



## **Promoting Special Educator Teacher Retention**

**Dr. Ramesh Chander**

Assistant Professor, Dept of Hindi  
Kasturi Ram College of Higher Education, Narela, New Delhi

### **Abstract**

This article provides a thorough analysis of previous research on the topic of teacher turnover and retention in special education settings. The research findings provided important context for understanding the dynamics of special educators' turnover and retention. Job satisfaction, administrative support, orientation and mentorship were the most prominent recurring themes. Research suggests that providing special educators with strong administrative backing is an effective way to boost their work satisfaction and retention rates.

**Keywords:** teacher preparation, attrition, retention

### **Introduction**

teachers with training in special education has worsened during the last decade. Every year, there aren't enough people entering the sector to become special education teachers. The high rate of early career special education teacher turnover is often cited as a key contributor to the global lack of qualified educators. Right now, every year, around 13% of special education teachers quit their employment. Due to a lack of available instructors, many teaching positions in special education have been filled by individuals without proper certification. The American Association for Employment in Education (2008) found that nine of the thirteen categories of teaching with the greatest need for new teachers were in special education (p. 105). Students and the district as a whole suffer because of the high turnover rate. A major emphasis of our efforts should be on keeping our current faculty. The lack of special education teachers stems from a number of interconnected causes, such as inadequate training and poor mentoring in the early years of a career in education. Educators' decisions to stay or quit the area of special education have been studied by researchers who have focused on a wide range of criteria. external, occupational, and individual considerations. The research' findings on whether or not a given characteristic influenced attrition or retention were often contradictory. For example, it was discovered that the turnover rate for general education teachers was higher than that for teachers with special education certification. The various definitions of attrition utilised and inability to statistically account for important demographic characteristics are to blame, according to Billingsley (1993). According to the findings of subsequent research, uncertified special educators are more likely to abandon the profession than their certified counterparts. From 1992 to 2004, the time span covered by Billingsley's second evaluation of the literature, researchers began to zero in on individual factors. Demographic determinants on attrition were analysed by Billingsley (2004b). She found that age was the only significant predictor of turnover, whereas gender and ethnicity had no effect. Younger special educators are leaving the profession at a higher rate than their more seasoned counterparts.

### **Definition of Attrition and Retention**

Many different ideas are used to explain the decline in the number of special educators and the concomitant increase in the number of special education students. The term absolute retention refers to the circumstance in which a special education teacher continues to work in the same capacity as in the prior year. It is documented as transfers to another special education teaching position whenever an



employee in the special education field changes employment. The process of special educators moving into regular classrooms is referred to as transfers to general education teaching, and the term characterises the trend. Last but not least, the term exit attrition is used to refer to the loss of special educators who choose to leave the field. The most troublesome aspect is teacher turnover and attrition since it results in a smaller overall teaching staff in the field of special education.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The degree to which a teacher enjoys their work may play a role in determining whether or not they remain in the area of education whole, whether they switch to a position in general education, or whether or not they quit teaching altogether. Job happiness is directly influenced by a wide variety of things (e.g., administrative support, stress, and workload). Educators who work in special education gave themselves lower ratings of overall job satisfaction than their colleagues who work in regular education. Those who left the teaching profession mentioned a lack of support from parents and administrators, an excessive amount of paperwork, a restricted availability of resources, and big class sizes as the primary factors that caused their discontent with the profession. The capacity of a teacher to assist his or her pupils leads to high work satisfaction, which enhances the possibility that the teacher will remain in the profession, according to a poll of 57 special educators who remained in the field.

Special educators are often expected to accomplish work that goes above and beyond what is needed of instructors in general education, yet they are not compensated for this extra labour. The capacity of the instructor to effectively instruct their students is seen by some as being hampered as a result of this additional obligation. using content analysis to investigate the responses to 341 questionnaires, we came to the conclusion that the primary responsibility of special education instructors is no longer the delivery of teaching. On the other hand, special educators prefer to work in this sector and remain there so that they may continue to instruct and support their student populations. They will have less happiness in their work as a result of this, which will finally cause them to leave the industry altogether. As a result, a survey was conducted with both in-service and pre-service teachers of special education in order to assess the expectations placed on each kind of educator. The pre-service teachers, on the other hand, perceived their future function as one that is consistent with the policy that is already in place, but the practising teachers expressed quite different duties. The responsibilities of special educators might vary anywhere from those of a traditional classroom teacher to those of an educational consultant. Special educators are required to fulfil a wide variety of duties due to the nature of their profession. Some of these roles include the management of challenging behaviours and the instruction of social and vocational skills. This misunderstanding of responsibilities may contribute to early stress and burnout in teachers since a new teacher entering the profession may anticipate one duty, but instead be given another that is much different from what they expected. Because of the increased pressure, some special educators choose to quit the profession.

### ***Administrative Support***

According to the findings of the study, one factor that leads to instructors of special education quitting their employment is a lack of support from administrators. shown that administrators and teachers were in agreement about the need of teacher assistance. In addition, early career special educators absolutely need administrative help in order to successfully navigate the many rules that pertain to special education. It was difficult for special education instructors to establish a connection with the



administrators of their districts, which made it more challenging for them to get the required assistance for their classes.

### **Conclusion**

It is widely believed that the high rate of turnover among special educators is one of the primary causes of the current teacher shortage. The high incidence of employee turnover has a detrimental impact, not just on the pupils but also on the school system as a whole. It is more important to work on ways to keep teachers in the classroom than it is to find ways to fire them. There are several different words that may be used to describe attrition and retention rates for special educators. Absolute retention refers to the situation in which a special educator maintains the identical position that they had the prior year. We refer to individuals who go from working in special education to jobs in general education as transfers. The term exit attrition refers to the loss of special educators who quit their careers in the education area entirely. Special educators choose to work in the field, and once they do, they remain there to continue teaching and providing services to the pupils they serve. They will have less happiness in their work as a result of this, which will finally cause them to leave the industry altogether. There is a correlation between the absence of support from administrators and the departure of special education instructors from their professions.

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