

Occupational Socialization and the Design of Teacher Education Programs

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The following analysis is one-sided and selective. It is an attempt to derive guidelines for the design of teacher education programs from recent work on the occupational socialization of physical educationists. The work cited is limited almost exclusively to that completed by the author and his former students. This can be justified insofar as this analysis doubles as a benchmark for an additive and integrative research program, indicating which questions need to be asked next and signalling the practical significance of past work. The discussion begins with a definitional treatment of occupational socialization prior to identifying guidelines for teacher education programs.

Occupational Socialization

Occupational socialization, as conceptualized in the following analysis, includes all of the kinds of socialization that initially influence persons to enter the field of physical education and that later are responsible for their perceptions and actions as teacher educators and teachers. Five such kinds of socialization may comprise occupational socialization: societal, sport, professional, organizational, and bureaucratic.

Societal socialization is the first kind. It is used here to refer to the process through which people in a given social system acquire the dominant rules and meanings that are so taken for granted as to be called "common sense."

Sport socialization is the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for sport participation as well as the meanings derived from such participation. There are two related parts: socialization *into* sport, the process of selection and becoming involved, frequently leads to socialization *via* sport. With the latter, participants may acquire consumer preferences and lifestyle patterns. Socialization *via* sport also can nurture the choice of a sport-related career, including the decision to complete a physical education major in higher education.

Professional socialization is the process by which persons recruited into physical education acquire the knowledge, values, sensitivities, and skills endorsed by this profession. For teachers, such knowledge and skills comprise Lortie's (1975) "shared technical culture," and the values and sensitivities tend to promote a humanistic ideology. Teacher education programs are believed to be instruments for this professional socialization.

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Organizational socialization is the process by which physical educationists learn the knowledge, values, and skills required by the work organization. In principle, this socialization may be perfectly compatible with professional socialization. In practice, it frequently is not. Most physical educationists are hired in large, bureaucratic organizations, and *bureaucratic socialization* usually conflicts with its professional counterpart. A custodial rather than humanistic ideology customarily results from bureaucratic socialization, together with a cognitive style that is clearly at odds with the norms of professionalism. In short, there is good reason to assume that bureaucratic and professional socialization are sometimes incompatible (Lawson, 1985b).

Consider momentarily how the five kinds of socialization may interact as part of occupational socialization. For example, for some persons socialization into sport leads to socialization via sport, and socialization via sport can lead to the choice of physical education as a career. This choice prompts the recruit to accept some parts of the professional socialization experienced in university teacher education programs while rejecting others. And once credentialled, this same person is greeted with organizational socialization which, in its bureaucratic form, may result in either an immediate or delayed erosion of the contents of professional socialization (Lawson, 1983b, 1983c). Such occupational socialization continues as long as the person remains in physical education, whether as a teacher or as a teacher educator. As indicated above, a central feature of occupational socialization is that it includes different forms of socialization which, while often experienced simultaneously, have competing or contradictory forms and contents. This implies that occupational socialization may be responsible for variability among recruits, teachers, and teacher educators, and in turn for pluralism in work perceptions and practices. It also implies that scholarly work on occupational socialization has import for the design of teacher education programs.

A Review of Selected Work on Occupational Socialization

An Overview

The first selected work in the occupational socialization of physical educationists was aimed toward a model of teacher socialization (Lawson, 1983b, 1983c). Its purpose was to integrate past research and set the conceptual stage for future research and program development.

Initially, the three-stage model for the professions (Lortie, 1975) was used to frame the analysis. Early studies on recruitment (the first stage) revealed that recruits in physical education enjoyed extensive past experience as performers and coaches, exhibited conservative orientations compared to other college students, and had less academic ability than their matched samples, with differences suggested between male and female recruits in physical education. Later work, while reaffirming most of these early findings and recognizing a custodial orientation in most recruits, also found recruits who were interested in changing existing physical education programs. Using Lortie's (1975) concepts, this later work was designed to examine how the backgrounds and orientation of recruits affected teacher education programs.

Following Lortie, there was interest in the extent to which the effectiveness of teacher education (the second stage) hinged upon the people recruited into the profession. In other words, interest centered on whether a recruit's biography was more instrumental

than teacher education programs in affecting his or her orientations and actions. Although teacher education programs in physical education were not found to be totally ineffective, their differential effects on recruits were partly attributed to the agency of these recruits in either accepting or rejecting the contents of teacher education programs (Dewar, work in progress). Other factors responsible for the differential effects of teacher education programs included the absence of a shared technical culture (Lortie, 1975), the failure of teacher educators to synthesize knowledge and skills resulting from research on teaching to the point where these clearly and readily applied to school practices, the conflicting views of teacher educators on school practice, and the absence of an overriding educational design for teacher education. Thus, variability in the first stage (recruitment) was met with more variability in the second stage (teacher education).

