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# The Relationship Between Teacher Leaders and Teacher Attrition

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the relationship between teacher leaders and teacher attrition and its impact on students attending public schools in the United States. Teacher leadership has been recognized as being an integral part in operating schools efficiently and effectively with outcomes of success. School administrators have realized the value that teacher leaders bring into the schools. Teacher leaders can influence the schools' climates which in turn influences the learning environments in the classrooms. Teachers are collaborative and supportive for one another and especially for beginning teachers when there are teacher leaders on the faculty. In the United States during the last decade, teacher attrition isn't decreasing but appears to become an even more serious problem in the coming years. Approximately 40 percent of beginning teachers will leave the classroom within their first five years of teaching. Teacher attrition is even a higher percentage within schools that serve minority and low-income students. This study identifies some of major contributing factors being attributed to the high rates of teacher attrition rate. In addition, this discusses what are some of the possible approaches in reducing this high rate of teachers exiting the profession.

**Keywords:** Teacher Leadership, Teacher Attrition, School Climate, Student Population

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## 1. Introduction

The relationship between teacher leaders and teacher turnover, more commonly referred to as teacher attrition needs to be examined from a nationwide perception in the United States. Nevertheless, average rates of teacher attrition do not reveal the fact that some learning institutions regularly lose teachers, especially those that serve students who are black and with low achievements. High rates of teacher attrition destabilize the school's learning environment thus interrupting instructional performance in the classrooms and endanger the student's educational experience, most of who are by now at below grade level in their academics. School leaders might find it hard to implement policy changes or make modifications in instructional practices occurring in the classrooms when they are frequently faced with high rates of teacher attrition. As a result, high rates of teacher attrition in schools negatively affect the implementation of various instructional programs. Teacher attrition also limits teacher leaders from emerging within the school's faculty. This is particularly the case when there is a constant flow of

beginning teachers are hired to fill open teaching positions when veteran teachers leave the profession. Beginning teachers who are new to the teaching profession are less likely of being effective at increasing students' growth as compared to more experienced teachers.

School administrators are faced with significant challenges when it comes to dealing with the removal of ineffective teachers from the classrooms [1]. To help with this challenge, school administrators are turning to and relying upon teacher leaders to assist them in dealing with this important administrative matter. Many of these independent variables of teachers' effectiveness can be measured within the classroom setting. In addition, the influences of variables can be measured in various degrees. This administrative matter becomes even more challenging to remove ineffective teachers from the classrooms. Additionally, teachers have higher probabilities of improving their classrooms effectiveness when provided the appropriate guidance and support from teacher leaders found within the schools' faculty.

## 2. Teacher Leader

Even though a teacher leader like a principal is faced with willing and evaluations to discharge a teacher who is ineffective, she or he has the probability of encountering certain universal disputes, which include protection by the union or contract, official procedures and procedures of dismissal that are time-consuming. Some presidents of local unions, for example, admit that they do not advise teachers who are ineffective to vacate the profession or district and as a result they end up protecting those teachers who are ineffective. Even external peer review procedures for teachers who are weak that are partially intended to help teacher leaders of the trouble of teacher improvement or elimination, have their individual obstacles.

The migration of ineffective teachers from one learning institution to another is known as the “dance of lemons”. Most if these teachers who are ineffective usually end up in schools that have the least experienced school leaders, usually those schools that serve learners with the least attainment records. Regardless of the numerous challenges that are encountered by teacher leaders in dismissal and remediation of teachers, some schools have the ability to uphold a teaching force that is of high quality, whereas others are not. Likewise, some learning institutions have the ability to maintain their best teachers, whereas others cannot. The leadership of learning institutions should comprehend the relationship between retention and support of teachers [14].

As a result, they are supposed to remain updated on the strategies that should be undertaken to ensure that they keep these professionals employed under circumstances *that* are difficult. As changes take place in learning institutions, and the number of students who are at-risk continues to go up, so do the needs for teacher leaders to comprehend and stay aware of the techniques and methods that they can use in facilitating teacher retention that is improved. Comprehending the manner in which environmental, emotional, technical and instructional support has an effect on teachers and identifying the significance of being updated on the topics of leadership, teacher attrition and the development of the teaching profession, teacher leaders should depend on some significant sources that ensure support and retention of teachers in these institutions.

