Literature for Teacher Retention during Covid-19

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ABSTRACT: This paper summarizes and analyzes eleven literary sources that studied various influential factors that affected teacher retention during the pandemic. From these articles and other research, three themes emerge for the audience to consider. The first theme to emerge was why teacher turnover was lower during the pandemic's initial stages than in the later stages; teachers felt that with a lesser workload, they were able to focus on teaching. The second theme was for district leaders and principals to focus more on school characteristics and school improvements to increase job demands and resources. The last theme was that school leaders should reallocate resources to minimize disruptive student behaviors.

Keywords: Covid-19, Teacher Turnover, Rural Schools, Teacher Characteristics, School Characteristics, Wellbeing.

Bastain, Kevin, C. and Fuller, Sarah, C. (2021) Teacher and Principal Attrition During the
    COVID-19 Pandemic in North Carolina. *Education Policy Initiative at Carolina.*
    https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/09/Teacher-and-Principal-
    Attrition-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-in-North-Carolina-June-2021.pdf

Researchers examined teacher and principal attrition in North Carolina by comparing the attrition rates three years prior to the pandemic to the rate of attrition during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employment data from North Carolina's public school system was used to calculate the departure of teachers and transfers within North Carolina's public school system. This data was compared to the percentage of teachers and principals who departed the system between school years and within school years during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rates of departure and transfer were lower during the pandemic. Older teachers or teachers who were eligible for retirement were more likely to depart from the public school system than were other educators. Educators who worked in schools that served more students of color and economically disadvantaged students were also more likely to depart from their job. Compared to previous school years, departure rates for educators and principals were lower in schools that opened as fully remote through the month of January in 2021.

Bastain, Kevin, C. and Fuller, Sarah, C. (2022) Teacher and Principal Attrition During the
      COVID-19 Pandemic in North Carolina: Updated Analyses for the 2021–22 School
      Year. *Education Policy Initiative at Carolina.* https://epic.unc.edu/wp-
      content/uploads/sites/1268/2022/09/Teacher-and-Principal-Attrition-During-COVID-
      19.pdf

There was a decrease in attrition rates of principals and teachers during the first year of the pandemic and an increase in the following year. These increases were larger for new educators, educators of color, and educators who had higher performance levels than other educators. The number of new educators, first time educators, and principals were higher at the start of the 2021-2022 school year than for previous years.

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Collie R. J. (2023). Teacher well-being and turnover intentions: Investigating the roles of job

resources and job demands. *The British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 00, 1– 14.

https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12587

The role of job demands and resources were examined in relation to career decisions and individual well-being among educators. 426 Australian educators (primary, secondary, and both) were given an online questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of statements that required respondents to scale (1-7) their perspectives of how accurately each statement resonated with them. It was discovered that job resources, such as close connections with colleagues and students with consistent leadership support, are positively associated with educator well-being. Time pressure was negatively associated with vitality but positively associated with educators' preparedness and productivity at work. In addition, educators with higher feelings of relatedness with their colleagues had lower intentions to turnover.

Suggestions offered for school leaders to help promote educator well-being and rate of turnover were that a) schools should build positive relationships between educators and students to help promote educator vitality and engagement during teaching. School leaders should provide teachers with continual support and feedback on developing positive interactions with their students and creating goals for improving student-teacher interactions.

Dos Santos, L. M. (2021). The Relationship between Workforce Sustainability, Stress, and

Career Decision: A Study of Kindergarten Teachers during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This study focused on why kindergarten teachers left their profession permanently and if their reasoning for leaving was related to stress, burnout, or technology. 60 former kindergarten educators that left their jobs due to reasons relating to Covid-19 in the United States were interviewed. The results indicated the reasons for departing included personal considerations of family members and the educator's trained skills. Teachers also reported reasons surrounding their individual and school environment in addition to financial considerations. Recommendations were also included in efforts to target the current resources for educators as well as combat the shortages of educators due to the pandemic.

Gillani, A., Dierst-Davies, R., Lee, S., Robin, L., Li, J., Glover-Kudon, R., Baker, K., & Whitton, A. (2022). Teachers' dissatisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic: Factors contributing to a desire to leave the profession. *Frontiers in Psychology,* Vol 13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.940718

Researchers identified sources of 1,807 U.S. teachers' dissatisfaction during the 2020 school year. Teachers reported a lack of organizational support from their school leaders/administration. Other sources of dissatisfaction were the poor implementation of school policies and poor mental health. In 2020, researchers noted that 43% of teachers reported a greater desire to leave the profession. Those who were dissatisfied with their school's communications, decisions, and supplies related to COVID-19 were at 34% greater odds of reporting that they were thinking of leaving the profession more than before the pandemic. More specifically, Non-Hispanic Black

teachers who were not given the opportunity to provide feedback or opinions into the decision to remain open or close within their district were approximately two and a half times the odds of increased intention to leave compared to those not of color. Female teachers who reported being dissatisfied with their district's policy and procedure decisions regarding COVID-19 were at 78% increased odds of increased intention to leave compared to their male colleagues.

