Role Identity: At the Intersection of Organizational Socialization

and Individual Sensemaking of New Principals and Vice-Principals

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This study of one mid-sized Canadian school district employed a case study approach to uncover and document the influences of organizational socialization, sensemaking, and perceptions of self-efficacy on the development of administrators' role identities. Findings describe formal and informal socialization processes experienced by administrators, how administrators made sense of their socialization, and how these processes influenced the development of their role identity and subsequent practice. A new framework for considering the organizational socialization of administrators is presented. This study will be of interest to those responsible for planning succession, professional development, and administrator preparedness programs.

Introduction

The nature of the role and responsibilities of school administrators have changed in recent years. Increasingly the job has become more complex and multifaceted, and the myriad of educational reforms have only added to the demands of leadership requiring the acquisition of new kinds of skills, knowledge, and dispositions. The complexities of the role make the job challenging and demanding. Principals are expected to lead in schools with increased student diversity including differences in culture and language, socio-economic status, and emotional, physical, and learning abilities. Necessary training, mentorship, and support often have not preceded or accompanied these changes, and increases in demands have resulted in stress, job dissatisfaction and anxiety for many principals and vice (assistant) principals.

There has been an increase in research in educational leadership in recent years. However, this has occurred within the context of a growing problem in leadership development and succession due to an aging workforce and higher retirement rates. The predicted shortage of qualified administrators in Canada is being borne out across the country. Grimmett and Echols (2001) asserted that the average retirement age for administrators is no different from the retirement age of teachers (58.7) and if everyone took this option, this would lead to the retirement of 13,300 educators in British Columbia by 2009. It is a reasonable assumption that many of these would be principals and vice-principals leading to an imminent shortage of administrators. Chapman (2005) predicted that 25% of current school administrators in British Columbia will retire in the next few years. As reported by the British Columbia Principals' and Vice Principals' Association (BCPVPA), there are fewer experienced and qualified people pursuing administration, while many principals and vice-principals are choosing to leave the profession. In 2007-08, close to 7% of BCPVPA members retired and more than 4% returned to teaching or chose to leave the profession early. Total attrition in BC was more than 11% in that one year (Merler, 2010). Williams (2003) reported that in Ontario cumulatively 81% of elementary principals and 85% of secondary principals will have retired between 2001 and 2009. By 2010 fully 100% of principals will have been replaced. In the same study, William suggested that there is growing evidence in Ontario that there are declining numbers of applicants for advertised principal positions. This same situation has been reported in the U.K. (Daresh & Male, 2000; Stevenson, 2006), Eastern Europe (Karstanje & Webber, 2008), Africa (Onguko, Abdalla, & Webber, 2008), Mexico (Slater, Garcia, & Gorosave, 2008), Scotland (Cowie & Crawford, 2008), and Australia (Barty, Thomson, Blackmore, & Sachs, 2005; Wildy & Clarke, 2008).

In light of these problems, what are educational organizations doing to ensure adequate candidate preparation and support for new appointees as they transition into the ranks of administration? Has there been sufficient scrutiny of the preparation and socialization processes, and if these are able to meet the goals of the organization as well as the needs of individuals involved? Or are these somehow disconnected?

The Study

The purpose of this study was to determine and describe the interaction, connection, or misalignment between the organizational socialization of new administrators, their sensemaking and perceptions of self-efficacy, and subsequent role identity development. It was anticipated that this study would provide those senior district administrators and school boards concerned with developing and supporting new administrators with insights into the processes of organizational socialization and if these align to meet the goals of the organization and the needs of the individual. It was also anticipated that the insights of this study would have implications for those responsible for the planning of succession and training of administrators with the goal to develop and implement more successful professional development and preparedness programs.

This case study of one school district (called the District) sought to uncover and describe the influences of organizational socialization, sensemaking, and perceptions of self-efficacy on the development of administrators' role identities. The District is a medium sized Canadian school jurisdiction with approximately 21,500 students in 42 schools situated in a small urban centre, with the majority of students coming from an urban or semi-rural setting.

Data collection methods included interviews, document analysis, and observations. The primary data sources were semi-structured interviews. Supplementary data sources included documents, informal conversations, field notes, notes from the researcher's participation in District events, and researcher reflections. The use of multiple sources of data was used to ensure sufficient quantity and quality of data (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Yin, 2008). This study occurred during the 2009-2010 school year, and data were collected over a period of seven months. The data collection and analysis involved triangulation as prescribed by qualitative research methodology. The use of multiple sources of data allowed for corroboration of evidence in order to provide a rich description of District structures and processes as well as the perspectives of the individuals involved.

For the purposes of this study, data were collected primarily through 18 in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Interview question themes included participant reflection on their teaching experience, formal and informal preparation for administration, socialization experiences both formal and informal, perceptions of self-efficacy, administrator roles and expectations, and levels of support received. Shorter, follow-up interviews were conducted by telephone or in person with participants when more information or clarification was sought. The researcher also had the opportunity to have many informal conversations with participants as the study progressed.

The participants included two administration candidates, eight vice-principals, six principals, and two senior District administrators all new to their positions. Direct observation during on-site visits and documentation such as policy and procedures manuals, reports, newsletters, meeting agendas and minutes, and materials from workshops and training sessions were collected and analyzed on an ongoing basis. Attending District meetings, events, and administrator in-service sessions allowed for significant opportunities for the researcher to be

4

immersed as participant-observer and to gain added insight to answer the research questions that guided this study.

All interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Interview data were initially analyzed using a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). As each new interview was transcribed, it was compared to all others. Following the methods described by Glaser and Strauss, the first analysis scanned for larger patterns of responses to recognize any need for refocus or elaboration. As the data were further analyzed and more data added, larger categories emerged. As these categories were refined, patterns emerged that were reflective of the reviewed literature. Finally, the data were re-analyzed and then coded to fit the patterns and categories that emerged. Eventually, 26 coding categories emerged and were used to analyze the data.

Specifically, these questions guided this research:

1. What are the organizational structures and processes and who are the stakeholders that contribute to the socialization of new and experienced school administrators appointed to new positions?

2. How do new administrators make sense of their organizational socialization and develop perceptions of self-efficacy?

3. To what extent do these processes encourage or discourage creative and innovative practices in new administrators?

4. To what extent do socialization processes support the goals of the organization as well as the needs of individuals in developing their requisite role identities?

To answer these questions, the study sought to uncover the stakeholders involved in the socialization process, as well as the signs, symbols, rituals, preparation, selection and induction processes, role descriptors, training procedures, and policies that contribute to the socialization of newly appointed administrators. The study further sought to develop an understanding of how

participants made sense of these structures and processes and developed their role identities upon assuming their new positions.

Organizational Socialization

Succession, Recruitment, and Retention

Administrator succession is a process that is significantly important to the school involved and the organization as a whole. Effective succession planning ensures that leadership positions are filled in a timely and efficient manner when they become vacant. However, it is more than that. Effective succession planning also includes socialization processes that facilitate and support the successful integration of the new administrator into the organization and their new school (Hart, 1991, 1993, 1994b; K. Louis, et al., 2010; Mascall & Leithwood, 2010).

