

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MINI DISSERTATION: MANAGING TEACHER ATTRITION IN SEKGOSESE  
EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO**

**by**

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## DECLARATION

I MARIA OUMA RAPETA, student number 23804229 declares that MANAGING TEACHER ATTRITION IN SEKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



15/11/2018

Signature

Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my dear mother, Asnath Letsoalo, my three sons Glad, Charles and Kamogelo, and my daughter Tshepo, for their understanding. I also dedicate this work to my husband Joseph, for his motivation.

Special thanks are due to 'malome' Mathews Sehoana and my late granny Meriam Mamabolo for paving the way for me by giving me the basis for education.

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All the principals who participated in this study, I would not have made it if it were not for you. Thanks a lot.

The Limpopo Department of Education and Sekgosese East Circuit manager, Mr T.S Mashimbye for granting me the permission to do the research. I salute you.

The language editor, special thanks to you.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research was aimed at investigating the management of teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit. Teacher attrition is an on-going problem experienced by various countries, including South Africa. Although teacher attrition was always part of the departmental policy of age retirement, schools suffer as a result of it. In this study, 'attrition' refers to the number of teachers leaving the profession due to resignation, retirement, death, medical incapacity and retrenchment for operational reasons. Teacher attrition is regarded as a voluntary, involuntary and a continuous phenomenon. The current study focused on answering questions based on the nature of teacher attrition, the causes of attrition, the effects of attrition on learners, staying teachers and management, how attrition was managed by principals as well as the statutory bodies that may be involved in retaining teachers.

The study used the qualitative method to investigate the management of teacher attrition in schools. The qualitative method was selected because it deals with participants in their natural setting, which was exactly what was done in this study. Both convenient and snowball sampling were used to sample six principals in the area under study. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the participants in their natural setting. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed, analysed and categorised into themes.

The findings revealed that teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit occurs in the form of death, retirement and resignation. Teachers resign due to a number of reasons. It was found that resignation occurred as a result of the low salaries they are paid, loans which accumulated into more debts and because teachers seek greener pastures. The findings revealed that attrition was detrimental to learners' performance. In schools that were affected by teacher attrition, learners spent three to four months without a teacher due to the slow pace of the Department of Education in replacing teachers. Principals revealed that they liaise with the Department of Education for replacement of teachers. Principals also revealed that attrition is not good for them as school managers. They rely on sourcing teachers from elsewhere and overloading remaining teachers who even have to teach those subjects in which they did not specialise. The recommendation was that the Department of Education speed up the replacement of teachers by introducing on-line application for resignation or retirement so that the two processes may run concurrently.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

C2005- Curriculum 2005

CAPS – Curriculum and Policy Statement

CPTD – Continuous Professional Teachers Development

DA - Developmental appraisal

DoE – Department of Education

DSG – developmental support group

EEA – Employment of Educators Act

ELRC – Employment Labour Relations Council

GEMS- Government Employees Medical Scheme

HIV/AIDS – human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome

HOD – Head of Department

HSRC- Human Science Research Council

IQMS – Integrated Quality Management System

LIFO – last in first out

M+4- Matric plus 4 year tertiary education

NCS – National Curriculum Statement

NGO – non-governmental organisation

OBE- Outcome Based Education

PAM – Personnel Administrative Measures

PD – Professional Development

PM – Performance measurement

SACE – South African Council of Educators

SASA – South African Schools Act

SDT – school development team

SGB – school governing body

WSE – whole-school evaluation

## **KEY WORDS**

Attrition

Discharge

Dismissal

Management

Misconduct

Principal

Resignation

Retention

Retirement

School Governing Body

School Management Team

Teacher

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Countries experience a persistent increase in attrition among teachers for various reasons. Teacher attrition has even been acknowledged as a national and international problem since the early 1980s (Latifoglu, 2016:55; Pitsoe, 2013:309). Murnane (1991, cited in Shen, 2010, 81) shows that in North California, attrition is positively related to teacher salary. In Western Australia, a shortage of the labour force is ascribed to teacher attrition due to poor remuneration (Fetherston & Lummis, 2012:1). In South Africa, teacher attrition results from numerous reasons, including poor salaries, overcrowding of classrooms, nepotism, a lack of teacher's enthusiasm, a lack of inspiration and a lack of work ethics among teachers (Mamiala, Meyer, Potgieter, Van der Walt & Wolhuter, 2012:181; Pitsoe, 2013:310).

Without teachers, a school cannot function effectively. The mobility of teachers from one place to another or when they quit the education system often leaves a void, which becomes a difficult issue for principals, who are vested with powers to perform all the management and administrative activities of the school so that the planning, organising, leading and controlling of school activities can be performed without fail (Botha, 2013:4). Moreover, principals have to coordinate the activities in the school through teams (Van Zyl, 2013:150) ensuring that teaching and learning run smoothly. For example, principals need to ensure that the school timetable for curricular and extra-curricular activities is in place to enhance the day-to-day school activities. Principals obviously also have to manage all teacher-related matters, such as lesson preparation, class attendance, controlling teachers' workbooks, ensuring that they perform their allocated duties without fail and giving report about duties performed.

The management of this area could be called 'staff management' or 'human resource management'. The management of teacher attrition was investigated as part of the key area of human resource (HR) management. Researchers like Mamiala (2012:181) and Pitsoe (2013:310) studied aspects such as the causes of teacher attrition, teacher burnout and learner performance, but this research additionally focused on ways in which teacher attrition as facet of staff development can be managed, and particularly in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani district in Limpopo, a province in South Africa, Sekgosese East Circuit consist of 16 high schools and 20 primary schools.

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

My experience of 28 years in the teaching fraternity, including 18 years at managerial level, has prompted me to investigate the management of teacher attrition. I detected that little information about this specific aspect was available. This came after realising that some school principals complain about the Department of Education failing to replace those teachers who quit the profession as a result of death, ill health, retirement and resignation (Pitsoe, 2013:312). The complaint alarms a burden that principals' bear in their managerial positions as this also affects their day-to-day performance.

This study was based on the relationship between teacher attrition and school management. Principals are faced with the day-to-day management and administration of schools. With the increasing need for principals' accountability, it was imperative to embark on this topic since principals have to account for the smooth management of schools.

## **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS**

The progression from a research topic to research questions can be seen as a sifting process (Creswell, 2009:79). This process is activated by determining which research has already been done on the topic, and involves a study of relevant articles, books and theses and the posing of questions such as what the research wants to investigate, when, why and how (Creswell, 2009:7). Based on the information provided in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, the main research question of this study was formulated as how teacher attrition can be managed in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo.

The main research question was supported as follows by sub-questions that were obviously linked to the district under investigation. The sub questions were:

- What is the nature of teacher attrition?
- What are the causes of teacher attrition?
- What are the effects of teacher attrition?
- Which managerial functions are currently employed in teacher retention?
- Which components should be included in a strategy for teacher retention?

## **1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The main aim of the study was to establish how teacher attrition could be managed in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo. The objectives derived from the main

aim of the study and applied to the district under investigation comprised the following:

- to establish the nature of teacher attrition;
- to determine the causes of teacher attrition;
- to determine the effects of teacher attrition;
- to determine which managerial functions were being employed in teacher retention at the time of this research; and
- to derive which components should be included in a strategy for teacher retention.

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The area that was researched is important in the sense that previous studies were mainly based on the causes and effects of teacher attrition (Pitsoe, 2013:310), without engaging the effect and the way attrition is managed in schools. The data produced in this study deal with the relationship between teacher attrition and school management.

This study could further enlighten the Department of Education on ways that could be considered vital for the efficient management of attrition in schools.

The study could also motivate other researchers to investigate related aspects on the topic. Lastly, the study could be used to guide policymakers when developing new policies by taking this into consideration for the improvement of the education system and the country at large.

### **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of the study was to gain understanding of how teacher attrition is managed by school principals in the region of Mopani in the Sekgosese East Circuit. The study employed a qualitative research design underpinned by an interpretive paradigm. A case study method was selected to enable I to gain in-depth understanding of attrition management. The participants comprised six school principals. The principals were purposively sampled using convenient sampling and snowball sampling. The selection criteria are listed and explained in Chapter 3. As a qualitative study, it was important for I to gain an in-depth understanding of how teacher attrition can be managed in the work setting. I collected data using a case study and utilising interviews and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were the primary instruments for data generation while document analysis was a secondary data generation instrument. By the selection of these instruments it

was envisioned that a bigger picture of the phenomenon would emerge, as these instruments would help each other in confirming the data. Permission to interview the participants in the Mopani district was obtained from the Ministry of Education in Limpopo. A strict code of ethics was adhered to and schools and principals were given pseudonyms such as Mango, Dove, Rod, Dino, Trod and Squi to ensure anonymity and to protect their identities. The data analysis process involved identifying, coding and categorising the primary patterns in the study. Data were analysed based on the themes identified from the participants. Mouton (2001) shows that analysis involves breaking apart of the data into small related parts to form themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The key ideas and the recurrent themes were extracted as quotes from participants to illustrate these recurrent.

## **1.7 DEMARCATIONS OF THE STUDY**

I may experience the following limitations:

At the time of this study, the area under study had 16 secondary schools and 20 primary schools. The study was limited to only six schools. Other schools were excluded due to unavailability of the data required by me. I had limited time available to conduct the research. Since I am working full-time in the other region, time was limited.

I selected principals and deputy principals as participants in the study. Availability of the principals was not guaranteed as they might have had to attend departmental meetings as per year schedule or in emergencies. As a result, it was possible that some principals might have had to withdraw from participating in the research. Since the interviews took place in the participants' natural setting, there was the possibility that I might be disturbed by noise. Noise within the school premises might have spoiled the audibility of the audio recording.

## **1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

### **1.8.1 Management**

Management refers to setting direction, planning how progress will be made, organising available resources, controlling the process and setting and improving organisational standards (Botha, 2013:4).

### **1.8.2 Attrition**

Attrition has to do with the process of reducing the number of people who are employed by an organisation by not replacing people who leave their jobs (Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary). In this study, the concept 'attrition' specifically referred to the number of teachers leaving the profession due to resignation, retirement, death, medical incapacity, dismissal, voluntary retirement and retrenchment for operational reasons (RSA 2005:99).

### **1.8.3 Retention**

Teacher retention is a field of education research that focuses on how factors, such as school characteristics and teacher demographics, affect whether teachers stay in their schools, move to different schools or leave the profession before retirement (Wikipedia.org). This study referred to retention as the attraction of teachers to stay long in the profession.

### **1.8.4 Dismissal**

Dismissal occurs when an employer terminates a contract of employment with or without giving the employee notice (RSA 1995). Informally, the term 'dismissal' refers to firing of employee by the employer due to breach of contract. Dismissal is the termination of employment by an employer against the will of the employee in cases of bribery, theft, fraud, corruption or having sexual relationship with a learner (RSA, 1998)..

### **1.8.5 Discharge**

Discharge refers to the termination of employment if there is not really any fault (RSA, 1998). Discharge refers to when the employer decides to terminate the services of the employee on conditions of abolition of the post, operational requirement or misconduct (RSA, 1998).

### **1.8.6 Misconduct**

Misconduct is a broad term that is used to refer to a wide range of behaviours and actions regarded as unlawful. In this case, an employee's action constitutes misconduct when he or she intentionally or persistently breaks a rule at the work place (RSA 2000).

### **1.8.7 School Governing Body (SGB)**

School Governing Body is a statutory body of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and learners from Grade 8 or higher who seek to work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the school community and thereby enhance learning and teaching (RSA, 1996).

### **1.8.8 Teacher**

**Teacher** refers to any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services at a school (RSA, 1996).

### **1.8.9 Principal**

**Principal** means an educator appointed or acting as the head of a school (RSA, 1999). Principals are the persons in schools who have the greatest capacity to network with the wider community and ensure that schools keep abreast of current initiatives and anticipate future trends (Botha, 2013:201).

### **1.8.10 School Management Team (SMT)**

**SMT** refers to a team of school managers comprised of the principal, deputy principal and the school heads of departments (RSA, 1999). The team works collaboratively in executing the school managerial functions.

### **1.8.11 Resignation**

**Resignation** is the decision on the part of the employee to terminate the employment contract (RSA, 1998).

### **1.8.12 Retirement**

**Retirement** refers to the employers' decision to terminate the employment contract of the employee as stipulated in the legislation (RSA, 1998).

## **1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

The chapter outline is as follows

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

In this first chapter, I presented the background information regarding the topic under study. The problem statement, the aims, rationale and significance of the study is outlined.

### **CHAPTER 2: MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER ATTRITION IN SCHOOLS**

This chapter outlines the views of other scholars and documents regarding the attrition of teachers. The research sub-questions are answered in this chapter. Each sub-question forms a subsection on its own. This chapter also highlights the strategies that can be used in teacher retention.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.**

The chapter outlines the methodology used in investigating the problem. I selected the relevant research design that suited the methodology chosen. Sampling of the participants was done in order to work with a group of manageable size. The research design was vital to assist in collecting the relevant data for the investigation while at the same time taking ethics into consideration.

### **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION**

I presented the findings from the interviews as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data.

### **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This last chapter reflects the summary of chapters, the recommendations and the conclusion.

## **1.10 CONCLUSION**

In this first chapter, I presented the background information about the study and the rationale for choosing the topic. The main research question and sub-questions have been stated based on the rationale. I further outlined the significance of the study, the research methodology that was applied during the study and the possible limitations to the study. A brief definition of the key concepts was given and the chapter was concluded by outlining how the chapters that follow will unfold.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER ATTRITION IN SCHOOLS**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:64) view a literature review as describing the theoretical perspectives and previous research findings regarding the problem at hand. It can also be seen as an examination into the body of existing knowledge that other scholars have investigated concerning the research problem in which I am interested (Mouton, 2001:87; Tracy, 2013:100). The specific aspects that were studied closely were the nature of teacher attrition, the causes and effects of attrition, the managerial functions that should be employed by management staff for teacher retention and components that could be included in a strategy to cope with teacher attrition in the Sekgosesa East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo.

#### **2.2 THE NATURE OF TEACHER ATTRITION**

Teacher attrition is an international phenomenon experienced by both developed and developing countries. According to Pitsoe (2013:311), teacher attrition is a global challenge and is very complex in nature. It occurs in trends according to age, race, gender and qualification or experience. Studies conducted in Liaoning Province in China found an alarming rate of attrition in 1979 and 1985 (Changying, 2007:6). According to the statistics given by Changying (2007:7) in China of 120 000 trained teachers and 70 000 working in secondary schools, a total of 190 000 teachers, 130 000 left teaching between 1984 and 1987.

It has also been noted that in China, 59.4% of teachers who had left teaching profession, were between the ages of 36 and 40 because they were dissatisfied with teaching (Changying, 2007:7). Attrition in this regard was the result of poor living conditions in rural areas and monetary reasons, as teachers' payments were very low and delayed. In Beijing and Shanghai, teachers complained of housing space, which was less than 4 m<sup>2</sup> per person thus causing families to stay apart. Of the teachers in the vicinity of Guangzhou district in China, 42% also quit the profession due to a lack of enthusiasm in teaching (Changying, 2007:7). The impact of teacher attrition in China was that the best teachers were leaving thus causing the morale of those remaining to be low as schools failed to operate in the normal way (Changying, 2007:7).

However, after realising that the best teachers were moving to other sectors, China learnt a lesson from Japan. In Japan, teachers' salaries were adjusted to be higher than those of other civil servants, and this affected learners' performance positively (Changying, 2007:9). The plan was to increase teachers' salaries for a period of three years. According to Fetherston (2012:13), Western Australia is another country affected by teacher attrition where resignation tripled between 2003 and 2007 increasing from 286 in 2003 to 908 in 2007. The number of those who resigned because they found greener pastures somewhere increased from 58 in 2003 to 210 in 2007 (Fetherston, 2012:13). The major problems behind attrition were verbal abuse by learners, bullying, outcomes-based education (OBE) and behaviour management. However, reports indicated that only 300 assaults were reported to the Department of Education as most teachers did not make formal reports (Fetherston, 2012:13).

