

# **Organizational Socialization Applied to Teacher Induction: An Emerging Conceptual Framework**

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*This paper discusses the issues inherent in the teacher induction stage based on a literature review.. Literature on organizational socialization is utilized as the theoretical framework and for informing the teacher education literature. A conceptual framework of teacher development is proposed to illustrate the stages from teacher preparation to becoming effective teachers that stay in the field. Teacher induction is highlighted because of its essentiality in bridging the gap between teacher preparation and teacher retention.*

Keywords: Organizational Socialization, Teacher Induction, Teacher Development

There has been a recent urgency for the recruitment and retention of quality teachers in the United States (Kelley, 2004). Designing programs that provide effective assimilation into the profession of teaching is a tactic that school districts utilize to promote retention among new teachers (American Federation of Teachers [AFT], 2001; Kelley, 2004). According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), “‘Sink or swim’ induction encourages novices to stick to whatever practices enable them to survive whether or not they represent ‘best’ practices in that situation” (p. 1014). Therefore, teacher induction programs are of essential value to the development and quality of novice teachers.

The increasing demand of recruiting new teachers is a product of the alarming attrition rate of new teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kelley, 2004). In fact, over 30 percent of new teachers do not return after completion of their first year in the profession. Hence, it is critical to further investigate the teacher development process, particularly during the teacher induction phase, to examine what support mechanisms foster teacher retention.

The purpose of this paper is to apply an established body of literature of organizational socialization principles to inform teacher induction practices, based on a literature review, and to propose a conceptual framework for teacher development designed to enhance retention. The questions guiding this paper are: (1) What are the issues and challenges inherent in the teacher induction process? (2) What conceptual framework would illustrate the stages of teacher development? and (3) What factors from the organizational socialization literature may be applied to the teacher education literature to inform the teacher development process?

## **A Literature Review on Teacher Induction**

### *Defining Teacher Induction*

According to Blair-Larsen and Bercik (1990), “Teacher induction is defined as the period of transition from student to professional when beginning teachers are offered supervision and support as they adjust to their new roles” (p. 25). Feiman-Nemser (2001) states, “The first years of teaching are an intense and formative time in learning to teach, influencing not only whether people remain in teaching but what kind of teacher they become” (p. 1026).

Teacher induction may constitute formal programs or informal acclimation and serves as a bridge between pre-service teaching and practice and from student of teaching to teacher of students (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). The first two to three years are extremely critical for new teachers; hence, this is the time that new teacher induction programs must facilitate teacher development.

### *Components of Effective Teacher Induction Programs*

Within the last decade, a growing body of empirical research from researchers, policymakers, and professional organizations have been conducted in order to assess, evaluate, and suggest effective teacher induction programs (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). In fact, findings from a myriad of research studies have found a relationship between effective teacher induction programs and various predictors such as job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kelley, 2004; NCTAF, 2005). 80 to 90 % of teachers that participate in a comprehensive induction program (defined as having a mentor, supportive collaboration from the principal, other administrator, or department chair; common planning or collaboration time with other teachers in the field; reduced

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preparations [course load] and help from a teacher's aide; and participation in an external network of teachers) stay in the field for at least five years. However, less than one percent of new teachers experience a comprehensive teacher induction program.

### **Theoretical Framework: Organizational Socialization**

Organizational socialization refers to the process by which individuals acquire knowledge and skills required for their jobs, gain value and norm of the workplace, and adjust themselves in the organization's culture (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). According to Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006), "Organizational socialization is the process through which a new organizational employee adapts from outsider to integrated and effective insider" (p. 492).

Historically, many organizational socialization researchers suggested a variety of socialization models while pointing out the needs of synthesizing the fragmented literature of organizational socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1992). The organizational socialization theory first originated from "stage models", which regard socialization as a series of events new hires experience step by step. Researchers also focused on socialization tactics, i.e., how organizations facilitate the socialization of employees.

### **Methods**

The methodology for this study involved a literature review based on mainly academic journals published approximately within the last decade with respect to the teacher education literature. However, the authors reviewed articles within the last two decades for the organizational literature, since utilizing the early studies were critical for understanding the academic field. This review incorporated a search of the literature using library databases (e.g. ERIC, EBSCOhost, SSCI) and journals (e.g. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *Journal of Teacher Education*) with such keywords as organizational socialization, teacher induction, and related terms. Only the literature that was well documented throughout multiple sources was included in this paper; this selection and omission method assisted in the construction of a conceptual framework.