The District was experiencing significant succession issues as evidenced by the 55 changes out of 106 school-based, district, and operational administration positions announced during the year of this study. At the same time, more was being demanded of administrators at all levels. The District, more than ever, was requiring adherence to policy and procedure, but also expecting administrators to be entrepreneurial, creative, and innovative in carrying out their responsibilities. More fiscal burden and responsibility was downloaded to schools at a time of budget cutbacks, and more cost recovery and revenue generation was being initiated by the District. At the same time, the District needed and expected compliance and commitment to the implementation of various educational initiatives including new instruction and assessment practices, data collection and reporting, parental involvement, and requirements for increased instructional leadership, to name a few.

In this context, the District recognized that the recruitment and socialization of

committed, energetic, and technically competent administrators was posing significant

challenges (Fink & Brayman, 2004, 2006). Senior administration expressed concern that the

current processes were not adequate to fully sustain the human resources needs of the District.

As one senior administrator stated:

> One of the barriers to doing a good job of creating a succession plan and a model
> for support and development is the tyranny of the urgent. So everybody is on this
> gerbil wheel and isn't stepping off to prioritize to do the right thing. So there are
> ad hoc conversations that happen occasionally in a meaningful way and
> occasionally in a loose way. (Senior Administrator)

The District was also having difficulty finding quality candidates to fill vacated

administration positions as evidenced by the need for repeated rounds of advertising and

interviewing for vice-principal and principal positions during the year of this study. Senior

administrators recognized the need for effective processes and programs to assist in the selection

and development of the next generation of school leaders. The difficulties were described as

significant, but District measures to address the issues were seen by some senior administrators

as reacting to specific vacancies rather than developing a coherent succession plan. A senior

administrator described the situation:

> Yes, we're plugging the hole in the dike. And missing the hole for a while so
> there's leaking. And then all of a sudden the thumb goes in the dike, and
> sometimes there is still water spurting because of the results of not having got
> there soon enough and not having some way to solve the problem.
> (Senior Administrator)

The District had taken some recruitment steps to alleviate the problem but solutions were

not easily achievable. The District had enough candidates willing to apply for positions when

they became available. The problems stemmed from not being able to find the quality candidates

who had demonstrated aspirations and a commitment to a career trajectory that included school administration. In addition, even if potential candidates were identified and encouraged to apply, some were reluctant to do so because they saw the job as too demanding and time consuming.

Definition of the Role

Participants at all levels in the District had difficulty in clearly defining the role of school administrator. It could be posited that the complexities of the roles defy succinct definitions. In addition to a myriad of administrative duties, the District in this study expressed expectations that instructional leadership would take precedence over all other activities. As reported by administrators, this expectation along with the required managerial duties resulted in role ambiguity and considerable work related stress. Additionally, administrators expressed that, because they could not fulfill all of these expectations, they felt that they were being criticized. As a result, some felt they were underappreciated and undervalued by the District. This proved detrimental to the development of their perceptions of efficacy to perform competently in their roles. When individuals feel that their organization values their work, they interpret this as a sign of respect achieved through their increased status within the organization. This is likely to result in increased commitment to the organization due to enhanced identity with the organization and positive self-concept (Chattopadhyay & George, 2001; Fuller, et al., 2009; Tyler, 1999).

In addition to feeling overwhelmed by the scope of their new duties, new administrators in the District expressed that one of the most difficult parts of their transition was giving up their teacher identity and accepting that there are professional and personal divides between teachers and administration. Some administrators expressed they had difficulty in making the transition

from teacher to administrator and accepting the role differentials. As one vice-principal

explained:

> I think the biggest thing is that I discovered that I wasn't part of the teachers
> anymore. Now I was an administrator, and I really didn't like that feeling. And it's
> not like they are doing it on purpose. It's just the way it is. And now you've
> crossed over to the other side, which is unfortunate. I didn't know there was such
> a big difference. (Vice-Principal)

New administrators in this study reported that they often struggled to relinquish the confidence

they felt as teachers and to accept that their new positions were significantly different and

required new knowledge and skills.

Formal Socialization Experiences: Role Learning and Performance

For socialization to be effective, the newcomer must come to know and internalize the

norms, values, expectations, and role identities that contribute to the performance of their role

and the organization (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). Effective socialization facilitates role-

related learning and enhances confidence and perceptions of self-efficacy (Bravo, Peiro,

Rodriguez, & Whitely, 2003). On the other hand, ineffective socialization can increase role

ambiguity and results in poor adjustment to the new role and organization (Ashforth & Saks,

1996). The District had structures and processes in place to assist in the recruitment and effective

socialization of candidate and new administrators. These structures included the Leadership

Academy, New and Nearly New training sessions, and Superintendent's monthly meetings.

The Leadership Academy had been in existence in various formats for 10 years in the

District. In its formative years, leaders and potential leaders from all segments of District

personnel were invited to participate including administrators, support, and operations staff. At

the time of the study, the Academy existed solely for the development of potential vice-principals. Candidates formally applied, made a presentation, and interviewed with senior staff to be accepted into the Academy. Successful candidates were released from their teaching assignments for six afternoon sessions and spent another full day observing principals or vice-principals in different schools. Academy sessions included presentations on functional or operational topics, but emphasis was placed on school and instructional leadership. Candidates reported that they found these sessions rewarding and enjoyed the opportunity to connect with other candidates and meet District staff.

Senior staff and candidates both reported that the Leadership Academy was also a time to evaluate and be evaluated. Candidates reported that there was a friendly but competitive edge to the sessions and felt that they were being "sized up" by senior administrators and fellow candidates. The District hired new vice-principals out of this candidate group who were placed in a pool of administrators to be assigned to schools as the need arose. Candidates stated that one of their main goals during the Leadership Academy sessions was to listen and observe.

As a senior administrator explained, the purpose of the Leadership Academy was to introduce candidates to the Leadership Standards and to explain the process for selecting vice-principals. But both senior administrators and candidates agreed that there was a tacit understanding that this was also a process of continuous evaluation. One candidate called it a year-long interview. Candidates recognized that demonstrating an understanding of the Leadership Standards was important to be invited to apply to participate in the vice-principal selection process. However, candidates also suggested that they would have benefited from more information and training that would support them in the managerial aspects of their future leadership positions.

The Leadership Academy experience was an important rite of passage for candidate administrators as well as an opportunity for the District to begin to inculcate the normative behaviours, dispositions, and modes of action expected of new administrators. When viewed through a social identity theory lens, the Leadership Academy allowed candidates to begin to develop their sense of social identification with the organization. Candidates began to classify themselves in terms of their affiliation to the organization and the administrative group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This perception of belongingness provided the basis of the construction of a social identity due to the development of positive self-esteem derived from this sense of affiliation (van Dick, 2001). As this positive social identity developed in candidate administrators, this resulted in an increase for the need for positive evaluations from others with higher status in the group. The need for positive feedback resulted in individuals seeking approval from senior administrators by demonstrating that they were internalizing the prototypical or expected behaviours as exhibited by the facilitators of these sessions (Tyler, 1999; Tyler, Kramer, & John, 1999). Candidate administrators suggested that they could not hope for notice from senior administration and promotion into administrative positions without a demonstration of acceptance and internalization of the intended outcomes of this socialization process.

