098*
Enjoy students	.2574*	-.3853*	.0938	.3722*
Jewish life	.4074*	.0301	.0285	-.1975
Teacher respect	.1438	-.2662*	.1560	-.3081*
Administration respect	.1524	-.2817*	.3554*	-.2145*
Paperwork	-.0152	-.1184	.2068*	-.2625*
Class size	-.0672	-.2199*	.1700	-.1566
Society respect	.0683	-0.2567*	.2884*	-.3031*
Jewish community respect	.1102	-.2326*	.3892*	-.2037*
Career advancement	.1422	-.1917	.3339*	-.1450
School resources	.0007	-.4051*	.1783	.1155
Administration support	.1136	-.4013*	.3723*	-.2759*
Parent respect	.1373	-.3962*	.2957*	-.0245

*Loadings less than $-.20$ or greater than $.20$.

1 and 2 for EJSS and DeLeT in Table 2). We identify PLSA *X*- and *Y*-loadings (or component loadings) less than $-.20$ or greater than $.20$ with an asterisk (*) to suggest a substantial level of association. The *X*-loadings describe the relative importance of a given predictor (e.g., commitment to the Jewish community, salary . . .) to the teacher profiles (see Components or Profiles 1 and 2). The *Y*-loadings at the bottom of Table 2 reveal which of the four teacher profiles was positively correlated with the response variable (teacher intention to stay in day school teaching or in Jewish education).

EJSS TEACHERS' PROFILES

PLSA identified two profiles among EJSS teachers, which we term: *very engaged* (Profile 1) and *disengaged and unsupported* (Profile 2). The profile of *very engaged* (Component 1) describes EJSS teachers who fit the stereotype image of a day school teacher—someone who mainly sees their work as a way to contribute to the Jewish community (0.5051) and live by the Jewish calendar (0.4073). Second, their intention to stay in Jewish education is positively related to their desire to help students grow (0.3534). They also enjoy interacting with students (0.2573). For teachers included in this profile, being an Orthodox (.2367) was also positively associated with an intention to stay in Jewish education (compared to non-Jewish teachers in day schools). For the teachers in this profile school conditions items show positive but weak effects (below .20). In practical terms, this means that for these teachers, school conditions had no bearing on their intention to remain in Jewish education, which includes but is not limited to day school teaching. This is an important finding. It suggests that day school teachers who fit this profile are committed to student growth and eager to contribute to the Jewish community even if it means enduring unfavorable school environments that do not support their practice. As the *Y*-loadings reveal (bottom of Table 2) these *very engaged* teachers (Profile 1) are likely to pursue lifelong careers in Jewish education (.3972).

We called the second profile of EJSS teachers *disengaged and unsupported* (Profile 2). This profile illustrates a far more troubling phenomenon. In contrast to the previous profile of *very engaged* teachers, the *disengaged and unsupported* teachers did not have a positive association with the goal of “contributing to the Jewish community.” We found a similar finding when analyzing the second “Jewish identity” item (“compatibility of working here and living a Jewish life”). An even more disturbing finding is the fact that *disengaged and unsupported* teachers showed a strong negative relationship to such items as “desire to help students grow” (−0.2532) and “enjoy interacting with students” (−0.3853), which usually rank the highest among most teachers (e.g., Lortie, 1975). In terms of their demographic background, teachers in this group had positive association with being Orthodox (.2079), negative association with being female (−.2132, which means they were more likely to be men), and strong positive association with taking Jewish studies courses in university (compared to studying other subject areas, .3468).

The *disengaged and unsupported* teachers experienced poor working conditions. For example, they report strong negative relationships with school resources (−.2553); teacher respect (−.2662); and administration support (−.4013). Taken together, the profile of the *disengaged and unsupported* teachers (Profile 2) indicates deep endemic problems among a segment of Jewish day schools and some of their teachers. Not surprisingly, this profile

TABLE 3. *Y*-loadings for the EJSS and DeLeT data.

Variable	EJSS		DeLeT	
	Profile 1 <i>Component 1</i>	Profile 2 <i>Component 2</i>	Profile 3 <i>Component 1</i>	Profile 4 <i>Component 2</i>
Lifelong career	.3973*	.1456	.3299*	.3562*

*Loadings less than $-.20$ or greater than $.20$.

of teachers was the only one to show a weak commitment to a lifelong career in Jewish education (0.1455; see *Y*-loadings of Component 2 in Table 3).

To sum up, the analysis of EJSS teachers suggests a mixed but disturbing story. On the one hand, we identified a highly committed group of teachers willing to remain working in schools which do not support their practice. On the other hand, we have a second profile of teachers with a weak commitment to the Jewish community, have little interest in helping children grow, do not enjoy interacting with students, and experience debilitating school environments.

