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An International Review of Incentives into Teacher Education: Implications for Policy and Practice

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Author(s) : Harris, Alma; Jones, Michelle; Evans, Ceryn; Knight, Cathryn;
Ismail, Nashwa
Presenting Author : Harris, Alma; Jones, Michelle; Evans, Ceryn; Knight, Cathryn;
Ismail, Nashwa
Presenter's E-
Mail: almaharriswag@gmail.com; michelle.s.jones@swansea.ac.uk; ceryn.evans@swansea.ac.uk; cathryn.knight@swansea.ac.uk; omarwan5000@gmail.com
An International Review of Incentives into Teacher Education: Implications for Policy and Practice ⓘ
Harris, Alma; Jones, Michelle; Evans, Ceryn; Knight, Cathryn; Ismail, Nashwa
Organization(s): University of Swansea, United Kingdom, Open University

An International Review of Incentives into Teacher Education: Implications for Policy and Practice

Objectives or purpose:

This paper focuses on the issue of teacher shortages, particularly at entry into the profession, in a range of countries. The purpose of this paper is to outline some of the findings from an international review of the literature which focused upon how different countries were incentivising entry into teaching. The main objective of this paper is to consider the international evidence base concerning the following:

1. Direct incentives to engage students in initial teacher education;
2. Differences in remuneration and conditions between systems;
3. Cultural drivers such as the relative value of the role of teachers in society.

This paper will provide evidence about the incentivisation approaches that are being deployed, internationally, to encourage a better supply of graduates into the profession.

Perspective(s) or theoretical framework:

The paper adopts an interpretivist and critical stance on the approaches used to increase the supply side of teaching in different countries.

Methods, techniques or modes of inquiry:

A scoping review of the international literature was undertaken in order to map out the contemporary evidence base about incentivisation into teaching. The key policies, initiatives and strategies deployed, by various countries to incentivise entry into the teaching profession, since 2014, were examined and summarised. In addition, six in-depth country specific case studies were prepared to illuminate the nature of the teacher shortage problem, the responses to that problem (including incentivisation approaches) and any evidence, where it existed, of impact.

Data Sources/evidence:

An electronic search of the academic literature was undertaken which involved a review of key databases: EBSCOhost (BEI, ERIC), SCOPUS and the Web of Science. In addition, ResearchGate and OECD publications were also accessed to provide supplementary supporting material. Initially this search resulted in 727 potential outputs but after several rounds of detailed scrutiny, 93 outputs comprised the academic part of the review. In addition, a large amount of grey literature (media reports, blogs, commentaries etc.) was collected and added where appropriate. Expert witnesses from each country assisted with the compilation and validation of the cases.

Results and conclusions/points of view:

The paper suggests that financial incentives alone may not always be the most effective strategy to improve teacher recruitment and increase supply. The evidence from the review showed that there are other important considerations that affect entry levels into teaching, for example, improving the working conditions of teachers; raising the profile of the profession; developing flexible routes in to teaching; establishing a clear set of career pathways and offering higher degree options as part of the professional learning offer. Evidence from the case studies suggest that such considerations make teaching a far more attractive profession and one that more highly qualified graduates might consider.

Educational importance of this study for theory, practice, and/or policy:

This study has clear implications for education policy as it details different strategies to aid teacher recruitment and retention. Furthermore, it offers findings from a contemporary review.

Connection to the conference theme:

The paper connects to 'education and career readiness'.