All new administrators, and those with 3 years of experience or less, were required to attend Friday morning meetings at the School Board Office called the New and Nearly New training sessions. Senior staff presented on a variety of topics ranging from collective agreements, health and safety, and maintenance operations. Each quickly paced session usually covered more than one topic. The purpose of the sessions was to disseminate pertinent information on policy, procedures, and persons to contact for assistance. These sessions were

11

well received by those required to attend and those more experienced administrators who attended voluntarily to receive updated information. The sessions did not include much interaction since their purpose was to act as a conduit for procedural information from District personnel to school-based administrators. Led by senior District staff, with an emphasis on policy and procedure, these sessions provided valuable information and, at the same time, reinforced the District's expectations for fulfilling the role of administrator. This readily applicable information gave new and transitioning administrators more confidence for performing in their roles as evidenced by participants' positive reactions. Many participants said they wished they had this information sooner and hoped for more such in-service opportunities in the future.

Superintendent's meetings were held monthly at the District's central Educational Centre. These meeting were attended by almost every administrator in the District. Some vice-principals did not attend every meeting, but attendance was a requirement for all principals. The atmosphere was collegial and friendly at these meetings, with lots of conversation and laughter before the meetings were called to order. This informal interaction and networking was described by participants as an important opportunity to maintain personal and professional relationships with colleagues. A substantial amount of information was always presented during the course of the day. The superintendent started each meeting with his presentation followed by presentations from senior administration and other District staff. The meeting agendas were full and, although the tone of the meetings was agreeable, many administrators would privately complain after the fact that they felt overwhelmed by the amount and scope of information and the number of directives and initiatives.

The informal parts of the Superintendent's and other administrator meetings were as important for socializing new administrators as were more formal presentations and reports by senior administration. Question and answer sessions, group activity portions of meetings, and informal conversations during breaks all reinforced group norms and expectations. As Crow and Pounders (1996) suggested, and as was borne out by this study, this often was a time when rituals, rites, stories, and myths were transferred from more senior experienced administrators to newcomers. These processes would prove significant for new administrators. According to social identity theory, individuals come to know themselves through social interaction with others and, as a result, a social construct and self-concept begins to take shape (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). People apply self-definitions as a consequence of the organizational role positions they occupy, and they learn the expectations of their position through a process of self-definition mediated by their interactions with and acceptance by high status members of the group. As Burke (1980) noted, these definitions of self and role are linked as social identity and eventual role performance. Social or organizational roles become the expectations attached to a position by the group, while organizational identities are the internalized role expectations by the individual (Stryker & Burke, 2000). For new administrators, both their organizational identities and role performance expectations were influenced through continued interaction with colleagues and senior administration. Critically, their perceptions of acceptance, role performance efficacy, and feelings of being valued by the organization were also influenced by the levels of positive feedback received from higher status senior members of the group.

The District's Leadership Academy, New and Nearly New sessions, and Superintendent's meetings fall into what has been described as formal (segregating newcomers from their workplace); collective (grouping newcomers for common socialization experiences); sequential

(identifiable stages); fixed (timed); serial (involve experienced members); and divestiture (newcomers are expected to divest certain characteristics and dispositions) socialization tactics (Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Collectively these strategies and tactics were described as *institutionalized* approaches to socialization (Jones, 1986). In this study, new administrators reported that, for the most part, they found the information gained and learning experienced from these District processes meaningful and readily applicable. Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002, 2006) found that institutionalized socialization tactics predicted learning in social, interpersonal, role, and organizational domains. Participants in this study reported that having the opportunity to gain knowledge of processes, procedures, policies, and expectations contributed to their effectiveness in their roles and lowered anxiety. They also reported that knowing the right people and making connections was equally important. With more and better knowledge, and by developing a network of contacts, administrators developed higher perceptions of efficacy to perform in their roles.

Informal Socialization Experiences: Role Learning and Performance

In contrast to institutionalized socialization tactics, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) described several ad hoc socialization processes. These include informal (experienced and new employees are integrated during socialization); individual (individuals are socialized singularly rather than collectively); non-sequential (stages of socialization are more random); variable (no advance notice of timeline or schedule); disjunctive (entering the role unaided by mentors); and investiture (valuing the newcomer's previous experiences and dispositions) socialization tactics. Collectively, these were described by Jones (1986) as *individualized* socialization tactics. These usually happened more by default than by design (Bravo, et al., 2003).

The District's institutionalized socialization structures and processes worked in tandem with more localized individualized tactics that involved interactions with various stakeholders. As Hart (1992, 1994a, 1994b) reported, personal contact with central office personnel, administrative colleagues, teachers, parents, and students significantly contributed to the socialization of new administrators. Administrators in this study reported the stakeholder groups that influenced their socialization included senior management, supervisory principals, teachers, parents, and students.

Senior administration. Senior management had a vested interest in influencing the socialization of new and transitioning administrators. By establishing and supporting various training and development programs, the District provided opportunities for candidate and new administrators to be acculturated into the expectations and requirements of the administrative role. Senior administration had the opportunity to set the agenda and instill the values, dispositions, behaviours, and skills expected of administrators in the District. As one senior administrator explained:

> They can't just be a manager. And that's what we're finding that happens to them because it's so difficult. Because the day-to-day world is about management. But to move up, right now, you can't. You've got to be leading teachers in instruction and assessment. (Senior Administrator)

However, school-based administrators reported that they were, for the most part, overwhelmed by the day-to-day exigencies of their jobs and that instructional leadership intentions and behaviours were often superseded by the managerial demands of the position (Hallinger, 2005). As one principal explained:

> I think there is a tendency that there are so many administrative things that we're asked to do, that the most important thing becomes the last thing that we do... The unfortunate thing is that we spend so much time dealing with the urgent stuff that

it just seems we don't even have the energy sometimes to do the important stuff.
There just isn't enough time. (Principal)

In this regard, senior and school-based administrators had differing views on the expectations and realities of the job. Whereas senior administrators expected that instructional leadership would take precedence, school administrators reported their frustration at not being able to fulfill those expectations due to the daily demands to react to emergent issues at their schools. This resulted in feelings of incongruity and frustration in administrators. In essence, it was difficult for administrators to make sense of these competing expectations.

Administrators expressed that they could not resolve this dilemma. Participants reported that competing requirements for accountability and managerial compliance, increasing daily demands for reaction to emergent issues, and senior administration's expectations for continual instructional leadership resulted in feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. Administrators were having difficulty reconciling the expectations and realities of their jobs although they tried very hard to meet both organizational goals. As a result, they expressed difficulty in developing the necessary perceptions of self-efficacy to competently enact their roles. They doubted that they were doing a good job and could not count on approval from their superiors. Although senior administration recognized this as problematic, no solutions were given. The District maintained concurrent expectations for managerial expertise and effective instructional leadership.

