

School Adaptation and Professional Development of Teachers with Previous Non-Teaching Work Experience in Japan: A Longitudinal Analysis of Six Years of Panel Data

Mugiho Maeda (Kokugakuin University)

Research Overview

This study uses a quantitative analysis to clarify the school adaptation and professional development of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience in Japan. The results show that, while such experience had positive effects on making new efforts and addressing parents' complaints, it had negative effects on building close relationships with teachers.

Purpose of Study

In recent decades, teacher shortages have rapidly become a serious issue in school education worldwide. This has led to increased attention to policies that recruit teachers from other occupations. The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) of 2024 revealed that the proportion of teachers with previous non-teaching experience (in both education and non-education roles) has increased in 18 education systems since 2018. This suggests that many countries have promoted teacher recruitment policies from other occupations.

Although Japan's percentage of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience is lower than the OECD average, policymakers have discussed future reforms to the teaching license system and teacher recruitment policies to recruit workers from other occupations since the 2020s. If the expansion of teacher recruitment from other occupations increases the percentage of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience, their adaptation to school organizations and

professional development will become important issues. Although a few qualitative studies have examined the experiences of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience in Japanese schools, little quantitative research has been conducted.

Additionally, the school adaptation and professional development of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience are important in both the practical context and the theoretical discussion on organizational socialization of teachers. Since these teachers were socialized in other organizations before entering schools, they experience desocialization from their previous workplace and resocialization into school organizations. The multidimensional exploration of their ambivalent position and experience is necessary to elaborate the complex process of organizational socialization of teachers.

This paper clarifies the characteristics of teachers with previous non-teaching work experience in Japanese schools, their school adaptation, and professional development through a longitudinal quantitative analysis.

Previous studies suggested that while teachers with previous non-teaching work experience can feel confident in communicating with parents, have a different viewpoint, and try new things at school, they sometimes feel difficulty in having close relationships with peers and being socialized in school organizations and teacher groups. This paper validates the positive and negative influences identified by previous studies through quantitative analysis.

Research Methods

This study uses a longitudinal data with six time points (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023). The survey data were collected from teachers (excluding principals and vice principals) of

25 public elementary schools and 22 junior high schools in X district of Y prefecture, Japan. The analysis uses 691 samples (2,465 observations) with two or more responses and no missing values.

Dependent variables are as below:

1. Communication with parents
 - I can communicate appropriately with parents.
 - I can address complaints from parents.
2. Have a different viewpoint and try a new effort in school
 - I am actively implementing new initiatives within the school organization.
3. Relationships with peers and being socialized in school organizations and teacher groups
 - Number of people I can talk to honestly at school
 - I have a colleague I can easily talk to about work matters.
 - Supervisors are easy to consult with about work.

Independent variables include two patterns:

1. having or not having previous non-teaching work experience (2 categories)
2. the year of previous non-teaching work experience (3 categories)
 - None
 - Less than 3 years
 - 3 years or more

To examine the effect of previous non-teaching work experience on teacher's school adaptation and professional development, I use random effect model with the cluster-robust standard error by Stata SE 14.2.

Results and Discussion

The analysis revealed that previous non-teaching work experience positively impacted the willingness to make a new effort in school and the confidence to address complaints from parents. However, it negatively affected close relationships with administrators (principals and vice principals) and colleagues through consultation about work. These results suggest that educational boards and schools must support teachers with previous non-teaching experience to help them form better relationships with colleagues and adapt to their schools more easily.

Keywords

- Teachers with non-teaching work experience
- School adaptation
- Professional development
- Organizational socialization
- Longitudinal analysis