

Teacher Attrition in South Africa: Trends, Challenges and Prospects

Victor J. Pitsoe

*Department of Educational Management and Leadership,
College of Education, University of South Africa
Email: Pitsovj@unisa.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Teacher Attrition. Teacher Retention Policy. Incentive Theory of Motivation

ABSTRACT Teacher attrition is a universal challenge and has a negative impact on global policies. A growing body of research around the world shows that most countries are experiencing a substantial decline in meeting their teacher demand. In this article, I argue that teacher attrition has far-reaching implications for the quality of teaching and learning and for the achievement of Education For All (EFA) and Universal Primary Education (UPE) targets and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Drawing from the incentive theory of motivation and teacher attrition literature, this article (1) explores the emerging trends in teacher attrition and the challenges it presents; (2) critically analyses the South African teacher retention policies; (3) investigates the implications of teacher attrition on the quality of teaching and learning; (4) explores different avenues to reduce teacher attrition rate; (5) proposes a framework of rethinking teacher attraction and retention policies.