

## Novice Teachers' Well-Being at Work

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### Abstract

*Aim: Teachers' first year at work after graduating is known to be challenging as the new teachers are developing their professionalism and finding their personal teaching styles. The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' well-being at work during their first work year; which factors strengthen and reduce their well-being. In addition, teachers' perceptions of the connection between teacher education and well-being at work were studied. Method: This was a qualitative study and the data were obtained with the method of empathy-based stories (MES). Two frame stories were utilized for data collection. The research participants consisted of teachers (N = 14) who had worked from 1 to 4 years as classroom teachers. The data were analyzed with the content analysis methods. Results: Based on the results, the colleagues' support and work community impacted the teachers' well-being. Other important factors strengthening well-being were co-operation with parents and the size and features of the classroom. Successful teaching experiences also strengthened well-being. Well-being was weakened by difficulties in group management and school practices as well as the teachers' fatigue. Pedagogical skills and abilities to develop one's work provided by teacher education were seen to strengthen well-being. Conclusion: The findings suggest that despite the teaching task, more preparation is needed to teachers' other tasks too. Furthermore, teachers need support to build a more realistic work role and professional identity. Measures to support transition to work should be developed.*

**Keywords:** well-being at work, classroom teacher, work community, teacher education, method of empathy-based stories

### 1. Introduction

This study focuses on well-being in teachers who are newly-graduated, novices in the work. Much public discussion about teacher well-being has been going on lately; Especial concern is addressed to teacher fatigue and stress, and various studies and surveys are conducted about it in Finland (e.g., Blomberg, 2008; Rajala, 2001; Turpeenniemi, 2008; Ylitapio-Mäntylä et al., 2012) and internationally (e.g., Kyriacou, 2001; Lopez & Agrawal, 2009; Mwamwenda, 1998).

Well-being is comprehensive social, physical, and emotional experience (Uusiautti, 2013; Warr, 1990). Employees' well-being is not just a matter of health or duty of care. There is also a tangible link between employees' well-being and effectiveness in the workplace (Levi et al., 2000; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2014). Turner, Barling, and Zacharatos's (2002) model of healthy work illustrates that work that promotes well-being consists of favorable work practices (e.g., autonomy at work), positive psychological processes and mechanisms (e.g., trust, commitment, responsibility), and healthy outcomes (e.g., feeling of self-efficacy, proactivity, well-being). All these are interconnected and interact with the exogenous work conditions as well. In this study, novice teachers perceived well-being at work and factors influencing it

were at the core of interest.

### *1.1 Teacher well-being and satisfaction at work*

There are numerous ways to categorize factors that have impact on well-being at work. For example, Hakanen (2006) has listed factors that enhance well-being in teachers; reasonable work demands and balance between effort and reward are some key factors. According to teachers' own evaluation, in-service training periods that develop teachers' work resources alongside work tasks arrangements and invests in the workplace atmosphere were considered the most important measures to improve well-being. Mentoring (Alila, 2014; Jokinen & Välijärvi, 2006) can also function as a method of maintaining and developing the work community and individual teachers' resources. According to Förbom (2003), mentoring aims at supporting novice teachers in their work and helps to develop their work identities. The mentor guides at the start-up phase of the new teacher's career and provides opportunities to develop in the profession.

Furnham (1992) has divided factors influencing work satisfaction into three groups. The first group covers the operation and work methods of the work community. This means, for example, the fairness of the reward system and guidance and decision-making procedures in the workplace. The second group includes various sides of work such as autonomy, feedback, and work environment. They contribute considerably to one's enjoyment at work. The third group consists of a worker's personal features such as stress tolerance, self-esteem, and general life satisfaction. Moreover, it is worth noticing that satisfaction and well-being are always personal perception; meaning that people doing the same job can feel different levels of work satisfaction.

### *1.2 Stress and coping at work*

Selye (1978) defines stress as a state occurring after certain changes in an individual. Stress has its particular form but not any definite reason that causes it. For example, an individual's personality affects the emergence of stress. Therefore, it is not dependent on so much what happens to a person than how he or she faces the situation.

Syrjäläinen (2009) has analyzed teachers' coping with national education changes and turns in education trends. She refers to the latest studies according to which teachers are not coping well and that their willingness to change profession or retire is high. Due to mental health problems and fatigue, teachers retire more often than employees in any other field. Pupils' behavior problems and teachers' fatigue were reported as the reasons for stress. Teachers' workload was considerably accumulated by pupils' family problems, contacts with parents, pupils with special needs, and numerous meetings. School development is a part of teacher's work, which takes time from the teaching work. Turpeenniemi (2008) emphasizes that teacher education should pay attention to stress in a teacher's work and thus help to recognize and strengthen student teachers' stress management skills.

