

The influence of organizational socialization tactics on newcomer
adjustment

A study on university graduates of China

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Abstract

The newcomers are very important human resources, which can make organization continually develop. The abilities, skills and knowledge they have are the key factors of organizations' core competence in future. Therefore, it is important for each modern enterprise to work hard on providing training and cultivating talents. In China, the high rate of turnover has been recognized as a substantial problem in managing Chinese employees, and particularly for newcomers. Facing this challenge of managing newcomer turnover, many enterprises have invested a great deal of money to facilitate newcomer adjustment. However, the studies on organizational socialization in the Chinese context are still quite limited. Therefore, it has both theoretic and practical meaning to set research on university graduates in the context of China.

This research investigated the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and socialization outcomes, and the moderating effect of proactive behavior by using a sample of 156 Chinese new-hired university graduates. The results of hierarchical regression analysis indicated content and context factor had positive effect on role clarity; content factor had positive effect on social integration, job satisfaction and negative effect on turnover intention. The result also indicates relationship building, positive framing, self-management had a moderating effect on the relationship of organizational socialization tactics and role clarity, job satisfaction. The theoretical and practical implications have been discussed.

Keywords: newcomer adjustment; organizational socialization tactics;
socialization outcomes; proactive behavior

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1.Introduction

1.1 Background

The newcomers are very important human resources, which can make organization continually develop. Their abilities, skills and knowledge are the essential factors of organization's core competence in future. Therefore, it is important topic for every organization that how to develop and retain new employees successfully. Many organizations invest considerable time and money to recruit and train new employees. If their new employees quit soon, it will be a big loss for the organizations and they have to start new recruitment and select process all over again. Every year, university graduates account for a large proportion in organizations' new recruitment and they are important fresh power to organizations. However, turnover rate among university graduates is extremely high. Accounting to the newest *Chinese College Graduates Employment Annual Report* provided by Mycos, the most trusted third party authority in China, 33% graduates change jobs within half a year and the turnover rate of the first three years reaches 70% (Mycos, 2015). Besides the impact of compensation and benefit, the main reason of high turnover rate is graduates don't accommodate themselves to the new working environment. The newcomers' work adjustment not only relates to the work-life quality and career development of university graduates' own,

from the organizations' point of view, by helping their new-hired employees make a successful transformation from outsiders to insiders can promote human capital increment and management efficiency.

Based on such background, an improved understanding of newcomer adjustment is of growing importance. Such scrutiny is warranted particularly on the research of organizational socialization. In the field of management, the process through which newcomers learn the behaviors, attitudes, skills to fulfill new roles and function effectively within an organization is called organizational socialization. This process involves both organization and individual. Thus, research on organizational socialization should make the integration of both organization-driven strategies and individual-driven behaviors. This paper will first review organizational socialization tactics and newcomer proactive behaviors and then focus on discussing how these tactics influence the university graduates adjustment. The author hopes this research can fill the gaps in the area of China, and present a new research aspect of organizational socialization. On the other hand, this research also has practical meaning. Firstly, from the perspective of graduates, joining a new firm is a symbol of a transformation from "student" to "social man", it will have great influence on their career paths and lives. In a way, career development decides one's life quality, self-value and social status. Therefore, the research on university graduates' adjustment can help them adapt to new work environment smoothly and lay a foundation for achieving their career goals. Secondly, from the perspective of organizations, successful adjustment can reduce recruitment costs and improve reputation. Moreover, since the talents are the power of

enterprise development, to improve their adaptation level cannot only enhance the work efficiency, but also build a good relationship between organization and individuals, then reduce turnover rates.

Therefore, this research studied the newcomer adjustment from two aspects from both organization and individuals to find the key influence factors. And this research is also expected to give suggestions to university graduates to help them integrate into new workplace, at the same time give suggestions to organizations in cultivating talents.

1.2 Research Aims

As mentioned above, this research focuses on the influence of organizational socialization tactics on Chinese university graduates adjustment, and discusses the moderating effect of individuals' proactive behaviors. In details, this research is expected to achieve the following aims.

1. To examine the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and organizational socialization outcomes in the China context.

Most of exist studies were conducted in the western context. Therefore, it is important for present research to investigate such a relationship in a non-western context, specifically in the context of China.

