

Retention practices in education human resources management

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The public education system in South Africa, particularly in public schools, faces serious problems. The review of retention practices for teachers is premised on the principles of quality management which aim at continual increase of the accountability in education human resources management. This research revealed that the tenure process applied to teachers in public schools is weak and plunges the education system to an all-time low. The use of the suggested model is a combination of business principles and public service management principles based on legal and statutory provision. An increase in customer satisfaction is necessary. The strength of the argument is the reference to law education management theories and the involvement of unions. However, it is acknowledged that review of the retention practices alone cannot be a panacea to the crisis in education. Aspects of professionalism are alluded to and the essential role of the South African Council for Educators is also considered as well as that of the Committee for Teacher Education Policy. The notion of quality requires a rigorous effort and cautious and calculated initiatives to interrogate problems and issues in education human resources management. In conclusion, recommendations and reasons are suggested why a review of retention practices is necessary.

Introduction

The task of transformation of the education system emerges from the need to improve quality of the system, from a lax and unproductive structure to a more productive one. This task requires a fundamental shift not only in attitudes, relationships and the environment, but also in the way resources are deployed and retained to achieve the society's goals (Department of Education, 1996:11). Consequently, transformation requires review of retention practices in education human resources management. This research focused on retention processes (tenure) applied in the management of human resources in education — with special reference to public schools. It appears that there are many disabling problems in the way teachers attain tenure. The general outcry that the education system does not give its clients their money's worth is indicative of a deep-rooted problem inherent in the tenure process.

Many researchers (Badenhorst, 1987; Chisholm & Valley, 1996; Govender, 1996; Hartshome, 1992; Hyslop, 1986; Mangla, 1992; Ornstein, 1981; Smith & Schalekamp, 1997) have analysed the crisis in education but they focused only on aspects of teachers' professional lives. In this article, it will be indicated that at the heart of the poor performance in education lies an inefficient and ineffective tenure problem. It seems that unless the tenure process is reviewed to meet the challenges and demands of quality, the ideal of quality education will elude the Department of Education as the employer and its stakeholders.

The current emphasis on competences should be seen as a shift towards specific redefinition of knowledge. When contextualising this emphasis on technical competence, it becomes evident that quality demands in human resources should translate into personal values, self-awareness, emotional and moral capability. This implies that teaching requires technical competence which is accounted for regularly (Davis & Ellison, 1997:141). Therefore, it will be improper and unfair to the clients of education to give tenure to all teachers including those who:

- dodge lessons;
- abscond from classes;
- are absent from school without any valid reason;
- engage in abuses;
- do shoddy work;
- neglect children in classrooms; and
- give up teaching responsibilities.

Consequently, the following questions are asked to interrogate the way teachers are granted permanent job status: What mechanisms are used to give a teacher a permanent job status? What is tenure? Does the granting of tenure mean that the local school governing body (SGB) has no authority to make changes affecting persons who have gained tenure status? Is tenure applied in an accountable way? What are the factors affecting the retention process? Answers to these questions will

be drawn from literature and legislative material, although the unrelenting problem in the writing and use of legal texts in the form of the ever-changing nature of the law may affect this article. What is accurate and complete at the time of this research may not even be so when this article is published.

The tenure process

A definition

Tenure is used to retain teachers in the system. It can be defined as permanent job status granted to teachers following successful completion of a probationary period. It refers to the status of school employment in which a teacher, by having served a probationary period of a specified number of years, has his/her job security protected by law or SGB policy. This seems to suggest that the terms and conditions of service cannot be altered except through legally specified procedures. This is true for professional and excellent teachers who continue to offer quality education. However, it cannot be the same with regard to unprofessional and incompetent teachers. In real terms, the tenure process should embody a system designed to provide teachers with continuing employment provided that they render efficient service. It establishes an orderly procedure to be followed before services are terminated (Casterter, 1981:465).

In general, tenure is construed to be a privilege granted by the employer rather than an obligation the employer owes to the teacher. Similarly, the paragraph below investigates the way teachers attain tenure and whether tenure is a right or privilege.

Conventional practice of tenure

The customary practice is to grant permanent tenure after an individual has served a probationary period. However, the current practice in education human resources management is that the probationary period is not linked to an accountability system whereby the attainment of tenure is based on a performance management system (assessment). It seems teachers attain tenure without any report whatsoever compiled about their (teacher's) performance. Therefore, the tenure system probably assumes that every teacher is perfect — his/her terms, and that service conditions cannot be altered. On the contrary, permanent tenure does not necessarily mean the employer (the provincial department of education and the SGB) has no authority to make changes affecting teachers who gained tenure status.