DELET TEACHERS' PROFILES

The portrait of DeLeT teachers seems different from their EJSS counterparts. The first profile of DeLeT teachers generated by PLSA outlines a group of teachers who are positively associated with strong school conditions. We called this profile *well supported* professionals to denote these teachers' positive experiences with professional development opportunities (.3759), curricular resources (.2343), and administration support (.3722). Teachers in this profile also reported feeling respected by administrators (.3553), parents (.2957), the Jewish community (.3891), and society (.2883). As Table 3 illustrates, the DeLeT teachers who fit this profile of *well supported* professionals (Profile 3) are strongly committed to staying in day school teaching for the long haul (*Y*-loading of .3299).

We termed the second profile of DeLeT teachers *very engaged and unsupported* professionals (Profile 4). Unlike the *well supported* professionals (Profile 3), this group experienced profoundly different school environments. For example, this profile was strongly and negatively associated with school conditions—administration support ($-.2758$), teachers' respect ($-.3080$), administration respect ($-.2145$), Jewish community respect ($-.2036$), and society respect, ($-.3030$). Yet, despite the unsupportive environment, DeLeT teachers who fit this profile exhibit strong professional commitments to day school teaching. For example, these teachers have strong positive association with working more than 41 hours per week

(.4346).¹¹ We also found that teachers who fit this profile were negatively (and strongly) associated with earning less than \$35,000 (−.4571) and with earning more than \$55,000 (−.2038), which means that they were likely to earn salaries between \$35,000 to \$55,000. Another important indicator of a strong professional commitment is the strong association with such rewards a “enjoy teaching students” (.3721) and “helping students learn” (.2097). All in all, the *very engaged and unsupported* professionals profile (Component 2) indicates positive strong association with lifelong commitment of teaching in day schools (*Y*-loadings of .3562; see Table 3).

COMPARING DELET AND EJSS TEACHERS

Comparing the profiles of DeLeT and EJSS can tell an important story about Jewish day schools, the teachers who teach there, and about the potential value of serious teacher preparation.¹²

While EJSS teachers were probably most likely to teach in a large number of institutions (Jewish and non-Jewish), we were unable to receive these data. Consequently, we were forced to treat them as a unified group. Nonetheless, when EJSS teachers are compared to DeLeT teachers, we saw substantial differences between the two groups in terms of their profiles and commitment to teaching and Jewish education. The fact that DeLeT teachers displayed more favorable profiles in terms of commitment to teach in JDSs may suggest some long-term benefits for a practice-centered model of teacher preparation model linked to induction support.

DISCUSSION

Teachers' decision to stay in teaching often results from a complex interaction of various factors. Teachers consider their personal priorities, motivations, aspirations, and professional commitments in relation to the working conditions available at their schools. Teachers seem to be asking themselves questions like the following: Do I feel professionally supported and personally fulfilled? Do I feel respected by other teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the Jewish community? Am I part of a vibrant professional

¹¹As can be seen in Table 2, none of the other three profiles had significant association with working more than 41 hours per week.

¹²The DeLeT program combines professional study with a year-long, mentored internship in a local day school. We call this *context specific teacher preparation* because it offers teachers opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for teaching in a particular school context. For a discussion of context specific teacher education and its impact on teacher retention, leadership, and teaching quality, see *Context Specific Teacher Education for the 21st Century* (forthcoming) from Harvard Education Press.

community at my school? How much am I contributing to the Jewish community? Do I teach because or despite of the paycheck? Is working with children and making a difference in their lives a high priority for me?

Creating portraits of teachers which combine their responses to these questions helps to clarify and illustrate the decisions that teachers make regarding to their future employment.

Although this study is exploratory, its findings are notable. They suggest that in order to retain teachers in JDSs and Jewish education, teachers need to be either self-motivated (e.g., have a strong desire to teach children, contribute to the Jewish community) and/or feel supported by their school (enjoy respect and support from administrators and peers and have access to meaningful professional development). In some instances, teacher salary and Jewish studies background played a secondary role in shaping teachers' career commitments. The denominational affiliation of a school as well as teachers' age, experience in teaching, graduate degree and state certification, had a weak insignificant effect on teacher retention in day school teaching and Jewish education.

The findings regarding teachers' personal motivations seem consistent with scholarship on the intrinsic rewards of day school teaching. Teachers who aspired to stay in teaching or in Jewish education, framed their commitment to day school teaching around a desire to teach students and see them grow and around a connection to Judaism (see also Tamir & Magidin de-Kramer, 2011). The other findings about the importance of working conditions for retaining teachers are both backed by research in Jewish and general education (e.g., Tamir, 2013; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Johnson, 2004; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001).