The same variability was located in the third stage, with discussion centering on the effects of organizational and bureaucratic socialization on the orientations and actions of new teachers. Linking different kinds of organizational socialization with different kinds of outcomes in new teachers, questions were raised about the extent to which school experiences necessarily "washed out" the effects of teacher education programs. Interest in this regard was especially keen, given physical education's unique role in the school culture as well as the role marginality and conflicts of physical education teachers. The agency of physical education teachers in this context was nevertheless reaffirmed, even though this agency manifested itself in ways that may not always be judged as desirable. Commitments to teaching, career contingencies, career mobility, and career longevity and change thus can all be examined with an eye toward the agency of physical educators (Lawson, 1985b, 1983b).

It was concluded that the different, if not competing, orientations and actions of teachers who experienced these three stages of occupational socialization would in turn inevitably influence recruitment into the profession. Thus, these teachers' variability in work practices, stemming from their differential socialization, would be mirrored in the next generation of recruits entering into physical education—recruits who predicated their decision largely on what they observed and experienced as students in school physical education programs. These new recruits, like their predecessors, promised to engage either in reproductive or transformative acts, and in both cases their orientations and actions could be attributed to their occupational socialization.

The Subjective Warrant and Recruitment

Having provided an overview of occupational socialization, special attention was directed to its parts, beginning with a fresh examination of recruitment. Here Lortie's (1975) construct, the subjective warrant, was revised prior to being employed in a new recruitment study (Dewar & Lawson, 1984).

The subjective warrant is a person's perception of the requirements and benefits of work in a given profession, weighed against self-assessments of aspiration and competence. Each individual has a subjective warrant for each possible career and sorts through them as part of the silent competition among the professions before making a choice (Dewar & Lawson, 1984).

In the first published work on secondary school students' subjective warrants for physical education, Dewar (1984) found that her sample held a dominant view of physical education. With the assumption that socialization via sport was an important facilitating experience, she identified (with the help of school physical education teachers) students

who were highly skilled and had strong achievements in physical education and school athletics. Dewar found that all but a few of her subjects shared the same view of physical education—namely, that it was a teaching career that involved learning how to play sports and games and then teaching them to others. In short, the dominant sports and games curriculum in these schools had influenced the recruitment process in a predictable way.

Not all of the students in Dewar's (1984) investigation were attracted to a career in physical education. Those who were not cited the requirement for teaching school as the reason. Students who were attracted to physical education or who had already decided upon such a career viewed the roles of teacher and coach as nearly identical and cited this combination of roles as a reason for their attraction to physical education. Most important, when questioned as to what they planned to do in the future with physical education programs, the vast majority displayed custodial orientations toward the programs they had experienced. In other words, they expressed the desire to preserve the dominant sports and games curriculum that was largely responsible for their attraction to physical education in the first place.

Subjective Warrants and Teacher Education

Having established that recruits have firm beliefs about physical education prior to teacher education programs, the question is whether these subjective warrants remain intact during teacher education. Lacking longitudinal data that would be most definitive, three short-term works provide evidence that recruits resist efforts to change their perceptions during teacher education.

For example, Placek (1983) found that despite the attempts of teacher educators to convince prospective teachers that physical education is a school subject devoted to learning, her recruits were not oriented toward such learning. Rather, their intent was to provide a kind of sports and games experience that kept students busy, made them happy, and kept them on good behavior.

Similarly, both Dewar (in process) and Steen (1985) used ethnographic research designs to study recruits in teacher education programs. Both found that prospective teachers can reject selected parts of the process and content of teacher education programs. In different terms, the subjective warrants of undergraduates prove to be somewhat change-resistant in the face of teacher education programs. Hence, biography may indeed be more powerful than teacher education (Lortie, 1975), at least the kind of teacher education programs designed and analyzed so far.

Orientations and Actions of Teacher Educators

Ignored until very recently, the career paths and role orientations of teacher educators in physical education also help to explain the preservation of recruits' subjective warrants. For example, Mitchell and Lawson (1984) studied teacher educators in physical education in four universities. They found that these persons did not agree on conceptions of the ideal physical education teacher, the ideal teacher education program, and the ideal school program, although all suggested that some sports and games should be included in school programs. These differences were evident within as well as across universities. Furthermore, most of these teacher educators indicated that their own biographies, including their teaching experiences in the schools, were more important than their formal education, whether in undergraduate teacher education programs or doctoral programs.