Tenure is not intended by the employer to establish an occupational haven for incompetent, unqualified and unscrupulous teachers. It is designed to protect not only the interests of teachers, but also those of the employer and its clients. While tenure is used to protect teachers from an employer's arbitrary and unwarranted employment practices, it is also designed to improve the quality of the public schooling system (Maile, 2000:70). Therefore, tenure should com-

mence with a consideration of academic and professional factors including contextual factors such as:

- curriculum assessment which embodies classroom performance and professional involvement;
- service matters embracing personal factors and commitment;
- administrative competence expressed in terms of planning, organisation, control and leadership as well as discipline; and
- a development plan.

These elements of tenure are invoked to provide equitable protection of teachers and employers. Tenure should be viewed in the light of the need for accountability, for the education system cannot afford to remain static, sterile and unproductive. To grant tenure indiscriminately and en masse is to declare the goal of the education system average. When a position is taken that teachers must demonstrate required competences prior to receiving tenure, the quality demand is placed on a whole new level of importance — this indicates the amount of evidence required to show that quality demands have been met according to determined standards. In this way tenure will be given to a teacher according to his/her strengths and potential for growth in the profession.

Legislative and statutory provisions

General provisions

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, protects the rights of teachers including their right to freedom of employment. Hence section 22 of the Constitution confirms that:

- 22 Every citizen has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. The practice of a trade, occupation or profession may be regulated by law.

This provision bodes well for tenure in that it makes it legal to regulate how employees attain permanent job status. At common law, the practice of trade is limited by a contract which has the force of law unless it is unreasonable. An unreasonable restraint is one that attempts to protect more than the legitimate interests of the person in whose favour the contract has been concluded. For instance, there is an onus on an employer to show that the freedom to practice a trade or profession is not absolute. In the same vein, De Waal, Currie and Erasmus (1999:369) argue that:

In one sense, all limitations on commercial freedom impact on occupational freedom in one way or another. Questions of the degree of the impact cannot be avoided here, but with occupational freedom as the focal point they are more easily answered. It must be asked whether the restriction placed on commercial activity can realistically be said to impact on occupational freedom. Most restrictions of commercial freedom will therefore fall well outside the scope of section 22.

Occupational freedom is informed by underlying values of quality. This freedom has an internal limitation: the practice of an occupation may be regulated by law. The internal qualification in principle applies to restrictions on entry to choice of and practice of an occupation. Hence in *State v Lawrence* 1997(4) SA 1176(cc) the Constitutional Court made an important observation that:

Certain occupations call for particular qualifications prescribed by law and one of the constraints of the economic sphere is that persons who lack such qualifications may not engage in such occupations. For instance, nobody is entitled to practise as a doctor or as a lawyer unless he/she holds the prescribed qualifications, and the right to engage "freely" in economic activity should not be construed as conferring such a right on unqualified persons; nor should it be construed as entitling persons to ignore legislation regulating the manner in which particular activities have to be conducted ...

From the above it appears that emphasis should be placed on the term "regulation" which refers to the ordering or organising of a trade. For example, the South African Schools Act (SASA) No. 84 of 1996, the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998, the Department of Education's Personnel Administration Measures 1998, Basic Conditions

of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997 and the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995, aim at ordering the practice of the profession but not to deprive teachers of practice.

Hence the Labour Relations Act (LRA) 66 of 1995 protects the labour rights of both employers and employees. For instance, chapter viii of the LRA protects teachers from unfair dismissal, and places obligations — duties and responsibilities — on employers when they have to dismiss employees. Therefore, practice of an occupation may be restricted by reasonable regulations predicated on considerations of common good. The freedom to choose an occupation, however, may be restricted only insofar as a compelling public interest requires — and only to the extent that protection cannot be accomplished by a lesser restriction on freedom of choice (De Waal *et al.*, 1999:369). It is in the same spirit that tenure should be reviewed — to protect public interests.

Probation

The tenure process is frequently the cause of misinterpretations when viewed to mean permanent employment. The current practices of tenure automatically declare a permanent employment job status without accountability. The whole process should be reviewed. This includes the review of probation to ensure that the expression of confidence in teachers as competent practitioners meets the essential demands of quality. It is significant to discover the capabilities of an individual teacher and to know how the person being evaluated can fit into the staffing needs of the school (Maile, 2000:74).

