

Retaining older teachers for secondary education

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Credit: Leiden University

Not all teachers succeed in staying happy with their work until the end of their career. Dissatisfied older teachers will tend to quit before reaching retirement age. Work overload, low status of the profession, disruptive student behaviour, and a poor relationship with students are reasons often mentioned for the declining job satisfaction of older teachers.

Shortage of teachers

In the Netherlands, like in many other Western countries, we face a shortage of teachers. In the public debate, much attention is paid to

beginning teachers. How can we keep them for the profession? This is important. But it is equally important to keep older teachers for the profession. To this little attention is paid in the [public debate](#), but also in research. The purpose of this dissertation was to gain insight into the relation between the [job satisfaction](#) of older teachers and the quality of their [relationship](#) with students.

Older teachers differ in the extent to which they are satisfied with their work and the relationship with their students. Unsatisfied older teachers name extrinsic factors as causes for their dissatisfaction, such as work overload and administrative burden. Satisfied older teachers often name intrinsic factors, such as a good relationship with students.

Older teachers also differ in how they estimate the relationship with their students: more positively or negatively than the students. In coaching older teachers, it is important to take into consideration the role that the relationship with students has for job satisfaction.

Coaching for satisfied teachers

Coaching should not only be aimed at dissatisfied older teachers; coaching of (still) satisfied older teachers may be important to maintain their job satisfaction. Older teachers often overestimate or underestimate themselves in their relationship with students. It is important to address this in coaching. In the case of underestimating, this is in the interest of the teachers themselves. In the case of overestimating it may also be to the advantage of the students.

Provided by Leiden University

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