Principals. The hierarchical organization of school and District leadership influenced the socialization of new administrators. The relationship that had the greatest impact on vice-principals was his or her relationship with their principal (Calabrese & Tucker-Ladd, 1991; D. Gorton & Kattman, 1985; R. Gorton, 1987; Kaplan & Owings, 1999). This is not new. As R. Gorton (1987) indicated, "no other entity has a greater impact on the fortunes of an assistant

principal in a specific school than the principal of that school" (p. 3). New vice-principals in this study concluded that, in essence, their professional development and chances for promotion in the future depended on the level of involvement and support they would receive from their principal. However, the level of this support was not uniform and a commitment to supporting the vice-principal varied from principal to principal. It was perceived by both new and experienced administrators that this discrepancy in support impacted the opportunities for advancement for new administrators and the development of a collective sense of efficacy throughout the District.

In addition, a lack of a clear definition of the role created feelings of ambiguity for a number of new administrators. These new administrators reported that supporting the principal's efforts at implementing school and District initiatives was important but this was seen as secondary to managing the school. Elementary vice-principals reported that the principal expected that their teaching assignments take precedence over their administrative functions. Furthermore, the District emphasized the need for instructional leadership and the adoption of the Leadership Standards as foundational for the role, but several new administrators expressed that they felt they were actually expected by senior administration to manage the building rather than lead. This produced role performance ambiguity for these new administrators due to the perceived incongruity between the beliefs and expectations expressed by the District and the tacitly understood expectations for effective management rather than leadership activities.

Effective socialization results in the development of shared norms, beliefs, values, and expectations, and contributes to organizational commitment and cohesion (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Effective socialization practices are stabilizing factors in organizations (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003), and have been associated with higher job satisfaction, social

integration, role performance, lower role ambiguity and stress (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994; Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Taormina, 1999). The reports from participants in this study suggest that the mixed messages and ambiguous role expectations resulted in significant performance pressures and anxiety for new administrators. This incongruity in shared beliefs and role expectations could be interpreted as a root cause for the variations in organizational commitment reported by administrators. It may hold that less effective socialization experiences led to a lack of clarity of role expectations which lowered the overall commitment to the job and organization for some of these new administrators.

Teachers, parents, and students. Teachers, parents, and students played a significant role in the socialization and development of new and transitioning administrators (Hart, 1991, 1992, 1994a). Teachers expected that new administrators had immediate and full knowledge of all procedures and functions of the school and District. Several administrators reported that teachers tested them immediately or very early in their assignments, and that some teachers came to them with explicit agendas to inform them "that's the way we do things here." New administrators reported that parents also immediately expected them to be fully competent in the affairs of the school and District. Most of all, parents expected that administrators maintain order and safety in their schools and that they treat their children fairly. New administrators found that, from the start, some of their most challenging situations involved "difficult parents." Several administrators stated that parents approached them seeking advice on raising their children. New administrators, particularly younger new administrators, found this very difficult as they felt they lacked the experience or training to engage in counseling activities. New administrators also

reported that they had to solve problems or appease parents so that those issues would not reach the desks of their principal or director.

New administrators state that they needed more support and ongoing mentorship as they transitioned into their new roles. These powerful informal socialization experiences were not well understood. When less than successful, these interactions with teachers, parents, and students encompassed a set of rituals, rites, and role performance expectations that often created feelings of ambiguity and self-doubt in the new administrator (Crow & Pounders, 1996). As identified by Paglis and Green (2002), this lack of perception of locus of control and self-confidence resulted in lower perception of self-efficacy and increased self-doubt for competent role performance in these new administrators. Increased support and mentorship would have mitigated the longer term effects of these initial socialization experiences.

The needs of the organization and individuals are intertwined and the processes of socialization address both sets of requirements. Both institutionalized and individualized socialization are important. Institutionalized (more formal) socialization tactics were more easily recognized by participants in this study. Because these tactics were more recognizable and more easily embraced by new administrators, they presented more opportunities for novices to receive notice from their superiors for approved responses and behaviours. In this sense, compliance to the expectations derived from institutionalized socialization experiences resulted in participants receiving increased approval from those deemed important in the District resulting in increased status for these individuals. As a result, administrators reported experiencing less ambiguity and anxiety and increased role clarity upon assuming their new roles.

Administrators in this study reported that the more institutionalized socialization processes they experienced, the more they felt they were acquiring the requisite knowledge to

perform in their roles. The Leadership Academy allowed candidates to more clearly understand

the dispositions, behaviours, and actions required of administrators. Candidates appreciated the

exposure to the Leadership Standards and specific information about the vice-principal selection

process. In the New and Nearly New sessions, administrators reported that the information they

received was immediately applicable and relevant to their jobs. Superintendent's monthly

meetings were less well received due to the overwhelming amount of information imparted and

the added requirements and directives that came from these meetings; however, participants

stated that they enjoyed the feelings of camaraderie and the opportunities to interact with

colleagues at these gatherings.

Informal or more individualized socialization tactics were also important to new and

transitioning administrators but resulted in more ambiguity and feelings of anxiety in

participants. In the immediacy of emergent situations, new administrators felt pressured to

perform and, either rose to the occasion and felt reassurance from their successes, or felt they

stumbled and questioned their efficacy. The finding of this study suggested that neither the

institutionalized nor individualized forms of socialization in the District, although intertwined

and important, fully prepared novices for their roles. It might also be the case that no formal or

informal socialization can take the place of time and experience on the job. However, most new

administrators in the District did not feel adequately prepared to take on their new positions. As a

vice-principal suggested:

> I wish I brought more to the table. I wish I had more experience... I wish I had
> more to bring to the table, but I just don't have it yet. (Vice-Principal)

In general, participants in this study reported they felt unsupported as they entered their

new positions. The most common concern expressed by new and transitioning administrators

was that they felt alone in their initial years of service. The greatest feelings of support, and subsequent development of self-efficacy, resulted from the more formal socialization tactics employed by the District. More anxiety and lower perceptions of self-efficacy resulted from informal socialization. This pointed to the need for more direct support from senior administration for new and transitioning administrators.