Probation is an opportunity afforded the teacher to develop his/her teaching skills and benefit from the support of his/her colleagues. During this period the teacher's teaching will be monitored so that the most appropriate form of support is offered. This matter was raised in *Hansen v University of Natal* (1989) 10 ILJ 1176 whereby the court emphasised that no matter how many instances of poor performance the employer can cite, they have little value unless the employee was properly warned that his/her attitude and performance were lacking and had to improve, otherwise dismissal could follow. Hence in *BEEWU and Others v MD Electrical* (1990) 11 ILJ 87, the court decided that not only must a probationary employee be counselled and helped to correct any problems he/she may have in the job, he "should also be treated sympathetically and with patience, especially where he lacks experience in his new work field and should therefore be given a reasonable opportunity to improve his work performance or to acquire the required skill". According to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC) (1999:5) probation is necessary to ensure that a teacher is able to take on all the responsibilities and demands of teaching. In the same spirit, the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 section 3 contemplates that:

- (1) (a) An educator shall be appointed on probation for a period of at least 12 months, which period may be extended, on good cause shown, for a further period not exceeding 12 months.
- (b) An employer may approve the transfer or promotion of an educator during his/her period of probation: provided that such transfer or promotion will be on probation and such probation may be for a period of less than 12 months if such period together with probation served in the former past, shall total at least 12 months.
- (c) The employer may, if it is deemed necessary, require that the promotion of an educator employed in a permanent capacity be on probation: provided that the conditions in paragraph (a) and (b) shall apply.
- (2) The probation period of an educator shall be extended by the number of days leave whatever nature taken by him/her during a probation period or any extension thereof: provided that a school holiday shall not be considered as leave for the purpose of this sub-regulation.
- (3) If the head of the relevant institution or office certifies that during his/her probation period or extended probation period, such educator has been diligent and his/her conduct uniformly satisfactory and that he/she is in all respect suitable for the post which he/she holds, the employer may confirm the permanent

appointment, transfer or promotion in the educator has complied with all the conditions to which his/her appointment, transfer or promotion was subject.

This provision resonates with the need for the tenure system to be in line with accountability. However, the provision does not outline mechanisms for accountability except to say that if the employer "certifies that during the teacher's probation period or extended probation period", such "a teacher has been diligent and his/her conduct uniformly satisfactory and that he/she is in all respects suitable for the post which he/she holds, the employer may confirm the permanent appointment". However, the probationer should be given a chance to state his/her side of the case (the application of the principle of *audi alteram partem*). Although the onus of proving poor performance lies upon management, it must be noted that the employer has no responsibility to prove his innocence (Piron & Piron, 1992:6). Nevertheless, he/she has the right to challenge any statements which are detrimental to his credibility and integrity. The need for accountability requires a developmental assessment instrument in order to objectively arrive at a qualitative declaration of the individual's tenure status. To give a permanent status to unsatisfactory personnel is a professional error and a waste of the taxpayer's money (Jones & Walters, 1994:194), as well as a scant commitment to excellence and ignorance of global trends (Stefy, 1989:152).

Developmental assessment

When the argument above — that probation period is a period of continuing learning and professional development — is considered, then developmental assessment is invoked as one of the methods of the tenure process. Developmental assessment enhances the probation, in particular, and the tenure process, generally, by providing:

- evidence of performance;
- systematic procedures;
- continual feedback;
- final objective report; and
- development opportunities.

The notion of assessment evokes issues of labour rights and trade union engagement as role-players with divergent perceptions (Davies, 1997:38; Nxesi, 1997:35). On the one hand, there are those who postulate that the playing fields have to be levelled before the process can take off. This argument emanates from those who regard redress of past imbalances as fundamental to any change or initiative. On the other hand, there are those who assume that the employer must assume more responsibility to regulate the profession. Therefore, in order for the process to proceed it must address the following as a precondition (Department of Education's Personnel Administration Measures C 1.2):

- the creation of a democratic organisational climate;
- the restoration of the culture of teaching at public education institutions;
- the commitment of educators to lifelong learning; and
- openness, accountability and mutual trust (Beckmann, Bray, Foster, Maile, Smith & Squelch, 2000:217).

In terms of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) developmental assessment should consist of the following ongoing processes (C 2.3):

- Reflective practice: this is a continuous process that "requires educators to interpret and analyse their performance in order to meet objectives in serving the needs of clients with the intention to rethink current practice."
- Self-appraisal: An educator should undertake: "self-analysis and introspection in terms of his/her own performance, client-questionnaire results and institution development plans ... followed by self-evaluation in order to determine priorities for personal and professional growth."
- Peer appraisal: This refers to "the involvement of a colleague in assisting the appraisee to review his/her performance with a view to prioritise professional development needs."

