

# CTL Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at IIM Udaipur



भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थान उदयपुर  
Indian Institute of Management Udaipur

May 2023  
Volume 1, Issue 8



## Socialization in Management education

Socialization is about preparing newcomers for the future. In graduate professional education, the socialization aspects of education play a very important role in building professional identity. While it is important, it is a relatively less understood aspect of management education. In this edition of the newsletter we discuss the Weidman, Twale and Stein graduate socialization framework – a widely used model for understanding graduate socialization.

We also share brief summaries of two other book chapters – one that talks about the time aspect of socialization and the other looks at a model to understand and make sense of college student peer culture. The corresponding literature is shared within the internal community.

Happy Reading, and please do share your comments and suggestions!

### INSIDE:

UNDERSTANDING GRADUATE  
SOCIALIZATION

BRIEF NOTES FROM THE  
SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND  
LEARNING

THE ROLE OF TIME IN SOCIALIZATION

RECONCEPTUALIZING RESEARCH ON COLLEGE  
STUDENT PEER CULTURE

# Understanding Graduate socialization

*A brief summary of the Weidman, Twale and Stein graduate socialization framework*

Graduate student socialization into the professions may be conceptualized as a process whereby the new entrant or novice:

1. enters the graduate educational program with values beliefs and attitudes about self and anticipated professional practice;
2. is exposed to various socializing influences while pursuing a graduate degree, including normative pressures exerted by institutional culture through faculty and peers as well as by society, professional organizations, professional practice and personal reference groups;
3. assesses the salience of the various normative pressures for attaining personal and professional goals; and
4. assumes, changes, or maintains those values, aspirations, identity, and personal commitments that were held at the onset of the socializing experience

There are many different approaches to studying graduate and especially professional student socialization, since it depends on the field of study as well as the institutions which host the students . The Weidman, Twale and Stein graduate socialization framework builds on early socialization models and is expanded to consider differences and commonalities in students, academic and professional fields, and career outcomes. It acknowledges the dynamic, non-linear nature of professional socialization and suggests that it is a complex, continuous and developmental process . This model has been

widely used in contemporary studies of graduate professional socialization. This framework suggests that:

At the center of the framework is the core socialization experience consisting of the institutional culture – which includes the academic program and peer culture, the socialization processes of interaction, integration and learning, and the core elements of socialization – knowledge acquisition, investment and involvement. These core elements are under the primary control of the academic program faculty who establish norms for teaching, curriculum, pedagogy, social relationships among different members of the program and decide on which students to admit and administration of financial aid.

## **Stages of Socialization**

The framework also lists four interactive stages of socialization. These four stages are anticipatory socialization, formal socialization, informal socialization, and personal socialization. In the anticipatory stage, mass media and role models are the primary source of information regarding role expectations, and these are fairly generalized and stereotypical in nature. The formal stage is where the students receive structured instruction regarding norms and expectations. In the informal stage, the students learn about the informal expectations and nuances from their peers and faculty. In the final personal stage, students form a professional identity that is consistent with their chosen profession and reconciles previous role conflicts, if any. In each of these stages, the key to learning the culture is the interaction among the students, faculty and professionals who are part of this culture. This model suggests that these stages are non-linear and socialization process characteristics of all four stages may be present at any time in the entire experience of the students.

While there are critics of the stage models, there is agreement that they serve as a useful heuristic for thinking through the challenges that a new student faces. The following section describes the

various stages of socialization and the core elements of socialization.

### ***Anticipatory Socialization***

The first stage of socialization is anticipatory socialization where the newcomer is acquainted with the behavioral, attitudinal, and cognitive expectations as the student enters the program with stereotypes and preconceived notions. A key source of information for anticipatory socialization is mass media. Personal observation and conversations with incumbents is another source. Knowledge of anticipated roles gained from such sources provides an accurate temporary representation of the role. Communication from the faculty and institute flows in one direction and the newcomers are uncertain about normative behavior.

### ***Formal Socialization***

In the formal stage of socialization, a general consensus among the agents of socialization – in this case the faculty, the incumbents (the seniors) and the incoming students is reached about normative expectations, and this is done through formal induction initiatives. The students observe incumbents and learn normative expectations from them. Over a period, the newcomers interpret their environment, set goals, seek feedback and identify opportunities to grow.