The United State of America is no exception in terms of attrition. Murnane and Olsen (1989, cited in Imazeki, 2003:432) indicate that attrition shows patterns of more women leaving the profession than men as a result of marital status or family reasons. In the United States, attrition tends to take a U-shaped pattern since there is an escalating number of attrition in the early years of teaching, which then lowers by middle aged and rise again when teachers approach retirement (Imazeki, 2005:432; Mamiala, 2012:180; Podolsky, 2016:2). New teachers leave the profession early because they are not inspired by the salary they get. It has been found that in the United States that Special Education, Mathematics and Science teachers quit within five years of their teaching experience (Pitsoe, 2013:311; Podolsky, 2016:1). As in other countries, this lowers the morale of the remaining teachers. In San Diego State, it was believed that the salary increase for experienced teachers would remedy the mobility of teachers out of the system (Imazeki, 2005:431). The United States however attempted to recruit and retain excellent teachers by practicing the following measures:

- increasing teachers' salaries and other compensation, such as housing subsidies;
- offering loans for preparation and cost entry that would enable teachers to attend courses for teaching methods;
- hiring and personal management to reduce barriers into teaching;
- induction and support for new teachers to increase their retention;
- accelerating teachers' professional growth; and
- improving working conditions in high-poverty schools.

Studies conducted by Draper and Hofmeyer (2015:6) in South Africa indicated that highly

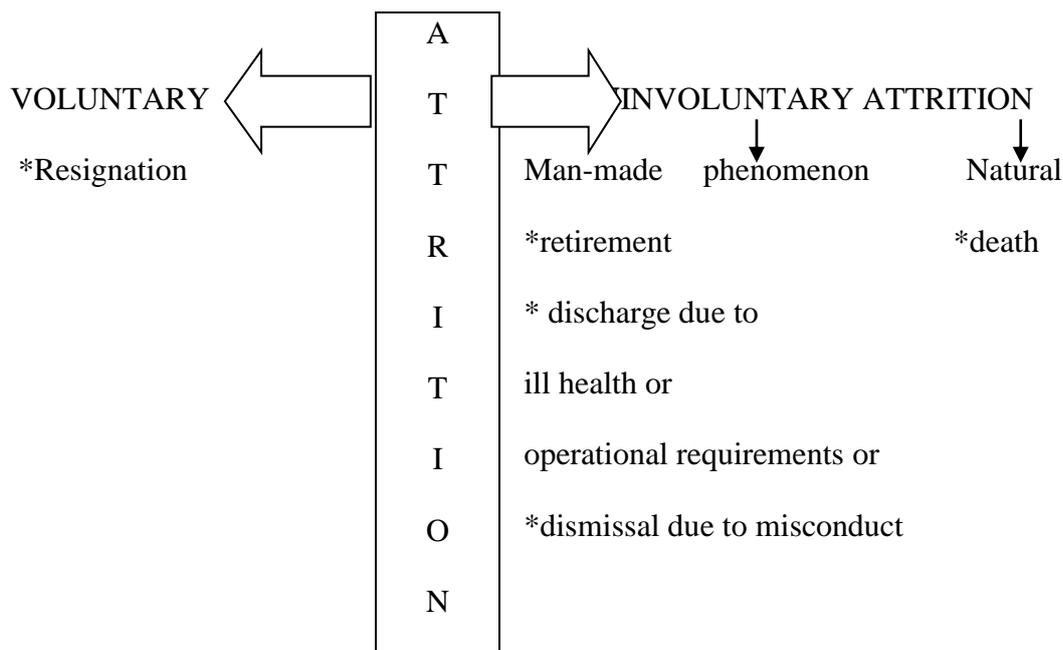
qualified teachers are the most likely to leave the profession leaving the less qualified teachers. Mostly Mathematics and Science teachers leave teaching because they have more career opportunities than others. This led to these subjects to be labelled as ‘scared skilled subjects’ (Draper & Hofmeyer, 2015:6) and Mampane (2012:73). This creates an imbalance within the schools leading to less qualified teachers teaching subjects for whom they are not trained (Draper & Hofmeyer, 2015:7). This also affects the future careers of the learners because they do not meet the university requirements for the degrees for which they want to register because of having failed Mathematics. South Africa has thus resorted to sourcing (RSA, 2011:9) Mathematics and Science teachers from countries such as Zimbabwe and Ghana while training South African teachers in those subjects for the country to be resourceful.

The nature of attrition in South Africa resembles that of the above-mentioned countries in the sense that attrition takes on a U-shaped pattern as it increases in the early years of teaching, lowers and then rises again when teachers retire. Studies conducted by Pitsoe (2013:311) found that in South Africa, it is mostly young people who move during their early years of teaching even before gaining any experience. It has also been found that most young teachers quit the profession due to a number of reasons, such as a lack of satisfaction with the salary they earn, bullying by learners, a lack of support from the management staff and poor working conditions. In South Africa, teacher attrition among the aged is a legislative issue. This is because in South Africa employees are to retire from work at the age of 65, as the accepted age for retirement is 65, irrespective of whether the person is male or female (RSA, 1998).

Generally, attrition is not only a problem in the education system but it also affects the industrial sector. According to Fetherston and Lummis (2012:1), shortage of teachers puts pressure on the labour markets because the industries depend on schools for an efficient and effective labour force. Moreover, Pitsoe (2013:313) also emphasised that teachers form the largest section of the labour force producing quality learners and also contributing to the success of factories than other sectors. This means that the quality of teachers and the quality of output they produce are of paramount importance for the country. Many factories rely on the hard work of the teacher in producing a quality labour force. Teacher attrition therefore becomes a threat to industries in the country (Fetherston & Lummis, 2012:1) as it affects

production and the quality of production in factories. Alternatively, it is believed that attrition is the result of a viable economy. Increased job opportunities in the economy result in teachers being employed in other sectors of the economy, thus leaving their profession. Although teacher attrition may appear to be a problem that may even cause a standstill in the profession and schooling, it is also regarded as a necessity to rejuvenate the schools and the education system (Latifoglu, 2016:56) therefore as teacher attrition occurs, principals have to show their capabilities in both administration and management, especially human management.

Attrition was defined in section 1.8 as the concept that deals specifically with the number of teachers leaving the profession due to resignation, retirement, death, medical incapacity, dismissal and retrenchment for operational reasons. In its most basic form, attrition can be seen as voluntary attrition or involuntary attrition. This division of attrition is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.



ATTRITION IS A CONTINUOUS PHENOMENON

Figure 2.1 Schematic representation of attrition

Source: Author`s own compilation

### 2.2.1 Voluntary attrition

Voluntary attrition occurs when an employee decides freely to quit the job due to personal reasons (RSA, 1998). For example, an employee may decide to terminate work voluntarily by resigning if he or she wants to pursue other jobs in other sectors.

- Resignation

This is one of the forms of attrition where an employee quits the job voluntarily due to personal reasons, such as not being satisfied with the working conditions, starting an own business, or having found greener pasture in the private sector.

Beside people's personal reasons for quitting the profession, the grounds on which the services of a teacher may be terminated are also determined by legislation (RSA, 1998). These legislation determinants form part of involuntary attrition and are discussed below.

### 2.2.2 Involuntary attrition

Involuntary attrition occurs when an employee quits the job due to unforeseen circumstances such as death, incapacity, ill health, dismissal or age retirement. A teacher may be discharged from work on the grounds of ill health, being unfit or as a result of incapacity to do the job or if the post has been abolished by reason of operational requirements (RSA, 1998). On the same note, it is also emphasised that an employees might be dismissed on account of poor performance; misconduct or operational reasons (RSA, 1995).

- Age retirement

According to the (RSA, 1998), teachers who were employed before 2 September 1994 are entitled to retire on or after the attainment of 65 years of age. The employer shall also allow the teacher the right to retire on or after attaining the age of 55 years if sufficient reasons are stated or if the retirement is of advantage to the state. Alternatively, a teacher who had been employed immediately before 1 May 1996 and who has completed ten years of service without interruption of service and who has attained the age of 50 shall have the right to retire (RSA, 1998).

- Discharge of teachers

A teacher may be discharged by the employer on one of the following occasions: On account of continuous ill-health; abolition of the post; on operational requirements; on incapacity to

fulfil duties; on misconduct; on misrepresentation made by the teacher; if the teacher is appointed on probation and appointment is not confirmed. A teacher may also be discharged if absent from duty for a period of more than 14 consecutive days without permission of the employer. The teacher may also be discharged if he or she resigns from duty or assumes duty in another position during the period of suspension(RSA, 1998).

- Dismissal

The services of a teacher may be terminated by dismissal in very serious cases of misconduct. Some cases are regarded as very serious misconducts and therefore warrant self-dismissal (RSA, 1995), namely:

- theft;
- bribery;
- fraud;
- an act of corruption with regard to examinations or promotional reports;
- having a sexual relationship with a learner of the school;
- seriously assaulting with the intention to cause grievous bodily harm;
- illegal possession of an intoxicating or stupefying substance; or
- causing a learner to do one of the mentioned actions (RSA, 1998);
- more over, any teacher who does not show up at work for three consecutive months due to illness but without proof thereof is liable to dismissal (RSA, 2016).

- Death

Death is another form of involuntary attrition since no employee can just choose to die. Teacher attrition through death is marked as a natural phenomenon as it occurs naturally.

Attrition through incapacity, ill health, dismissal, discharge and retirement are marked as man-made because these are regulated through legislation (RSA, 1998). Both voluntary and involuntary attrition are continuous phenomena. All employees are subject to one form of attrition or another. In discussing attrition, I identified three important aspects, namely that attrition is a natural phenomenon, attrition is a man-made phenomenon, and it is a continuous phenomenon since it occurs on a continuous basis.

### **2.3 THE CAUSES OF TEACHER ATTRITION**

Fetherston and Lummis (2012:2) categorise the causes of teacher attrition into three groups:

teacher factors, school factors and community factors. This means that attrition affects teachers from those three angles. Several scholars (see Mamiala, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013 & Podolsky, 2016) concur on the same causes of teacher attrition, which categorically emanate from teachers factors and from school factors. For example, scholars (see Mamiala, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013 & Podolsky, 2016) agree on factors such as meagre salary, workload, working conditions, a lack of discipline in schools, a lack of resources, accountability and the hours of work and government policy (Pitsoe, 2013:311) as among others the causes of teacher attrition. According to studies conducted by Fetherston and Lummis (2012:5), the causes of teacher attrition in Australia are bullying by students and administrators, the OBE system, which requires a lot of work, and learner behaviour. Beside the reasons behind attrition, statistics indicate that over 3 000 teachers in Australia quit the profession due to retirement (Fetherston & Lummis, 2012:4).

South Africa, like other countries, experiences teacher attrition. In South Africa, the number of teachers who quit the profession due to death, early retirement and ill health has increased in the past years (Pitsoe, 2013:310). According to Pitsoe (2013:312), Angie Motshekga, the Minister of Basic Education, announced that 24 750 teachers quit the teaching fraternity between 2005 and 2008, and Limpopo was rated the province with the fifth highest teacher attrition. Minister Angie Motshekga indicated in Mail and Guardian (08 April 2015) that the Government Pension Administration Agency showed that 4600 teachers resigned in 2014 November alone. This remark showed that the country is in a crisis of teacher attrition. The causes of teacher attrition in South Africa are diverse and some have already been discussed by various scholars, such as Fetherston (2012); Imazeki (2005); Mamiala (2012) and others. Teacher attrition is known to be a natural phenomenon as it occurs through death or a government policy through retirement. The Employment of Educators Act (EEA) (No. 76 of 1996) stipulates that all teachers employed before 1994 will lapse their serves when they are 60 years of age while those employed after 1994 their services will lapse at 65 years of age. However, some teachers prefer to end their services voluntarily due to unforeseen circumstances. Among the causes identified, I found that the following could be identified as the main factors for teacher attrition.

### 2.3.1 STRESS

Teachers have the responsibility of creating a culture of teaching and learning in the school

(Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:15). Teachers are held accountable to the Department of Education and parents for the activities they do within the school, , such as learner achievements, usage of funds, the running of the school and maintaining order in the school as per their management tasks (Botha, 2013:20). The pressure that stems from these responsibilities could affect teachers adversely physically, psychologically, socially and financially resulting in a situation where they find it difficult to cope with their day-to-day activities, which could lead to poor performance, a high rate of absenteeism and lack of motivation (Van Deventer & Mojapelo-Batka, 2013:232). The prolonged occurrence of stress could even result in teachers quitting the profession (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:161).

According to Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:161) stress can also be seen as a managerial problem in the sense that both teachers and principals do not know how to handle it. Principals are unable to manage stress because they were not trained for that. This situation means that rather than relieving stress, the principal's management style could cause additional stress to teachers. Unfortunately, it seems that principals and teachers fail to identify the causes of stress and they are even affected physically by diseases such as ulcers, coronary heart diseases, cancers and psychological conditions.

Teaching therefore appears to be a stressful career that causes teachers and principals to leave their profession at an early stage. The stress affects their wellbeing and their day-to-day performance in the work place. In most cases, the stresses that affect teachers originate from work-related issues. The causes of stress are to be dealt with professionally at an early stage to avoid bad effects.

### 2.3.2 LACK OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Self-management refers to the ability to control one's own behaviour and emotions, and to have good relations with people as these could affect one's co-workers (Everard & Morris, 1999:111). Since teachers work with learners and parents on a daily basis, they need to set a good example in speech and in conduct. Teachers as role models are expected to conduct themselves diligently as required in their code of ethics (RSA, 2000). The South African Council of Educators (SACE) is there to look after the professional wellbeing of teachers and acting contrary to SACE code of ethics and the Employment of Educators Act warrants self-dismissal.

A lack of self-management implies being unable to conduct oneself in an appropriate or

desired manner as required by the employer or in terms of the relevant code of ethics (RSA, 2000). Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:167) view a person who lacks self-management as one with poor interpersonal relationships. Lack of self-management may result in a weak personality therefore making it difficult for one to relate well with people (Odendaal & Roodt, 2009:5). This implies that a person's conduct is vital in building his or her character to enable him or her to relate well with other people. I have used her experience as a manager to realise that due to a lack of self-management, some teachers find themselves behaving contrary to the teachers' code of ethics as they become alcohol abusers or they are absent themselves without valid reasons. They are consequently charged with misconduct and start to see teaching as valueless to them as they are always reprimanded for misbehaving. For this reason, some teachers find themselves ending their job due to scandals in which they were involved. A lack of self-management is therefore a threat to one's career. It is imperative for teachers to conduct themselves in a manner acceptable by the code of ethics that regulate them. According to the South African Code of Educators (SACE, 2000), a teacher is a role model and is expected to conduct him- or herself diligently as required. I have noticed that teachers who lack self-management are often the cause of managerial problems in schools as they occasionally absent themselves from work and are not up to date with their work.

### 2.3.3 THE COMPLEXITY OF SCHOOL DUTIES

Teachers have an array of complex duties to perform in a school. In addition to their main function, I was aware that teachers are seen as class managers, substitute parents, sport coaches and providers of health and social care. They are also increasingly involved in disciplinary matters and providing safety to learners, and they are even expected to operate as nurses, which means to apply first aid and having to account for learners' injuries. (RSA, 2003) Teachers are also required to operate as safety officers in watching that drugs or dangerous weapons are not found within the school premises (RSA, 1996).

Although the teaching of subjects is still the main duty for teachers, they also have to inspire learners to follow the vision and mission of the Department of Education to become good citizens. Teachers are thus required to operate beyond that for which they have been trained (Cole, 2017). They have an obligatory involvement in a wide range of school administrative matters. Teachers are actively participating in various committees, such as the health and

safety committee, assessment and support committee, subject committee, development committee, timetable committee and sports committee. All these require the teacher's full attention, time and responsibility. These vast responsibilities drain teachers' energy and power and leave some of them with no choice but to leave the profession.

#### 2.3.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability means being able to account for one's actions and is associated with responsibility (Botha, 2013:224). Teachers are both responsible for learners' wellbeing at school, and they are also accountable for learners' performance. Some teachers even have to work during school holidays and weekends trying to teach those learners doing Grade 12 to have a good pass rate out of fear of giving account for the matric failure rate. Jacobson (2016:3) agrees that much of the accountability with which teachers are faced concerning learner achievement, especially failure, irrespective of learners' behaviour and absenteeism, puts additional pressure on teachers and therefore leads to burnout and attrition. It appears that this robs teachers of their time to be with their families since they sometimes spend the whole seven days at work. As per the Employment of Educators Act (1998), a teacher is required to work seven hours per day. Teachers however sacrifice their time to teach extra hours and their health suffers physically and mentally.

