BEGINNING TEACHER MOTIVATIONS AND ORIENTATIONS FOR TEACHING IN ONE SCHOOL DIVISION

Abstract

It was once believed that increased student enrollment and teacher retirements were the cause of the teacher shortage (Ingersoll, 2003). However, Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2006) reported the teacher retention problem is instead due to beginning teachers, defined as having less than 1 year of teaching, leaving teaching within the first 5 years. Ingersoll (2005) proposed the problem could be ameliorated by identifying the motivations that attract people to teaching and retain them once they are in the field through mentoring support. One reason people may choose not to continue teacher education classes or teaching is that their motivations are inadequate to “sustain their involvement in teacher education or practice” (Sinclair, Dowson, & McInerney, 2006, p. 1134). The purpose of this study is to determine and measure beginning teachers’ motivations and orientations for teaching using the Orientations for Teaching Survey (OTS) as a means to assist with mentoring and supervising teachers in schools in an effort to increase the retention rate of beginning teachers. The study employed a mixed-method sequential explanatory design with two phases. In the first phase, the OTS was administered to beginning teachers with less than 1, 1, and 2 years of experience. After the quantitative data analysis, semistructured phone interviews were conducted with a few typical cases during the second phase to further explain or elaborate the findings of the quantitative results. Overall results of the ANOVA did not reveal differences in reported results of teachers with less than 1, 1, and 2 years of experience for each of the six factors on the OTS. Further analysis showed variance between scores was within groups. Data from the phone interviews revealed that beginning teachers felt mentoring offered
by the school division helped with day-to-day issues that developed and ameliorated feeling overwhelmed.