### ***Informal Socialization***

Informal socialization is the stage when the novice learns about informal expectations through interactions with incumbents. Formal socialization is driven by the institution in a top-down fashion whereas informal socialization is driven by the individual through interactions with others (Leavitt, 1991; Trocchia & Berkowitz, 1999). Students are immersed in the peer culture and get cues about acceptable behavior, and develop their own peer culture and emotional support system among fellow 'freshers' (Darling & Staton, 1989). This is also the stage where student cohorts develop strong social bonding, cohesiveness, and connectedness – they build their emotional support group.

In this stage the fresher understands that there are flexibilities associated with the performance of

roles and meeting role requirements; during this process, the student begins the transformation process of feeling less like a student and more like a professional (Rosen & Bates, 1967).

The informal socialization activities are more random and allow students to take part in these experiences at a pace of their own choosing.

### ***Personal Socialization***

In the personal socialization stage, the role is internalized, and students start forming a professional identity. The incongruity between their previous and current self-images and roles starts getting resolved as they assume their new role (Bullis & Bach, 1989). They are more aligned to the value orientation of the profession, though they also separate themselves from the institute in search of their own identity. They also develop a clear understanding that the program is only preparing them for professional life and is not the real thing (Olmsted & Paget, 1969). With deeper immersion in the program, students become mature and have higher expectations of themselves and their faculty and expect more freedom (Staton, 1990). At this point students assess their career marketability, their aspirations, and make decisions and commitments to long term personal and professional development. These thought processes often involve significant reflection and the activities of the final trimester, and conversations with alumni and seniors who are not part of the industry, help students to make such decisions and commitments.

### ***Core elements of socialization***

The graduate socialization framework suggests three core elements of socialization – Knowledge acquisition, investment and involvement that lead to identification with and commitment to a professional role.

### ***Knowledge acquisition***

Knowledge acquisition is important as a part of socialization because a novice must acquire sufficient knowledge to perform the role effectively and acquire knowledge of the normative expectations associated with the role. During socialization, knowledge shifts from being

general to being specialized and complex- reflected in a deeper understanding of ideology and problems characteristic to the profession. As a novice becomes aware of the language and behavior associated with a profession, they become aware of their own capacity to participate in the culture. The accuracy of the knowledge determines the success of the socialization outcomes.

### **Investment**

Investment in a role in the context of socialization is to commit something of personal value – time, self-esteem, career choice, social status, or reputation – to some aspect of professional role preparation. While making a choice to pursue a program in a school, a student makes a choice to forgo employment and the choice of other alternative educational courses. In formal socialization, the student takes specialized classes and invests time in maintaining academic performance in them. Over time, even more specialized knowledge is acquired that adds to the capability of the student. Sponsorship of the incumbent by faculty and peers in the form of mentorship, counselling, assistance, and other forms creates obligation, and accepting this sponsorship leads to deeper commitment to the professional role. Professional socialization depends a lot on the level of commitment of the novice to the choice of career and willingness to invest in the process.

### **Involvement**

Involvement is participation in some aspect of the professional role to prepare better for it. Novices acquire and internalize a professional identity by participating and taking pride in the problems and activities that are typical to a profession. Faculty and other students give novices a sense of the professional ideology, motives, attitudes, and values of the profession and what is expected of them in the future. When novices think and reflect on the personal meaning of these aspects, it enhances their personal identification with the professional role. Students do not passively respond to the cues they receive but actively interpret them and continually evaluate and

benchmark themselves in comparison to others around them.

Although they are described separately for analytical purposes, the elements are interrelated – specialized skills (knowledge acquisition) and participation in activities (investment) aid the development of a professional identity. Student interactions with faculty provide knowledge of appropriate attitudes and creates opportunities for sponsorship- an example of involvement leading to knowledge and investment.

### **Conclusion**

Educators in professional courses at the graduate level can benefit tremendously from an understanding of this graduate socialization framework. The framework puts many of the activities of students, faculty and other stakeholders like alumni and recruiters in the context of socialization. Understanding these as a developmental process allows faculty and educational designers to evaluate and curate the overall socialization experience better. Low stakes testing is a known academic best practice which is not extensively used because of the time and effort involved. Low stakes testing by itself is a significant form of active learning with immediate feedback. AI can help reduce this effort by generating the quizzes and questions that need to be deployed for such type of testing. The paper includes a set of prompts.

Weidman, J. C., Twale, D. J., & Stein, E. L. (2001). *Socialization of Graduate and Professional Students in Higher Education: A Perilous Passage? ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, Volume 28, Number 3. Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series.* ERIC.