Accountability is also required in terms of how the norms and standards is utilised at school (Botha, 2013:224). Principals have to use the norms and standard money according to the prescripts of the Department and have to indicate how the money was used throughout the year. They have to submit the financial books to the auditors (RSA, 1996). This is because accountability goes with responsibility. Principals should therefore take the lead in strengthening management by demonstrating to everyone the importance of the accountability-linked matters (Botha, 2013:225). However, the frequency and intensity of accountability become stressful to teachers and principals.

Teachers become accountable for learners' poor performance irrespective of contributing factors, such as learners' unbecoming behaviour and a lack of parental involvement (Botha, 2013:233). All these endless accountabilities become tedious to teachers who cannot cope with the stress it causes; thus, leading some to early retirement and resignation.

#### 2.3.5 LACK OF DISCIPLINE

Principals have a responsibility to create a culture of teaching and learning in the school,

which goes hand in glove with good discipline (Botha, 2013:32). Due to the legislation, schools have to adopt the schools code of conduct in line with the Constitution (RSA, 1994). The school governing body has the responsibility to draft the code of conduct for learners at the school for the purpose of controlling their conduct on the school premises and the way discipline should be administered in the school (RSA, 1996).

Since corporal punishment has long been abolished (RSA, 1996), I experienced that teachers find it difficult to work because learners are ill-disciplined and do not take instructions. Although there are measures that can be taken against learners such as putting learners on detention or grounding them, in most public schools, those seem not to work. Discipline therefore becomes a serious problem that hinders learner performance and gives a picture that the teacher neglects the learners. Many teachers find that the alternative measures for corporal punishment as stipulated by the then Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal, are not effective because learners lack respect (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010:394). These leave teachers with a feeling that their power has been usurped and they are therefore valueless. This forms a good base for them to leave the profession.

#### 2.3.6 CURRICULUM CHANGES

With the emergence of democracy in 1994, the education system in South Africa changed. Change in the curriculum was aimed at improving the standard of education because the then Bantu education was based on heavy detailed content and authoritarian with little opportunity for teacher initiatives (Weber, 2008:26). The change in the curriculum to Curriculum 2005 (C2005), which was introduced in 1998 and based on OBE was a radical one. Curriculum 2005 was however aimed at developing citizens who are active inventors and problem solvers rather than dependent and unthinking followers (Weber, 2008:41).

Unfortunately, the country lacked knowledgeable people who could train the curriculum advisors to train teachers on the new C2005 so that it could be applied without fail. The Department of Education did not offer in-service training to teachers but only offered three-day workshops, which left teachers confused and stressed. This resulted in teachers' dissatisfaction and made them feel incompetent in the job, as the government had a challenge of commitment to early childhood education which would continually boost the Grade 12 performance (Weber, 2008:325).

Priestely and Sime (2005, cited in Maimela, 2015:1) state that inadequate training, increased

workload, unrealistic demands, a lack of resources and ineffective management contributed to the failure of C2005. On the other hand, Jansen (2010, cited in Maimela, 2015:1) indicates that the struggle to cope with new terminology made it difficult for teachers to implement the new curriculum resulting in teaching in the usual way in the language of OBE. Due to the number of loopholes, Curriculum 2005 was revised and was called Revised National Curriculum Statement in the year 2000, but was also later streamlined and strengthened to National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Department of Education, 2002:6). According to Maimela (2015:1), policymakers, education officials, politicians, the media, parents and the public exerted intense pressure on teachers for the success of the new curriculum. The arrival of the new Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, also led to the NCS to be changed to the present curriculum, the Curriculum and Policy Statements (CAPS). The ever-changing curriculum, each with its loopholes, has become tedious to most teachers as they cannot excel in the work they do. This forms one of the reasons why teachers resign voluntarily to seek better options in other sectors of the economy.

#### 2.3.7 RATIONALISATION OF TEACHERS

Inherently, the rationalisation of teachers has to do with the idea of relocating or transferring teachers from one school to another in order to reconstruct the education system. The implementation of this idea is based on teacher–learner ratios. The ratio of 35:1 for secondary schools and 40:1 for primary schools was used as the basis for calculating the number of teachers allocated to work in a school for a particular year (RSA, 2005:35). The Department of Education conducts a survey of the total number of learners enrolled in a school for a specific year. The enrolment is then used to calculate the staff establishment for the school using the teacher–learner ratio.

If the school's enrolment increases, that school is allocated an additional post, meaning that the school can employ one more teacher depending on the enrolment (RSA, 1998). Alternatively, if the enrolment decreases, the number of teachers allocated for the school also decreases; thus, declaring a teacher to be in excess (Bougardt, 2011:1). Excess teachers may move from one school to another depending on the curriculum need of the school and the last-in-first-out (LIFO) method applied by principals in schools. The Department of Education allows excess teachers to take early retirement (RSA, 2002). The system of rationalisation of teachers seems to have a detrimental effect on the lives of teachers because

they are separated from their families as they are sometimes allocated to work across circuits if they are not absorbed in their own circuit (RSA, 1998). Moreover, the attempt to rationalise teachers came with serious effects of dissatisfaction, conflict between the teachers and the principal as it was not applied according to the correct procedure, and it had also cost some teachers their families as they were separated. The resultant effect of this process led to some teachers considering resigning as the best solution for them because they were continually on the move and did not want to be separated from their families (Bougardt, 2011:16).

#### 2.3.8 HIV/AIDS AND RELATED DISEASES

The government of South Africa has taken steps to prevent and fight HIV/AIDS. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among teachers is a worrying issue as teachers have to teach learners about this epidemic in subjects like Life Skills. The provision of quality education depends among others on the wellbeing of teachers. Pitsoe (2013:310) indicated that in South Africa the prevalence of HIV is more in women than in men due to their biological make up, low socio-economic status and living conditions. In 2015, the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) was commissioned by the Department of Basic Education to investigate the HIV-related profile of teachers in South Africa. It was revealed that of 40 000 teachers in the country at least 58 000 teachers at public schools live with HIV and 32 000 of them are on antiretroviral treatment (Cole, 2017). Among the teachers at the public schools KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape had the highest prevalence of HIV. KwaZulu- Natal was leading at 2.05% and Eastern Cape at 1.23% (Cole, 2017). The report indicated that teachers between the age group 34–44 years were infected with HIV and the number was high among women teachers (16.4%) compared to their male counterparts (12.7%) (Cole, 2017).

Since HIV is related to other diseases, the wellbeing and productivity of teachers become at risk. The epidemic spreads because of males having multiple partners (Cole, 2017), which is evidence of a lack of self-control. I experienced that some teachers who were infected and affected by the disease voluntarily decided to terminate their duty. This, irrespective of the nature of the illness, adds to the number of attrition in the district or country. This had a negative effect on the teaching profession since teachers could not work effectively due to illness.

## **2.4 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION**

Teacher attrition is a thorny issue to many institutions and people because whether it is voluntary or not, it is not welcome in the remaining working pool due to its bad effects. Countries that experience teacher attrition also have the problem of teacher shortages. In South Africa, the Department of Education has to ensure that teachers are attracted to teaching by introducing the Fundza-Lushaka bursary scheme specifically for those who take teaching as their profession since education cannot come to a standstill (Mampane, 2012:77 & SACE, 2011:16).

Some countries, like South Africa, started outsourcing from other countries in an effort to close the gaps created by teacher attrition (Mampane, 2012:78 & SACE, 2011:19). It generally becomes a cost to the Department of Education as this means more teachers are needed and increased expenditure, which affects the developmental status of the country in terms of education. The need for safety in schools is also vital for keeping teachers in their profession. In America, for example the law of No Child Left Behind (Borman & Dowling, 2008:368) has been passed as a result of learner behaviour which led to teacher attrition and to reform the education.

### **2.4.1 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE**

One of the tasks of principals is to ensure performance of learners in the school. This task is coupled with accountability for learners' results every year. Learner performance is affected by many things, ranging from their social life to health, attitude and things happening around them. Learners tend to perform well when they are used to the teacher's style of teaching. Whenever there is a change in the subject teacher, learner performance is adversely affected because they have to get used to the new teacher's teaching style and character. Jacobson (2016:4) thus regards consistency in instruction as more important than learners' academic performance. Most scholars agree that teacher attrition is not healthy for learner performance since it adversely affects learner performance and disrupts the smooth running of schools (Jacobson, 2016:4; Shen, 2010:81). Once a teacher moves out of the school, questions arise about who is going to take over the subject and whether that person will perform accordingly or not. Learner performance may drop due to the initial attitude towards the new subject teacher. Marshall (2013, cited in Jacobson, 2016:4) remarks that students are more successful in districts that have a high rate of teacher retention than in district with low retention rate.

This means there is a strong link between learner performance and teaching style and consistency in instruction. This is one of the reasons why some teachers want to teach the same subject in the same class every year, for example in grade 12, because principals have realised that learner performance is superb in those subjects when taught by specific teachers. This tendency of ‘owning’ the subject has an effect on retaining teachers in schools as they are the school’s valuable assets. One can deduce that learner performance increases with the years of experience of the subject teacher because of the trust that has been built upon the teacher in the subject, and because the teacher knows the tactics of teaching specific topics that are problematic for learners.

#### 2.4.2 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION ON STAYING TEACHERS

These are teachers who remain at school while others leave due to resignation, retirement, death or dismissal. Remaining teachers are left with the burden of carrying the responsibilities of the teacher who had left and this adds to the workload they already have (Mampane, 2012:76). Teachers find themselves sacrificing to teach even those subjects for which they are not trained (Cole, 2017). Attrition tends to lower the morale of the remaining teachers and this consequently affects their productivity. Some of the remaining teachers may develop a tendency of absenting themselves from work as a sign of discontent with the work to be done.

The tendency of teachers absenting themselves from work as a sign of discontentment is backed by Latifoglu (2016:66) who argues that the loss of teachers affects the quality of the remaining teaching pool. This also implies that when attrition affects quality teachers, it usually has negative implications for the quality of teaching. Conflicts may also arise as remaining teachers do not agree on sharing the workload with which they are faced. The main problems that arise due to attrition thus are work dissatisfaction, workload as a result of having to teach big classes, and extra responsibilities. Teacher attrition may therefore result in long-term conflicts at schools.

#### 2.4.3 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION ON SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Teachers are important stakeholders who are engaged in the strategic planning of the school activities, such as timetabling, extramural activities, meetings, subject allocation and formation of committees. Planning involves the prioritisation of the organisational tasks to achieve the school’s vision and mission (Both, 2013:21) and to enhance the smooth running

of the school. Attrition affects the general planning of the school. In the school, there are various departments led by heads of departments. Should a particular stream be affected, then the functioning of the whole faculty is disturbed. It takes time for the Department to replace teachers who had left the school in any way; hence, it involves a lot of consultation, money and paperwork. Attrition has a strong effect on school management. It disrupts the smooth running of the school as some teachers may leave the school while having managerial responsibilities. This means some school programmes may remain unaccomplished due to a lack of suitable human resources. Shen (2010:81) indicates that attrition does not only have negative effects on learner performance but also on the school programme as it disturbs school programmes.

Attrition seems to disqualify and weaken the pre-planned school activities or programmes and reinforcement of the team of teachers in a school because planning involves making decisions (Botha, 2013:21). Decisions that are made by the school as an organisation involve all the stakeholders or teachers to enable them to perform tasks of teaching and learning (Botha, 2013:17). These stakeholders need to be well co-ordinated and regulated in their functioning to attain educational tasks, but with attrition taking place, attainment of tasks becomes difficult. In the drafting of school timetable, for example, I noted that the number of periods per subject was not to be compromised while subject allocation required enough teachers as per staff establishment for the tasks to be performed according to the subject policies. Attrition therefore places school managers in an awkward position as they appear to fail in their managerial duties when things do not go as they should.

#### 2.4.4 THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION ON THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

It is the responsibility of the Department of Education to ensure the smooth running of the education system and that everyone in the country receives basic education. The Department of Education spends a considerable amount of money on recruiting and hiring new teachers as a result of teacher attrition (Jacobson, 2016:2; Ronfeldt, Susanna & Wyckoff, 2012:6; Shen, 2010: 81). The question of hiring new teachers does not just take place overnight, as there are some logistics that need to be addressed before any teacher can be employed. Besides, there must be money budgeted for those teachers who are employed in order for them to be paid. Education can only be provided viably once there is a big enough labour

force. For this purpose, the Department of Education has offered a full-cost bursary scheme called Fundza-Lushaka to attract candidates to choose teaching as their profession (SACE, 2011:16 & Mampane, 2012:77). The Department thus uses the bursary scheme to retain teachers in the system because teachers who were funded by the bursary at university have to work for the Department for a certain period before they can decide to quit. Some work permanently for the Department of Education as they become more interested in teaching and realise the benefits teachers enjoy. The Department of Education trains and develops teachers to provide the best education in the country so that teachers are always competent, but attrition robs the Department of its experienced and knowledgeable teachers thus weakening the effort by the Department to boost the economy. Alternatively, attrition may be regarded as a wakeup call for the Department to always recruit teachers so that supply of teachers equals demand of teacher.

Attrition is associated with poor learner performance, disturbed co-workers, confused managerial staff and a burden to the Department of Education. Attrition disconnects the bond between the teacher and the learner, and may affect the relationships of the co-workers adversely as teachers do not agree on sharing the burden left by the outgoing teacher.

## **2.5 MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS FOR TEACHER RETENTION**

Principals and other managerial school staff as well departmental officials are responsible for creating and implementing teacher retention strategies. One of the objectives of this study was to develop such a strategy. This strategy obviously had to be inspired by information from a comprehensive literature study supported by data obtained from the empirical investigation.

In this section, an attempt is made to list the managerial functions that different authors identify in the field of staff management or human resource management that can be applied in the case of staff retention. For this purpose, I identified a number of South African works in the field of educational management and human resource development with the idea to determine which specific management functions can best be used for staff retention in the South African school context. In some of the works, only a section or chapter is dedicated to staff development whereas others are fully focused on staff development issues only.

Table 2.1 Management functions applicable to staff retention.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Staff Induction</b>	<b>Staff development</b>	<b>Staff Appraisal</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Conflict management</b>	<b>Stress management</b>	<b>Self management</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>	<b>Leadership</b>
Deventer and Mojapelo (2013)				Staff Motivation	Effective communication		Stress management			
Botha (2013)				Staff Motivation	Effective communication	Conflict management	Stress management			Educational leadership
Deventer (2003)			Staff appraisal	Staff Motivation	Effective communication	Conflict management	Stress management		Team management	Educational leadership
Regenesis Manual (2014)		Staff development		Staff motivation	Effective Communication	Conflict management	Stress management		Team management	Educational leadership
Robbins et al. (2009)				Staff Motivation	Effective Communication	Conflict management	Stress management		Team	
Van der Westhuizen (1991)	Staff induction	Staff development	Staff appraisal	Staff motivation		Conflict management	Stress management		Team management	
Steyn and Van Niekerk (2012)	Staff induction	Staff development	Staff appraisal	Staff motivation	Effective communication	Conflict management	Stress management	Self-management	Team management	Educational management

In the table, the summary of human resource-related issues dealt with by the respective authors is indicated. Pertinent managerial functions for staff retention obtained from the table are listed below. I identified and discussed these as key management functions that are to be executed by the managerial staff in promoting teacher retention:

- conflict management;
- effective communication;
- staff induction;
- staff development;
- educational leadership;
- staff motivation;
- working with teams; and
- Staff appraisal.

### 2.5.1 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict is regarded as disagreement between two or more parties on two or more issues (Regenesy Manual, 2014:249). According to Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:78), conflict management is defined as the deliberate intervention by the manager to stimulate and encourage beneficial or helpful conflict and to resolve, suppress or prevent harmful conflict. Since conflict is unpredictable and may arise in everyday situations, it is imperative for the principal to have special skills and knowledge to be able to manage conflict in the work place. A principal who lacks the skill of assertiveness, as Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:70) put it, normally resorts to being autocratic. Managing conflict implies knowing what to do as conflict arises. Unassertiveness may bring a feeling of loneliness in accomplishing the vision and mission of the school, and that the staff are not giving their full support.