### **Issues and Challenges Inherent in the Teacher Induction Process**

Novice teachers are expected to perform the same job duties as master teachers (Huling-Austin, 1992). Feiman-Nemser (2001) articulates a host of responsibilities new teachers must adopt such as getting to know their students, understanding the curriculum along with understanding how to align their curriculum with district, state, and national standards, learning the norms of the profession, and adhering to assessment requirements.

Many novice teachers are recruited into highly demanding and strenuous classes with unruly and unmotivated students (Johnson & Reiman, 2007), must teach subject matter they may have little or no backgrounds in (Huling-Austin, 1992), or may be in schools that are comparably substandard (Kelley, 2004). Having a large number of students with behavior issues is a source of disruption to teacher learning; however, learning to manage student misconduct is essential for teacher development.

### **A Conceptual Framework of Teacher Development**

It is important to note that teacher induction programs do not operate in a vacuum. Effective teacher induction depends on a number of factors including presage variables such as quality teacher preparation programs, real-world practice from teacher candidates, and appropriate teacher dispositions and beliefs from teacher candidates. Therefore, this paper presents a conceptual framework of teacher development with a foundation from the teacher education and organizational socialization literature (See Figure 1). The conceptual framework presents a linear trajectory of teacher candidates from teacher preparation programs, (which supply them with the basic knowledge, skills, and dispositions to prepare them for success in their careers) to becoming effective teachers. Further, the conceptual framework illustrates the teacher induction stage including factors leading to successful progression to the last stage, teacher retention. The ultimate goal of teacher induction programs is to retain competent teachers who are adaptive experts and effective teachers. A full discussion of the rationale for the inception of this conceptual framework is presented throughout the rest of this paper.