### *1.3 Young teachers' professional development and socialization in the work community*

Huberman (1995) has described the early years of a teacher's career with the words "survival and discovery". Survival refers to the encounter with the work reality and possible related shock during the first work year. New teachers experience challenges and their professional ideals and the work reality do not necessarily converge. Discovery means the zeal for teaching and ability to learn. The teacher experiences freedom and responsibility when having his or her first classroom and students. The teacher is proud of the profession and position. According to Huberman (1995), the successes and joys of discovery help teachers to survive with their daily work.

Reynolds (1992) has outlined the typical features of a novice teacher. New teachers spend more time on planning lessons and focus more on teaching contents compared to more experienced teachers. Subject knowledge and noticing various learners can be challenging. Creating routines in the classroom and smooth organization of working become easier as the teacher gathers more teaching experience. Although new teachers can evaluate their work widely and variedly, they may find it difficult to concentrate only on the most essential factors.

Blomberg (2008) points out the paradox in a teacher's work: while new teachers are expected to have abilities and skills that they can only achieve by working. They do not have enough experience-based knowledge in order to develop their own teacherhood. New teachers need courage and belief in their own expertise; they will help the teachers to become members in the work community, too. On the other hand, the belief that teachers should handle their work alone and independently, makes integration more challenging.

## 2. Method

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' well-being at work during their first work year; which factors strengthen and reduce their well-being. In addition, teachers' perceptions of the connection between teacher education and well-being at work were studied.

The following research questions were set for this study:

- (1) How do novice teachers perceive their well-being at work during their first work year?
- (2) What factors strengthen well-being and satisfaction at work according to novice teachers' perceptions?
- (3) What factors reduce well-being and satisfaction at work according to the novice teachers' perceptions?
- (4) How does teacher education support well-being at work according to the novice teachers' perceptions?

To find answers to these questions, the method of empathy-based stories (MES) was applied (see Eskola, 1997).

The purpose of the method is to provide research participants with a frame story that they are supposed to continue by telling what they think could happen or what could have preceded the situation described in the frame story. The word "empathy" is a little misleading in the translation as it does not refer to empathetic action as such (e.g., in a caring or compassionate manner) (Sarivaara, Määttä, & Uusiavanti, 2014). A more suitable name for the method could be, for example, a role playing method (see Eskola & Suoranta, 2008; Eskola & Wäljäs, 1998).

The method can be applied either through active or passive role playing. The passive method was applied in this study which means that the research participants participated in the study by writing. The participants were given a task to write a short story that continues a frame story. This study applied two opposite frame stories describing a newly-graduated teacher's transition to work life and his or her thoughts and feelings at the end of the first work year. The participants had experienced this by themselves, so the assumption was that they would share the reality of the situation.

The first frame story described a teacher who feels tired and stressful. The second frame story described a teacher who was content with the previous work year and felt having succeeded. Each participant wrote one story based on one or other of the aforementioned frame stories.

The participants were recruited by a public call published in *Opettaja* [Teacher] journal, which widely reaches teachers across Finland. In addition, classroom teachers who had graduated from the University of Lapland in Jan 1, 2006–Jul 31, 2008 were contacted. Classroom teachers who had been working from one to four years were selected for the study.

Altogether, 14 essays were received. The number does not reach Eskola's guidelines of the method (15–20 essays / frame story). Although the number of the essays is relatively low, the data were regarded sufficient after familiarizing with the contents of essays. Namely, the essays started to repeat each other and did not bring any new information, which meant that the saturation criterion was filled. Furthermore, the data have some other advantages, as well. As the participants were randomly writing about the positively and negatively experienced first year at work, they could talk about factors they had themselves experienced supportive or discouraging. Consequently, this method made it possible to the participants to have a look at their work from a distance and reveal their perceptions in an open manner that might not have been necessarily reached, for example, in a personal interview. This viewpoint can be considered enhancing the credibility and reliability of the data (see e.g., Shenton, 2004)

The data were analyzed with content analysis (Mayring, 2000). The purpose was to discover types in the data to compile a generalized and condensed picture of the phenomenon. In the first phases of the analysis, all essays were read through. Then, they were re-read in the light of questions set for the data. These questions were composed by leaning on the theory, research questions, and the contents of the data. The analysis was mainly theory-bound but realized so that contents emerging from the data were considered. The data were coded with colors representing the questions, after which data excerpts were collected in a table. In addition, the essays for each of the two frame stories were compared in order to find whether there were any differences between these essays (Eskola & Wäljäs, 1998). Using types to complement the analysis helped us to form a combined type story for each frame story (Eskola & Suoranta, 2008). This phase illustrated how the factors influencing well-being impact the contents of the essays.