Managing conflict requires principals to realise that they deal with a group of intelligent and rational professionals (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:317). It stands to reason that the skill of assertiveness is vital in the manner in which conflict is to be managed, and that the manner in which conflict is managed may result in either positive or negative outcomes for the school (Heystek, 2008:87). Conflict tends to yield a positive result when conflicting parties end up agreeing on one thing, which they initially viewed differently. This kind of conflict is regarded as functional or constructive because it yields positive effects on performance and the optimal wellbeing of the staff members (Steyn& Van Niekerk, 2007:72; Van der Merwe,

2013:68). Alternatively, conflict may yield a negative result if poorly managed (Regenesys Manual, 2014:245). If conflict is left unresolved for a long time, it may cause conflicting parties to part ways thereby affecting the management and productivity of the organisations. According to Van der Merwe (2013:67) the unresolved conflict is referred to as dysfunctional conflict and as it has the disadvantage of derailing the progress of the school.

Botha (2013:74) identifies three principal orientations relevant to managing conflict between teachers, learners and parents, namely peaceful coexistence, compromising, and problem solving. Botha (2013:75) argues that peaceful coexistence operates within the parameters of avoiding conflict and smoothing conflict. This means that conflict can be smoothed or avoided by following specific strategies or approaches such as being friendly and moving away from the conflicting party. The compromise approach can be attained when one party agrees to yield a point. The problem solving approach is attained when the two conflicting parties are actively involved in seeking the solution for the problem. Regenesys Manual (2014:245) and Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:79) are also of the opinion that compromising and problem solving are opted for in managing conflict in the work place. However, problem solving is regarded as the most effective way of managing conflict as it is used to satisfy both conflicting parties as they agree on the possible solution that benefits both Regenesys Manual, 2014:248).

Solving conflict amicably can be used as a strategy to retain teachers in the school. Principals, as lion tamers, know how to tame the lions with whom they are working to avoid conflict at work. Effective conflict management could help breed good working relationships, personal development and wellbeing. This consequently creates peaceful minds and enhances longevity at work.

## 2.5.2 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication is the conveyance of messages from the sender to the recipient (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:29) and can either be verbal or non-verbal with regard to activities, management tasks and relationships between staff, parents and learners and the school (Prinsloo, 2003:156). Since communication involves at least two people, it entails that the receiver or the listener should have good listening skills while the sender should also have good communication skills. Communication in the work place has the capacity to motivate staff (Van Zyl, 2013:171) because communication is used by managers to motivate staff to

achieve organisational goals. Effective communication is essential for school management. Kruger and Van Deventer (2003:158) identified the following as links between communication and management functions:

- The planning that takes place in the school has to be communicated to all involved.
- It is important for the staff involved to think about and discuss the aims, and for the aims to be clearly spelt out and communicated to all interested parties.
- Policy, i.e. school policy and the learners' code of conduct, should be put in writing and be made available to all interested parties.
- Decisions should be made on the basis of sufficient information, and the reasons should be made clear to those involved.
- Delegation can only be effective if all tasks and responsibilities are clearly demarcated.
- Coordination will only be successful if the term and year programmes are drawn up clearly and followed every day.
- Control is used to communicate to staff and learners the standard of work expected and any corrective measures that may be necessary to implement.
- Leadership skills, relationship-building, negotiation skills and motivation all depend on effective communication.

Effective communication is a prerequisite for management functions in a school (Prinsloo, 2003:157). The four managerial functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling in the school need to be well communicated between all stakeholders (Prinsloo, 2003:158). To perform these managerial functions, the principal cascades some of the duties and responsibilities down to teachers and members of the school management team, and these require effective communication (Botha, 2013:172). Communication with staff can be verbal and non-verbal through circulars, meetings, SMSs, telephone calls and interviews.

Effective communication plays a vital role in teacher retention in the sense that teachers need to be engaged in school matters for them to feel a spirit of belonging (Botha, 2013:170). By cascading information and giving teachers responsibilities, communication is enabled while at the same time it reinforces the bond between employer and employee. Teachers feel satisfied when they are given information regarding what is unfolding in their schools and the whole education system.

### 2.5.3 STAFF INDUCTION

Staff induction refers to an endeavour by the principal or any member of the school development team to assist the newly appointed teacher to get used to the school environment (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:252). Induction is given with a view of making work easier for the teacher and to achieve the organisational goals much easier (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:252). The new teacher starts the job without thorough knowledge of work policies, curriculum, the work environment, learners, teachers and the school administration (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:209). Induction is therefore vital for the purpose of giving the new teacher information about the work to be done. For this reason, induction is inevitable to any new teacher starting at a school. New teachers need self-esteem to show their capabilities in terms of what they have been trained for and to prove their level of performance.

The induction orientation is not only given to newly qualified teachers but also to experienced teachers who are new at the school. This therefore means that the induction programme given to the experienced teacher and the newly qualified teacher will differ due to job description differences (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:252) as this can also be used as a strategy for teacher retention. For example, a teacher may be new at a school but operating as a deputy principal or as a head of department in the school. In this case, the induction orientation will differ in terms of the post level and the content.

For Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:210), the procedure which principals could use to induct new teachers may follow different routes. For example, in the school, induction may commence by the school governing body (SGB) welcoming the new teacher in a way the school deems appropriate. The principal may request a member of school management team member to begin with the initial assistance to serve as a mentor to the new teacher so that his or her work might be easier and for the newcomer to gain confidence in performing his or her duty. The orientation phase is a crucial phase for the new teacher as the new teacher is introduced to all members of the school community and taken on a tour around the school. This is the time to tell the teacher about the background of the school, the school policies, duties assigned to him or her, the school rules, procedures and the disciplinary policy. The school can undertake a needs assessment during which areas to be assessed are identified, and then engage in on-going assistance and development of the newcomer. The new teacher

should be encouraged to attend workshops relating to the job for development purposes. Subject advisors may also induct and mentor teachers by giving them support in the subjects they are teaching. Inducted teachers stay long in the teaching profession because they may encounter lesser obstacles on their professional way and this may therefore a good strategy to retain teachers. Induction is essential for retaining teachers as it takes away the doubts and fears of the novice and inculcates a spirit of enthusiasm and self-esteem.

#### 2.5.4 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Professional development refers to the participation of teachers or educational leaders in development opportunities that enable them to be better equipped (Steyn& Van Niekerk, 2007:224).

Professional development can therefore be used by schools as the primary mechanism to help teachers to learn and improve their skills. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that all teachers be developed by allowing them to participate in professional activities so that they can be skilful and well equipped. Professional activities may be organised and funded by the Department of Education or non-governmental bodies . The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education (RSA, 2003) has established the Continuous Professional Teachers Development (CPTD) project (SACE, 2011) endorsed by SACE. The framework plays a major role in teacher development by encouraging them to register for CPTD so that they earn professional development (PD) points anytime they are engaged in professional activities (SACE, 2011). Each teacher is expected to earn PD points in each successive three-year cycle (SACE, 2011:56). The PD points are allocated to activities classified in the following five categories:

- school-led programmes;
- employer-led programmes;
- qualification programmes;
- other programmes offered by teacher unions, NGOs, community-based organisations or other approved providers; and
- Self-chosen activities (SACE, 2011).

Teachers who succeed in upgrading their qualifications earn PD points. Some teachers pay for their studies while others are helped by the provincial bursary, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme depending on the field of study (RSA, 2007:19).

The activities within which teachers are engaged enable them to be well-developed people. Teachers develop well when they change leadership roles in school mural and extramural activities. This has the power to enable them to stay long in the profession as they are able to realise their opportunities to grow (Kruger & Van Deventer, 2013:11). Professional development is therefore an effective tool for teacher retention. According to Butler (2014:16), teachers are more likely to stay at the school if they form part of a team that works to improve the school.

The Department of Education also develops teachers via workshops and projects while schools develop teachers in meetings or subject seminars (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:222). According to Makhuzeni and Barkhuizen (2010:3), the Department of Education plays a vital role in motivating and retaining teachers by providing them with career path opportunities to occupy senior positions based on good performance and proven managerial skills. The Department of Education further invests in career development programmes to attract and retain quality school teachers (Makhuzeni & Barkhuizen, 2015:4). For that reason, the Department of Education in Limpopo has engaged in a programme to develop teachers in managerial positions by registering them with Regenesys School of Business for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Public Management for a period of 18 months which I also attended. This enabled me to be more knowledgeable in public sector management issues, and so played a role in me getting a promotion.

#### 2.5.5 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

An educational leader is a human resource manager who must have qualities and skills to deal with challenges from the people with whom he or she is working. It is imperative for an educational leader to have good communication skills because he or she does most of his or her job communicating with people, giving instructions and directions. A sound character is essential because a leader must lead by example and should behave well even if circumstances are difficult. He or she should have motivational skills to keep on motivating and encouraging workers to go the extra mile without complaining and be able to work with teams because as a leader he or she has to lead a team of managers who need to be respected (Regenesys Manual, 2014:150).

The skills and knowledge of the leader portray the type of leadership one exercises and this has an influence on the people who are being led. Regenesys Manual (2014:14) argues that

leadership behaviour has a significant effect on the functioning of individual employees. It was further indicated that human resource managers must have specific competencies, such as

- self-management (trustworthiness, adaptability and initiative);
- self-awareness (emotional awareness, confidence and integrity);
- social awareness (empathy and awareness of what is happening in the organisation);
- social skills –
  - having the ability to interact meaningfully with others;
  - being a good communicator;
  - having conflict management skills;
  - having the ability to manage change; and
  - having the ability to develop others.

The principal as the educational leader has to possess all these qualities and competencies as they form the basis of management capability and therefore are vital for retaining staff. Various educational leaders use different leadership styles, such as instructional, situational, transformational, transactional or democratic style to lead and guide teachers. Each principal selects the style that is beneficial for his or her team and for working with and/or retaining them. Prinsloo (2003:153) talks of positive leaders who, through their leadership style, can use all their powers to motivate their staff. A leadership style that makes the job appealing is essential for teacher retention. People would like to work with a positive leader as he or she encourages teachers to stay.

#### 2.5.6 STAFF MOTIVATION

Van Deventer and Mojapelo-Batka (2013:31) define motivation as the internal state that activates and gives direction to our thoughts, feelings and actions. Moreover, Heystek (2008:79) defines motivation as the force that energises the behaviour, gives direction to the behaviour and underlies the tendencies to persist even in the face of obstacles. It is a strong feeling, which is connected to a person's attitude and his or her beliefs that compel such person to do something irrespective of the conditions. When the force operates within a person, then the person responds to the force by actions, and behaves as desired. Motivation starts from within a person. A motivated person will persist to do the work even if others do not see any reason for doing it. The intensity of teachers' work reflects their state of mind,

which determines their attitude and feeling for the work (Odendaal & Roodt, 2009:144). Motivation and attitude affect how work is performed. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:134) consequently indicate that teachers' attitudes and behaviour reflect their motivational level. Odendaal and Roodt (2009:144) talk of three key elements of motivation, namely intensity, direction and persistence towards attaining a goal. This implies that the intensity of motivation plays a major role in giving teachers direction in achieving their goals. The way staff behave is an indication of their feelings and motivation. This confirms what Odendaal and Roodt (2009:144) say about motivation, which is the result of the interaction between the individual and the situation.

The principal has the responsibility to make the situation at school compelling to do the work (Odendaal & Roodt, 2009:146). Heystek (2008:79) argues that the culture and climate that prevail in the school have an influence on teacher motivation, and can stimulate teachers to work. Since motivation is an on-going process to achieve long-term goals, teachers work collaboratively to achieve the goals set in their school while the principal uses skills to appeal to teachers' feelings or emotions to act towards the desired direction or goals (Mojapelo-Batka & Van Deventer, 2013:31; Van Zyl, 2013:163;). For motivation to be used as a tool to retain teachers at school, it is also vital to know what teachers value before rewarding them. This is referred to as "positive reinforcement" (Heystek, 2008:82). Motivated staff have direction and persist to achieve their goals. The school can use both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation to motivate teachers to achieve the desired goals.

Intrinsic motivation is about acknowledgement or giving verbal praise while extrinsic motivation is about giving rewards or incentives (Heystek, 2008:79; Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:145). Intrinsic motivation is long-lasting because it entails the feelings and values of an individual, which enables such person to act voluntarily without an external force.

Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007:146) indicate that teachers can best be motivated and retained by using the techniques of job enrichment, job rotation, feedback and reinforcement as well as empowerment. In job rotation, teachers get motivated when they exchange role in various school activities. Motivation of teachers is therefore a strategic effort to retain them and to make them have self-esteem and self-realisation and improve their performance. The Department of Education plays a vital role in retaining and motivating teachers by giving bonuses during the birthday months (see PSCBC, 1999) merit pay after 20 and 30 years of

service (see PSCBC, 1999) and by enhancing professional responsibilities when a teacher becomes a master teacher (see PSCBC, 1999).

### 2.5.7 WORKING WITH TEAMS

Everard and Morris (1996:156) view a team as a group of people with a common objective that can effectively tackle any task which has been set up. Members of the school community form part of the team working towards a common goal. Teachers are the major components of various teams within the school whether in the classroom or on the playgrounds. For a team to be successful, it is imperative for team members to hold distinguished characteristics of being cooperative, trustworthy and harmony (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:192). These characteristics are vital in keeping teachers in the system. Teachers work collaboratively with each other, learners and parents. The principal as the team leader is responsible for the wellbeing of each team and has to uplift the spirit of trust and togetherness to be successful (Regenesys Manual, 2014:161; Steyn& Van Niekerk, 2007:105). The heads of department at school are also team leaders in the various departments and hold the same vision for the success of teams. Each departmental head leads his or her group of teachers in such a manner that they become satisfied. Satisfied teams are successful teams, and this is visible as less conflict, increased morale, motivation, increased staff retention and productivity (Prinsloo, 2003:192; Steyn& Van Niekerk, 2007:105). Effective teamwork is essential to enable team members to realise their own potential (Prinsloo, 2003:199) as they can work without supervision; thus, taking ownership of the work (Regenesys Manual, 2014:162). Working with teams can therefore encourage, empower and motivate other members to remain in the system without feeling the pain of hard work.

### 2.5.8 STAFF APPRAISAL

Appraisal implies making judgments and decisions on the quality or effectiveness of a programme, project, thing or set of actions (RSA, 2016). Staff appraisal is a continuous and systematic process to assist teachers with their professional development and career planning (Steyn& Van Niekerk 2007:26). Since appraisal pertains to the general performance of the teacher in a school, performance appraisal is defined as an on-going process used for identifying, measuring and developing an individual's performance in accordance with the strategic goals of an organisation (Elliot, 2015:102). In 2003 the Department of Education has adopted the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as a form of appraisal for

teachers (RSA, 2003). The IQMS encompasses three programmes: Developmental Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement (PM) and Whole-School Evaluation (WSE). The purpose of DA is to determine areas of strength and weakness with a view of development. PM is there to evaluate teachers for salary progression and grade progression while WSE evaluates the overall effectiveness of the school (RSA, 2003).

The commencement of appraisal starts with advocacy and training by the principal to ensure that every member of staff is committed before the selection of the school development team (SDT) by staff. Each member of the staff has to select his or her own developmental support group (DSG), which consists of a peer and the immediate senior. The DSG is there to assess the teacher in accordance with the performance standards set by the Department of Education. The DSG is responsible for developing the teacher in terms of identified areas of weakness and to recommend the teacher for salary (RSA, 2003).

Teachers are assessed against a set of assessment standards to check their performance. Each performance standard has four criteria, which a teacher has to satisfy to indicate how he or she is performing. Appraisal is vital for teacher development because each teacher is assessed for developmental purposes (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:249). Teacher appraisal can be a prerequisite for teacher development because appraisal assists individual teachers to identify personal developmental needs through self-evaluation and thereafter drafting a personal growth plan indicating when and how development is to be made and by whom. Self-evaluation is necessary for stimulating self-motivation and self-management.

However, the effectiveness of appraisal is based on the criteria of transparency, confidentiality, mutual respect and clear guidelines (Piggot-Irvine, 2005:9).