Guzzo, Boffo, S., Ferri, F., Gagliardi, F., & Grifoni, P. (2022). Towards Quality Digital

Learning: Lessons Learned during COVID-19 and Recommended Actions—The

Teachers' Perspective. *Sustainability (Basel, Switzerland), 14*(14),

https://doi.org/10.3390/su14148438

This article focuses on the challenges and lessons that originated from the experience of distance learning during the pandemic in Italy. The sample involved in this study consisted of primary and secondary educators who taught students from urban areas, rural areas, or students from both areas. The article also emphasized the importance of being prepared for potential future emergencies. Many teachers have proven to be resilient and have been able to positively adapt to remote teaching but there is still a significant number of teachers who resist remote learning approaches. The data also suggests that the more prepared educators are, the less request for priority action decreases. Similarly, when educators are provided with structured and organized curricular materials, it was found to have a negative correlation with the level of preparedness for remote learning.

McMakin, D., Ballin, A., & Fullerton, D. (2023). Secondary trauma, burnout, and teacher

self care during COVID19: A mixed methods case study. *Psychology in the Schools*,

60(5), 1442–1458. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22764

19 U.S. educators and staff members' perceptions/experiences with secondary trauma, burnout,

and self-care were examined. Two surveys were administered; one in the fall term of 2020 and

another in the spring term of 2021. Teachers noted how the pandemic brought on increased

responsibilities not only at school but also at home. This additional set of responsibilities

disrupted self-care routines for educators. Results indicated that educators maintained stable

compassion satisfaction (negative feelings associated with helping people due to occupational

stress), low levels of secondary trauma, and an average range of burnout. Educators defined self-

care in the form of supportive relationships with school leaders and colleagues along with having

a sense of purpose. These findings suggest that the trauma-informed approach could potentially

promote a supportive work environment all while minimizing an educator's symptoms of

burnout.

Ozamiz-Etxebarria N, Berasategi Santxo N, Idoiaga Mondragon N and Dosil Santamaría M

(2021). The Psychological State of Teachers During the COVID-19 Crisis: The

Challenge of Returning to Face-to-Face Teaching. *Front. Psychol*.

https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.620718.

Researchers evaluated the emotional state of educators following their school's re-opening after

the six-month closure due to the COVID-19 crisis in Leioa, Spain. The educators in this sample

consisted of 1,633 pre-school to post-secondary educators (private and public). Fifty percent of

teachers (pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational, or university education) reported stressful

feelings. Moreover, about half of teachers reported symptoms of anxiety. Of those experiencing

symptoms of anxiety, 8% reported extremely severe symptoms and 7% reported severe

symptoms. 32% reported symptoms of depression, 3% reported extremely severe symptoms, and

4% severe symptoms. School leaders should consider the benefits of providing special

psychological care for their teachers during a crisis, particularly those who may be more

vulnerable due to increased feelings of stress or greater personal responsibilities.

Pressley, T. (2021). Factors Contributing to Teacher Burnout During COVID-19. *Educational*

Researcher, *50*(5), 325–327. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X211004138

Researchers recruited 359 K-12 U.S. teachers to participate in a survey that was scored using

four different scales; the COVID Anxiety Scale, Anxiety Scale, and two teacher burnout

subscales. There were no significant differences in teacher burnout stress during COVID-19,

based on the educator's ethnicity, location, years of teaching experience, and type of instruction.

Researchers suggest that to limit teacher feelings of burnout, schools and districts must take into

consideration improving their level of support in regard to their teachers. It is also recommended

that schools and districts consistently monitor teachers during a crisis and provide extra support

throughout the school year. Limitations are also noted regarding the sampling procedure. The

researchers reported the need to have some knowledge of who was picked. Therefore, random sampling was not used, so there is a possibility the data could be skewed.

Redding, C., Booker, L.N., Smith, T.M. and Desimone, L.M. (2019)., "School administrators'
     direct and indirect influences on middle school math teachers' turnover", *Journal of*
     Educational Administration, Vol. 57 No. 6, pp. 708-730. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-10-
     2018-0190

The roles of support from administration, teacher quality, and any other factors were examined along with the influence of these factors on middle school teacher turnover. An analysis of 64 exit surveys found that new math teachers who had administrative support were less likely to leave the profession. The predicted probability of teacher turnover for higher-quality teachers is lower than for lower-performing teachers. It was reported that 16% of teachers' reason to leave was due to the lack of support from their school's administration. Almost a third (28%) of teachers reported leaving due to their school's climate. It was also suggested that principals shape their level of support based on the quality of the teacher.

Robinson, L.E., Valido, A., Drescher, A. et al. "Teachers, Stress, and the COVID-19 Pandemic:
     A Qualitative Analysis. *School Mental Health*" (2022)., https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-
     022-09533-2

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This article analyzed the association of stress and the pandemic's influence on 52 fifth-grade teachers' mental health and ability to meet professional demands and educators' individual experiences with their school's implementation of social-emotional learning programs during the pandemic in the United States. On an individual level, teachers reported an increase in workload. On a classroom level, teachers reported an increase in concern regarding their younger students' welfare and lack of resources. As for school leadership, teachers reported an increase in levels of stress with what they perceived as unreasonable demands. Personal and professional stressors were also found to be associated with higher rates of teacher stress, depression, and burnout.