Paradoxically enough, these same teacher educators entertained high hopes of exerting a strong influence on their recruits during teacher education. Judging from their conflicting views on teacher education as well as on physical education teaching and programs, it is doubtful that such teacher educators can expect to have a major impact on the subjective warrants of their recruits.

In the same vein, Placek (1985) found differences between the espoused beliefs of teacher educators and their actual behaviors in teacher education classes. Thus, not all students were treated to orientations and experiences that teacher educators had idealized for them. Here, too, are factors detracting from the effectiveness of teacher education programs, allowing recruits' subjective warrants to remain intact.

The Literature in Teacher Education

The literature, particularly textbooks, used in teacher education also affects program effectiveness, and yet published analyses of this literature have not been available until now.

In the first such study, Lawson, Mitchell, and Dewar (1985) analyzed "principles of physical education" textbooks. They were interested in the authors' conceptions of missions, goals, and objectives for physical education. Lawson, Mitchell, and Dewar found that conceptions of problems and needs were remarkably similar in the books sampled, nor did the conceptions change when second and even third editions of these books were published. Yet the incidence and prevalence of these presumed needs and problems were not documented by research. Rather, each author's professional ideology was instrumental in presenting problems and needs in a person-blame attribution framework. This tendency to blame the victim suggested diagnostic stereotyping and the preservation of a dominant view—namely that expressed by the books' authors—of the roles and goals for physical education.

In short, this literature implicitly asks students to accept the authoritative, ideologically proclaimed judgments of the authors, just as some teacher educators seemingly ask students to automatically accept views expressed in class lectures. Opinion and personal experiences are the driving forces in both cases, rather than a scientifically grounded, shared technical culture for teaching. Yet such a shared technical culture is presumed to be an important contributor to the effectiveness of teacher education programs.

Organizational Socialization

A final line of inquiry in occupational socialization concerns the role perceptions, expectations, and performances of young teachers after teacher education programs (Lawson, 1983c; Locke, 1984). Interest is in "Why they don't, even when they oughta!" In other words, why don't teachers do what teacher educators think they should do? If it is abundantly clear that teacher education programs do not have the impact that teacher educators hope and believe them to have, then it is also true that the work organizations for teachers affect the effectiveness of these programs and the role perceptions and behaviors of teachers.

For example, Lawson (1985b), in an analysis of the relationship between occupational socialization and curriculum work, identified the role of students and the school culture on the organizational socialization of teachers. It was suggested that teachers, once employed in schools, find that their programs often depend on what their students will permit. In short, students act as powerful socializing agents, affecting the range of alter-

natives that teachers will even consider, let alone endeavor to design, adopt, or implement. Although this may be the case for all school subjects, this agency on the part of students is more likely to occur in "manual" subjects such as physical education and home economics than in "mental" subjects such as mathematics and science. Reflecting a parent knowledge hierarchy in society, the relatively low status assigned to physical education contributes to the considerable ambiguity surrounding its role and importance in the school culture. Indeed as Bain (1983) has observed, the professional autonomy that some observers grant to teacher-coaches is in fact institutionalized neglect borne out of the low or peripheral status of physical education as a school subject. Teacher education programs that do not take these realities into account are not likely to have a lasting impact on teachers.

In a related work, Lawson (1985a) analyzed the impact of occupational socialization on knowledge use in physical education, particularly the use of scientific knowledge. Here, too, organizational socialization is in large part responsible for patterns of knowledge use other than those deemed ideal by teacher educators. The issues in this connection transcend those limited to teacher education programs, but the role of teacher education in presenting a shared technical culture and ways to continually cultivate it emerged as important factors in the professionalization and job security of physical educationists.

Implications for the Design of Teacher Education Programs

Having reviewed selected work on the occupational socialization of physical educationists, implications for the design of teacher education programs can be derived from it. Important here is clarity and brevity, although risking oversimplification.