What do these findings tell us about the staffing challenges facing JDSs? The first issue implied by the findings is that teacher retention varies across day schools. Although the EJSS study did not acquire an accurate representative sample of Orthodox schools, according to the available data, school affiliation with Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative movements had no effect on retention. This means that schools, educators, and community leaders need to realize that teacher retention is primarily affected by the commitments teachers bring, the preparation they have, and the support they receive from their school. Three of the four profiles we identified lacked one or more of these components.

Such findings should serve as a wake-up call to school leaders, funders, parents, and the Jewish community. They reveal a disturbing reality about some day school environments which do not support teachers or help them grow professionally. They also suggest that despite some important initiatives aimed at improving professional development, many Jewish day schools cannot and do not offer teachers the types of support and development they need, as described in a growing body of research and research-based literature in general and Jewish education.

Finally, even if day school teachers find the personal connections and resources that help sustain them in teaching, they will not necessarily continue to teach for the long run. Thus, as uncomfortable as it may be, these findings should stimulate serious discussions about making Jewish day schools good places to teach as well as to learn.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Our analysis suggests that poor working conditions exist in many JDSs and thus should be a source of concern to the Jewish community. It also suggests that new programs to prepare and support day school teachers and to improve professional development are unable to turn around years of neglect on the part of schools. Still, they set an example and have positive effects on the preparation and recruitment of a committed cadre of professional Jewish day school teachers. Future research should analyze teachers from various teacher preparation programs and evaluate their preparation, commitments, and retention in teaching and leadership positions in the field of Jewish education.¹³

Finally, the uncoordinated fashion of conducting research in Jewish education makes any attempt to compare studies and populations a challenging task (see Tamir, 2012). In this study we compared two surveys, each of which used a different set of instruments to assess very similar issues and subjects. We tried to match only the most suitable items. In the future researchers and program evaluators should use the same validated instruments across multiple studies. Furthermore, instead of commissioning a study of teachers in Jewish day schools every 10 years, it would be far more beneficial to establish and fund a systematic, ongoing longitudinal data collection initiative that would track the teacher workforce and school conditions in JDSs. This type of initiative, comparable to the data collection of the National Center for Education Statistics, could offer substantial feedback to day school leaders and teacher educators and inform policy-makers' decisions.

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¹³In order for that to happen funders and programs, like DeLeT, Pardes, and JNTP, should come together to build a survey that serves their needs. Data from this survey should be collected and analyzed by independent researchers and shared with program and policy makers.

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APPENDIX

List of Matched Items From the EJSS and DeLeT Surveys

Variable	Independent variables	
	EJSS	DeLeT
	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Female	I am: female, male.	What is your sex? Female, male.
Religion	I consider myself to be (please select only one): Orthodox, Chabad-Lubavitch, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Secular, just Jewish, I am not Jewish, Other.	If you were describing yourself now, based on religious affiliation, which of the following would you use? Modern Orthodox, Orthodox, Conservadox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Renewal, Cultural, Other.
Age	My age is in the following range: younger than 20, 20–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70 or older.	What is your date of birth? MM/DD/YYYY
Graduate degree	I hold the following academic degree: Bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctoral, or other advanced degree.	Have you received a graduate degree in the last 2 years? If yes, what degree and from where?
Years worked	Including this year, I have worked at this school for the following number of years: less than 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-20 years, 31-20 years, more than 30 years.	Where do you currently work? Starting date: (month/year).
Number of hours worked	I actually work on average of about this much time per week at this school: 10 or fewer hours, 11–20 hours, 21–30 hours, 31–40 hours, more than 40 hours.	On average, how many hours a week do you spend doing your job? (If applicable, include work outside of the classroom; e.g., grading meetings, staff development, parent/community events, paperwork, etc.).
Certification	I have a valid teaching certification that is both: (a) recognized by the state or province in which I teach (that is, I could work as a teacher in the public school system), and (b) not an emergency credential. Yes or no.	Are you certified to teacher in your state's public school system? Yes or no.
Salary	During the current academic year, my total salary for all employment at this school will be: I am not compensated, less than \$1,000, \$1,000–\$4,999, \$5,000–\$9,999, \$10,000–\$14,999, \$15,000–\$19,999, \$20,000–\$24,999, \$25,000–\$29,999, \$30,000–\$34,999, \$35,000–\$39,999, \$40,000–\$44,999, \$45,000–\$49,999, \$50,000–\$54,999, \$55,000–\$59,999, \$60,000–\$64,999, \$65,000–\$69,999, \$70,000–\$74,999, \$75,000–\$79,999, \$80,000 or more.	What is your annual salary?