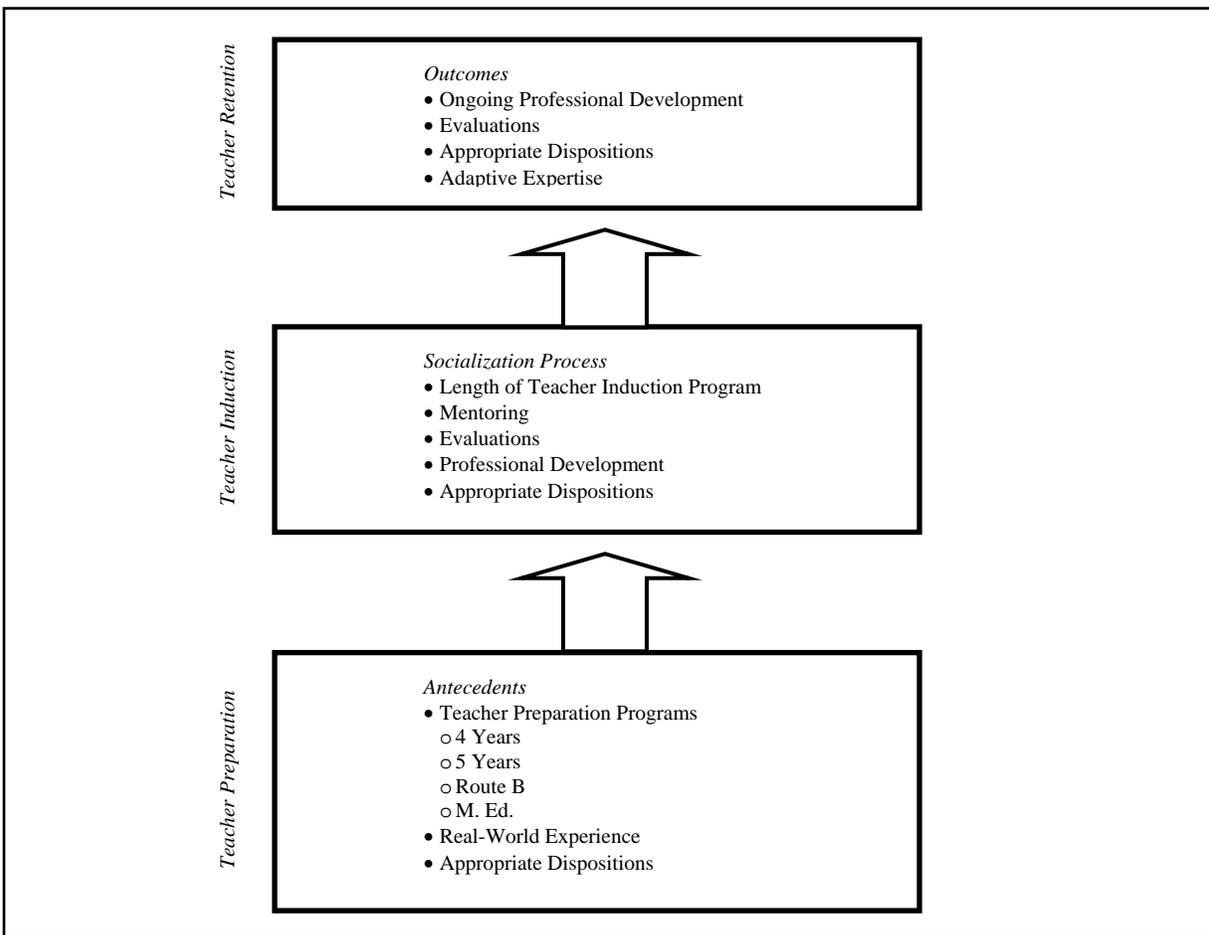


Figure 1. A conceptual framework of teacher development.

## The Relationship between Teacher Development and Organizational Socialization

### Phase I: Teacher Preparation

*Teacher preparation programs.* Within the last two decades, teacher preparation programs across the nation have begun serious engagement regarding understanding what teacher candidates must know and be able to do (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Lund, Wayda, Woodard, & Buck, 2007). This transformation is in large part due to the focus on increasing the quality of schools and society (Good, McCaslin, Tsang, Wiley, & Bozack; 2006; McFadden & Sheerer, 2006; Ruhland & Bremer, 2003). Hence, redesigning teacher preparation programs are one way in which school reform initiatives are addressing the issue of quality in schools and society (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

The types of teacher preparation programs are highly scrutinized and widely debated (McFadden & Sheerer, 2006). The most common types of teacher preparation programs include the traditional four-year program, five-year programs, Masters of Education (M.Ed.) post-baccalaureate programs, and alternative or Route-B programs; however their content, duration, and rigor varies widely (Roehrig & Luft, 2006).

Proponents of alternative certification programs tout the attraction of more experienced teachers in the classroom as a major advantage. Dissenters emphasize the aspect of placing these individuals into schools with insufficient experience in teaching and its pedagogies. Ruhland and Bremer (2003) through survey research examined perceptions of traditionally and alternatively certified Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers and found that traditionally certified teachers reported that they were more prepared in the realm of pedagogy, whereas their counterparts (alternatively certified teachers) perceived they were more prepared in their content knowledge. In a three-year longitudinal survey study of Massachusetts Institute for New Teachers (MINT) participants, Maloy, Seidman, Pine, and Ludlow (2006), found that alternative teachers were dissatisfied with the usefulness of their

teacher preparation program. This was in stark contrast to the ratings of traditional preparation teachers, which 69% rated their programs as excellent. In response to student teaching, mentoring, and field experiences, the results were similar. Nevertheless, both groups expressed a strong and continuing commitment to teaching. In a three-year longitudinal study of first year K-12 teachers from a variety of preparation paths, Good et al. (2006) found that traditional preparation teachers were more skilled in classroom management practices than their nontraditional counterparts.

Roehrig and Luft (2005) discuss the importance of teacher induction to serve as a baseline for the increasing number of teachers being certified through various types of teacher preparation programs. Despite the laundry list of solutions for teacher preparation programs, an agreed upon list of coherent teacher candidate proficiencies or professional knowledge base has yet to emerge (Ruhland & Bremer, 2003).