The need for the development of teachers in a school also implies WSE. Once teachers have been evaluated, the problems that hinder progress, such as absenteeism, late-coming and conflict are dealt with, and the results are increased self-motivation, self-enthusiasm and self-esteem, which are necessary for teacher retention (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2007:249). Appraisal is useful for both managers and employees as it improves the quality of the public service, which is a great motivation for most civil servants (Barreix, 2013:35). Staff appraisal can be used as a yardstick for whole-school development. As staff appraisal is based on holistic development, it is essential to develop each component of the school, including the SGB. Staff appraisal is the mirror that tells whether the goals of the school have been

achieved or not. This enables teachers to develop, as they are aware of the weak points on which they have to work. Staff appraisal makes teachers proud to remain in the system with personal goals to achieve.

## **2.6 STATUTORY BODIES TO BE ENGAGED IN TEACHER RETENTION**

Teacher retention is a phenomenon that affects the future of the new generation in the society and the economy where they are living. It needs to be dealt with cautiously by relevant people to bring positive changes in the lives of the new generation. In realising that attrition is an on-going phenomenon and that schools suffer as a result, attempts to retain teachers are made by authorities to curb early teacher attrition through various programmes. Provision of incentives and empowering and building a career ladder for teachers are attempts to ensure teacher retention. Although some scholars argue that subject specialists have nothing to do with attrition as they believe subjects are not contributing factors and they would rather focus on other factors, some deem it necessary to retain Mathematics and Science teachers, for example, since they are regarded as high-quality teachers who contribute positively to learner performance (Latifoglu, 2016:56). High-quality teachers are able to influence learner outcomes; hence, their loss is a concern worldwide. However, retaining Mathematics and Science teachers may be a difficult task since they have more opportunities in other sectors.

In the United States of America, there was a decrease in the number of teachers, especially after World War 11 (Borman& Dowling, 2008:368). This led to strategies to retain teachers since the standard of education was deteriorating. In order to pick up the standard of education, authorities decided to invest in schools by lowering the entrance level to accommodate more teaching enrolment. However the strategy produced a smaller number of teacher force of high quality and resultant low performance (Borman& Dowling, 2008:368). The education authorities then decided to embark on other strategies to reform the education system, such as recruiting and retaining more teachers and improving teacher quality by enhancing in-service professional development (Borman& Dowling, 2008:368). The following could be included in a strategy for teacher retention.

### **2.6.1 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN RETAINING TEACHERS**

The principal has the responsibility to create an environment conducive to working, which supports institutional practices. This requires dedication by principals to ensure that the school portrays a conducive climate for teaching and learning (Botha, 2013:32). The principal

has to ensure that teaching and learning are uninterrupted; therefore, proper planning and policy implementation are necessary (Botha, 2013:20). The messages on the bulletin board or notice boards indicating that dangerous weapons are not allowed on the school premises are not sufficient to say the environment is conducive to teaching and learning. Supervision of the school premises, classrooms, furniture and buildings by the principal to ensure their adequacy is essential for the safety of teachers and learners. An environment conducive to teaching and learning, appeals to the principal to motivate teachers and to work collaboratively with other stakeholders (Kruger & Van Deventer, 2003:79).

The principal has a role to play in providing material for learning and teaching. This is the support that teachers need to work without stress. It strengthens teachers' commitment to their work and ensures professional development and productivity. For the principal teacher, productivity and experience are the decisive factors in retaining teachers. Principals use their powers to ensure that the staff are right for the school curriculum. According to Butler (2014:68), the principal has to ensure that the environment contributes for the retention of highly qualified and productive teachers.

#### 2.6.2 CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY IN RETAINING TEACHERS

The SGB plays a decisive role in the formulation of the learners' code of conduct (RSA, 1996). This helps teachers to offer quality education in a disciplined, stress-free environment, resulting in teachers willing to stay long in the profession. The security that is provided at school by the SGB leaves teachers with increased self-esteem and high morale, values that are needed for teacher retention.

The SGB is the employer of teachers by virtue of the responsibilities assigned to them (RSA, 1996). The SGB may contribute to teacher retention by fulfilling one of their basic jobs, of ensuring that school have the learners code of conduct (RSA, 1996) which will enable learners to adhere to teachers instructions, thereby making the environment to be stress free. They are involved in the advertisement, selection, interviewing and appointment of teachers in schools. They recommend to the head of department which teacher they want to employ in the school in accordance with the needs of the school curriculum (RSA, 1996). The recommendation of the assumption of duty itself means that the teacher is retained in the teaching field as the teacher may assume duty on receipt of assumption letter. The Department of Education allocates to each school the number of teachers as per

enrolment for that academic year (RSA, 1998). The SGB has the right to raise funds in addition to the funds the school receive for norms and standards. The SGB creates posts despite the ones created by the Department for school's staff establishment to ensure provision of quality education for the learners (Beckmann &Prinsloo, 2009:171; RSA, 1996). They remunerate the teachers in the SGB post with the money raised during the fund-raising.

The SGB has the responsibility of controlling the school finances through its democratically elected financial committee (Beckmann &Prinsloo, 2009:176; RSA, 1996). They support teachers financially to enable them to attend departmental workshops, to ensure teachers have the required learner–teacher support materials for the improvement of results, they give financial support in purchasing sports equipment, and they fund school trips and teacher development. All the support leaves teachers with enthusiasm that make them value the job they do.

The election of the SGB means that parents are well represented in the school, as representation of parents within the SGB ensures parental involvement in the education of their children and in school activities. Where parents are involved, teachers feel free to work because they are certain of support from parents and therefore improvement in learner performance (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:9. The involvement of the SGB in the school is important as they assist teachers and the principal in the execution of their duties (RSA, 1996). The teamwork that is formed among all stakeholders creates in teachers a feeling of unity and belonging to one family.

### 2.6.3 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTRIBUTION TO TEACHER RETENTION

The Department of Education through its districts plays a major role in teacher retention as the two offices liaise to workshop teachers on new matters arising in the Department that pertains teachers work (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:7). The attrition of teachers has a detrimental effect on the quality of education, on the candidates who get university entrance and later on the workforce. The economic future of the country relies on the effort and expertise of teachers for shapingand developing the minds and talents of the future workmanship. The retention of quality teachers should therefore be a priority of the Department of Education. Barkhuizen and Makhuzeni (2015:1) indicate that retention policies should be able to attract new employees, satisfy the older generation of employees and motivate current employees to stay within the organisation. The Department is therefore

faced with a task of continuously attracting quality teachers to stay, and they encourage student teachers to view teaching as a necessity not just as a job of last resort. According to the report by Barkhuizen and Makhuzeni (2015:3), teachers regard non-financial rewards such as employer brand, working hours and holidays as important factors that will attract and retain them in the teaching profession. The Department of Education uses the following incentives as its contribution to retain teachers:

#### 2.6.3.1 Pay progressions

The system of education catered for salary progression where the salaries of teachers were not at the same level for a long time (RSA, 2005:76). This motivated teachers and made them see teaching as a well-paying profession. Teachers are evaluated on a number of criteria during the appraisal period for them to qualify for salary and pay progression. Teachers have to score above the estimated score as set by the Department of Education to qualify for pay progression. Salary progression of 1% is added to teachers' salary yearly after being evaluated on the IQMS (SACE, 2000). Money serves as an incentive to teachers as it leaves many of them with high morale to work (Podolsky, Kini et al, 2016:2).

#### 2.6.3.2 Remuneration and service bonus

Remuneration of teachers is one of the important matters in the debate on education when addressing teacher attrition, recruitment and working conditions (RSA, 2005:63). Scholars such as( Barkhuzen & Makhuzeni, 2015: 1; Podolsky, Kini et al, 2016:2)concur that the best strategy for the Department of Education to use for teacher retention is to adopt good remuneration practices. This concurs with the contribution by teachers' unions as they debate with the employer in terms of salary increases. Employers signing contracts with teachers' unions at the bargaining council to increase teachers' salaries, was employers' attempt to satisfy teachers and to motivate them to work. The Department of Education is encouraging and motivating teachers by offering a service bonus, which is equivalent to a full month's salary thus termed 'the thirteenth cheque' (RSA, 2013:161).

#### 2.6.3.3 Promotions and recognition of long service

Promotion in the work place is what every employee is wishing for. Teachers have to gain experience of work and obtain relevant qualifications before they can be considered for promotion. Teachers start working as CS1 teacher (post level 1 teacher), then promoted to the post level 2 (HOD, or head of department of a specific subject), then to a deputy principal

and finally to principal. In any case of teacher promotion, the SGB is involved as they are responsible for advertising the post, short listing, interviewing, and recommending the best candidate for the post to the HOD of the province after they had considered all the democratic values during the process (RSA, 2013:161). Even though the promotion of teachers narrows to the top, teachers enjoy the opportunity of being promoted to a higher rank as new posts are created while those with long service receive recognition (RSA, 2005:16). Long-service teachers are regarded as senior teachers and they receive an appropriate salary increase. With effect from 1 April 2018, teachers with 20 years' teaching experience received an amount of R10410.00 for recognition of long service, those with thirty years' experience received R20819.00 while those with 40 years' experience received R27759.00 (PSCBC, 2018). Improvement in the promotion structure has also enabled many women to hold managerial positions in the teaching field and other sectors of the Department of Education. This promotion structure has motivated teachers – particularly women – to stay in the profession, as the Department of Education is sensitive about gender equity and about recognition for long service.

Furthermore, the Department of Education has also prioritised teaching by employing administrators in schools to release teachers from the administrative tasks. Most of the schools have been allocated administrators, depending on the size of the school. This has caused teaching to be more admirable; hence, even those who left some years ago wish to be re-employed (Nkosi, B. 2015).

#### 2.6.3.4 Fundza-Lushaka bursary scheme

Teacher attrition in South Africa has affected the quality of education and the number of teachers available to fulfil the goals and mission of the Department of Education (SACE, 2011:9). Since attrition affects mainly Mathematics and Science teachers (Latifoglu, 2016:56; Mampane, 2012:73) in most schools and leads to teacher shortage, the Department of Education has tried to alleviate the problem by sourcing Mathematics and Science teachers from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe and Ghana (Mampane, 2012:78; RSA, 2011:9). Meanwhile the Department of Basic Education attracted young candidates into the teaching fraternity by offering a full-cost bursary scheme called Fundza-Lushaka, which started in 2007 (Mampane, 2012:77; RSA, 2011:17).

This was done on condition that the person granted with the bursary would serve under the Limpopo Department of Education for a period of three years before deciding to quit or join other sectors (Mampane, 2012:77; RSA, 2011:17).

#### 2.6.3.5 Housing allowance scheme

There is a delinking of housing allowances for spouses of employees on salary level 1-5 effecting from 1 September 2018. Home-owners staying in urban or in rural areas receive the same allowance irrespective of gender. The Department of Education is offering a subsidy of R1 336.22 (PSCBC, 2015) for each teacher as a housing allowance. Teachers who are staying and working in rural areas are also entitled to receive a housing allowance as an incentive (RSA, 2011:16) to stop the influx of teachers into urban areas as they need better living conditions and services. This has alleviated stress on teachers in terms of moving to urban areas for the sake of getting a housing allowance as government was initially subsidising only those with mortgage bonds. These changes in terms of subsidising home owners irrespective of whether the house is mortgaged or owned has greatly influenced teachers to stay in the system.

#### 2.6.3.6 Rural allowance

In Sri Lanka, there was a problem that teachers did not want to work in rural areas. In 2011 a decision was taken by the authorities that, on completion of their studies, teachers had to serve in rural areas first before working in urban areas. The same problem, namely that teacher`s did not want to work in rural areas because of poor working conditions was experienced in New Zealand. New Zealand resolved the problem in 2011 by using the point system, which meant that those teachers working in rural areas, were given extra points to determine the school where they would be placed in future (RSA, 2011:17). In South Africa, only those teachers who are working in remote rural areas are given a rural allowance as an incentive with an intention of keeping them there; however, teachers do not like to work in remote places.

#### 2.6.3.7 Medical assistance for teachers

The Department of Education is keen to retain teachers in the system and therefore concerned about the wellbeing of all teachers. The Department therefore offers a medical aid subsidy to teachers who belong to the Government Employees Medical Aid Scheme (GEMS) to ensure that teachers are healthy and ready for work.

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I discussed the nature of teacher attrition, the current causes of teacher attrition, and the managerial aspects to be considered for teacher retention as well as aspects that could contribute to teacher retention. Attention has been drawn to various managerial functions essential for teacher retention and the strategies that are used by the Department of Education in retaining teachers.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study employed a qualitative research method with an interpretive research design to determine how teacher attrition can be managed in Sekgosese East Circuit. This chapter addresses the main points, namely research paradigm, research design and approach, sample size and participant selection, convenience sampling, snowball sampling data collection, data analysis and interpretation, trustworthiness and ethical consideration. In conforming to the ethical consideration, schools and principals were given pseudonyms, namely Mango, Rod, Dove, Dino, Trod and Squi.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

A paradigm is a perspective or angle from which I view the topic to be investigated (Maree, 2007:32). This study was based on a qualitative research paradigm. A subjective exploration was undertaken from the perspective of an insider by using interpretivism, which pointed towards discovering the meaning of events together with those individuals who experienced them (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010:343). The focus of this study was to gain a deeper, clearer understanding of how teacher attrition is managed. The specific participants that have been selected had first-hand experience of attrition taking place within their schools and of the management thereof.

According to Gray (2014:23), interpretivism asserts that the natural reality and the social reality differ from each other. In applying this idea to the nature of teacher attrition, I differentiated between the two from the natural perspectives where the cause of attrition is natural (such as in the case of death) and from a social perspective (where the cause is man-made, such as dismissal).

#### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH**

According to Mouton (2001:55), a research design is a plan or blueprint of how I intend to conduct the research, and it is tailored to address different kinds of questions. A research design, according to Maree, (2007:33), is used to describe the procedure for conducting a study, and its purpose is to help find appropriate answers to research questions.

In line with the essential elements of the qualitative research paradigm that were alluded to in section 3.2, a case study research approach was followed in this study. A case study is a basic method of qualitative research, and it involves in-depth investigation of the meanings that individuals ascribe to particular instances of a phenomenon (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010: 343). Since I required in-depth information about the management of teacher attrition in schools, she decided to select a case study as the research design because of the advantage of interacting systematically with participants in their natural place of work. Creswell (2009:13) defines a case study approach as a strategy of inquiry in which I explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process or one or more individuals. Maree(2007:75) views a case study as a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest. I collected extensive data on participants regarding attrition and management thereof. I focused on understanding teacher attrition and retention in schools and how management addresses these. I used a case study as it is most suitable for gathering information on a social phenomenon in its natural environment.

#### **3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

A sample is a group of participants from whom data are collected (McMillan, 2012:95).Sampling is the selection of participants from whom data are collected. Sampling was vital because I could not interview all the principals in Sekgosese East Circuit. I sampled six principals from the schools in Sekgosese East Circuit, and engaged in convenience, purposeful sampling and snowball sampling as they are regarded as examples of non-probability sampling.

- Participant selection

All six participants sampled had personal experience of the management of teacher attrition in their schools and could influence teacher retention. These participants were in a position to share their experiences and understanding of the topic with me and further revealed the possibility of what can be done in similar situations.

I used purposive sampling by contacting the circuit office with a request to inform her of the schools which had recently been affected by teacher attrition and to make a selection of four of those that were located within five kilometres of the participants' location, thereby using convenient sampling. I was interested in those schools that had teacher attrition over the five years prior to the current study.

I further used snowball sampling whereby the four selected participants were asked to provide two more names of principals or deputy principals in the Circuit who had experienced teacher attrition. The participants were able to mention two more schools in the circuit, which had seen teacher attrition. These schools were subsequently contacted. According to Maree (2007:177), snowball sampling is often used in cases where the researcher is interested in an interconnected group of people.

#### 3.4.1 Purposeful sampling/Convenience sampling

I used a combination of purposeful and convenience sampling methods to select the first four participants. Convenience sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling where the participants are selected on the basis of their accessibility (Maree, 2007:177). I engaged in this kind of sampling by only selecting participants who worked in the same circuit as herself and who were to be located within 5 km of each other. From my own experience, I know that all principals who had been employed for at least five years had been involved in attrition amongst teachers. In this sense, the four participants were selected purposively.