2. To discuss whether relationship building, positive framing and self-management have moderating role in the relationship between socialization tactics and organizational socialization outcomes.

Newcomers have different quality of proactivity. The individuals who have high

quality of proactivity will be more positive to seek information to help them adjust into organizations. Do the socialization tactics have stronger influence on the newcomers who have high quality of proactivity? Thus, in this research, we will discuss how does the proactive behaviors (e.g. relationship building, positive framing, self-management) influence the relationship between the socialization tactics and organizational socialization outcomes.

Base on the analysis and discussion, we hope that this research can provide suggestions both to organizations and university graduates to help them achieve successful adjustment and reduce the turnover rates.

2. Research Review

2.1 Organizational Socialization

The word “socialization” came from sociology, which was first introduced into managerial field by Schein in 1968. He defined organizational socialization as a process which one is taught and learns “the rope” of a particular organization role. This is the early meaning of organizational socialization. Since then, many researchers studied about the content of organizational socialization and its theory structure.

Table 1. Definition of organizational socialization

Researcher	Time	Definition
Van Maanen & Schein	1979	Organizational socialization refers to a process by which individuals acquire the attitudes, behaviors and knowledge needed to participate as organizational members.
Louis	1980	Socialization is a process through which individuals come to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, social knowledge essential for clarifying organizational roles and for participating as organization members
Fisher	1986	Organizational socialization is a joint process, involving an organization that is seeking to influence and shape its members, and an individual who is attempting to assume an acceptable role for himself within this organization.
Morrison	1993	Organizational socialization is a process that a newcomer learns the role of organization, using attitude and behavior to help himself adapt and adjust into new working environment. These things begin with mastering the job tasks, followed by clarifying the role, integrating into the work team, and accept the

		organization's culture.
Chao	1994	Organizational socialization is an important process by which people adapt themselves into new jobs and organizational roles. There are six dimensions of organizational socialization, including performance proficiency, people, politics, language, organizational goals and values and history.
Glow& Glascock	1995	Organizational socialization process includes three phases: 1. Explore; 2. Give up the previous role; 3. Adjust self and new work role to each other. Among these phases, Giving up their previous role might involve either abandoning the old role or investing in a new role.
Sakes& Ashforth	1996	Organizational socialization is a learning process for newcomers. Organizations should offer a significant amount of resources to newcomers' socialization.
Bauer	1998	Organizational socialization is a process that newcomers acquire knowledge of the accepted behaviors, values, and norms to become effective members of the organization. During this process, new-hired employees attempt to reduce uncertainty and ambiguity by seeking and collecting information, and joining in socialization activities such as training programs.
Klein& Weaver	2000	Socialization is a sense-making and learning process through which newcomers acquire a variety of types of information to become effective members in the organization.
Haueter et.al	2003	Organizational socialization is about learning in three key organizational factors of 1. How things work with the organization, 2. How things work with the work group, 3. How things work with the actual job a person is hired to do.
Reio& Callahan	2004	Organizational socialization is continuous throughout an individual's career.
Cooper& Anderson	2006	Organizational socialization is the process in which a new organizational employee adapts from outsider to a functioning insider.

As we illustrated in Table 1, the conceptualization of organizational socialization has been continuously deepened and developed. It changed from focusing on “learn the rope” to “learn the values and norms”; from researching on an adjustment process to a “continuous, life-long” process; from regarding organizational socialization as a “passive acceptance process” to discovering the impact of newcomer’s proactive behavior in the process of organizational socialization.

2.2 Organizational Socialization Tactics

2.2.1 Typology of Organizational Socialization Tactics

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) developed the concept of organizational socialization tactics. They defined organizational socialization tactics as “the ways in which the experiences of individuals in transition from one role to another are structured for them by others in the organization”(Van Maanen and Schein’s, 1979). According to Maanen and Schein’s theory, there are six kinds of newcomer’s organizational socialization tactics and every tactic constructed by two opposite concepts. It includes collective (vs. individual), formal (vs. random), sequential (vs. random), fixed (vs. variable), serial (vs. disjunctive), investiture (vs. divestiture).