## 3. Results

Various factors were mentioned as having either a positive or negative impact on well-being at work. Next, we will discuss the teachers' experiences categorized by these factors.

### 3.1 Colleagues' support and work community

The newly-graduated teachers surfaced how important it is to become accepted as a full member of the work community. Support and information provided by colleagues as well as knowledge that they will help and advice whenever needed strengthened new teachers' well-being at work considerably. A study by Raehalme and Talib (2006) also showed that co-operation and communality enhance coping at work, while Multanen, Bredenberg, Koskensalmi, Lauttio, and Pahkin (2004) emphasize the importance of an open atmosphere at the work unit. When members of the work community feel safe and trust in each other an open and accepting atmosphere can be created.

*Now, at the time of starting the summer holiday, I look back at the study year and how it has gone, I can do nothing but conclude that the good co-workers have been the support and safety to this young teacher. When having faced tricky situations, my co-workers have supported me and provided good practical tips and advice. During this year, I have felt that I do not have to cope with all alone, but I have been given help and advice to big and even small questions. I also feel that it has been important that I was welcomed to our work community. I mean that I had a sense of being appreciated and considered as equal and professional teacher despite the fact that I had just graduated. Good spirit and shared humor with co-workers have helped me to cope at work. Although at times, I have encountered difficult moments in the classroom, I have always find it nice to come to work. My co-workers have given me lots of positive energy; and the coffee room has echoed with our laughter. (Teacher no. 8)*

A newly-graduated teacher can feel uncertain because of his or her minimal work experience. In a good workplace, the new teacher is being supported and encouraged; this provides the teacher with confidence as he or she becomes accepted as a full member of the work community. The negative extreme is a situation in which the new teacher is thrown in the middle of conflicts and arguments. Instead of support and help, the new teacher can be belittled and criticized due to his or her inexperience. The teachers who participated in this study revealed that they also had faced situations in which they had to prove their expertise to others. New teachers are not always given say in decisions and opportunities to influence but the elder members of the work community can tend to arrange everything on behalf of the new teacher.

### 3.2 Collaboration with parents

Home-school collaboration was considered important for the well-being of pupils, and teachers are ready to work for it. Blomberg (2008) points out that the interaction between school and home is the most emotional and sensitive parts of a teacher's work. Because of this, teachers find problems in interaction as a strain in their work. According to Lehtolainen (2008), parents and teacher both often feel that home-school interaction is frequently related to some problem. In the study conducted by Lehtolainen (2008), teacher mentioned that random encounters with parents helped them to familiarize with them in informal situations. This kinds of natural encounters and familiarization help dealing with possible difficulties as well. Parents are interested in their children's school achievements, and an open atmosphere between school and home encourages them to contact the teacher when necessary. Still, parents often expect school to make the initiative in home-school collaboration (Lehtolainen, 2008).

The essays of this study showed how newly-graduated teachers first doubted their abilities to collaborate with parents. On the one hand, they had high expectations toward collaboration while, on the other hand, teachers seemed to be afraid of the emergence of problem situations. However, challenging situations had led to experiences of success. Teacher found it important to provide parents with a sense of being at the same side and that they all work for the children's good. Smooth collaboration with parents supports teachers in their work, as was manifested in the data of this study:

*Stress can be relieved if the teacher can create an atmosphere where parents feel that the teacher is on their child's side, not against the child. Parents' meetings and personal encounters with parents are crucial here. I organized a class council, and now I am beginning to know most of the pupils' parents pretty well, and they know each other. Doing together with them is fun and makes the atmosphere more relaxed. If you know the parents, it is a whole lot easier to contact them. (Teacher no. 3)*

### 3.3 The Classroom Size and Other Characteristics of the Class

The teachers in this study wrote about easy and difficult pupil groups. According to the descriptions, a difficult group was

big and, for example, behavioral problems were mundane. Teachers could also experience their expertise insufficient to meet the needs of pupils with special needs. Segregation of teaching and providing individualized support for pupils in a diversified classroom were considered challenging. Likewise, insufficient resources and too many classes to teach were regarded as problems. On the other hand, an easy class was small and had a good team spirit, and suited well to the teacher's personal teaching style. Work satisfaction was increased by the opportunity to do one's work well and diligently; consequent successes, therefore, contributed to teachers' well-being. It is worth noticing that a challenging class can also increase well-being at work if the teacher gets experiences of success with this kind of a group of pupils (see e.g., Schiffrin & Nelson, 2010; Uusiavutti & Määttä, 2014).