*Real-world experience.* Numerous critics point to the lack of real-world experience teacher candidates are exposed to in their teacher preparation programs or to the disconnect between courses and field experiences (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). In fact, according to findings from McFadden and Sheerer's (2006) survey research of 81 North Carolina superintendents, 68% believed teaching is more of a craft that must be developed through real-world experiences in school settings rather than a knowledge-driven profession. Further, 99% of the superintendents believed that most of the courses in professional teacher preparation programs should be connected to school settings. In addition to on-campus clinical experiences as well as early field experiences, the student teaching internship is the culminating experience in a teacher preparation program and is cited as the most significant experience throughout the teacher candidate's tenure in their programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

*Appropriate dispositions.* Teacher candidates' dispositions serve as a lens for understanding and making sense of the knowledge and experiences they gain in their teacher preparation programs; in addition, these dispositions serve as a guide for more learning and professional development (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammerness et al., 2005). The assessment of teacher preparation programs regarding teacher dispositions stem from the research that indicates the positive linkage among teacher preparation faculty and courses in regards to influencing teacher candidate dispositions (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2006). However, the actual assessment of dispositions is difficult to measure, making the process quite problematic. Furthermore, little research exists in order to define or conceptualize the construct in the realm of teacher education (Johnson & Reiman, 2007).

Lund et al. (2007) surveyed physical education teacher educators on essential dispositions needed for teachers; they found that preparedness for class, dependability, ability to cooperate with others, communicating with others, seeking solutions to problems, sensitivity to individuals with differences, enthusiasm, ability to work without supervision, taking initiative, and trustworthiness to be the most essential skills needed in the profession of teaching. However, the study demonstrated that not all of these dispositions were being reinforced in the curricula and through assessments.

Based on the literature regarding teacher dispositions, appropriate teacher dispositions are not only important in the teacher preparation stage (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammerness et al., 2005) hence, they are included as factors in the teacher induction and teacher retention stages. It is helpful to examine the organizational socialization literature to determine what employee knowledge, skills, and dispositions might facilitate induction into an organization. These factors may serve as implications for future research in the teacher education field.

*Antecedents.* According to Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2002), pre-entry knowledge, proactive personality, socialization influence, and perceived alternatives, is important in the organizational socialization process. Pre-entry knowledge or previous work experience have both negative and positive aspects in terms of organizational socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). According to Adkins (1995), prior related experience can make new hires less attentive to formal orientation programs. However, it was found that new hires with previous related experience had more skill and knowledge in another research study (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). In addition findings indicate that prior occupational work experience affects retention (Carr, Pearson, Vest, & Boyer, 2006).

Personal characteristics, such as self-efficacy and motivation are important predictors of socialization, which affects the outcomes of socialization. According to Jones (1983), "newcomer's self-efficacy expectations will moderate the reality shock of entry" (p. 466). Self-efficacy affects the way newcomers seek information (Miller & Jablin, 1991) and the proactivity of newcomers in the socialization process (Major & Kozlowski, 1997), which are critical to outcomes of organizational socialization.

#### *Phase Two: Teacher Induction*

*Length of teacher induction program.* The amount of time that a new teacher is placed in a teacher induction program is not agreed on in the literature. Feiman-Nemser (2001) indicates that two years is common, but three years is preferable to give the new teacher sufficient time to develop a professional identity and become familiar with his or her new profession. Moreover, the duration of the teacher induction program might be the distinguishing

factor of those who stay in the field and those who do not. According to findings from AFT (2001), 15 states require teacher induction programs to be at least one year in length, three states require two years, and five states require more than two years.

*Mentoring.* Assigning experienced mentors to novice teachers is one of the most common types of practices within teacher induction as well as the most vital component (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). However, AFT (2001) reports indicate that only 29 states require mentors to be a component of teacher induction programs. Effective mentorship programs combine selection, preparation, and supporting of new teachers with a mission to retain and develop quality teachers. However, this process is quite contentious with the understanding that many experienced teachers may feel as if they are too busy to effectively mentor and they may be provided with little to no structure in this critical endeavor.

Evertson and Smithey (2000) found that mentees had better organizational skills and were able to manage instruction more effectively as a result of the mentoring process; in addition, these mentees had better student classroom management. Because it is not always feasible for new teachers to be placed in an environment that is highly conducive to effective teaching, Feiman-Nemser (2001) suggests that new teachers should have a strong support system of highly skilled experienced mentors.