1. *More uniform professional orientations and competencies among recruits are prerequisite to effective teacher education programs.*

As the preceding analysis has indicated, the formation of a subjective warrant for physical education takes place prior to teacher education and not only influences who enters physical education but also the characteristics, competencies, and experiences presumed to be necessary for a career in physical education. Moreover, teacher education programs, like school programs, are often designed with an eye toward what students will permit. Hence, major improvements in teacher education may hinge on improvements in the kinds of students recruited into the profession. Recruitment in turn hinges on the subjective warrants students form, implying that greater attention should be paid to the conditions and experiences that are instrumental in the formation of a subjective warrant. Sport socialization, the socialization occurring through first-hand experiences in elementary and secondary school programs, and the significant others encountered in both socialization settings appear to be especially instrumental in forming a subjective warrant. This suggests that practicing teachers and coaches, in their interactions with persons who become physical education's recruits, *are also teacher educators*. Similarly a school physical education curriculum also functions as a part of teacher education curriculum. In fact, given the persistence of recruits' subjective warrants in the face of teacher education in higher education, practicing teachers and coaches may be more influential as teacher educators than those professors who bear the formal title!

So, teacher educators in higher education cannot afford to divorce themselves or their efforts from practicing teachers and coaches in schools and other agencies if they seek more uniform professional orientations and competencies among recruits. Furthermore, if these practicing teachers and coaches are influenced in their orientations and actions by a bureaucratic kind of organizational socialization, so too are recruits affected

by this same kind of organizational socialization as their subjective warrants are being formed. Hence, teacher educators can no longer assume that bureaucratic socialization begins after teacher education programs, acting to wash out the effects of teacher education. In fact, this socialization begins before teacher education, contouring the subjective warrants of recruits and often preventing teacher education programs from enjoying a pronounced or lasting effect on recruits.

Thus teachers, coaches, and university teacher educators must work together to exert some control over the conditions and experiences that are instrumental in forming a subjective warrant for physical education. In doing so, the goal is to elevate recruits' cognitive or academic abilities, professional orientations, and performance abilities in movement activities and in teaching. In fact, a national curriculum has been proposed to facilitate greater uniformity in the recruitment process (Lawson, 1985c). For when there is more uniformity and quality among recruits, teacher education programs stand to become more effective.

2. More uniform professional orientations, competencies, and behaviors among teacher educators in higher education are prerequisite to effective teacher education programs.

As indicated earlier, there is considerable disagreement among teacher educators on the targets for teacher education programs—namely, on what constitutes the ideal school program and appropriate teacher behavior in conducting such a program. Until such time as teacher educators work to reach a fundamental level of consensus on the criteria for performing and determining good work in physical education, each is likely to act implicitly to disconfirm the others' efforts. And the message for students, though latent, is clear: "One person's view of physical education is as good as another's; therefore, follow your own inclinations as influenced by your biography."

If the absence of a shared technical culture has plagued teacher education programs and actual teaching practice, then its development must be assigned a high priority. It is in this sense that teacher educators must more uniformly acquire and display the competencies necessary to develop, disseminate, and use in their own work with future teachers such a shared technical culture. Presently, teacher educators in higher education do not appear to value, use, or do research as much as they need to, and because they have adopted this posture, the development of a shared technical culture and the effectiveness of teacher education programs have been impaired.

3. An explicit educational design, the goals, components, and processes of which are shared with teacher educators, teachers, and recruits alike, is essential to the impact of teacher education programs.

Would-be teachers are told by teacher educators to make learning outcomes and processes explicit for learners because goal and task clarity are indispensable for effective learning. No less is the case in physical education's teacher education.

In the same vein, such a design might take as a point of departure not only the idealized vision of physical education and successful teaching but also the subjective warrants of entering recruits (Lawson, Belka, & Simmons, 1985). Mindful that subjective warrants are always somewhat variable, incorrect, and incomplete, a teacher education program's efforts to induct students into teaching requires the systematic dismantling of these subjective warrants and replacing them with clear, uniform, and appropriate conceptions of work specified in the design for teacher education. The progression is embodied in the now-classic Lewinian socialization model of "unfreezing, changing, and refreezing."

Furthermore, more attention needs to be paid to the process of teacher education. That there are differences between what teacher educators espouse and what they do in classes has been established already. Even more to the point, it is now possible to identify relationships between kinds of socialization processes (e.g., collective vs. individual, sequential vs. random, formal vs. informal) and the expected socialization outcomes that accompany these processes, either singly or in combination (Lawson, 1983b; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Here, too, an explicit educational design should be informed by an emergent knowledge base on the *process* of professional socialization in teacher education.

Finally, in assembling and implementing such a design for teacher education, individuals might well take note of Dodds' (1985) analysis of differences between functional, hidden, null, and explicit curricula. For there are always learning outcomes that are unidentified, unintended, or unanticipated, and the categories provided by Dodds alert designers of teacher education curricula to such differences.