Individual Differences and Proactivity

The personal characteristics of administrators also had an impact on their socialization. Participating administrators reported having different approaches and levels of motivation in seeking advice, information, and support from their superiors. A number of informants stated that they had no difficulties accessing information or contacting District personnel if they needed help, and that they were expected to do so by their immediate superiors. Others reported that they preferred to solve problems on their own and had a *go it alone* predisposition. These administrators exhibited characteristics that included self-reliance and confidence in their abilities to solve problems. However, several new administrators reported that they were intimidated, and felt they were being constantly questioned and evaluated by their superiors. The new administrators that reported this unease were also the ones who said they felt the least confident in performing in their role. They also reported lower job satisfaction and questioned their decision to enter into administration. One new administrator stated:

> It was not the way you would want to be indoctrinated into admin. I would say
> that every day that first year I questioned why I got into admin. You know, when I
> started to get the tap on the shoulder to consider getting into admin, I said, let's
> give that a try. But that first year - if this is what it's all about, I want no part of it.
> (Vice-Principal)

The more proactive the new administrator was in seeking and gaining role and organization related information, the more successful was their integration into their new role. New administrators used a number of proactive tactics. They set goals for themselves for their learning and monitored their progress. New administrators were conscious of and monitored their interactions with others, particularly those more senior in the organization. They gauged responses of others and often rehearsed how they would respond to emerging situations and interactions. New administrators reported that they were self-critical and set high standards for themselves, even if they did not have a clear picture of what they should be doing and how well they were doing it (Saks & Ashforth, 1996). They suggested that ongoing feedback would have assisted them in this process (Ashforth, et al., 2007).

Sensemaking and Perceptions of Self-Efficacy

Impact of Changes, Contrasts, and Surprises

With a new position, often comes the need for an adjusted or new professional identity. Individuals entering new roles make these adjustments due to new role status and expectations. M. Louis (1980) suggested that this change requires newcomers to a role or organization to make sense of their entry and socialization experiences. The more elements of changes the newcomer faces, the more adjustments and sensemaking is required of the individual. In varying degrees, administrators in this study had difficulty adjusting to their new position, not only because of the new expectations and demands placed on them, but because they felt they left roles in which they were capable and confident and entered new roles that were unfamiliar with expectations that were not well understood.

These new administrators had difficulty making sense of the expectations that came with their new roles and had difficulty adjusting to their new professional persona. For some, this change was deeply personally and professionally troubling and they questioned why they entered into administration. The contrasts between their old job and new required that these individuals had to make sense of their new positions by letting go of their old roles and taking on a new role identity. This proved most difficult for new administrators that were leaving teaching to enter the vice-principal's office. They were leaving the classroom where they felt competent and confident as teachers to new administrative positions where they felt they were constantly second guessing themselves.

All administrators in this study reported that the transition into their new jobs involved both excitement and a good deal of frustration. All were excited about the new possibilities of "making a difference" and "doing good things for students" and said they were looking forward to their new assignments. However, most new administrators reported feelings of being overwhelmed at times, not having enough information and skills to perform the tasks, and not getting enough support when they needed help. The expectations that they had for the new role and themselves seemed unmet and they were surprised at the scope of change required. In many instances, the newcomer's expectations did not match the realities of the job (M. Louis, 1980). When unfamiliar or difficult situations arose, these individuals who were not effectively socialized did not have enough relevant information and knowledge to make sense of their situations and to act confidently and effectively.

Developing Perceptions of Self-Efficacy

The institutionalized socialization opportunities provided by the District alleviated anxiety and provided some of the basic competencies requested and required by new and transitioning administrators. However, individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and investiture socialization processes also significantly influenced administrators (Jones, 1983, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). These socialization tactics influenced the development of self-confidence in new administrators in both positive and negative ways. By having to solve immediate problems and manage the daily exigencies of the school, new administrators were able to fulfill the most important requirement for building perceptions of self-efficacy: successful or mastery experiences (Bandura, 1993, 1997). However, if their initial actions were not successful, new administrators questioned their capability and efficacy to perform in the role.

All participants in this study reported that they found their first year or two in administration very challenging. They also reported feeling alone and less supported than they expected. However, they made their own way, learned from their mistakes, but mostly learned from their successes. Their successes built positive perceptions of self-efficacy and allowed these new administrators to persevere in the face of difficulties (Garies & Tschannen-Moran, 2005). As a result, they reported that they knew what to do and did not want to rely on others for help.

The second way individuals develop positive self-efficacy is through, what Bandura (1993, 1997) called, vicarious learning. Observing successful modes of action and learning from trusted role models or mentors allow individuals to emulate those behaviours when faced with similar situations; however, observing others fail despite concerted effort lowers the individual's judgments of their own abilities and undermines confidence. In this study, new and transitioning administrators consistently expressed that, for the most part, they had to solve problems on their

24

own. They felt little guidance was provided, with no formal mentorship in place. Individuals found help where they could and formed their own informal mentorship networks with trusted colleagues. Some participants felt that this had to be done surreptitiously in order not to be perceived as less competent and not having the capability to solve difficult problems on their own. For the most part, administrators felt on their own and with less support that they hoped for.

The third source of information for the development of perceptions of self-efficacy is, what Bandura (1993, 1997) called, social persuasion. Individuals who are verbally persuaded that they possess the necessary skills to succeed are more likely to believe they have what it takes and will act with diligence and perseverance to attain their goals. Individuals need support from mentors and superiors to develop the skills to enact their roles confidently. Participants in this study reported that they received little ongoing support once appointed. Although support was initially offered, senior administration was perceived to be so busy as not to be able to offer consistent mentorship and assistance. The majority of participants suggested that they would benefit from mentorship; however, they would want to choose their mentors themselves. No formal mentorship program existed in the District during the time of this study.

Feelings of not being supported and aloneness impede important aspects of socialization and sensemaking. The social aspects of organizational and individual sensemaking are particularly important. Social interactions reinforce commonly shared meanings and effective modes of action, and reduce ambiguity and feeling of anxiety (Maitlis, 2005; Poole, Gioia, & Gray, 1989; Stensaker, Falkenberg, & Gronhaug, 2008). If given the opportunity in a non-evaluative setting, individuals will proactively seek input from more influential members of the group (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). However, the majority of participants in this study reported

that they did not feel they had enough opportunities to seek information or advice, and several reported that they thought that their superiors would view them as less competent if they did.

Managing stress and anxiety significantly contributes to the development of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993, 1997). All participants in the study reported that they entered their new positions with high hopes and excitement for new opportunities and experiences. Essentially, all participants were fundamentally optimistic. For some, however, the demands and expectations of the job were wearing them down sooner than they expected. Some questioned their ability to continue for the long term.

In spite of all the challenges, the majority of participants remained optimistic and, in varying degrees, found ways to maintain enthusiasm for their jobs. Participating administrators spoke of the positive impact teamwork, or a sense of collective efficacy, had on the development of their individual perceptions of efficacy. Social cognitive theory describes perceived collective efficacy as the level of confidence a group has in its capabilities to organize and perform tasks necessary to attain desired goals (Bandura, 1997; Goddard, 2002; Goddard, LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). This strong sense of collective efficacy enables a group to work cooperatively and with persistence to solve problems and attain goals. However, many administrators in this study stated that this collective sense of efficacy may have existed at schools with administrative teams, but less of this collective sense of purpose and competence exited District-wide. This especially concerned administrators who were alone in smaller schools. They suggested that this exacerbated their feelings of isolation, and suggested that structured opportunities to interact with other administrators in order to collaboratively solve problems would enhance their confidence to learn and perform in their new roles.