*The evaluation of New teachers.* Evaluating novice teachers is highly contested in the teacher education literature (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Huling-Austin, 1992). Dissenters argue that novice teachers may feel less comfortable in expressing their concerns and asking for help with the fear of the repercussion of negative evaluations or a perception of appearing less than competent. However, proponents indicate the positive effects of evaluating novice teachers. Huling-Austin (1992) discusses the need for policymakers and school administrators to revamp the evaluation system of novice teachers making it differentiated from their veteran teacher counterparts. This was suggested in order to counter the message that teaching is simple and may be easily mastered. Teachers continually need to be assessed and critiqued on their teaching practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001); therefore, teacher evaluations are also included in the teacher retention stage.

*Professional development.* Within the last decade, an increasing commitment to continuous teacher learning as well as mounting efforts for the professionalization of the teaching field has been underway; this is in large part due to the increasing standards for students, curricula, assessment, and teaching. However, little is known in the teacher field about professional development and much of what is known is fragmented and incoherent (Wilson & Berne, 1999).

According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), “professional development opportunities are usually sporadic and disconnected, rarely tied to teachers’ classroom work and lacking any follow up” (p. 1014). One major challenge in regards to professional development is the impediment of time. According to Abdal-Haqq (1996), “teachers who sacrifice personal time or preparation time often experience burn-out from trying to fulfill competing demands for their time” (p. 6). Based on the literature regarding teacher professional development, ongoing professional development is needed in the teacher retention stage as well (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammerness et al., 2005).

*Socialization process.* Again, this paper shifts to a discussion of organizational socialization factors inherent in the induction phase of employees to an organization with the purpose of informing the teacher development process. The period in which a new member enters an organization is one of the most critical periods in their tenure process for this is the time when the newcomer determines the nature of the new organization and determines whether they fit in or not (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). Early organizational socialization researchers (Wanous, 1992) discussed three stages of the organizational socialization process: how an individual is prepared to occupy his or her position in an organization; how the individual discards his or her old view and adopts a new one for a new role; and how the individual adapts to the value of his work group and organization, learns his or her role perfectly, and performs his or her job successfully. Though socialization phenomena happen throughout every employee’s career, it is especially important for new hires because they are generally deficient in some elements which are essential for organizational life, such as the ability to define their roles and understand the organization’s expectation in specific situations (Miller & Jablin, 1991).

In the organizational socialization literature, there is little agreement about the appropriate length of an orientation program (Wanous & Reichers, 2000). In a British organization survey, researchers investigated the mean length of orientation programs, which turned out to be three days: one-third of the orientation programs lasted between one and two days, another third lasted between three and five days, and the remaining lasted over six days (Anderson, Cunningham, Snell, & Haigh, 1996).

Organizations support new hires’ socialization not only by providing formal orientation programs, but also by promoting supportive environments (Holton, 2001). Many studies on organizational socialization noted that the newcomers’ relationship with insiders, such as supervisors, senior co-workers, peers, and mentors are pivotal resources for effective socialization (Eby, Lockwood, & Butts, 2006; Payne & Huffman, 2005; Slaughter, Selvajian,

& Anderson, 2006). Morrison (2002) discussed that the characteristics and structure of newcomer's social networks affect socialization outcomes, such as organizational knowledge, task mastery, role clarity, and organizational commitment.

#### *Phase Three: Teacher Retention*

*Adaptive expertise.* Closely related to the need for teachers to engage in ongoing professional development and gain appropriate teaching dispositions in the post-induction stage, the expectation is for teachers to grow as professionals and become adaptive experts. Teaching, in this respect, may be thought of as a creative performance that might be improved through experience (Sawyer, 2004). Adaptive expertise may be categorized among two dimensions: efficiency and innovation (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Bransford, Berliner, Cochran-Smith, McDonald, & Zeichner, 2005). To illustrate efficiency, expert teachers may perform multiple activities simultaneously without having to think extensively about it. A similar construct is innovation, which involves transcendence beyond the normal routine and engagement in critical reflection to transform their thinking and ways of doing things. In a standards-based era of educators, the concept of adaptive expertise is increasingly becoming more and more important in the career development of teachers, the promotion of teacher retention, as well as the implications it has on student learning.