# Brief notes from the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

## The role of time in socialization dynamics

Ashforth, B. E. (2012). *The Role of Time in Socialization Dynamics. The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Socialization, December.*  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199763672.013.0009>

Socialization is seen as a process that prepares newcomers for their roles in an organization. From the newcomer's perspective, onboarding activities are about learning to become a functioning member, which encourages them to think prospectively, anticipate change, and hope for improvement. Similarly, from the organization's point of view, onboarding activities represent an investment in the newcomer, with the belief that the long-term benefits will outweigh the short-term costs.

The author suggests that there is a difference between clock time and event time when it comes to socialization. Clock time refers to regular units of measuring time in the form of days of instruction, weeks, or trimesters. The author argues that event time refers to the use of discrete episodes to frame the passage of time. Student learning and adjustment is 'lumpy' as they are driven by intense episodes in which experiences are followed by reflection and possible reinterpretation. Events can be as simple as being invited to lunch which may seem a regular thing for an insider but for a newcomer it may have exaggerated and special meaning.

The author argues that early events tend to exert a disproportionate impact on the student because they influence how later events will be interpreted. This insight is crucial to understand

and appreciate why activities done in the first or second week during formal and informal socialization have a lasting negative or positive impact on students and their interpretive frameworks for a long time.

The outcomes of socialization are learning, proximal adjustment, and distal adjustment. Learning involves acquiring knowledge about the job, role, social dynamics, and organizational context. Proximal adjustment includes role clarity, task mastery, social integration, and role crafting, which refers to innovating or modifying role-related expectations. Proximal adjustment predicts more distal forms of adjustment, such as performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

## Reconceptualizing Research on College Student Peer Culture

Kristen A. Renn and Karen D. Arnold  
*The Journal of Higher Education*, May - Jun., 2003, Vol. 74, No. 3 (May - Jun., 2003), pp. 261-291

Understanding student peer culture is key to being able to gauge the health of an educational campus and improve educational outcomes. The influence of peer culture on learning and development is well-researched. More often than not the focus is on peer-pressure and their influence on undesirable behavior like alcoholism, substance abuse, etc.

The author uses the Bronfenbrenner ecology model to unpack student culture and explain the context. This model looks at four important elements of the context – Person, process, context and time.

The person concept encapsulates a student's unique experiences, individual characteristics, socially constructed identities, academic record and self-concept, political and social perspectives, and family background. Bronfenbrenner proposed that every Person is characterized by four types of 'developmentally instigative characteristics' - those

attributes of a person most likely to influence development by aiding or inhibiting dispositions towards the immediate environment. First, those dispositions that invite or inhibit responses from the environment containing the individual that can disrupt or encourage psychological growth; second, selective responsiveness – individuals' characteristic reaction to, and exploration of surroundings; third, structuring proclivities – ways in which individuals interact with increasingly complex activities, re-conceptualize and add new features to their environment; fourth, directive beliefs – how individuals understand their agency in relation to the environment. These characteristics do not determine the course of development directly but influence the development in the presence of other forces, resources, and the total ecological system.

Proximal processes are enduring forms of progressively more complex, reciprocal interactions between a developing person and the persons, objects and symbols in his or her environment.

The term context is described as the immediate setting for student development, as well as the interactions between those settings, settings from which the individual is absent but which do exert influence on them, and the larger sociohistorical environment

The individual's own developmental life course is seen as embedded in and powerfully shaped by conditions and events occurring during the historical period through which the person lives. A major factor influencing the course and outcome of human development is the timing of biological and social transitions as they relate to the culturally defined age, role expectations, and opportunities occurring throughout the life course.

An understanding of the student environment and its various elements is crucial to understand the student peer culture of a campus.

### Feedback

Please click on the link below to share your feedback and comments and to let us know what kind of content you would like to read about in future newsletters.

<https://forms.gle/oT73PwW9tafiTmXb7>

For queries or for making a guest contribution, please contact the Centre for Teaching and Learning at [ctl@iimu.ac.in](mailto:ctl@iimu.ac.in)

©2023, IIM Udaipur, all rights reserved.

## Updates from CTL

As IIM Udaipur one year MBA cohort moved into the second month, they participated for the first time in an event called Onewind (a version of the 2 yr Unwind). This is an inter-section competition typically organized on the weekend after the first mid-term exams as a means to bring the section together in a celebration and competition purely for pride.