Teacher attrition and concerns of retention have recently caused serious deficiencies in the education sector. Teacher attrition from a point of placement is either involuntary or voluntary, even though much attrition of teachers is done voluntarily [4] provided that there are extensive rates of tenure and the commonness of unionized grievance legislations that regard termination. In the facade of a developing population of school-age population, districts and schools have to work hard to preserve teaching standards for quality teaching whereas they endlessly ensure that they recruit new bright teachers and look out to retain the most effective teachers.

### 2.1. The Role of Teacher Leaders

Teacher leaders should therefore understand that they have

a significant duty in teacher retention or attrition. They are supposed to focus on ensuring that they keep the teaching staff and recruit teachers that can be considered as assets to the environment of the school. Therefore, maintaining teachers who are good should be considered as one of the most significant agenda for school leaders. Teacher leaders play a significant duty in ensuring that they improve teacher retention through provision of support in the different domains which include instructional, environmental, emotional and technical aspects of their team [8]. As the development of instructional leaders is significant to the development of teacher leadership, they majorly strengthen the institutional traditions of learning institutions through provision of support and guidance and also giving institutional and instructional resources. Teacher leaders should therefore take into consideration the manner in which their actions determine the climate and tone of the school since they are the most significant developers of the culture of a school.

Teacher leaders could probably alter most work design aspects that detract or facilitate them from their work performance [9] For instance, teacher leaders can make sure that teachers get enough resources as well as pertinent information to thriving function in their work. Teacher leaders further assist in setting the tone of school culture, especially with regards to the manner in which special programs are perceived, through meditation of disagreements, policy setting and recommendation of behavior that is meritorious. The prominence on work design is essential in organizing the perception of developing the relationship between teacher leaders and teacher attrition. The development of level support from teacher leaders has a coherent conception compared to the focus of development of teacher leaders. Eventually, the amalgamation of the actions and principles of the teacher leaders and members of the teaching staff who are mediated by the general culture of a learning institution has an influence on the support level that is felt by the teacher as a professional. Provision of administrative support as well as the development of the culture of a school is relevant in retaining teachers. When teacher leaders develop an organizational pattern that is focused on mission, vision and development of staff, they offer the foundation for significant inspiration and development that is uninterrupted.

### 2.2. The Support of Teacher Leaders

Teacher leaders should ensure that they address most of the concerns that are connected to teachers' attrition because most teachers are isolated [13]. Widespread programs for staff induction for teachers who are new as well as coaching approaches that is effective for the present staff usually encourages the development of communities. Teacher leadership behaviors that are modeled usually extend to the whole team mainly because the behavior of every individual has an effect on the attitudes and actions within the whole web. A teacher leader who is effective promotes professional development, risk taking activities, active involvement in the

educational community as well as autonomous behavior that is increased. Through addressing the exceptional requirements of teachers, teacher leaders usually enhance inherent motivation thus enhancing retention of teachers [7]. Teacher leaders have an influence on teacher's behaviors as well as the community system similar to the way a rainbow affects a spider web. In the same manner, teacher leaders can have similar universal effects in learning institutions as well as teachers. Reduced levels of teacher migration and attrition have constantly been experienced in learning institutions that have additional support for teachers, reduced challenges in discipline, and increased levels of decision making in the various faculties thus having an effect on autonomy and influence. Teacher leaders who are expressively supportive and offer informational support have a higher likelihood to have teachers with better rates of satisfaction with their duties.

### **2.3. The Influence of Teacher Leaders**

Teacher leaders are regarded as a driving force in assisting teachers in dealing with learners, provide them the authority for decision-making and offer them with an encouraging and supportive environment in their workplaces [3]. Teacher leadership that is strong is of essential significance in providing guidance to teachers thus developing the necessary strategies and skills that enhance the learning of every student, thus boosting the probability of retention. The creation of environments that promote teacher retention must comprise teacher leaders who are supportive to the various functionalities. The support skills undertaken by teacher leaders and their support are critical in promoting teacher retention. Teacher leaders are therefore supposed to be aware of the situations that have an influence on teacher attrition and retention.