*Outcomes.* An investigation of outcomes in the organizational socialization literature may reveal important factors concerning retention of employees in the post-induction phase of work. There are two domains of outcomes in the organizational socialization literature; Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) named these outcomes proximal and distal. Proximal outcomes, such as work skills and work group integration, are driven from learning and affects distal outcome. Distal outcomes are affective outcomes which include satisfaction, work motivation, commitment, and turnover intention.

Among various proximal outcomes, content mastery or the acquisition of knowledge and skills are noted as a result of socialization or training, which is directly linked to performance (Klein, Fan, & Preacher, 2006). It has been found that role clarity is one proximal outcome, which affects distal outcomes such as organizational commitment (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Proximal outcomes of organizational socialization may be applied to ongoing professional development in the teacher induction framework. As a result of teacher induction programs, new teachers achieve knowledge and skills to conduct their tasks effectively and attain clear orientation on what their roles are.

Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to remain, and retention have been suggested as typical distal outcomes (Wanous, 1992). As new teachers utilize previous knowledge and skills to understand their roles, they gradually become satisfied with their job and have affective commitment to their workplace. Consequently, teachers may be more apt to remain in their current work and turnover would then decrease. From the viewpoint of teacher induction, it is essential to build a process in which individuals can learn and change continuously keeping pace with constant change in the school environment.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In answering the third question of what factors from the organizational socialization literature may be applied to the teacher education literature to inform the teacher development process, based on the literature review, this paper articulated four areas in which the two bodies of literature overlap (each area affecting retention). First, both bodies of literature support the constructs of self-efficacy and motivation as factors affecting retention. Second, the concept of mentoring was well documented in both bodies of literature. Mentoring was mentioned to adequately socialize employees and teachers to the organization; however, future research should study the effects of quality mentoring on retention. Thirdly, the ideal length of induction programs for the promotion of effective employees and teachers are not substantiated in both bodies of literature. A comparative study of different teacher induction programs on teacher retention outcomes may serve as a better indication of the desired length of such teacher induction programs. Lastly, the notion of adaptive expertise is similar in both bodies of literature and is known as a factor affecting retention. Further research in teacher education might benefit from utilizing the three stages of organizational socialization as a foundation for investigating the teacher development process. Another area for future study is in regards to evaluation practices of new teachers; this practice is highly controversial with little research available to reference to. Based on an extensive literature review, it is apparent that many of the issues investigated in the organizational socialization literature are not researched in the teacher education literature concerning teacher development. However, advances in the literature of teacher development may lead to effective programmatic initiatives and practices for teachers in the teacher preparation and teacher induction stages, as well as a better understanding of factors leading to teacher retention.

## Contribution to HRD

This paper discusses the factors from the organizational socialization literature that may be applied to teacher education, leading to retention. However, an unanswered question still remains and serves as an implication for future research; how are teachers different than employees in organizations in regards to factors leading to reform? Intuitively, the two bodies of literature should be highly related based on the objectives of the two disciplines, to increase the retention of employees through support mechanisms of the organization. However, the empirical research within the two bodies of literature is highly bipolar focusing on very different factors related to retention. This paper serves as a conduit between the teacher education and the organizational socialization literature; it particularly points out the gap between these two bodies of literature. This paper found five particular areas in which research in the organizational socialization field has identified as important. However, little to no research has been conducted on these areas in teacher education. These areas include: research on the actual socialization of teachers in schools, the effect of prior work experience on success in the first years of teaching, the role of social support systems for teachers in the first years of teaching, defining roles and understanding the expectations of schools in promoting success for first year teachers, as well as job satisfaction, commitment, and intention to stay in the field of teaching. Therefore, the implications of this paper call for a more systems approach for HRD and teacher education researchers on the integration of the two bodies of literature as well as the inclusion of teacher education issues and challenges to the organizational socialization literature with an objective of retaining individuals in organizations as well as teachers in schools. The proposed conceptual framework may assist organizations (i.e., school districts) to understand how best to help new teacher adjust and build effective teacher induction programs to promote teacher retention as well as increase teachers' job competency.

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