- Collaboration: "Educators working together to assist in problem solving." This can be done in different ways, among others, subject teams at institutions, educator networks and partnerships. A useful resource in the form of the Support Services of the Education Department is also important for performance appraisal. Such services provide hands-on guides to the educator.
- Interaction with Panels: "Relationships have to be developed between members to work collectively to assist the appraisee to identify needs, formulate objectives, select professional development activities, implement such activities with time frames and to provide timeous feedback."

It will be naive to accept that the mere statement of developmental appraisal or assessment is enough. Material conditions differ from one institution to the other. Therefore, developmental appraisal should consist of the following features (PAM, C1.1):

- simplicity: easy to understand and applies to all educators;
- feasibility: can be administered within different types of institution;
- legitimacy: unions were involved in formulation hence educators take ownership; and
- flexibility: is used for development and confirmation of probationers.

Experiences and research evidence (GTC, 1999:3-6) reveal that the process of developmental assessment is fraught with problems if precautionary measures are not observed. For instance there may be:

- inconsistencies in the use of procedures and criteria;
- lack of clarity on what is to be assessed;
- obsolete knowledge and inappropriate experience;
- lack of feedback;
- differentiation in standards; and
- subjective evaluation.

Hence it is necessary to observe the finding from GTC research that:

- probationers or educators are different from each other when they start teaching;
- what challenges probationers or educators most, changes over time, and varies;
- the schools in which probationers or educators work influence many of the problems they encounter and consequently shape their support needs;
- initial training on reflection and self-evaluation is not generally continued into probation or developmental assessment;
- evidence contained in the final report does not usually satisfy probationers;
- the final report omits challenges faced or weaknesses overcome; and
- evaluation is regarded as a time for trial rather than one of professional development.

It is on the basis of evidence contained in the final report to the GTC that a teacher can be declared diligent and satisfactory in conduct. Consequently, permanent employment job status can be awarded. However, it is necessary to point out that when the outcomes of assessment are negative, the teacher should be afforded a second chance or leave of appeal. Negative results do not mean an outright dismissal or demotion. That will constitute an unfair labour practice according to schedule 7 part B Item 2 of the LRA. Hence in *Carmichael Commissions v CAWU* (1991) ILJ 922, the arbitrator ruled:

To render a dismissal for unsatisfactory work performance fair, warnings and counselling are essential. They are not only formal requisites. They are an integral and substantive part of the fairness itself. This is because it would be substantively unfair to terminate the services of an employee whose unsatisfactory work performance has to some extent been tolerated albeit with the increasing vexation. By giving the employee a fair chance to improve, to ponder the consequences of disregarding the warnings and to acquire appropriate skills and application, in the absence of satisfactory response the dismissal itself is rendered fair.

In addition to the guidelines given above, it is crucial that employers consider schedule 8 Items 8 and 9 of the Labour Relations Act 1995 which read as follows:

- 8 Incapacity: Poor work performance
- (1) A newly hired employee may be placed on probation for a period that is reasonable given the circumstances of the job. The period should be determined by the nature of the job, and the time it takes to determine the employee's suitability for continued employment. When appropriate, an employer should give an employee whatever evaluation, instruction, training, guidance or counselling the employee requires rendering satisfactory service. Dismissal during the probationary period should be preceded by an opportunity for the employee to state a case in response and to be assisted by a trade union representative or fellow employee.
 - (2) After probation, an employee should not be dismissed for unsatisfactory performance unless the employer has –
 - (a) given the employee appropriate evaluation, instruction, training, guidance or counselling; and
 - (b) after a reasonable period of time for improvement, the employee continues to perform unsatisfactorily.
 - (3) The procedure leading to dismissal should include an investigation to establish the reasons for the unsatisfactory performance and the employer should consider other ways, short of dismissal, to remedy the matter.
 - (4) In the process, the employee should have the right to be heard and to be assisted by a trade union representative or a fellow employee.
- 9 Guidelines in cases of dismissal for poor work performance
Any person determining whether a dismissal for poor work performance is unfair should consider –
- (a) whether or not the employee failed to meet a performance standard; and
 - (b) if the employee did not meet a required performance standard whether or not –
 - (i) the employee was aware, or could reasonably be expected to have been aware, of the required performance standard;
 - (ii) the employee was given a fair opportunity to meet the required performance standard; and
 - (iii) dismissal was an appropriate sanction for not meeting the required performance standard.

