

THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY, LEADERSHIP, SCHOOL-WORK ENVIRONMENT, DIVERSITY BELIEFS, AND SOCIAL NETWORK IN TEACHER RETENTION

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Mathematics and science teacher turnover is a great and consistent problem in the U.S., particularly in high-need, high-minority, and urban schools (Cross, 2017). Most teachers leave the profession because of dissatisfaction, lack of support, lack of autonomy, and lack of collaboration opportunities (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Thus, it is essential to understand the motivational, school-environmental, and social networking factors in relation to teacher retention. For instance, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are important in fostering constructivist learning, student motivation, and higher academic performance, which impact job satisfaction and retention or attrition in the profession (Yost, 2006). Further, opportunities to develop leadership skills and engage in a collaborative school-work environment to improve school culture and instruction can support and sustain high-qualified teachers (Dauksas & White, 2010). Some features of teachers' social networks (e.g., density) support their persistence and are correlated with their self-efficacy (Polizzi et al., 2021). Lastly, positive diversity dispositions are associated with persisting in teaching in high-need schools (Williams et al., 2016).

In this paper, we explored the extent to which teachers' self-efficacy for teaching, leadership skills, diversity dispositions, school-work environment, and social network are related to their retention. From the Greater Houston area, about 250 teachers (27% male and 73% female; 30% elementary and 70% secondary teachers; 65% White and 35% from minoritized backgrounds) with, on average, 14 years of teaching experience ($SD = 8.70$) completed a survey responding to questions related to teaching, self-efficacy (Klassen et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), teacher leadership skills (Watt et al., 2010), person-organization fit (Pogodzinski et al., 2013), principal autonomy support (Baard et al., 2004), diversity dispositions (Schulte et al., 2009), and social network (e.g., size; Polizzi et al., 2021). Among these teachers, 14 were identified as shifters (who shifted to a leadership position) and 18 as leavers (who left or retired from K-12 teaching/education).

We conducted multinomial logistics regression analyses with retention as a three-level nominal outcome (Mayer et al., 2017). Findings indicated that secondary teachers were more likely to shift to a non-teaching position compared to stayers. The higher level of teacher leadership skills and lower degrees of person-organization fit were associated with shifting to a leadership position. Lastly, a higher level of teaching self-efficacy was observed in leavers compared to stayers. Reasons for shifting included teaching burnout, better pay, and having greater impact. Reasons for leaving included the pandemic, retirement, family, stress, and burnout. There are implications for practitioners, researchers, and administrators for supporting

teachers to persist in teaching or shifting to a leadership position where they can have a greater impact for educational outcomes.

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