Assignment #4: Theoretical Foundation

Comparing Literature Reviews

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Within the education system, there are many challenges that an educator faces each and every day. Some of these challenges have caused educators to want to leave the classroom setting and look for employment elsewhere or to retire from the profession. States such as South Carolina are experiencing a teacher shortage and need to look at the challenges that teachers are facing in order to get a better understanding of what is causing teachers to want to leave the classroom. Understanding what is causing teachers to leave the classroom can allow states to better address the exodus that is taking place within the teaching profession. The purpose of this paper is to look at the gap in the research, the problem statement, theoretical foundation, and the research questions that will be included in a study within the state of South Carolina on teacher retention.

**Gap in the Research**

There is a gap in the research that has been carried out on teacher retention. There has been research carried out in the past on teacher retention in larger states. However, there has not been much research done in regards to teacher retention in smaller states such as South Carolina. Hammonds (2017) pointed out that there was a need for more research in other states to determine what is causing educators to leave the field. The closest study that could be found to the state of South Carolina was Tennessee. In the research that was carried out in Tennessee, the author of that study pointed out that more research was needed in other states to determine possible causes of teachers leaving the profession (Hammond, 2017). It was also recommended that research be carried out to determine why teachers are leaving the profession in order to address the issue and reduce the amount who are leaving the field of education (Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016). This view by the author was supported by Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, & Marinell (2017), who stated that there is a need to figure out what is causing so many teachers to leave the profession in this day and age. As a result of these recommendations, it has been determined that research needs to be carried out in the state of South Carolina to gain insight into what might be causing educators to leave the field of education in the state of South Carolina and thus find ways to address the increasing teacher shortage throughout the state.

**Problem Statement**

The specific problem is that teachers are leaving the classroom in the state of South Carolina at alarming rates. Teacher retention in the state of South Carolina is now becoming a major issue for school districts all across the state. Teacher retention is a large concern for school districts due to the amount of money it costs to hire and train new teachers for positions (Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, & Marinell, 2017). On average, 20% of teachers leave the profession each year in urban schools (Hammonds, 2017). The reasons why teachers within the state of South Carolina are leaving the education profession are not known. It is also not known if there is anything that can be done to keep these teachers within the education profession.

**Theories for Research**

The theoretical foundation that the study is going to be based on consists of three theories that support the research. The theories that the research will be based upon are Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg’s Motivational Theory, and Human Capital Management. Maslow’s Theory is important to the research due to the fact that it concentrates on the unsatisfied needs of human beings and how these can affect an individual (Hammonds, 2017). Maslow’s Theory is one that explains human behavior as one that is trying to satisfy the needs of individuals such as esteem and physiological needs (Maslow, 1943). Once one of the needs is met by an individual, then he or she moves to another step in the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). Herzberg’s Motivational Theory is based upon two sets of factors that can either cause employees to have motivation or lose motivation (Buble, Juras, & Matić, 2014). Human Capital Management concentrates on what companies or organizations can do to hire, develop, and retain employees (Marrewijk & Timmers, 2003).

**Phenomena and Research Questions**

The research that is going to be conducted will look at the phenomenon of teacher retention. The phenomena that will be investigated are what causes educators to want to leave the teaching profession and what can be done to reduce the amount of teachers who are leaving the teaching profession. The research that is going to be conducted involves three research questions, which are:

R1: What are teacher perceptions of working in education in one school district located in South Carolina?

R2: What is the main cause of educators leaving the field of education in one school district in South Carolina?

R3: How do educators who have a mentor view the thought of leaving the teaching profession?

**How Theories are Related to Research**

Maslow’s Theory is important to the research because it is important to figure out what educators’ needs are. Figuring out the needs of the educators could allow a district to reduce the amount of teachers leaving the district. Herzberg’s Theory is important to the dissertation because the research will be looking at what is motivating teachers and what is not motivating teachers to stay in the education field. Human Capital Management is also important to the research that is going to be conducted because this theory looks at ways organizations can retain employees. The theory is also important to the study because it is important for districts to figure out what needs to be done in order to train and develop employees to their fullest potential in order to reduce turnover. All three of these theories will go hand in hand to help look at the needs of teachers, what motivates teachers to stay in the profession, and what districts can do in order to retain teachers. These theories are also relevant to the research because it is important to figure out what teachers’ needs are in order for them to be happy, what causes teachers to have motivation or lose motivation, and how teachers can be retained and developed in the best ways possible.

**Conclusion**

There are many challenges that educators face on a daily basis. Many of these challenges that educators face are causing them to leave the profession or even retire earlier than they were originally planning. Having quality teachers within the education system is an important foundation in order to offer a good education for all of the students involved. Looking at the many challenges that are found within the education system could possibly allow districts and schools a way to increase teacher retention. Increasing teacher retention could allow districts to provide a good education for the students in the public school system. It is important that research is conducted in order to figure out what is causing educators to want to leave the classroom so that states and districts can take measures to reduce the amount of teachers leaving the profession.

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