Table 2 Van Maanen and Schein's theory of organizational socialization tactics

<i>Collective</i>	<i>Individual</i>
Get newcomers together and put them through a common set of experiences to learn organizations' values, skills and norms.	Handel newcomers singly to learn organizations' values, skills, knowledge and norms.
<i>Formal</i>	<i>Informal</i>
Segregate a newcomer from regular organizational members during a socialization period.	Do not make a clear differentiation between newcomers and experienced members
<i>Sequential</i>	<i>Random</i>
Use a fixed sequence of phases to lead newcomers to achieve the assumption of the role and social status.	Use a changing sequence of steps to lead newcomers to achieve the assumption of the role and social status.
<i>Fixed</i>	<i>Variable</i>
Organizations provide a socialization timetable for newcomers to help them achieve the assumption of the roles.	Organizations do not provides any information and knowledge of socialization timetable.
<i>Serial</i>	<i>Disjunctive</i>
Allow the newcomers to be socialized by experienced members.	Do not provide available role models that newcomers can follow.
<i>Investiture</i>	<i>Divestiture</i>
Organizational socialization processes confirm the incoming identity and personal characteristics of newcomers	Organizational socialization processes reject and strip away certain entering characteristics of newcomers.

Source: Adapt from Alan Saks and Blake Ashforth (2002)

2.2.2 Jones' Grouping of Organizational Socialization Tactics

Building on Van Maanen and Schein, Jones (1986) reclassified the six tactics. He suggested that the collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture tactics are

institutional socialization tactics. This kind of tactics can promote custodial role orientations. And individual, random, variable, disjunctive and divestiture are individual socialization tactics which can promote innovative role orientations among newcomers (Jones, 1986). Furthermore, Jones (1986) proposed that based on the characteristics of socialization tactics, it could also be classified as content, contest and social factors. The context factor includes collective (individual) and formal (informal), refers to the way organization provide information and knowledge to newcomers. The content factor includes fixed (variable), sequential (random), refers to the content of information and knowledge that organization provides to newcomers. The social factor includes serial (disjunctive), investiture (divestiture), refers to the interpersonal support that organization provides to newcomers.

Tables 3. A classification of organizational socialization tactics

	Institutionalized	Individualized
Context Aspect	Collective Formal	Individual Informal
Content Aspect	Sequential Fixed	Random Variable
Social Aspect	Serial Investiture	Disjunctive Divestiture

Source: Jones(1986)

2.3 Organizational Socialization Tactics and Outcomes

The research about organizational socialization tactics and outcomes mainly includes three aspects: role orientation, person-organization fit and newcomer adjustment.

As we mentioned before, institutionalized socialization has been found to be related to custodial role orientation and individualized socialization has been found to be related to actual role innovation (Allen and Meyer 1990; Ashforth and Saks 1996; Jones 1986). Cable and Parson (2001) examined how socialization tactics help to form person-organization fit between newcomers and organizations. And their results showed that the content and social factors were associated to person-organization fit, however, the context factor was not. When organizations use sequential, fixed, serial and investiture tactics, the newcomers may experience a high quality of person-organization fit, which means institutionalized tactics are more effective on person-organization fit.

Most researchers are focusing on the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment. In general, role conflict, role ambiguity, job satisfaction, organization commitment, turnover intention are used to be the measures of newcomer adjustment. Jones (1986) found that institutionalized socialization tactics are negatively related to the role ambiguity and role conflict, and positively related to job satisfaction and organization commitment. In the contrast, individualized tactics are positively related to role ambiguity and role conflict. Allen (2006) found when organizations use serial and investiture tactics, newcomers will have high levels of embeddedness and low turnover intentions.

2.4 Dimension of Organizational Socialization Tactics and Outcomes in

This Research

The present paper adopts Jones (1986) three-factor conceptualization of socialization tactics because it is richer in theoretical and allows for greater hypothesis testing regarding particular classes of socialization tactics (Cable&Parson, 2001). This allows us to distinguish different effects on each aspect of organizational socialization tactics on outcomes. It is also very helpful for organizations to design policies and strategies to improve the levels of newcomer adjustment by paying attention to the most powerful tactics on socialization outcomes. Also, the three-factor tactics have been tested in both western countries (e.g. Jones, 1986) and non-western countries (e.g. Takeuchi and Takeuchi, 2009). Therefore, we suggest the three-factor dimension of organizational socialization tactics can be used under the context of China and truly affect the existing society.