Creativity and Innovation

Socialization strategies and tactics have a bearing on the actions of individuals in organizations. As Greenfield (1985) reported, principals tended to be socialized through a combination of institutionalized and individualized tactics. He suggested that principals were more often socialized individually, informally, randomly, by veteran colleagues, and with an emphasis on divesting earlier teaching experiences and dispositions. However, the use of experienced administrators as mentors often led to conservative approaches to practice and the maintenance of the status quo. As Cline and Necochea (2000) suggested, and as borne out by this study, socialization processes often reward conformity, stability, and complacency rather than innovative leadership behaviours.

Creative individuals and organizations are ones that can solve problems on a regular basis or develop ideas that are novel and become valued. Creative individuals and organizations come up with solutions when problems arise and are always asking what makes sense and what does not, and if it does not make sense, what can be done about it (Goleman, Kaufman, & Ray, 1993). In this way, individuals as well as organizations become agentic. To do this, individuals and organizations reassess ever changing situations and reorganize to redeploy strategies and courses of action. Having adopted intentions and formulated plans of action, individuals and organizations enact their intentions with deliberately chosen behaviours (Bandura, 1993, 1994, 1997).

Although participants in this study agreed that the District tacitly encouraged innovative practice, administrators at all levels described systemic and cultural barriers to creative and innovative practice. As one senior administrator stated:

Even though we talk and wax philosophic about being entrepreneurial and at the forefront and being creative, the truth is that we are just mired in standards that we've established and don't want to move on. We're really not good at challenging ourselves and taking calculated risks. (Senior Administrator)

In addition, several administrators suggested that, although there was conversation around the need for creative and innovative solutions to challenges and problems, in the end, the District defined creativity and innovation as simply doing more.

Administrators also suggested that the sheer weight and number of District initiatives forced individuals to fall back to doing what they have always done. Interestingly, younger new administrators spoke of knowing what it takes to move up in the organization. At the same time, they spoke of their insistence on maintaining balance in the work and home lives. These dispositions, coupled with their experiences with the District's institutionalized socialization processes, suggested that these new administrators interpreted the predominant view of creative and innovative practice as doing more, but more of the same. This might be a reflection of these novices' initial naivety with regard to the scope of the job and what balance in work and home life actually means. On the other hand, this could also be interpreted as a reflection of the outcomes of the socialization of these novice administrators and their acquiescence to accepted normative behaviours, dispositions, and modes of action as defined by their superiors. In this way, the status quo was perpetuated and reinforced.

Participants in this study recognized that there were systemic barriers to innovative practice inherent in the hierarchical nature of the District. Those at the top exhibited the prototypical behaviours expected of subordinate administrators. Several administrators suggested that, to advance in the organization, they adopted the expected behaviours, attitudes, and modes of action. Individuals learned these behaviours, dispositions, and accepted practices through their

socialization processes. The hierarchical structures and standardized responses were perceived as normative, and newcomers quickly acquiesced and complied with these expectations. As several young new administrators stated: "I know what it takes to get ahead."

Even with the best intentions, the District's socialization strategies and tactics that influenced individuals' sensemaking processes and perceptions of self-efficacy re-created the role identities that were accepted by the group as prototypical (Hogg, 2001). These prototypical role identities reflected those of the individuals in positions of greatest status in the organization (Fielding & Hogg, 1997; van Dijke & de Cremer, 2008). The socialization strategies and tactics utilized by the District ensured that these role identities were inherited by newcomers to administration. As one principal expressed:

> Are we acculturated? Damn right we are. And do you move forward without being acculturated? Not a chance. And the further you diverge from the acculturated path, the more likely you'll make it that you are going nowhere. I mean the culture is very powerful, very powerful... We get into a culture whether it is by design or habit, and you better fit! (Principal)

Role Identity

Influences on Role Identity Development

Social identity theory posits that individuals are motivated to achieve or maintain positive self-esteem, and that self-esteem is partly based on a social identity derived from group membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1978). The development of this social identity is contingent on receiving positive evaluation from others in the group (van Dick, 2001). This social identification allows for feelings of belonging and, as such, social identity partly provides the basis for the development of personal identity (Tajfel, 1978). Individuals are motivated to

adopt those behaviours, dispositions, and modes of actions that are approved by the group (Hogg, et al., 1995; Tyler, et al., 1999; van Dick, 2001). Individuals want approval from others in the group, particularly those with high status.

The District needed leaders and managers, not one or the other. The District also needed loyalty and commitment for the implementation of various initiatives. In order to meet its goals, the District institutionalized the socialization of new and transitioning administrators through its various programs and processes. In all of these socialization structures and activities, the District created opportunities to impart the desired behaviours, dispositions, and modes of action on individuals. It also created opportunities to enhance the development of commitment in individuals by influencing the development of their social and organizational identities.

Participants in this study managed their transition into new roles and the development of their organizational identities by seeking to emulate what they understood to be the normative beliefs, dispositions, and modes of action expected of administrators in the District. They took their cues from those more senior to them, but were also influenced by those in subordinate positions. As their initial promotion into administration depended on favourable interactions and support from senior administration and principals and a demonstrated influence over those in subordinate positions, successful new administrators were able to extract and act on those cues that would prove most beneficial to them (Starbuck & Milliken, 1988). They were able to successful interpret the normative beliefs, dispositions, and modes of actions that were required and were able to re-evaluate and adjust their responses as needed (Isabella, 1990; Weick, 1995). In this way they were able to mesh their personal and professional identities well enough to be recognized as, not only leadership aspirants, but qualified candidate for leadership position worthy of promotion.

Adapting to the Organization's Expectations, Identity, and Commitment

Individuals were better able to adapt to their new roles and identify with the organization by successfully interpreting the beliefs, dispositions, and modes of action demanded by the District as normative expectations of administrators. Organizational affiliation is a specific and important part of an individual's social identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Individuals define themselves in terms of what they perceive their organization represents to them and others (Ng & Feldman, 2008). Since individuals identify with their organization to enhance their status and self-esteem, they take part in the successes and status of the group to add to the construction of their personal identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Turner, 1985; Tajfel, 1978). In this way, individuals within the organization use their association with the group and identify and are committed to those groups that confer status opportunities on them (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). As Tyler and Blader (2003) noted, individuals, in part, evaluate themselves according to perceptions of their status within the organization. The higher they perceive their status and value to be, the more committed to the organization they become.

The District expected, what one administrator called, "missionary zeal" from the leadership team. There were expectations of adherence to modes of behaviour, attitudes, and actions that emulated the prototypical normative behaviours demonstrated by senior administration. These were, in a sense, the inherited expectations that new and transitioning administrators sought to uncover. The District established various formal processes and procedures to transmit certain expectations and to socialize newcomers. Powerful informal socialization processes also influenced roles enacted by individuals. But the organization's goal should also have included better synchronicity between the institutionalized and more

individualized socialization processes. In order to develop positive perceptions of self-efficacy, individuals need requisite knowledge, but also need to feel supported, recognized, and valued by the organization when engaged in these socialization processes.