*Naturally, the class influences the teacher's satisfaction at work. If the teacher is lucky and gets a peaceful class with which the teacher can concentrate on teaching instead of discipline, the teacher is likely to have experiences of success and increasing confidence about having chosen the right career. However, with a more difficult class, the teacher can get even more experiences of success when succeeding in discipline. When having a difficult class, the teacher's work satisfaction can be increased by the co-workers' support and advice. (Teacher no. 13)*

### 3.4 Experiences of Success in Teaching

New teachers are enthusiastic about teaching and willing to learn (Huberman, 1995). In these data, teachers described the feeling of freedom when they had their first own class to teach; the feeling resembled the state of discovery in Huberman's theory. These experiences of success with one's own class provided the sense of meaningfulness and strengthened well-being at work:

*On the other hand, I have my own power to teach; I have always dreamed of this. (Teacher no. 10)*

*I have been able to fulfill myself in my work, and the work community has welcomed my ideas. (Teacher no. 8)*

Classroom teachers perceived their work significant, and they described interaction situations with pupils as the best sides of their work. Pupils' joy of learning was mentioned as the best possible feedback that a teacher can have. Teachers also appreciated the trust constructed between a teacher and a pupil. A study by Herbert and Worthy (2001) showed that experiences of success and especially positive feedback from students improve well-being and satisfaction at work. Finding the connection with an individual pupil and recognizing his or her learning results is rewarding in the teacher's work.

*Doing together with my class is amusing. – The most rewarding thing is to see learning experiences and joy of succeeding in pupils. Pupils are the ones giving the top moments in my work. When a pupil figures out something that we have been going on about for a long time, I have a big smile on my face when going home from work. (Teacher no. 10)*

### 3.5 Group Management

The research participants reported that group management and discipline were the most burdening part of their work. Tight teaching schedules and wide range of subjects to teach created pressure to teachers. As time management should be efficient and productive, time spent with behavioral problems and group management takes time away from other activities. When the teacher's attention is focused on group management and related problems, he or she will not necessarily have time to evaluate his or her teaching and develop its quality.

*And at the same time I am teaching grades 3 and 4, the fifth- and sixth-graders should be working silently. But all the time I hear a bit talking and movements, and I have to intervene. At times, I have to dismiss the noisiest ones from the classroom. When teaching and keeping the other class quiet, I have to follow and listen happenings behind the door and peep in every now and then. After the day at work, I have a deep sigh. (Teacher no. 1)*

### 3.6 School Practices and Everyday Life

School changes and renews slowly. The essays in these data included situations in which the new teacher would have wanted to renew or improve something but finds out that school practices are impossible to change. Rajala's (2001) study shows that development in school practices can relieve teachers' stress and thus improve their work satisfaction.

Teachers would like to see the rector as a human relationships manager who organizes the school practices in a satisfactory manner. This was emphasized by teachers in this study, too. They hoped that the school practices were clear so that the new members of the work community could easily adopt them and work according to the common guidelines.

*At our school, you do not have any kind word whatsoever that would say that the school practices were clear. Every single day the rector cried because everything had to be denied, and all blue feelings the pupils had were poured out to the rector. Simultaneously at first, the rector intervened in everything you tried to handle by yourself. Likewise, all punishments and rules had to be accepted first by the rector. I do not say that this was bad, but, certainly, it kept the rector busy. (Teacher no. 14)*

In addition to basic teaching, projects put extra strain to teachers' work. Work groups, grade-specific teams, and collaboration projects were exhausting and did not feel motivating.

*Our school would invest in collaboration. Every Tuesday morning we had a collaboration meeting, all teachers included. In addition, we had separate grade-specific teams and work groups. They had meetings on Monday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. My work group worked with a learning-to-learn material to be used in a school project. Mostly, we had to do it during leisure, and, therefore, it took away our resources. This work was not separately compensated. (Teacher no. 6)*

### 3.7 Fatigue

Already the first year in a teacher's work caused fatigue. Workload, work-leisure spillover, pupils' behavioral problems, extra tasks, lack of appreciation from colleagues, and conflicts in the work community were the reasons for experienced fatigue in teachers of this study. Sabar (2004) criticizes the fact that teachers are expected to be ready to all of their work responsibilities at once, starting from the first semester after graduation from teacher education. However, the teachers in this study highlighted that they learn their work as they do it. Experience teaches them.