(Continued)

APPENDIX (Continued).

Variable	Independent variables	
	EJSS	DeLeT
	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Jewish studies	I have participated in the following educational experiences as a learner: Jewish graduate level studies.	What degree and from where? Field of study (Jewish graduate level studies or all studies)?
PD schools	In the past 12 months, my professional development activities have included workshops, training sessions, conferences, classes, and/or seminars that involved visiting another school or schools. Yes or no.	In the past 12 months, in which of the following activities have you participated? Observational visits to other schools.
PD courses	In the past 12 months, my professional development activities have included workshops, training sessions, conferences, classes, and/or seminars that were college or university courses. Yes or no.	In the past 12 months, in which of the following activities have you participated? University courses.
PD opportunities	At this school, there are opportunities for me to develop as a highly skilled professional educator. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Teachers have regular opportunities for professional development. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
Curricular resources	The school has an effective curriculum map that guides me as I design lesson plans. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Teachers have adequate curricular resources and materials. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
Community	I was motivated to work at this school to contribute to the Jewish community. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Using the following scale, indicate the level of importance each of the following plays in your decision to teach. Teaching allows me to contribute to the Jewish community. Not at all important, slightly important, somewhat important, very important, extremely important, N/A.
Enjoy students	I was motivated to work at this school to work individually with students and get to know them well. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Using the following scale, indicate the level of importance each of the following plays in your decision to teach. I enjoy working with children. Not at all important, slightly important, somewhat important, very important, extremely important, N/A.

(Continued)

APPENDIX (Continued).

Variable	Independent variables	
	EJSS	DeLeT
	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Help students	I was motivated to work at this school to really impact the life paths of young people. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Using the following scale, indicate the level of importance each of the following plays in your decision to teach. I enjoy "reaching" students and helping them learn. Not at all important, slightly important, somewhat important, very important, extremely important, N/A.
Jewish life	I was motivated to work at this school because of the compatibility of working here and living a Jewish life. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Using the following scale, indicate the level of importance each of the following plays in your decision to teach: it allows me to live by the Jewish calendar. Not at all important, slightly important, somewhat important, very important, extremely important, N/A.
Teacher respect	My efforts are validated and/or recognized by my colleagues. SD, D, N, A, SA.	To what extent do you feel professionally respected by peers at school? Not at all respected, slightly respected, somewhat respected, very respected, extremely respected.
Administration respect	My efforts are validated and/or recognized by the school's administrators. SD, D, N, A, SA.	Please use the following scale to indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements about your current school. Administrators support and value teachers' work. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
Parent respect	My efforts are validated and/or recognized by my students' parents. SD, D, N, A, SA. Recognition and/or validation of my efforts by my students' parents. Not at all important to very important.	To what extent do you feel professionally respected by parents of your students? Family/parents. Not at all respected, slightly respected, somewhat respected, very respected, extremely respected.

(Continued)

APPENDIX (Continued).

Variable	Independent variables	
	EJSS	DeLeT
	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Paperwork	The proportion of time I spend on fulfilling administrative requirements and other paperwork. Not at all important to very important.	Please use the following scale to indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements about your current school. Teachers are not unduly burdened with paperwork and non-instructional responsibilities. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
Class size	The size of my classes. Not at all important to very important.	Please use the following scale to indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements about your current school. I am satisfied with my class size(s). I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
Society respect	Society's view of teachers. Not at all important to very important.	To what extent do you feel professionally respected by the broader society? Not at all respected, slightly respected, somewhat respected, very respected, extremely respected.
Jewish community respect	The status of teachers in the Jewish community. Not at all important to very important.	To what extent do you feel professionally respected by the Jewish community? Not at all respected, slightly respected, somewhat respected, very respected, extremely respected.
Career advancement	Opportunities for career advancement at this school. Not at all important to very important.	I am pleased with the opportunities for professional advancement (promotion) offered to educators at my school. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.
School resources	Well-equipped classrooms at this school. Not at all important to very important.	The school's physical facility adequately supports the instructional program. I do not agree at all, I slightly agree, I somewhat agree, I very much agree, I completely agree.

(Continued)

APPENDIX (Continued).

Independent variables		
	EJSS	DeLeT
Variable	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Administration support/Respect	Recognition and/or validation of my efforts by school administrators. Not at all important to very important.	To what extent do you feel professionally respected by head of school and school administration? Not at all respected, slightly respected, somewhat respected, very respected, extremely respected.
Dependent variable		
	EJSS	DeLeT
Variable	SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree	
Lifelong career	I would describe myself as having a career in Jewish education. SD, D, N, A, SA.	I am sure teaching will be my life-long career. SD, D, N, A, SA.