Through comprehending the circumstances that amount to teacher attrition, teacher leaders can offer support that is structured to both the organization and the teachers with an objective of promoting professional development. Getting a better comprehension of the way various organization of teachers wish to be offered support by their leaders is significant because apprehensions over support are usually considered as the reason for prematurely quitting the profession. Support that is structured can be illustrated through provision of criticism about work performance, assisting teachers connect with parents and learners and development of practices that teacher leaders consider essential in attaining the educational objectives of the learning institution. Teacher leader are therefore aware of the changes that should be made to facilitate improvement or illustrate continual development, and this is their chance to institute these developments. Teachers therefore perceive the role of teacher leaders as significant with regards to provision of support and the retaining of teachers who are new in their classrooms, in their profession and in their schools.

## **3. Teacher Attrition**

There are certain aspects that can either inhibit or

contribute to teacher attrition or retention. Whereas we might be aware of what issues cause teacher attrition, we might not be aware of what constitutes interventions that are effective to avert or ease burnout and promote teacher retention among teachers. Teachers who quit their professions because of dissatisfaction in their work environment do so not just because of their salaries which are low, but also because they do not have support from the teacher leaders, the absence of learner's motivation, the absence of influence by teachers over making decisions and the challenges of student discipline.

Another significant aspect of the relationship between teacher leaders and teacher retention is motivation. Motivation is a factor that has influential consequences on teacher retention in learning institutions [6]. Motivated and qualified workers are regarded as significant aspects for the success of an organization. It is therefore significant for teacher leaders to comprehend the manner in which they provide support to teachers thus leading to decreased or increased rates of motivation. Most aspects both positive and negative can have an effect on teachers' motivation which includes the stage in which a teacher is at in their occupation. Among the reasons that cause teacher attrition in schools include fatigue, motivation and individual crisis. On the other hand, aspects that boost the willingness of a teacher to stay in a school include enough professional ties and relations, professional contribution, teacher assessment, teacher development and leadership. Teacher leaders are therefore supposed to be aware that some of the most essential intentions might at times be taken astray when concerns such as motivation are enforced. Teacher leaders who have the objective of contributing to teacher's development and improvement wish to depend on teacher's strength that is brought to the table. They require to be aware of the teachers as individuals; authentically, pedagogically and culturally. Teachers do not require to be thumped over the heads for development. They therefore require increased chances, feedback, time and other additional support with the aim of bolstering their own motivation for purposes of development.

Another significant aspect that enhances the relationship between teacher leaders and teacher attrition is communication. Communication between teacher leaders and other teachers takes place on different levels and exists in diverse forms which include physical, verbal, non-verbal and emotional [10]. Consequently, communication is regarded as an essential part of developing positive, synergistic and trustworthy relationships between teachers and teacher leaders thus contributing to the development of positive work environments. The manner in which teacher leaders communicate with other members of staff has a vital role in establishing the climate of the school, school improvement and job satisfaction. Communication, then, is not considered as an occurrence that happens inside a school where teachers transmit written and oral messages; instead it is a procedure that is continual or reaffirming and creating the social reality that creates the school environment. Openness in communication therefore is considered as an important

aspect since schools are able to maintain effective communication. The way in which information is communicated, either from the teacher leaders to teachers or from the teachers to teacher leaders, is important since it maintains positive relations both holistically and individually. Communication can easily be altered; meanings and words lost to various interpretations and viewpoints. Considering these factors, accuracy should be considered as one of the important components of communication. Communication is regarded as one of the important building blocks of forming trustworthy relationships and therefore it must be legitimate and offer an avenue for reciprocity of concerns, ideas and questions both for teacher leaders and teachers in general [12]. When teacher leaders and teachers share a similar vision and objective, they make sure that they enhance communication and therefore form an open school climate.

## 4. School Climate

According to research, the development of an open climate in a school increases the level of job satisfaction among teachers and teacher leaders. Furthermore, the development of open school climate boosts the level of job satisfaction among teachers and teacher leaders. The perceptions of teachers concerning their school have a heavy influence towards their attitudes and consequently, their behaviors. Communication can be used to heavily influence the behavior of teachers and also their attitude in various ways; negative to positive communication thus setting the atmosphere and tone of what various individuals need to convey to others. In case teachers need to communicate, interact or become honest with teachers, they have to struggle to have a school that is effective. Similarly, if teachers fail to communicate with teacher leaders a similar effect can be experienced. As a consequence, such a learning institution can experience low job satisfaction levels and morale, and ultimately result in attrition and burnout of teachers.