*The first year as a classroom teacher is now behind. I am exhausted. – There are, actually, two major reasons for my tiredness. First, my work was not appreciated although put all the effort in it. Second, the older colleagues stalked me, which was too oppressive. (Teacher no. 7)*

According to one categorization (Esteve, 1991), factors causing fatigue in teachers can be divided into inner-classroom events influencing the teacher directly and causing negative feelings. Such events can be, for example, a pupil's violent behavior. The second category is happening in the environment that are reflected in teaching and the teacher's work motivation. Such events are, for example, illnesses or bad work atmosphere.

### 3.8 Teacher Education

Factors strengthening well-being at work included the pedagogical expertise and ability to evaluate and develop one's work. The transition phase from education to work life is a significant turn point in life, and students are motivated to work as teachers after graduation. Responsibility and freedom in a teacher's work are seen valuable and important.

For teachers' well-being at work, teacher education should prepare student teachers, in addition to teaching, to other tasks too, so that they could construct a more realistic professional identity and work role, set professional goals, and strengthen subject-specific knowledge.

*However, those dreams and your own expectations about the teacher's work are crashed when you move to work life. The reality is a whole lot different from the teacher training department's description. Perhaps, those who can build a new picture of teaching and teacherhood to themselves will stay in the teacher's profession. (Teacher no. 5)*

## 4. Discussion

This study showed that well-being in novice teachers is a sum of many factors. We have compiled all findings of this study in Figure 1 in the form of a tree. A novice teacher develops during the first work year considerably, and the tree trunk symbolizes the foundation of this growth. The teacher has certain resources provided in teacher education. According to Huberman's definition, we divided these resources into "Survival" and "Discovery" as they appeared in the novice teachers' essays in the data of this study. Survival consists of the pedagogical expertise and subject-specific

knowledge the newly-graduated teachers have learned during their teacher training at a university. In addition, their motivation and enthusiasm to teach, the joy of having the first class of their own, can be seen as a component of the novice teachers' survival. Discovery refers to the teachers' ability to evaluate and develop their work. These skills are also learned in teacher education but they are cultivated in practice as the teachers enter the actual school world. Discovery also includes teachers' professional development and learning that take a leap during the first work year. Perceived successes at work can considerably boost novice teachers' well-being and professional development, and confidence as teaching professional. In addition, the findings of this study showed that forming and accepting a realistic picture of the everyday work at school is essential for a teacher's well-being. The reality of a teacher's work does not always match the impression given in teacher education (see also Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007).

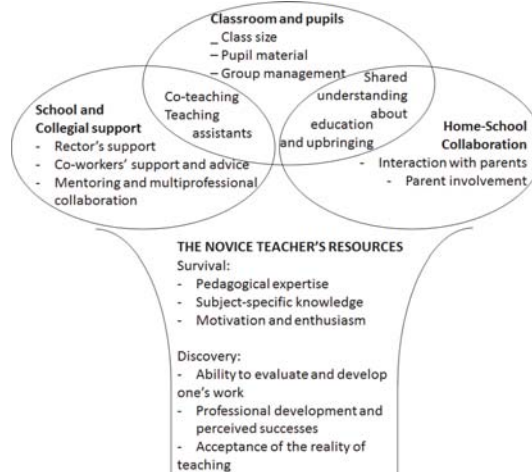


Figure 1. Factors influencing novice teachers' well-being at work

The novice teacher then reaches like branches of a tree to several core features of teachers' work. First, based on the findings of this study, the work community and colleagues' support – in good and bad – have the greatest influence on teachers' well-being at work. At its best, the teacher feels accepted and get support from other teachers and the rector. At its worst, the teacher has to cope with the first work year alone simultaneously being under the critical evaluation of the work community. Blomberg's (2008) study also showed that finding one's place and becoming a full member of the work community is always challenging in a teacher's work. It is especially difficult in schools that have a bad reputation when it comes to solidarity. A novice teacher can have crucial encouragement from a good work community, including the rector. In the worst case, the novice teacher become rejected by others and be involved in power struggles and scheming; this does not support the development of their teacher identity. Coping and well-being are best supported by co-operation, and also novice teachers need good social and collaboration skills in order to work well with their colleagues (see also Luukkainen, 2005).