The acquisition of permanent status by educators represents long-term commitments in administrative judgements, public trust, and budget appropriations. The probationary period and developmental assessment are important in the retention process. Both processes should be unfolded simultaneously to establish tenure conferred on an educator. In order to save the taxpayer's money and enhance the accountability system, tenure should be based on evidence from probation and assessment. Although it is not necessary for the probation period to be continuous, it is important to note that the probation period may be extended upon failure by the educator to meet the minimum required standards. More emphasis should be placed on development with judgement reserved for a later stage as provided in the labour laws. Finally, probation and assessment provide for selective elimination, permitting the organisation to employ on a permanent basis only those who have attained the excellence required for such appointments.

Bilateral agreements with the unions

Teachers' unions stand to play a role in the retention process. This argument emerges from the fact that unions exist to protect employees' interest. The fact that the tenure process affects the job security of teachers, invokes unions in the entire process. Moreover, the employer has the duty to consult in cases of transfer, redeployment or dismissal in terms of labour legislation.

At organisational level the immediate employers of institutional appointees provided in SASA 20(4) and (5), (the SGB) should consult with site-stewards. Site-stewards are an accessible communication link with the unions and often have a better idea as to what workers want (Wood, 1998:113). At provincial or national level the role of unions in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) and the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBS) is significant in

concluding collective agreements. Therefore, unions remain part and parcel in the process of altering employment status of educators.

Provincial budget reviews

Retention of teachers is influenced by budgetary constraints. The paradox with budgetary constraints is that provinces have to cater for staffing whereas they also have to provide for other basic education resources such as text books, classrooms, etc. As a result provinces overspend. Donaldson (1998:35) attributes this overspending to the fact that personnel spending exceeded 92% of provincial education budgets. This is undoubtedly too high, and glaring disparities emanating from the legacy of apartheid continue to plague education.

However, by alluding to high percentages of personnel spending one does not downplay the value of a dedicated and committed teaching corps. On the contrary, it is to recognise that the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom is undermined at present by inadequate supportive resources and facilities. Sustainable retention of educators requires provincial education departments to plan and budget for the costs of personnel provision, promotions, annual salary adjustments and all staff benefits, including training, leave and substitute staff. Provinces should refrain from using overdraft facilities thereby overspending because of:

- Unfunded mandates — whereby provinces are often forced to take on new responsibilities without receiving money to finance such programmes.
- Constraints on provincial flexibility — social security payments and salary expenditure are not under provincial control. Civil servants' wages are determined by centralised wage bargaining. Provincial capacity to respond to over-expenditure is limited.
- Budget gains to increase revenue — up to the 1997/1998 financial year, provinces under-budgeted for national priority areas such as health, welfare and education, hoping that the national government would bail them out when they ran out of money (Van Zyl in Maile, 2000:386).

Therefore, it is important for provinces to address this problem through the following measures:

- improving financial management;
- improved budget practice;
- regular reporting;
- improved expenditure control; and
- improved expenditure management.

Provincial budget should embrace personnel management which embodies teachers' conditions of service, career planning, performance assessment, development and staff mobility.

Recommendations

Short-term recommendations

Medium term expenditure framework

Realising that the greatest challenge facing the education system is the quantitative delivery of educational opportunities, especially for the poorest families, and qualitative development of the education system's effectiveness, there is a need to improve the process of budgeting in provincial education. Even though the crisis in personnel management is not solely financial, the management of resources and delivery of services are hampered by a serious lack of capacity. However, the main problem lies in the domain of personnel provisioning and funding (Prinsloo, 1999:122). Most provincial education departments lack capacity to ensure adequate control over recruitment and personnel management decisions, and lack effective instruments to manage the costs of their personnel establishment — in particular to manage the number of employees in relation to their budgets (Hassen & Naidoo, 1999:8; Donaldson, 1998:32). The result is a high expenditure. Therefore, the situation requires that there should be:

- planning of programmes and staffing which proceed on the basis of approved future spending;
- interrogation of policy issues within the context of a agreed expenditure framework;

- the link between capital spending and future operating cost of new or expanded schools and colleges; and
- analysis and comparison of inter-provincial spending projections with historical trends.

Monitoring staffing levels

The rightsizing in the public service should be a continuous process based on:

- probation and assessment evidence;
- teacher-pupil ratio;
- curricular needs;
- affirmative action; and
- budgetary constraints.