One of the most critical parts of the existence of human beings is the provision of support; various individuals need to be supported all through not just on their individual lives but also professionally. Support is particularly critical for individuals who work as members of staff in schools. The provision of administrative support has a major effect on the rate of teacher retention in the various placements [2]. Teacher leaders are supposed to make use of these supports and employ them in the retaining of teachers. One of the major subscales of teacher leader support includes the provision of emotional support whereby teacher leaders can use it to show endorsement towards teachers. Whenever teachers feel that they are more appreciated by teacher leaders, their levels of job satisfaction has a high likelihood of increasing. Teachers feel more connected with their school, principal, and work environment at instances where emotional support is given. Teacher leaders who have open door policies have proved to be sensitive to their teachers, lack preference, and show respect to their teachers thus having fewer challenges with retention. Environmental

support is also a significant aspect of the relationship between teacher leaders and teacher attrition since it includes everything from caseloads that are manageable to appropriate teaching assignments and enough planning time; and the adequate supplies that are used in teaching and schools that are well-maintained. Teachers who might have been misplaced in form of qualification usually work hard to staff schools. Therefore, the development of a manageable and appropriate teaching assignment is undoubtedly important to the satisfaction and success of a teacher. In most instances, teachers get assigned out of their specific subject areas, have assignments that are split that might not work out or become responsible for extremely enormous teaching classes or loads.

## 5. Discussion

Teachers who are assigned by their teacher leaders out of their obligation have a higher likelihood of experiencing teaching as unrewarding, stressful work and therefore might choose to vacate this field [5]. Both teacher leaders and teachers usually suffer in this respect. As a result, hard-to-staff learning institutions further struggle with the maintenance of the facilities and supplies that are enough. Most of them are operated and owned by the government where they are situated. Therefore, funding becomes hard to come by since companies substantiate financial requirements for additional expenses. Teacher leaders should have the resources required in curriculum implementation thus supporting effective teaching practices. Furthermore, there are basics that must be maintained as well as enough access to pens, paper, pencils, textbooks and crayons are of essential importance to ensure the success of teachers and the school in general.

The reflections of teachers who might have fallen out of textbooks, severe allocation on paper and libraries that are deficient require assistance to facilitate learning. From the perception of students, teachers and parents, a school that is cautiously maintains acts as a sign of respect for individuals who learn and teach there. Nevertheless, maintenance that is neglected not just passes disdain or indifference for individuals who use the services provided in the school but also obstructs with effective provision of instruction. Malfunction of Bunsen burners in a laboratory, failed electrical systems and weak lighting systems that make it difficult to read during lessons can compromise the effectiveness of teachers. In case educators are to flourish, then schools are supposed to be institutions that are hospitable for adults to develop and work professionally. Therefore, working conditions that are positive and environments are significant to teacher attrition in schools that are hard to staff.

## 6. Conclusion

Teacher leaders are in powerful positions to ensure that they shape the organizational circumstances under which teachers work. They have an effect on most elements of

school life; including the climate of the school, resources and the roles that are played by teachers. Specifically, teacher leaders who successfully share values, objectives and professional development opportunities assist in the creation of collaborative environments where every member of the school can assist in supporting how to learn from one another. Collaborative environments where teacher leaders and teachers can frequently and openly discuss and schedule the requirements of the school have a high likelihood of experiencing bigger occurrences of school improvement and retention. Learning institutions where teachers are allowed to freely express their opinions promote the discovery of the fact that they are cared for thus developing a high level of mutual respect, trust and solidarity. Support and leadership from teacher leaders might boost retention in implemented in a consistent manner and might also prove important to most teachers who might be in the various roles of leadership. Learning institutions that provide their teachers with more administrative and autonomy support also get reduced levels of migration and attrition. Developing the support for teachers, particularly those that are challenging to placements and learners is important since it improves retention. Teacher leaders should know that teachers are usually ready to remain in schools that are difficult to staff in case they are prepared to teach and also if the working situations include a mechanism that is supportive, numerous opportunities for teacher leadership thus influencing the decision-making process and the opportunity to closely work with few families and students.

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