4. *Knowledge and skills intended to serve as the shared technical culture for teachers must be integrated and sequenced appropriately, with demonstrated applicability to and utility in work roles.*

Although not all of the process and content in teacher education should be selected from a technological perspective (Lawson, 1983a), a shared technical culture by definition comprises knowledge and skills that may be readily applied and used in work. Such applicability and use of this technical culture must be explicit in the educational design for teacher education and be reinforced throughout the curriculum. Integration requires comprehensive packaging of knowledge and skills, and content- as well as process-sequencing requires that teacher education programs implement the same instructional design principles that instructional technologists in physical education offer would-be and practicing teachers. In short, recruits should be aware that their experiences in teacher education mirror the same guidelines offered for effective instruction, curricular progression, and evaluation—guidelines that should be offered in textbooks and related professional coursework. For students, this is strong proof that a shared technical culture is applicable and useful in work.

5. *Accreditation and certification standards must be made more stringent and must be faithfully implemented.*

Quality control in any profession hinges largely upon accreditation of professional education programs and the certification of practitioners. In fields such as physical education, whereby pluralism in work practices reduces professional effectiveness both in schools and in teacher education programs, such quality control measures can be used to reduce pluralism and increase quality.

For example, if the ever-expanding knowledge base about the process and content for designing, implementing, conducting, and evaluating professional education and teacher education programs is to be used as a kind of shared technical culture for teacher educators, then it also may serve as a foundation for deriving standards for both accreditation and certification. And it seems safe to say that such standards would mean, in the case of some teacher education programs, either dramatic investments in teacher education to meet the new standards or elimination of programs that cannot secure the required resources. Either way the result is greater uniformity and less pluralism, and both affect in a beneficial way occupational socialization and, in turn, teacher education and school practice.

6. *The transition from teacher education to the first 2 years of teaching must itself be managed carefully.*

For a recruit, entry into the schools as a beginning teacher marks another direct encounter with organizational socialization, particularly its bureaucratic form. If the shared technical culture disseminated in teacher education is to be used in practice, then a planned transition for new teachers is required, one that places a premium on finding ways for new teachers to create instructional environments in which their knowledge and skill may be employed. Just as teacher educators and experienced teachers must work together to improve recruitment efforts, so too is such cooperation required to nurture the professional development of the new teacher. And since today's new teachers become tomorrow's veterans, such a linkage between universities and schools paves the way for lasting relationships providing for mutual, professional enhancement, perhaps remedying now-disturbing patterns in knowledge use and practices by teachers (Lawson, 1985a, 1985b).

7. Future teachers must master the twin abilities to problem-set and problem-solve in varying work organizations.

All schools are not alike. All students do not learn the same skill or concept the same way. The ethos of a school often influences student achievement. These are among the findings that suggest variability among schools and teacher roles therein.

With such variability in mind, a deliberative orientation toward policy in teacher education has been offered (Lawson, 1983a). In this perspective, teachers should learn where, how, when, and under what conditions to set goals and employ appropriate problem-solving techniques. Such a problem-setting and problem-solving arsenal comprises the shared technical culture for teachers and teaching. In other words, a shared technical culture for teachers functions like contingency-management for administrators; teachers can be prepared to act independently as the contingencies warrant. Since teaching is lonely work (Lortie, 1975), a shared technical culture enhances the impact of teacher education and increases teaching effectiveness.

Summary and Conclusions

The literature on occupational socialization, although expanding, is nevertheless a recent addition to the teacher education literature, and only a selective sampling of it has been presented here. It is possible to conclude, however, that this literature and its implications promise significant improvements in the design and conduct of teacher education programs. To be sure, the business of deriving guidelines is easier than actually reconceptualizing, implementing, and evaluating them. And even though some guidelines can be offered with increased confidence, there remain unanswered questions about teacher education. Among these questions are those pertaining to the relationship between occupational socialization and a teacher's role perceptions and teaching behaviors in physical education.

Nevertheless, the preceding analysis and others like it have established the import of the literature on occupational socialization for the design, conduct, and assessment of teacher education. The next challenge may be to convince teacher educators and other professors to broaden their visions of the challenges associated with the education of teachers, including the requirements for new relationships with practicing teachers in schools. Above all, teacher educators would be wise to realize that the implications derived from the research on occupational socialization help to comprise a shared technical culture for teacher education professors. Teacher educators thus would do well to practice what they preach to their students. Teacher educators should endeavor to identify an

applicable and useful shared technical culture for their work and, in this connection, they should not be at all surprised to learn that the instructional principles they present to would-be teachers also merit faithful implementation in teacher education programs.

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