Very few participants spoke in a way that could be interpreted as seriously disparaging toward the District, but most administrators in this study expressed that they felt very much on their own in their new roles. They accepted this as a fact of the job even though it proved stressful to them. Most spoke of not having enough hours in the day to feel they were doing a competent job but also thought that senior administrators were equally taxed in their positions. There seemed to be a tacit acceptance of the complexities of the job and that the problems would continue to persist. Participants did not express much optimism that their own situation would improve. Instead, new and transitioning administrators saw the situation worsening as budgets shrink and demands and expectations continue to increase. As a result, participants expressed concern about their present and future levels of job satisfaction.

New school administrators reported that, for the most part, their voices were not being heard by senior administration. They felt on their own and with less support than they had expected. They agreed that the organization, as a whole, depends on the commitment of each individual, but that individuals need to feel valued and have opportunities to gain status within the organization. Administrators equated feeling valued with having a genuine voice in the District. The majority of administrators suggested that if they felt that their voices were genuinely heard, this would enhance their overall commitment to their roles and the organization.

Identity Salience

Identity theory also links role identities to an individual's modes of action. Since some identities have more relevance or importance to the individual, their actions will be based on their ability to reconcile conflicting role expectations. This is referred to as identity salience (Hogg, et al., 1995; Stryker & Burke, 2000). The majority of participants in this study struggled with the conflict between their administrator identity and expected "zeal", and their identities as spouses, parents, or friends. The long hours and commitment to their schools and District caused stress, pressure, and imbalance in their lives at work and at home. Some participants reported that they developed ways to cope with this conflict, but all participants recognized this as a personal and professional problem. A particularly honest and insightful description of this personal and professional conflict came from one senior administrator:

> There's huge conflict! So I would say that I have, you know, not maintained friendships outside of the world of education. I let most of those go. And if I do have some that are residual, and I do, I am not a good enough friend. So I would say I'm not as good a friend as I should be except where I've integrated my world with friends who used to be teachers. I am not as good a daughter as I should be. I've prioritized my own children and my work over that…I am not as good as sister and I'm probably not as good wife as I should be because I think I have a partner who values me...and so therefore supports me in that role. But I think I get away with murder. (Senior Administrator)

Interestingly, younger, new administrators reported that they would not succumb to the expectations from superiors to work endless hours. They stated that their priorities included working hard but also enjoying a life outside of work. These younger administrators did not in any way exhibit a lower work ethic, but instead espoused a different work ethos. They were perfectly willing to work hard, but would not acquiesce to the notion that more time at work meant more work accomplished. Some of their older colleagues agreed with the need for a better

work-life balance but expressed regret and that they felt conflicted in their attempts to find this balance. They suggested that, although the District tacitly encouraged administrators to look after themselves, the demands and expectations for role performance tended to contradict this suggestion.

Leadership and Identity

As Hogg (2001) indicated, those members of an organization that most exhibit the accepted or prototypical beliefs, dispositions, and modes of actions are more likely to emerge as leaders, and the most prototypical leaders will be perceived as most effective. Individuals will be more aware of and influenced by these most prototypical members when group membership and approval is salient to their identity (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & Hardie, 1992). In this way, leaders are the individuals that have influence over the attitudes, behaviours, and modes of action of the group. The leader is the person who most embodies those behaviours that are conformed to by the group (Fielding & Hogg, 1997). Thus leaders are those members of the group that possess a disproportional influence over the group's attitudes and behaviours. In this way they are able to influence the group's agenda and are able to define the group's identity in order to achieve the group's collective goals (Hogg, 2001). Group membership and status influence an individual's self-definition that results from absorbing the prototypical behaviours. Leaders are those individuals that best represent the group's identity and, therefore, are the most prototypical members that others aspire to emulate (van Dijke & de Cremer, 2008).

The District utilized institutionalized and individualized socialization tactics in order to affect, not only the learning required to develop competence in new administrators, but also to impart the prototypical and normative beliefs, dispositions, and modes of action expected of new

administrators. These ways of enacting the role of administrator were best exhibited by those in high status positions in the District, and it was incumbent upon new administrators to make sense of and emulate those behaviours. New administrators' socialization experiences, and how they made sense of these experiences, formed the basis of the construction of their new professional identities. It was seen that for socialization to be effective, new administrators had to come to know and understand the norms, values, expectations, and role identities that contributed to the group and the organization (Ashforth, et al., 2007).

In essence, new administrators had to come to understand, not only the context of their socialization experiences, but also to firmly grasp the content of their socialization. This included the acquisition of role performance knowledge (Chao, et al., 1994; Taormina, 1999), clarity of role expectations (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Taormina, 1999), and the acceptance of direction and suggestions from various sources such as supervisors and colleagues (Ashforth, et al., 2007; Taormina, 1999). As Chao et al. (1994) suggested, socialization role performance content spanned six domains. These included performance proficiency, the need to develop successful working relationships with co-workers, the need to develop formal and informal work relationships with senior members of the organization, and to learn the professional jargon, organizational goals and values, and the history of the organization including its customs, myths, and rituals. In the end, new administrators had to make sense of their socialization experiences in order to recognize the expected prototypical behaviours required of administrators. They looked to the behaviours and actions of more senior leaders in the organization to make sense of their own socialization experiences in order to develop their professional role identity. Their role identity emerged at the intersection of their socialization experiences and how they made sense of these experiences in order to develop perception of their self-efficacy to enact their new roles.