The branch of collegial support at school and the classroom and class features are somewhat overlapping. Class size and pupil material play a salient role in teachers' well-being. When teaching big classes, the teacher can have feelings of insufficiency as he or she cannot pay attention to every pupil individually. Learning difficulties and a bad atmosphere at school test teachers. In difficult situations, teachers need resources and multiprofessional support that can extend within the classroom for example in the form of teaching assistants (e.g., Piippo-Näätänen et al., 2012). However, a challenging work does not always directly decrease well-being but can function as a factor increasing the sense of meaningfulness at work. Coping with challenges and solving difficulties can provide experiences of success and confidence that enhance teachers' professional development. Likewise, pupils' development and successes strengthen teachers' well-being at work. Teacher-pupil interaction is important. Pedagogical freedom is a motivating factor in novice teachers' work.

Most commonly mentioned factors decreasing well-being at work included problems in group management, tiredness, and unclear school practices. The pupil groups are more heterogenous than ever and behavioral problems have become more and more common making classroom management play a big role in a novice teacher's work (Martin

& Baldwin, 1996). Teachers are expected to use their time efficiently and invest in the quality of teaching. Simultaneously, they are expected to notice each and every pupil as an individual and meet their special needs. Pupils' social problems, learning difficulties, and difficult behavior make time management more challenging and take time from teaching.

Closely related to the pupils' branch, we placed home-school collaboration as a main branch of its own. As the findings of this study implied, teachers' well-being was influenced by collaboration with parents. Home-school collaboration was considered challenging and needing considerable effort. At its best, parents can support teachers' work, and they can work together for the child's best, for the child's growth and learning. It is easier if the teacher and parents know each other well. If the teacher's and parents' views about upbringing and education differ much from each other, or if the other is seen as a threat, problems are likely to occur. Interaction situations with parents can first appear challenging if the novice teacher does not trust in his or her expertise regarding educational perspectives and methods.

This study provided an illustration of the factors influencing novice teachers' well-being. The purpose of the study is to highlight the issues that the teachers themselves considered the most critical. This helps designing supportive practices and ways of enhancing teachers' transition from teacher education to work. In the conclusion chapter, we will discuss the findings in the light of previous studies and bring up various means of support.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings imply that several supportive measures could enhance classroom teachers' work satisfaction and well-being during the first year at work. Suitable methods could be mentoring and supervision during the start-up phase (Koski-Heikkinen, 2014). In mentoring, experienced teachers can also help novice teachers with issues in home-school collaboration, which was highlighted in this study as well. Interaction with parents is crucial not only for the novice teacher's professional development, but also to parents' sense of being able to foster their children's learning and, thus, to children's school achievements in general (see Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004).

Peer support could also improve young teachers' coping; novice teachers could share their experiences (van Horn, Schaufeli, & Enzmann, 1999). Teacher unions could be suitable organs to arrange this type of training and activities. For example, Young Teacher trainings arranged by the Finnish Teacher Union is a good start as it focuses on themes important during the first years in a teacher's work, such as coping, responsibilities, salaries, and membership in a work community.

Indeed, the significance of a work community for well-being at work is valuable. Working without collegial support can be devastating for a novice teacher. Creation of support systems could provide the necessary support and thus prevent turnover and change of careers among teachers (Taris et al., 2004). An open and encouraging atmosphere at work is not any obviousness and does not happen by itself but teachers have to create it through their own action; this concerns both the older members of the work community and new ones as well, and the teachers' supervisor, the rector (cf., Uusiautti, 2013a). Asking and giving help shows the need and availability of collegial support.

Co-teaching is one of the teaching methods that can enhance coping and well-being in a teacher's work because co-teaching attempts to meet students' needs in general education settings (Cook & Friend, 1995). Shared responsibilities and constant availability of peer support are the advantages of this teaching method (Pakarinen, Kytälä, & Sinkkonen, 2010). However, the possibility to have individualized attention and teaching is best enabled in small classes where teachers have resources and opportunity to notice pupils' various needs (Takala, 2007). Multiprofessional work teams and special assistants also have an increasingly important role in teachers' work (Morgan, Ashbaker, & Forbush, 1998; Mäensivu, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2012).

In all, this research contributed to the field a viewpoint of novice teachers. The purpose is to illustrate the multidimensional nature of the teacher's work that beginning teachers have to face and the multiple ways that socialization and adjustment in work can be enhanced at various levels and by open and benevolent cooperation between the many actors who are related to teachers' work!

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