The duty to monitor staffing levels requires commitment from the employer to overcome school managers' weakness of inflating and deflating data to their advantage.

Increasing the authority of the school governing bodies

School governing bodies must be given more powers in staff provisioning rather than only to recommend. As immediate employers, they have first-hand information about local problems and should know who is to be retained and who is not.

Inter-organisational personnel planning and provision

Institutions of higher learning's admission policies for teacher trainees must be co-ordinated to curb over-production of teachers. The regulation must be extended to areas of specialisation to fill acute shortages in the areas of sciences, engineering, technology and mathematics. Furthermore, the bodies that determine standards and norms for teacher education and training must include in their roles, forecasting of personnel as part of their human resource management brief. These bodies include the Committee for Teacher Education and Policy (COTEP) and the South African Council of Educators (SACE). They must take the initiative to introduce their policies in initial teacher education to ensure that candidates who take on teacher education are prepared for professional demands.

Education and training vouchers

The employer must redirect redundant skills to areas of need by offering education and training vouchers which include enrolment offers and financial assistance. This is not to suggest unscrupulous measures of creating false hopes in people that the state will do everything for them including developing and educating. It is important to inculcate in teachers the spirit of competition to acquire skills and knowledge through the creation of a climate conducive for development.

Outsourcing

Skills of retired personnel can be used in areas where there is an acute shortage. Scientists in other organisations can be outsourced for urgent delivery of education service. In this era of high unemployment, school managers may find "freelance" teachers among the qualified unemployed teachers.

Long-term recommendations

Performance agreement

The tenure process should include a performance management instrument. It is proposed that there should be a performance accord which forms part of the employment contract. Considering that this may raise rebuttals from unions, it is, therefore, proper that union support is solicited as a priority for the implementation. The productivity accord should not be seen as a trap to apprehend teachers, but rather as a long awaited opportunity to earn a living and to teach without impediments. However, teachers should be guaranteed recourses to the due process of the law, and the employer is obliged to immerse under-performing teachers to developmental programmes rather than dismissing them forthright.

Budget process reform

Increased influence of the bargaining process on the budget process is a condition for meaningful and sincere bargaining process. The linkage of the two processes will ensure that the tenure process is accurately integrated in the employer's personnel spending.

Education Information and Transparency Unit

Although one cannot declare that there is corruption in education, proactive measures must be taken to save the system from maladministration and corruption. Experience can be drawn from Transparency International and Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency Units (Maile, 2000:387). The unit can develop under the auspices of the Auditor-general or the Public Protector. This is not to say that there should be a witch hunt, but what is suggested is an effective and efficient accounting system so that funds set aside for personnel provisioning are safe and used equitably and fairly (Bauer, 2000: 59-75).

Interprovincial financial review

The function of this body is basically about financial management. It does this by forwarding estimates of the provincial government for the subsequent two years together with the existing budget estimates. This joint venture will help in the retention of teachers in that overspending and unfunded mandates will be minimised. Every project will be run within the constraints of the budget.

Interprovincial Staffing Task Team

This task team will ensure an even distribution of teachers to areas where there is a shortage. The task team will do this on the basis of statistics supplied by the provincial department on post establishment of institutions.

Conclusion

While it is acknowledged that the issue of personnel provisioning is complex and taxing in terms of costs involved in retaining the existing staff, it is necessary that the employer review the retention system so as to integrate it with accountability. It has been argued, in this article, that the tenure system in the education human resources management exacerbates the weak public education service. This article suggests a system of tenure which is based on evidence of performance. It can be argued that a statement of performance should constitute evidence required of applied competencies that must be demonstrated by a teacher in forms of:

- the demonstrated ability, in an authentic context, to consider a range of possibilities for action, to make considered decisions about which possibility to follow, and to perform the chosen action;
- the demonstration of an understanding of knowledge and thinking which underpins the actions taken;
- the demonstration of the ability to integrate performances and decision-making with understanding; the ability to adapt to change and unforeseen circumstances, and the ability to explain the reasons behind these adaptations (Vista University, 1998:3).

This is necessary in order to restore the integrity of public education and ultimately accomplish the notion of quality public education. The arguments raised in this article are meant to endorse the idea that quality education human resources management is critical to the transformation of the education system because it introduces structured and systematic management of human resources. Different models are advanced and are implemented within the spectrum of legal norms and values. Although the recommendations suggested may not be direct panacea to the crisis in education, it is hoped that a combination of these suggestions together with legal provisions will help heal the situation.

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