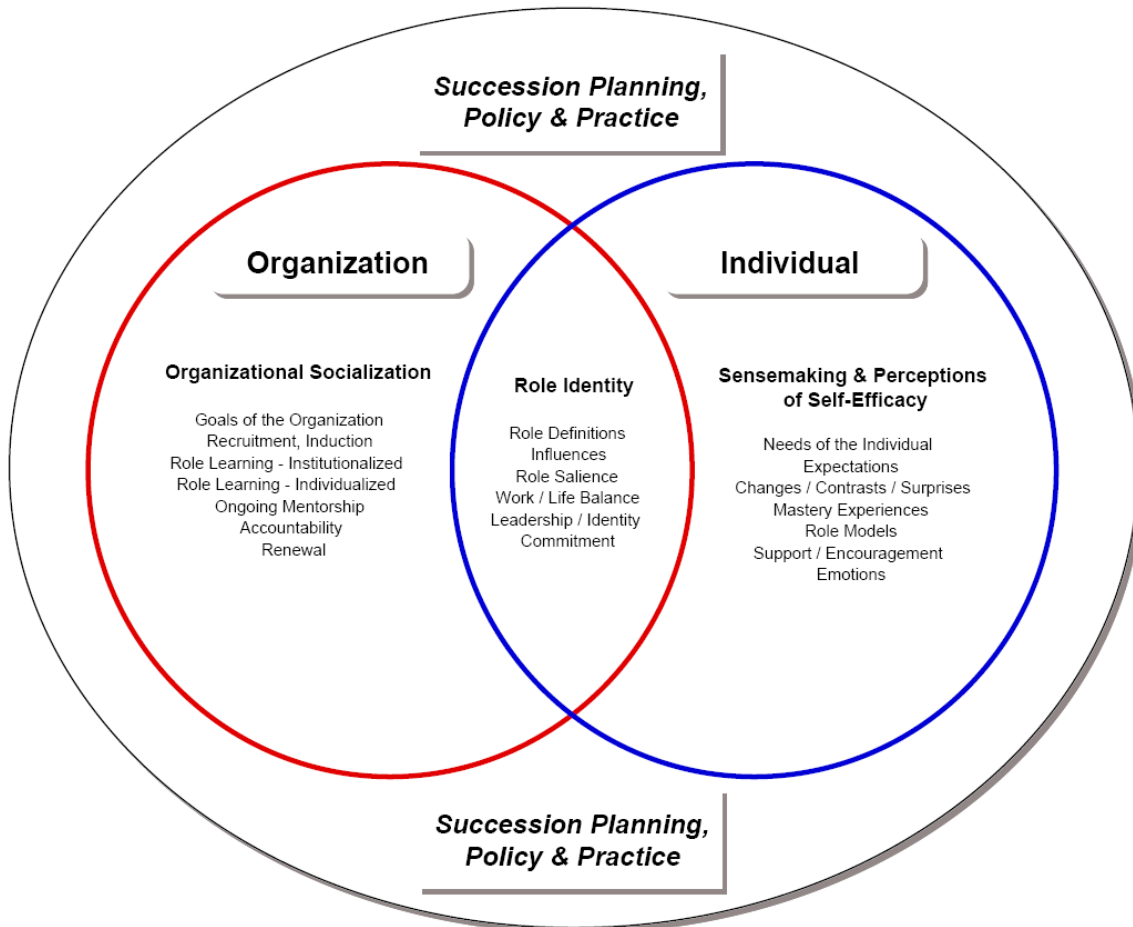**Towards a Framework for More Effective Socialization of New Administrators**

Figure. A new framework for the socialization of new administrators

This new framework for succession planning and socialization of new administrators reflects the literature reviewed, findings, and conclusions of this study. The original conceptual framework for this study assumed that there was interplay between organizational socialization, how individuals make sense and develop perceptions of self-efficacy, and how they develop and enact their new role identities. What was missing was a description and analysis of the conditions

36

and influences that affect this interplay. The sub-constructs filled in the gaps and it became clearer that these interactions and influences nest in the wider context of succession planning, policy, and practice. This framework suggests that all of the variables need to be considered individually and holistically when assessing the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of socialization processes in meeting the goals of the organization as well as the needs of the individuals involved.

Organizational socialization. Effective socialization of new administrators and those transitioning into new positions should start with the development of a comprehensive succession plan. The recruitment and induction of candidates, structured learning opportunities for new administrators, and accommodations for informal learning opportunities become part of the overall planning process. Mentorship for novice administrators that is non-evaluative in nature is encouraged and facilitated. Accountability processes include clear role definitions and provide ongoing support. Renewal training opportunities are offered to experienced administrators. All of these processes and programs form part of the overall succession plan. The different parts do not stand alone. In order to be successful to meet the goals of the organization as well as the needs of the individuals, each component of the plan integrates with the others. An effective succession plan is not just for attracting and recruiting candidates to fill vacancies but includes processes for recruitment, selection, socialization, initial and ongoing training of new principals and vice-principals, and refresher and renewal opportunities for experienced administrators.

Individual sensemaking and perceptions of self-efficacy. Whereas the goals of the District provide the foundations for the development of comprehensive human resource processes, to have these goals met, the needs of the individual must be considered as equally important.

Currently, many teachers do not put their names forward to apply for administrative positions when they consider the increase in hours, workload, and relatively small increase in pay. Many view the job as more stressful and less rewarding than teaching. One way the organization could attract more quality and qualified applicants into administration is by demystifying the job by clearly defining and streamlining the roles. Consideration of the needs of the individual in enacting the role to encourage the development of perceptions that they can be successful should become part of the overall succession and socialization planning process. Individuals enter the role with certain expectations they have placed on themselves and those that others have placed on them. Every transition results in surprises and some dissonance for the individuals involved. How individuals cope with this anxiety will go a long way in how they respond to their new work role expectations and develop the self-confidence and perceptions of efficacy to enact the role successfully. Opportunities to learn from trusted role mentors and ongoing support and encouragement are important parts of this process that need to be incorporated in an overall succession and socialization plan.

Whereas the District has the component parts of such a comprehensive succession and socialization plan in the Leadership Academy, New and Nearly new training, monthly Superintendent's meetings, and an administrator appraisal and professional growth plan processes, these structures and process do not always address the varying needs of individual participants. These institutionalized socialization processes lack the distinctly human dimension of the need for individualized support and mentorship. The fundamental need for new administrators to develop positive perceptions of self-efficacy and confidence in their role needs to be foundational to the District's socialization plan. The first step of a comprehensive succession and socialization plan begins with an understanding of the interplay between the

socialization strategies and tactics and the specific needs required by individuals to develop requisite skills and perceptions of self-efficacy to perform competently and confidently in their new roles. Socialization processes are then strategically targeted to address the learning needs of individuals. Individual and group learning opportunities are provided based on the recognition of the expressed needs of new administrators. In this way, the goals of the organization are achieved and the needs of the individual are met.

> *Role identity.* At the intersection of comprehensive organizational socialization and how individuals make sense of these processes to develop perceptions of efficacy lies the internalization and enactment of a new role identity. Effective socialization processes take into account the various influences that affect the development of role identities in new administrators. Interactions with superiors and subordinates can shape this identity either in positive or negative ways. Individuals enact various role identities in the context of their lives and, essentially, display an amalgam of social identities. Some identities become more salient than others and can come into tension with others. This leads to individuals having to choose which role identity will come to the foreground at any given time. Often the expectations of these varying identities will conflict and result in increased anxiety for individuals. For administrators, this tension between work role and home life is a significant issue that needs to be taken into consideration when planning for succession and socialization. In the end, administrators want to be fully engaged in their work, but a balance must be struck to ensure job satisfaction and long term commitment to the organization.

> This study set out to contribute to the understanding of the interplay between organizational socialization, individual sensemaking and perceptions of efficacy, and the

development of role identities in educational administrators. Research needs to continue on what encourages or discourages leadership aspirants from pursuing administrative positions to provide further insights to assist in the development of comprehensive succession and socialization plans. It would be equally beneficial for organizations to have a better understanding of the specific attitudes, views, and needs of the new generation of leaders as they enter into administrative roles. It is important to understand the differences in approaches and expectations of younger administrators. The new generation of leaders has a preference for a more collaborative and cooperative work environment and an insistence for more balance between work and home life. Succession and socialization planning will have to reflect this evolving work ethos.

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