#### 3.4.2 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling method where the existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances (Maree, 2007:177). I selected the other two participants on a snowball basis because of the recommendations of the participants selected via purposeful/convenience sampling. Snowball sampling is appropriate to use when the population is hidden or hard to reach (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:79).

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

In qualitative study, the researcher is seen as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014:185). In the current study, I was actively involved in data collection. Data were collected through interviewing six principals in terms of how they manage teacher attrition in their respective schools. I was also engaged in analysing various documents regarding teacher attrition and retention. I used only interviews and documents to collect data for this study.

#### 3.5.1 Semi structured interviews

This is a form of interview used by qualitative researchers (Gall & Gall, 2010:348; Gray, 2014:385; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013:359). I engaged in semi-structured interviews with

the participants. The interviews involved face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees with the intention of collecting information from the participants (Gray, 2014:382; Mears, 2012:173). The main advantage of a semi structured interview is that it allows me to probe by asking questions that were initially included as research questions (Gray, 2014:385). The intention of probing was to collect data to reach theoretical saturation.

I started by requesting permission from the Department of Education to conduct interviews in Sekgosese East Circuit (see Appendix A) and permission was granted (see Appendix B). In this letter, the objectives of the study were explained alongside data collection processes and selection of schools in Sekgosese East Circuit.

The interviews took place in the respective schools as the attrition phenomenon could best be understood within the context in which they are studied (Gray, 2014:385). I also applied for ethical clearance from Unisa’s Ethics Review Committee, which was granted, with certificate clearance number: 2017/11/15/32804229/04/MC (see Appendix F).The interviews were scheduled from November 2017 to April 2018 The selected participants were given letters requesting them to be part of the study undertaken after approval had obtained from Sekgosese East Circuit office. I further requested that each participant willing to take part in the research should respond by signing the consent form, which outlined the purpose of the interview and the risk which might be involved. The time scheduled for conducting the interviews was arranged beforehand to avoid inconveniences. Table 3.1 reflects the interview schedule.

Table 3.1 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Participant’s name	Venue	Date	Duration
Mango	School A	November 2017	30 minutes
Dino	School B	November 2017	30 minutes
Rod	School C	February 2018	30 minutes
Dove	School D	February 2018	30 minutes
Trod	School E	April 2018	30 minutes
Squi	School F	April 2018	30 minutes

Interview questions (see Appendix E) were prepared beforehand, as they had to be submitted as part of the ethics clearance request, and all the participants were asked the same questions.

Each interview was scheduled to take about 30 minutes, and all interviews were held in the participants' settings. An audio recorder was vital in this regard to record all the interview proceedings. The main aim was for me to grasp all the information in order to transcribe it later. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants for analysis purposes as I could not write down all the information exchanged during the interview. There was no risk or harm possible since the research involved human management in the participants' natural settings. Interviews took place in the participants' safe places at the schools where participants were working.

### 3.5.2 Document analysis

Besides the interviews, data were collected by using documents related to the topic (Gall et al., 2010:358; McCulloch, 2012:211). Documents are written records such as newspapers, minutes, books and letters. I also used documents such as Acts, forms and policies of the Department of Education, which deal with and can be used for teacher attrition. The reason for using documents was that documents are well suited to be paired with other data collection techniques (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013:409). Documents 'speak' the thoughts of other participants, are convenient, they save time and present data, which were attended to by other researchers. Table 3.2 below reflects the documents used to obtain data on teacher attrition and accompanying management actions and/or documents.

Table 3.2

DOCUMENT	MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER ATTRITION
Performance administrative measures	Attrition (ill-health), retention(housing, medical aid subsidy, recognition of long service, service bonus)
South African Council of Educators	Attrition (dismissal), retention (Fundza-Lushaka)
Employment of Educators Act (No. 76 of 1998)	Attrition (resignation, retirement, dismissal)
Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1995)	Attrition (resignation, retirement)
Limpopo Department of Education Procedure Manual For Terminations Of Services (RSA, 2012)	Attrition due to retirement, illhealth or resignation(Z583, Z864, Z102 , Z1525) and death (Z300)

Document analysis was the second technique used to collect data. Document analysis is regarded as a process of analysing documents to gather information. Various written materials were gathered to use as documents required for the study.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Data analysis involves breaking up of data into manageable units with an intention of summarising and interpreting data to formulate themes. I worked with a minimal number of participants to be able to manage the data collected easily and to analyse it (Mouton, 2001:108).

Maree (2007:99) states, “qualitative data analysis tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitude, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction”. After the interviews, the researcher started the process of analysing data, which commenced by transcribing data. I played the audio recorder several times while jotting down every word to ensure that the information was exactly the same as what was said during the interview. This was done to ensure credibility and trustworthiness.

I coded the responses and grouped the codes as categories. I further grouped similar categories to form themes. Coding, according to Maree (2007:105), is the process of carefully reading the transcribed data line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. The coding process involved marking segments of data or assigning a symbol or word to it to attach meaning to it (Saldana, 2016:4). Maree (2007:105) also regards coding as marking of segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names. I understood codes as grouping of similar words or phrases from the participants` point of view. In the process, I interpreted the data by looking at the relationship between categories and patterns. The process of analysing data was concluded by creating themes as key part of the interpretation. I then summarised what had been heard in terms of words, phrases, themes or patterns, and provided references from the literature as key part of the interpretation.

### **3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Trustworthiness refers to the extent to which the data, data analysis and conclusion are accurate. As Creswell (2009:303) indicates, trustworthiness is determined by credibility and credibility is there to verify whether the themes and patterns that emerge from the data are consistent, accurate and meaningful. I therefore dwelt on the following procedures to suit the topic under study.

### 3.7.1 Transferability

McMillan and Schumacher (2012:305) indicate that a qualitative study is not intended to generalise to participants, settings, instruments, interpretations or procedures; it rather uses transferability to get generalisation. The authors further state that transferability is the application of the result to similar contexts and settings. I sampled six participants to investigate how they managed teacher attrition in their schools. I have constructed thick descriptions of time, place, context and experiences of the research to explain when and where the data were collected, and also describe the documents and the participants in detail in this document. I collected detailed descriptive data so that the reader can compare the six schools to other possible contexts to which transfer could be contemplated.

### 3.7.2 Triangulation

Gall et al. (2010:358), Nieuwenhuis (2007:80) and Gray (2014:184) refer to triangulation as the use of more than one method of collecting data. Qualitative research uses triangulation to validate a claim, process or outcome through at least two independent sources (Newby, 2010:119). Qualitative researchers have good ways of increasing the level of confidence in their findings but lack numerical scale for stating that confidence (Stake, 2010:125).

By using triangulation, I increased the level of confidence in the research findings and also validated the outcome and process of the research through two independent sources, interviews and document analysis. In this regard, I corroborated the interview evidence with documentary evidence to strengthen the triangulation. The information that expired during the interviews was validated with the information from the documents.

### 3.7.3 Dependability

Dependability involves the reliability of the research process (Delpont, de Vos, Fouche` & Strydom, 2011:420). To ensure that the research process is dependable and logical, I followed all the necessary steps of doing research, keeping documents and taking the research work for audit.

### 3.7.4 Conformability

Conformability is concerned with whether the research findings can be confirmed by others or not (Delpont, de Vos, Fouche` & Strydom, 2011:421). I have kept the evidence of the participants` responses as document, CD and recorder to strengthen the findings and interpretation of the research.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical issues are taken into account to prevent participants from being harmed in the interview (Gray, 2014:405). Since the research focused on investigating human activities, ethical implications had to be considered. I considered the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, informed consent as well as the participants' right to privacy as of paramount importance during the interviews. I complied with the ethics rule by applying for ethical clearance before the commencement of the interviews. Permission to conduct research was granted by the Unisa Research Ethics Committee. The research ethics of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity were considered. Participants were informed that participation in the interview was voluntary and that they had the right to discontinue with the interview without any penalty. They were also informed that they would not be compensated for participating in the research. Participants' anonymity was assured by informing them of the use of pseudonyms for privacy reasons, and that the information disclosed in the interview would not be discussed with other people as it was only needed for the completion of my studies. Participants signed the consent form as proof of agreement to participate in the research study.

#### **3.8.1 Informed consent**

This is the process of ensuring that respondents know all the necessary information about the research before they agree to take part (Jensen & Laurie, 2016:133). The participants were informed about the nature of the study. I explained the purpose of the study before they agreed to sign the consent form. The study investigated the management of teacher attrition in Sekgose East Circuit and principals were selected as participants because principals are the people who deal directly with management of teacher attrition at schools whereas the circuit manager deals with management of attrition at circuit level. I informed the participants that the study would focus on collecting data through interviews. I agreed with each participant on the day, venue and time of the interview. On the day of the interview, the participant was requested to sign the consent form. The interview questions were prepared beforehand and the interview was scheduled to take only thirty minutes. The participants were informed that there was no risk involved in the study and that participation was strictly voluntary; hence, participants were not compensated for taking part in the study. I indicated that participants had the right to withdraw from participating at any time and that they would not be penalised for that.

Participants were ensured that the information they gave would not be disclosed to other people unless they did so themselves. The information might be given to the ethics committee should there be any need to do so. Participants were given my contact number so that they could contact me should they want to inquire something about the research. A copy of the consent form was given to each participant to sign as proof that they had agreed to participate in the study and that they had understood what the study entailed. They all signed the consent form.

### 3.8.2 Anonymity

Anonymity entails using a pseudonym so that people might not know who the participant was (Jensen & Laurie, 2016:133). Participants were informed that they had the right to remain anonymous and for that reason, pseudonyms were used instead of their real names. When transcribing data I gave each school a unique code to comply with the ethic rule of anonymity. I gave all participants pseudonyms so that they could remain anonymous. The information given was written in such a manner that no one would be aware of the person about whom the participant was talking.

### 3.8.3 Privacy

Participants' right to privacy was treated with respect. I ensured that the nature and quality of the participants' responses were kept confidential by allocating each a code so that no one could determine how each participant responded (Jensen & Laurie, 2016:133). Since I respected the ethical consent of the participants, the collected data were stored in the form of hardcopies, on audio tape, on memory stick (USB) and on compact disc. These documents or devices are kept in my room inside a safe. I am the only person who has access to the safe. This was done to strengthen privacy of the information. The other information is kept as a file on a laptop as backup information to ensure that information is not lost. I ensure that no one has access to the information unless needed by the university. I will keep the information for a period of five years and thereafter it will be discarded.

### 3.8.4 Confidentiality

Participants remained anonymous for the sake of confidentiality. The participants' names were kept confidential by using pseudonyms (Jensen & Laurie, 2016:133; Leedy, 2005:102).

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the research approach that was used in the study, the paradigm within which this approach was embedded and the research design that was deemed suitable for the approach used. The chapter indicated how sampling of participants was done, how data were collected and the ethical values that were considered during interviews. Validity of the data was proved by using triangulation.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter it was indicated how the data were collected and analysed to identify themes to answer the research questions. This chapter focuses on the analysed report, representation and discussion of the data collected. The findings collected during the interviews and document analyses are discussed. The participants' responses are quoted verbatim, as the overviews of the themes are also presented. This chapter is guided by the following research questions that form part of the interview schedule as indicated in Appendix E.

- What is the nature of teacher attrition you experienced at school?
- How did you manage the attrition as experienced?
- What are the causes of teacher attrition?
- What are the effects of teacher attrition?
- Which managerial functions do you apply to retention teachers?
- Whom do you think should be involved in teacher retention?

The following themes and sub-themes were identified during the analyses.

Table 4.1 Themes and sub-themes

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
1. The nature of teacher attrition	a. Retirement b. Resignation c. Death
2. The causes of teacher attrition	a. Financial/salary issues b. Policy issues
3. The effects of teacher attrition	a. Effects on learners b. Effects on remaining teachers
4. Experiences of principals in managing teacher attrition	a. Planning b. Motivation c. Creating an open-door policy d. Respect and communication e. Giving teachers support f. Valuing teachers

## **4.2 Theme 1: The nature of teacher attrition**

In Chapter 2 (see 2.9), it was indicated that teacher attrition takes on different forms and can be classified as either voluntary or involuntary. The empirical data revealed that principals have a good understanding of the influence of teacher attrition on the functioning of schools. I has realised that principals understood the concept ‘teacher attrition’. They provided a number of examples and gave reasons why former colleagues were no longer in the profession. Participants noticed that two groups of teachers, novices and very senior colleagues, tend to be the ones who were most vulnerable if it comes to leaving the profession. Death, retirement and resignation were obviously pointed out as the main reasons for teacher attrition.

### **4.2.1 Death**

All participants said that they personally experienced death of teachers at their schools. Rod elaborated by saying, “I had two death cases of male and female teachers.” Although these principals/participants recognised that they were aware of research findings that showed South Africa to have a high proportion of HIV/AIDS and related diseases, they were not prepared to say if deaths at their schools could have been caused by HIV/AIDS. The reason for this unwillingness could be because they did not personally know the cause of each death, and did not want to ruin their relationship with teachers and lose their trust. I thinks that it should in any case be noted as a finding of this study that a survey conducted in sub-Saharan Africa in 2004 showed that HIV prevalence among teachers was as high as 21% for teachers between the ages of 25 and 34 years (RSA, 2005:64). In research conducted by the HSRC, it was found that there are 58 000 teachers living with HIV across the country, with KZN leading at 2,05% and Eastern Cape at 1,23% (Cole, 2017). What is particularly disconcerting, is that another researcher (Pitsoe, 2013:310) found that the death rate from HIV/AIDS among women teachers is much higher than for male teachers. This could probably be so because their biological make-up and low socio-economic status might have contributed to that (Pitsoe, 2013:310). The findings are very disturbing because the future of the next generation and the economy may be adversely affected. Participants indicated that they were responsible for assisting the bereaved families for completion and submission of the Z300 form to apply for the funeral benefits. Squi, who looked very sad when he talked about the issue of death, indicated that he “lost a hard-working and dedicated teacher”.

Principals assisted the families of the deceased to submit the ID, salary advice and death certificate to the circuit office as proof that the teacher is out of the system.

#### 4.2.2 Retirement

The empirical findings showed that schools in Sekgose East Circuit also experienced retirement of teachers due to age. As stated in Chapter 2, it was stipulated in (RSA, 1998) that teachers were to retire at the age of 65 if employed before 1 May 1996 or at the age of 60 if employed after 1 May 1996. However, it was also stipulated that in the interest of a teacher, a teacher may be allowed to retire at 55 or before 55 on the request of the teacher if it benefits the Department. Since participants had teachers who were approaching retirement, they advised those teachers to give the employer 90 days' notice in writing of their retirement. Principals liaised with the circuit office in obtaining the necessary forms for the retiring teachers. An analysis of the administrative aspects that pertain to teachers' attrition showed that principals follow the procedure manual for the Limpopo Department of Education for termination of services very closely. The retiring teachers submitted the whole series of forms, as required, together with the principal's recommendation on retirement.

#### 4.2.3 Resignation

In Chapter 2 (see 2.9), resignation was discussed as a voluntary issue in teacher attrition. Participants indicated that they experienced teacher attrition in the form of resignation at their schools. Studies conducted by Mamiala (2012:178) and Pitsoe (2013:10) also confirm that teachers in South Africa quit their profession by resigning, as they are dissatisfied about job conditions and remuneration. The reasons behind resignation were monetary. Dove and Trod confirmed, "[t]eachers resigned to take advantage of the pension pay-outs that they would get to pay off their debts and seek greener pastures somewhere". However, an empirical study also revealed that others resigned due to ill health. Squi indicated, "[o]ne of my teachers had used all his thirty six leave days within three year cycle due to ill-health and was supposed to get leave without pay, and as a result he opted to resign". The findings in this study indicated that in most instances where teachers wanted to resign, principals had a one-on-one conversation with them, but could not convince any of them to change their minds. Principals thus proceeded to assist retiring teachers to complete the necessary forms as prescribed in the Limpopo Department of Education procedure manual for termination of services.

