

## ABSTRACT

Zavala, Glendelia Muñiz, Retention of Beginning Teachers: A Comparison of Teachers Prepared Through an Alternative Certification Program and a Center for Professional Development of Teachers Field-Based Program. Doctor in Education (Ed. D.),

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Teacher retention has been a matter of concern for the past several years. Teacher shortages occur in critical academic and geographic regions. In South Texas, teacher turnover has consistently remained higher than the national average. More importantly is a high attrition rate among beginning teachers. Recent studies reported that 19% of novice teachers leave teaching after the first year and approximately 50% leave the profession within the first five years of teaching.

Numerous studies have investigated various factors that contribute to teacher attrition, however, few have been conducted to determine the impact of teacher preparation paths on the retention of beginning teachers. This study compared retention rates of beginning teachers, K-12, prepared through two different teacher preparation programs, an Alternative Certification Program (ACP) and a Center for Professional Development of Teachers (CPDT) field-based program in South Texas. Reasons beginning teachers leave teaching during the early years of their teaching career were also investigated.

Data were collected on 1,188 individuals who completed the ACP or CPDT field-based program at a South Texas university site in 1997, 1998, and 1999 and were certified to teach in the State of Texas. SPSS 10.0 statistical software was utilized to conduct

descriptive analyses, backward elimination logistic regression procedures, all possible linear regression combinations, and odds ratios to analyze retention as a function of teacher preparation program, certification level (elementary or secondary), gender, age, Professional Development 02 and 03 ExCET scores, and ethnicity.

Subjects who were no longer teaching were mailed a Teacher Attrition Questionnaire developed by the researcher to explore reasons for exiting teaching. Responses to open-ended questions were categorized and classified. Frequencies were derived for responses of close-ended questions.

Teacher preparation paths, level of certification, gender, ExCET scores, and ethnicity yielded statistical significance on retention, however, effect size was weak. Simple percentages yielded higher retention rates for CPDT teachers. Teachers with lower ExCET scores had higher retention rates. Minorities, males, and elementary teachers had higher retention rates. As ACP teachers increased in age, so did retention rates. As CPDT teachers increased in age, retention rates decreased. Reasons for leaving teaching were found to be intrinsic and extrinsic in nature.