### **4.3 Theme 2: The causes of teacher attrition**

The previous section dealt with the nature of teacher attrition by discussing the three main reasons for attrition. Brief references were made in the previous section about teachers' reasons for resignation in particular. This section is aimed more directly at highlighting teachers' specific motives for leaving the profession. As a senior professional, I realised that attrition is a fact of life for all organisations, including schools. To a degree the reasons provided in this section can also be seen as 'normal', because they apply widely to teachers in a variety of educational contexts. A broad overview revealed that teachers mainly quit the profession because of a combination of personal and work-related issues. The following reasons were identified during the analysis as direct causes of teacher attrition in this investigation.

#### **4.3.1 Financial/salary issues**

The findings in this study (Chapter 2) concur with similar investigations in countries like Japan and the United States. In Japan, for example, attrition of teachers was regarded as such an important issue that huge salary increases were made. In the United States, a whole range of salary-related incentives was added to teachers' salaries to prevent attrition in the system. Participants indicated that in South Africa, teachers quit the profession to seek greener pastures, which is evidence of the dissatisfaction with the level of their salaries. Rod even remarked in this connection, "I know someone who is now working in the private sector because they offered him much more than what he was getting in the Department of Education." It was further said that teachers' salaries are low if compared to other sectors of employment. The principals who were interviewed were in agreement with the fact that teachers' salaries are insufficient and that the majority of them battle to support their families. It was clear that most teachers were heavily indebted and left the profession as the only option to rectify this situation. Trod mentioned in this regard, "I even question them when they say they are going to resign. Others say I'm not coping with the money I get." Fundamentally, money is the main contributing factor towards teacher attrition. Additionally, participants indicated that teachers are well aware of the fact that salaries differ between provinces. Dino mentioned, "for example, in Johannesburg salaries are high, but in Limpopo they are very, very low. For example, we have a teacher who left the Limpopo Province to Jo'burg because of salary." The participants also said that the financial problems

that teachers faced, definitely have a negative influence on their work. Rod added, “[t]he salary of educators is the main cause of vacating the system. If their salary can be raised up ... even those who have gone to other sectors, they can come back.” It is also worth quoting Mango, who stated that:

“The main cause of teachers leaving the system is ... the loans. Most of the teachers start by making small loans in order to pay for small things until they get deep into debts and they start to realise that, with the little money that is left behind, they are unable to cope with it”.

It is to be expected that work motivation is very low in this kind of situation. It is also interesting to note that it was felt strongly amongst participants that if teachers` salaries are substantially increased, those who left the profession could be encouraged to return.

This researcher is of the opinion that the question about teacher remuneration and attrition should realistically be approached from two sides. Firstly, it must be understood that higher salaries will not be the final solution for all teachers` problems. Like other professionals, teachers have a high degree of mobility, and tend always to explore employment opportunities across a range of sectors. Teachers will therefore, in a normal society, move between different jobs and teaching posts. A big concern is, however, that teacher mobility is influenced by government resource allocation. This study revealed that in South Africa teachers are attracted to provinces or regions that have the most resources. As mentioned by Bishop, Darling-Hammond, Kini and Podolsky (2016:4), this is a worldwide phenomenon. Teachers are inclined to move from one area to another in search of higher salaries. According to Macdonald (1999:835), the market economy provides many opportunities conducive to attracting teachers to work in other sectors, and these form the basis for teacher attrition. Secondly, possible remedies that participants suggested for teacher attrition caused by financial reasons, are discussed in 4.6 and 4.7. Nevertheless, chronic salary-related issues should be consistently addressed by all concerned and cannot be seen as a teacher-problem or a concern for government only.

#### 4.3.2 Policy issues

Policies serve as governmental strategic planning to achieve goals and they need to be reviewed from time to time as changes occur (Regenesys Manual, 2014:306).The government operates by using policies. Teachers work according to the stipulated policies. When policies are challenging, employees may find it hard to cope with them and decide to quit, because

attrition is influenced by personal factors, internal factors or external factors. According to Ayuk (2012:22), policies need to be modified to attract teachers to stay in the profession and avoid early retirement. The government policy of redeployment of teachers was seen, among others, as the cause of teacher attrition. I know from her experience as a teacher that some teachers were declared in excess in their schools and were deployed to other schools. This frustrates some teachers to the degree that they quit, especially when a teacher who has been trained for secondary teaching, is deployed to a primary school, or a primary school teacher is deployed to high school. Pitsoe (2013:311) also says that countries face challenges of teacher deployment. Dino, who is a primary school principal, indicated that the Department of Education had replaced the deceased teacher with a teacher from a secondary school and thus blamed the department by saying:

“Some of the policies of the Department, especially redeployment, make teachers to leave the system, because they take a teacher who is teaching Grade 12 to come and teach Grade R, and that was a problem, because they can’t handle the Grade R learners”.

In addition, the curriculum for Further Education and Training (FET) in high schools differs from General Education and Training (GET) in the primary schools.

#### **4.4 Theme 3: The effects of teacher attrition**

The previous theme focused on the causes of teacher attrition. The empirical study revealed that the main causes of teacher attrition were financial issues and policy issues. This section concentrates on highlighting the effects of teacher attrition. It has been noted that the causes of teacher attrition were also aligned to the effects that were noticed within the school environment. Those effects have been explained below as effects on learners and on remaining teachers.

##### **4.4.1 The effects of teacher attrition on learners**

Participants were school managers whose responsibilities were, among others, to ensure uninterrupted teaching and learning within the school environment. The participants realised that attrition had a bad influence on learners in both primary schools and secondary schools. Mango, who lost two teachers through death, noticed that learners compared the new teacher with their old one in respect of the teaching style. He commented by saying, “once learners realised that the new teacher does not perform the same way or teaches in the same style as

the old one, they no longer listen". The instructional style seemed to be vital for learners' success. Attrition seemed to have affected learners in the primary schools more than in secondary schools, because of their age, as they needed more attention from the teachers.

Trod, who is a primary school principal, has shown her concern by stating, "[t]hese little ones, they cannot spend the whole day without a teacher". It is also important to note that the effect of teacher attrition affect learners' cognitive development as they start to perform poorly. Participants in both primary and secondary schools complained that learner performance deteriorated due to teacher attrition as learners spent more time without the teacher. I was of the opinion that learners tend to forget easily when they are not engaged in lessons. The minds of learners need to be activated to perform. Dino, who seemed to be worried by the situation in his school, indicated, "[l]earners spent two to three months without a teacher and due to shortage of staff it was difficult to teach two classes at the same time[referring to Grade 2 and Grade 5]". Ayuk (2012:62) also remarked that learners suffer in the absence of the teacher, as their classes remain unattended. Attrition therefore affects the quality of teaching in schools.

#### 4.4.2 The effects of teacher attrition on remaining teachers

Teacher attrition disturbed the strong team that principals built in their schools. The attrition left principals with a problem to adjust the workload of the available teachers. Most participants concurred that attrition affected their teachers negatively, as those that remained were left with more work to do than before. According to EEA, No 76 of 1996, the learner-teacher ratio was stipulated as 35:1, which means that one teacher was supposed to work with 35 learners per class, but with attrition, the ratio no longer applied. Teachers were faced with large classes and in some cases one teacher was expected to teach five subjects. Mango alluded, "because no replacement of teachers occurred immediately, teachers' workloads increased as they shared the subjects of those teachers who left". Dove, who was also of the same opinion as Mango regarding teachers' workloads, said teachers were definitely overstressed, as some teachers had to teach subjects in which they did not specialise. Attention should be given here, so that teachers were employed as per the curriculum need of the school. As some teachers left, the remaining teachers had to struggle with the curriculum, because they would not know the new subjects. For that Mango indicated, "I juggle teachers around so that teaching does not stop." Teachers were employed according to subject

specialisation. It is also worth noting that teachers specialise in selected subjects when trained for their profession. The teaching of subjects they did not specialise in, caused performance problems. Mango indicated, “[w]hen learners realise that the performance of the new teacher was not the same as their old teacher, they no longer listen and that affected their results”.

Jacobson (2016:4) indicated that learners progress more in districts where there is better teacher retention, compared to districts where there is a lot of teacher attrition. This study revealed that teachers’ general performance drop when teaching subjects in which they did not specialise. Dove and Mango remarked, “[w]hen teachers teach the subjects they did not specialise in, they tend to perform poor in both the new subjects and their old subjects”. The teaching of new subjects also brought other problems in that it destroyed the collaborative teamwork of teachers. Rod complained, “[c]olleagues used to discuss challenging topics together to get clarity and help one another”. Dove indicated that as the networking changes, colleagues could no longer share ideas on challenging topics, because they lacked knowledge of the subject matter.

#### **4.5 Theme 4: The experiences of principals in managing teacher attrition**

Teacher attrition was the most important issue that principals experienced in their leadership. In Chapter 2 (see 2.7), it was pointed out that attrition was a continuous phenomenon throughout the employment period. While the previous section dealt with the effects of teacher attrition, this section concentrates on the experiences of principals in managing attrition. All participants have encountered teacher attrition in their schools. Each participant had outlined his or her experiences of managing attrition and had commented on the following issues.

##### **4.5.1 Planning**

Attrition came with management problems. Management, according to Botha (2013:13), is done in a rational fashion. Planning and organising were the two management tasks that participants dealt with. Principals were responsible for the planning and organising of the curriculum in their schools. Teacher attrition interfered with the smooth running of the schools, because the general planning of schools were affected on two fronts. Firstly, the classification of duties and responsibilities was disrupted. Allocation of subjects had to be done again as Trod indicated, “I had to make some new arrangements for learners to be taught and that had stressed her so much”. This implied that even the timetabling had to

change and be drafted according to the new allocation. The responsibilities, which were given to those teachers who left, were to be shared among the remaining ones. Dove, who was worried about losing a teacher, remarked, “definitely to lose a teacher who was allocated tasks to do and who was doing them perfectly was a problem, as it meant that he had to train another teacher to perform the same job”.

Secondly, attrition affected the budget in some schools. Schools had already drafted the annual budget, which was approved by all stakeholders. Attrition interfered with the budget because participants had to use money to pay for the petrol of those teachers they outsourced. Mango, who lost two teachers in Grade 12, indicated, “for the sake that teaching and learning should not stop, the principal had to use the money for development of the school to pay for the outsourced teachers”. This study has also revealed that there are tactics that principals use to retain teachers. When asked about their contributions regarding retaining teachers, they indicated the following points.

#### 4.5.2 Motivation

Principals regarded motivation as the best tactic to encourage teachers to stay in the profession and to boost their morale. Teachers took pride in the responsibilities assigned to them as they enjoyed the benefit of being trusted by management. For example, Dino regarded assigning managerial duties and responsibilities to teachers as the basis for motivating them to stay and he remarked by saying –

“[I]n order to motivate the teachers, we do like this. Some of the responsibilities and duties held by the management, they are going to be delegated to the educator that they must be proud. The responsibilities and duties we delegate to some of the teachers ... not all of them ... in order to motivate them”.

Motivation inspired teachers to work hard and motivated staff developed a sense of self-esteem, which allowed them to prove their capabilities. According to Mojapelo-Batka and Van Deventer (2013:195), improved performance and empowerment are the principles of staff motivation. Assigning managerial responsibilities to some teachers implied empowering and showing the staff that they are being trusted by management for their skills.

#### 4.5.3 Creating an open-door policy

Creating an open-door policy implies being available for your staff when things get tough.

Some principals had used the open-door policy as a strategy for retaining teachers, keeping the teachers closer to the principal in order to make the teachers feel free and cared for. According to Botha, 2013:34), the principal should develop a caring spirit towards his staff and even treat the teachers' private matters in such a way that they will not feel humiliated. Dove showed how he intended retaining teachers in his school by saying:

“Normally, by working in harmony, by giving attention to all teachers ... assisting them when they are having problems. Early identification of the problem with the teacher you can see that somebody is no longer performing or behaving like he or she is used to do, get nearer and try to assist. The other thing is confidentiality, to keep others' secrets as secrets. That helps keep us up”.

Rod responded by saying, “the only tactic that I use is to have one-on-one conversation”. Trod remarked by saying, “give some praise. We give some support to new educators and giving them reasons for being called to be a teacher.”

#### 4.5.4 Respect and communication

The principal played the decisive role in the running of the school. Successful principals involved all stakeholders in decision-making so that the decision agreed upon becomes the responsibility of all stakeholders. This enabled every member of the school community to fulfil the vision of the school and to enjoy the outcomes of all the activities within the school. According to Botha (2013:36), teacher morale is enhanced in decision-making and further remarked that the decline in teacher morale leads to attrition. Squi, who seemed to be proud of his staff, commented that his staff –

“[W]ere satisfied that there is respect among all stakeholders and they enjoy their stay, because they are respected. One other thing was that the staff is as a team. I realised that by respecting stakeholders, they in turn you as the principal”.

Good communication implied having a sense of humour, knowing what and when to say things and having the spirit of *ubuntu*. Good communication generated respect from colleagues and made teachers to work in that stress-free environment. Respect and good communication breed success. Squi pointed to a line of trophies and certificates on the wall that the school had won, because of teachers' hard work as he continued to stress teamwork and respect. Botha (2013:171) also declared that effective communication plays an important part in organisational success.

#### 4.5.5 Giving teachers support

Empowering teachers enabled them to be visionary leaders. Some principals used the principle of teacher development as the basis for retaining teachers. The study showed that principals who worked in harmony with teachers are sure of them staying. When asked about their contribution towards retaining teachers, Trod responded by saying, “because of the two educators that went two years before, the school had to make some teacher development and meetings”. Teachers were developed through workshops and requesting people from other Departments such as Safety and Security and Social Services to come and encourage the teachers. Barkhuizen and Makhuzeni (2015:3) show that a lack of support from principals is the cause of teacher attrition. This implies that a passionate principal builds relationships with other departments to create an environment conducive to teacher retention.

#### 4.5.6 Valuing teachers

Some principals make teachers feel valued by giving them the support and attention they need as human beings. Mango commented that he used to use a strategy of promoting teachers from within to ensure that teachers are motivated and rewarded for a job well done. Promotion was used as a token of appreciation for some teachers, and also used to acknowledge the value of the teacher. He remarked, “[s]ome years back the school tried to retain teachers in the system making sure that the principal promoted teachers from within the school, but now with the process of rationalisation and redeployment, it is no longer possible”. Rationalisation and redeployment of teachers was the policy of the government to address inequalities in education (RSA, 1998). When teachers are recognised for what they do, they feel proud and want to stay in the system as they serve as the role models for others. According to Botha (2013:170), principals use the teachers’ desire for achievement and the desire for recognition as effective principles to motivate them to stay in the system.

### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, presentation of the findings from the interview was made where principals were responding to the interview questions. The chapter presented the information analysed from documents used in this study and the principals’ verbatim responses to all the interview questions as they appear in the interview schedule. Principals were able to share their experiences in managing attrition. All the emerging themes were discussed, together with the literature, to validate the data presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, I analysed the participants' responses. In this last chapter, the summary of the previous chapters, the recommendations and the conclusion are outlined. A discussion of the research questions in terms of the contents of each question was undertaken.

These questions were previously formulated as:

- What is the nature of teacher attrition?
- What are the causes of teacher attrition?
- What are the effects of teacher attrition?
- Which managerial functions are currently employed in teacher retention?
- Which components should be included in a strategy for teacher retention?

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

Chapter 1 focused on the introduction and importance of the topic. This was followed by the background and the rationale for the study. Based on the research questions, I concluded with engaging in a qualitative study and the methodology of collecting data.

Chapter 2 gave a review of literature related to managing teacher attrition. The definition of attrition was followed with a global overview of teacher attrition. Articles, documents and textbooks about teacher attrition were consulted to find out what other researchers say about the topic. The findings from various scholars about teacher attrition were used as the basis for developing the topic under study. It was found that other scholars have studied the same topic of teacher attrition, but basing their focus on different aspects of the topic. This enabled I to continue with the topic as it explained the important facet of teacher attrition, namely how it was managed in schools. As I got deeper into the topic, she realised the important aspects of attrition: it can be voluntary, involuntary, it is either a man-made or a natural phenomenon, and that it is a continuous phenomenon. Possible answers on the research questions were obtained by consulting various sources. The main aspects reviewed in Chapter 1 are the nature of teacher attrition, the causes of teacher attrition, the managerial functions that contributed to teacher retention and the effects of attrition on schools.

Chapter 3 focused on the methodology used to collect the data. A qualitative research was

selected to understand the management of teacher attrition in schools, and because it was suitable for the techniques used for data collection, which is the interview and document analysis. A qualitative method was also selected, because it allows I to interview participants in their comfortable settings. Principals who were selected, had more than five years of experience in principalship. I selected principals as participants relevant to the study, as they are the ones who are directly involved with teacher attrition. Convenience and snowball sampling were employed as methods for selecting participants for the study. I requested permission from the Department of Education, from the Sekgosesa Circuit Office and from the school principals to conduct interviews during a pre-planned schedule. Participants were asked to sign the consent forms during the interviews. Interviews were conducted in the participants' comfortable settings and at times suitable for them. During the interview, an audio recorder was used to record the interview proceedings. Research ethics were considered vital as they form part of the participants' rights. The collected data was transcribed and later coded into themes and sub-themes for use in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 offered the discussion of the findings and interpretation of the data. The themes and sub-themes that emerged during data analysis are discussed in detail giving similar views from the literature studied. The themes that were identified, cover 4.2 up to 4.5 and are as follows. Identifying the nature of attrition with the sub-themes retirement, resignation and death. The next theme is the causes of teacher attrition and the sub-themes are financial issues and policy issues. The third theme is the effects of teacher attrition and the sub-themes are the effects on learners and the effects on remaining teachers. The last theme is experiences of principals in managing teacher attrition, and the sub-themes are planning, motivation, creating an open-door policy, respect and communication, giving teachers support and valuing teachers. All the themes and sub-themes were indicated in Table 4.1.

### **5.3 CONCLUSIONS IN TERMS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The conclusions were reached by comparing interviews with the documents and related literature as discussed in Chapter 2. The arrangement of this section does not correspond with a topic for topic basis with the contents of Chapter 2 or Chapter 4. Instead, the research questions were used as a guide only.

### 5.3.1 THE NATURE OF TEACHER ATTRITION

From the study of the six schools in the Sekgosese East Circuit, it was evident that attrition is a problematic issue. It is a concern to note that a high rate of attrition is experienced among male and female teachers alike. Attrition is experienced in the form of deaths, resignations and retirement. Ill-health and subsequent non-attendance seem to be early warnings for resignation. Irregular attendance usually leads to retirement. It was noted that teachers with a poor attendance record were the first ones to resign from the profession. It was also noted that the majority of resignations, including the ones that presented ill-health as reason for quitting, do so mainly for financial reasons. Many teachers in the district resigned with the view in mind that they will be able to pay their debts and start life afresh.

I was further convinced that although both principals and teachers are fully aware of the regulations and procedures that pertain to teacher attrition, these measures are not always applied. Some teachers tend to resign with immediate effect without serving a three months' notice. Principals are responsible for ensuring that teacher attrition should be a core aspect of school life and be discussed at staff meetings. It is an important part of the principals' responsibility to inform teachers about the procedure for voluntary attrition and to give guidance on the consequences thereof. There is evidence that teachers who resign, often become bankrupt even before five years have lapsed. Principals should discourage resignation, because this has bad repercussions for teachers. I am further of the opinion that the Department should employ financial advisors in the circuit to conduct workshops for teachers so that teachers should be acquainted with the knowledge of how to use and invest their money efficiently. The study of international sources on teacher attrition has convinced me further that teacher attrition is acknowledged as a worldwide problem that needs urgent attention. I think that schools are no longer regarded as the hub of safety for teachers as they quit their profession due to learners' behaviour, hence the No Child Left Behind rule introduced in America. The magnitude of teacher attrition implies that countries need to deal with it as a matter of urgency.

It has become a norm that principals serve as counsellors to teachers who wants to resign especially due to financial reasons. However, it is noted that principals are not worried by the resignation of those teachers who are problematic in their schools irrespective of the reasons behind their resignation.

### 5.3.2 THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF TEACHER ATTRITION

From the comments of principals on the causes and effects of teacher attrition, it was evident that teaching has become a meaningless profession because teachers cannot make a living out of it. I hold the view that, although teacher attrition has repercussions on teachers and other stakeholders, it is worth to note that principals as team managers, have the power to convince teachers to stay. I am again of the opinion that the degree of teacher attrition implies that the Department of Education has done very little to reduce the outflow of teachers from the system. I am of the opinion that consultation with teachers in assessing their needs has become inevitable to remedy the situation. It is also vital to note that the intensity of teacher attrition has an impact on stakeholders within schools. The influence extends from affecting the future of learners to affecting the future of the state of the country. The collaborative teamwork among stakeholders becomes disrupted as teacher attrition takes its course. Teacher attrition may even cause conflict among stakeholders. It is at this stage when support from management is needed most. Principals have to use their leadership skills to bring about stability within the schools.

### 5.3.3 MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS EMPLOYED IN TEACHER RETENTION

It is worth to mention that the principals' behaviour and how they relate to teachers play a major role in retaining teachers. I am of the view that teachers stay long in schools where teachers relate well with the principal. The relationship is coupled with the spirit of assertiveness, transparency, trust and respect. The spirit of trust that is built between members of the staff enables them to work together without conflicts.

I realised that principals motivate teachers and reward them by giving them promotional posts when they are available at schools. The reward system serves as a form of encouragement to encourage teachers to stay. I have also noticed that principals spend time with teachers, to be closer to them and to be able to advise teachers on personal matters. It is noted that some characteristics are needed to keep the school intact.

### 5.3.4 A STRATEGY FOR TEACHER RETENTION

Teacher attrition is a challenge for the school community and influences many facets of teachers', learners' and managerial staffs' lives. It has repercussions in the lives of people and tampers with the socio-economic status of people and their wellbeing. The retention of teachers is critical for bringing stability to the lives of different stakeholders at the school.

In this section, two aspects of the retention strategy are discussed. Firstly, the responsibilities of the different stakeholders in such strategies are outlined. This is followed by focusing on a number of actions that can be taken to support teacher retention. The main stakeholders or parties to be involved in the strategy for teacher retention are the Department, principals, teacher unions and teachers themselves. The Department uses its budget and policy to attract and retain teachers (RSA, 2005:63). Every financial year the government uses its fiscal policy to prepare the budget for teachers' salaries through the Ministry of Education.

Principals and other managerial staff are responsible for creating an environment conducive for teachers to work, ensuring that teaching and learning take place in a safe environment. Communication protocol and team-work spirit serve as core aspects for teacher retention. Teacher unions are responsible for creating work-place forums where they ensure that the rights of workers. Teachers are responsible for accomplishing the vision and mission of the schools where they are working. The managerial actions that are conducive for teacher retention include the following:

- i. Workshops

I noticed that the Department of Education workshop with teachers on new matters pertaining to their work. For example, teachers attend workshops on how they are evaluated on IQMS to qualify for pay progression. Principals also attend workshops regarding how to use school funds efficiently to alleviate the mismanagement of funds.

- ii Developing teachers

I realised that principals conduct in-house workshops with their teachers where they talk about teamwork, topics in certain subjects and also discuss work-related challenges. Principals induct, mentor new teachers and encourage all teachers to further their studies so that they qualify for higher posts when such posts are advertised. Principals have a tendency to promote from within, as a strategy for motivating teachers. It seems as if principals use the promotion strategy to reward teachers for the hard work they do in their schools. I has also enjoyed the benefits of attending a workshop organised by teacher unions which invited financial advisors, wellness workshops with dieticians, and business people to guide teachers on leading good lives.

Teachers also develop themselves by enrolling with different universities across the country to make them competent at work, to enjoy the benefits of earning higher salaries and to stand a chance of getting a promotion.

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

After deliberating on the principals' comments, I found the following recommendations worthwhile. In the light of the above, I was concerned that the system of redeployment of teachers was seen as a threat for teachers. Redeployment basically affects teachers psychologically. Teachers seem to be unhappy when they are moved from one school to the other, because this redeployment includes the problem of separating families. I therefore suggested that teachers be deployed on a voluntary basis to hold families together and to ease the pain of moving unintentionally.

The Department of Education should come up with a more efficient strategy for processing the intake of teachers who are replaced to other schools. Teachers who are declared in excess, take much time in the 'pool', waiting to be replaced. This causes frustration and stress to both teachers and principals, as it also disturbs the planning in schools. When teachers retire or resign, they are replaced by those teachers who have been declared in excess at their schools. Since it takes three months for the Department to process documents or paperwork, I therefore recommend that the procedures for resigning and retirement be done in line with the Department of Education to save on processing time, and to match those teachers who are in the pool waiting to be absorbed, quickly. In the absence of teachers who can be absorbed, the recruitment, advertising of posts and employment can also be done concurrently with the processing of retirement documents of teachers when they give notice. I suggest that the letters to confirm the resignation or retirement follow the online application for filling purposes. This, I think, will remedy the problem of principals complaining about the Department being too slow to respond to the filling of posts, and that of learners spending three months in class without a teacher, while their subject teacher is already gone. The coverage of the curriculum will also be catered for.

It should always be part of the plan of the Department of Education to remunerate teachers with better salaries, rather than waiting for teachers to engage in protests for salary increases. Strikes rob learners of their learning time.

Most teachers' attrition is based on the low salaries that they get. Hence, research indicated that teachers quit their profession to seek greener pastures in other sectors of the economy. Teachers are lifelong learners and they keep on developing themselves by enrolling with various universities country wide.

I recommend that the Department consider the efforts that teachers make in developing themselves to improve their qualifications, as this contributes to the quality of education teachers give to learners. Increased remuneration will help to attract new teachers into the system and let the established teachers to remain in the system.

I also recommend that each circuit have a psychologist who will look after the welfare of teachers. Teachers are not only engaged in teaching of learners in the classroom, but are also working as social workers, counsellors, security officers, police officers and nurses. All these functions become tedious, stressful and are coupled with accountability and therefore require sober-minded people. The availability of psychologists in circuits will enable teachers to consult freely when they encounter some hiccups and this will contribute towards their retention period.

### **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

The focus of this study is on management of teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. I recommend that further research be made on the effects of teacher attrition in the education system. Since the study focused only on one circuit, therefore similar studies may also be done across Districts and Provinces to find out differences, similarities and challenges when managing teacher attrition.

### **5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This research was a qualitative study on management of teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit in Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The findings are only based on the interviews conducted with six principals of both primary and secondary schools. Semi structured interviews were used to collect data from the principals I did not include teachers since I was interested in the management of teacher attrition. This study was conducted in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province. Since this research was a case study, the findings cannot be generalised to a larger population.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

I noted that teacher attrition is a world-wide phenomenon, which may require restructuring of the education system. It is noticeable that the causes of teacher attrition is basically similar across the countries and affect all stakeholders. It is the responsibility of principals to consider proper managerial functions to retain teachers. I realised that various stakeholders should collaborate to reduce the intensity of teacher attrition.

I introduced the research topic and gave the background information regarding the topic under discussion. The literature about teacher attrition was consulted to find the views of other scholars about teacher attrition. I used qualitative methods suitable for diagnosing the research questions during interviews and analysing documents. Participants were carefully selected using convenience and snowball sampling. I considered the ethical issues in the study. The summary and recommendations of the study were given to conclude the dissertation.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: Rapeta M.O

Contact: 083 5837 991

E-mail:

BOX 747

MODJADJISKLOOF

0835

02 October 2017

The Head of Department  
Department of Education Limpopo  
Polokwane

Dear Madam/Sir

Request for permission to collect data in your schools

I am a student at UNISA College of Education (student number: 328042229) doing Masters in Education Management under the supervision of Professor Christo van Wyk.

I would like to interview six of your principals in Sekgosese East Circuit. My research topic is entitled: Managing teacher attrition in Sekgosese East circuit, Mopani district in Limpopo Province. The purpose of my research is to investigate how teacher attrition as a facet of staff development is managed.

Participation is free and voluntary and there will be no reimbursement of some kind for participating. Assurance given here that pseudo-names will be used to protect the identity of the participants and their schools.

The complete research paper will be made available in the UNISA library and electronically in the internet.

Thank you for your anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

Rapeta M.O

Researcher



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION**

Ref: 2/22

Enc: MC Makola PhD

Tel. No: 015 290 9448

E-mail: [McMakola@EDU.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:McMakola@EDU.limpopo.gov.za)

Rapeta MO  
Box 747  
Modjadjiskloof  
0835

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"MANAGING TEACHER ATTRITION IN SESKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE"**
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: RAPETA MO

CONFIDENTIAL

Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

*The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!*

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Ms NB Muthewana  
Head of Department

10/10/2017  
Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH RAMPETA MO

CONFIDENTIAL

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS



Enquiries: Rapeta M.O

Contact: 083 5837 991

E-mail: oumarapeta@gmail.com

BOX 747

MODJADJISKLOOF

0835

02 October 2017

Dear Principal

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY.

I am a student at UNISA College of Education doing Masters in Education Management. My research topic is entitled: Managing teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province.

You are requested to be one of the participants in this research study. The purpose of this research is to investigate how teacher attrition is managed in the school.

Be informed that participation is free and voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time from participating. The data collected will only be used for the completion of the Master's degree and will not be communicated to other people. For confidentiality reasons only pseudo names will be used during the interview.

The interview will be conducted at the venue and time decided by you to avoid any inconveniences. The audio recorder will be used in the interview for transcription purposes.

You are requested to sign in the attached consent form as proof of agreement to participate in the research study.

Yours Sincerely

Rapeta Maria Ouma

Researcher

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

I, ..... agree to participate in the study conducted by Maria Ouma Rapeta entitled: Managing teacher attrition in Sekgosese East circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province.

I understand the purpose of the study and that participation is voluntary and no reimbursement will be given to me thereafter. I also understand that pseudo names will be used for my anonymity and confidentiality of the information.

I agree to participate in the research study and I also grant permission that the audio recorder be used for the purpose explained.

.....  
Signature of the participant

.....  
Date

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Can you explain the nature of teacher attrition that you experienced at your school in three to five years period?
2. How did you manage that attrition?
3. How was your experience of managing that kind of attrition?
4. According to the experience you have as a principal, what are the causes of teacher attrition?
5. What is your view about the effects of teacher attrition?
6. What is it that is done to retain teachers in the system? OR Which managerial functions are applied to retain teachers?
7. Who do you think should be involved in the strategy for teacher retention?

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/11/15

Ref: 2017/11/15/32804229/04/MC

Dear Mr Rapeta

Name: Mrs MO Rapeta

Student: 32804229

**Decision:** Ethics Approval from  
2017/11/15 to 2020/11/15

**Researcher:**

Name: Mrs MO Rapeta

Email: oumarapeta@gmail.com

Telephone: +27 83 583 7991

**Supervisor:**

Name: Prof C van Wyk

Email: vanwyk.christo1@gmail.com

Telephone: +27 83 500 9019

**Title of research:**

**Managing teacher attrition in Sekgosese East Circuit, Mopani District in Limpopo Province.**

**Qualification:** M Ed in Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2017/11/15 to 2020/11/15.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/11/15 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:



1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any charges that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2020/11/15. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

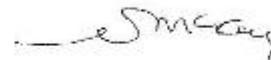
*Note:*

The reference number **2017/11/15/32804229/04/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



**Dr M Claassens**  
**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**  
 mcclci@netactive.co.za



**Prof V McKay**  
**EXECUTIVE DEAN**  
**UNISA**  
**College of Education**  
 2017-11-22  
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Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017



APPENDIX G: DECLARATION BY THE EDITOR

Jackie Viljoen

Language Editor and Translator

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Accredited member of the South African Translators' Institute

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DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the dissertation by **MARIA OUMA RAPETA** was properly language edited but without viewing the final version.

The track changes function was used and the author was responsible for accepting the editor's changes and for finalising the reference list.

Title of dissertation:

**MANAGING TEACHER ATTRITION IN EKGOSESE EAST CIRCUIT, MOPANI DISTRICT IN LIMPOPO**

The editor did not write or rewrite any part of the dissertation on behalf of the client, including passages that may have been plagiarised. The academic content is the sole responsibility of the client as author of the work. The editor could not and did not test definitively for plagiarism, nor is there any explicit or implicit guarantee that the content that was edited contained no material used without consent. The editor accepts no responsibility for any failure on examination of the dissertation by the university.

**JACKIE VILJOEN**

Strand

South Africa

12 November 2018