So far, the question of ‘what is the most effective factor of newcomer adjustment?’ still has no consentaneous answers. Because the socialization outcomes can differ from types of jobs, organizations, and cultures (Bauer.et, al., 1998). However, with the development of the concept of organizational socialization, the understanding of socialization outcomes variables has been clarified. Feldman (1981) suggested that role clarity, task mastery and social integration are the three important tasks for newcomers to do after their entry. Role clarity means that the newcomers are clear about their job roles (e.g. job duties, responsibilities, expectations) in the organizations (Rizzo et al., 1970). Task mastery indicates the levels that the newcomers understand their job and

their confidence of job performance (Haueter et al., 2001). Social integration indicates the level that the newcomers are accepted by organization members (Morrison, 1993a). These three socialization outcomes are regarded as ‘proximal’ outcomes and often occur in the shorter term. Besides the ‘proximal’ outcomes, Bauer (2007) summarized the attitudinal (e.g. job satisfaction, organizational commitment) and behavioral (e.g. performance and turnover) variables as ‘distal’ socialization outcomes. In the contrast with the proximal outcomes, these outcomes usually occur in the longer term. Some researchers suggest that the study of socialization outcomes should involve variables from both proximal and distal outcomes (e.g. Griffin, 2000). Therefore, this research uses role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intentions as the variables of socialization outcomes. Based on the arguments above, we suggest:

Hypothesis 1-1: Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to newcomers’ role clarity.

Hypothesis 1-2. Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to newcomers’ social integrate.

Hypothesis 1-3. Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1-4. Context, content, social tactics are all negatively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 1-5. Of the three factors of socialization tactics, the social factors of socialization tactics have the strongest positive influence.

2.5 Newcomer Proactive Socialization Tactics

As we mentioned before, organizational socialization process involves both organizations and individuals. Historically, researchers were focused on the aspect of organizations, and discussed how the tactics adopted by organizations affected newcomer adjustment. With the deepening understanding of organizational socialization, more and more researchers realized that the newcomers are not only passively accepted socialization guides by organizations, but also they proactively seek information and knowledge to help themselves adjust to the organizations. According to Griffin (2000)'s research, there are mainly eight proactive socialization tactics.

2.5.1 Feedback and Information Seeking

When an individual entering a new organization and start a new job, he or she may feel anxiety because of the uncertainty about the new environment. Although organization will provide some necessary information, to the newcomers, it is far from enough. Therefore, newcomers need to proactively seek information about the job content, role and co-workers to reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Morrison (1993a) suggested five types of information that newcomers seek: referent, social, feedback, technical and normative information. His studies indicated that technical and feedback information seeking tactics are positively related to task mastery; the feedback and referent information seeking tactics are positively related to role clarity; the normative information seeking tactics is positively to social integration.

2.5.2 Relationship Building

Relationship building refers to the relationship newcomers form with co-workers, supervisors and mentors. It is helpful to newcomers to collect knowledge, support, reduce stress and instruct role behavior. Previous research has indicated that the relationship building tactics is important to the socialization process (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996).

2.5.3 Informal Mentor Relationships

Informal mentor relationship refers to newcomers form relationships with other insiders (Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992). Different from forming formal mentor relationships, build relationships with the experienced employees is a proactive behavior adopted by newcomers themselves. Chao et al. (1992) compared different effect between informal mentor relationships and formal mentor relationships. They suggested that compared with those in formal mentor relationships, newcomers in informal relationship could receive more career-related support and get higher salaries.

2.5.4 Job Change Negotiation

Job change negotiation refers to the way that newcomers propose to gain control and overcome uncertainty during socialization (Ashford & Black, 1996). This proactive socialization tactics involves attempting to change their task or manner. For example, newcomers may want to focus on the job they perform well or the task which can

provide more career opportunities. Researchers also found that this tactic has impact on newcomer performance and job satisfaction (Ashford & Black, 1996).

2.5.5 Positive Framing

Positive framing can be regarded as behavior of cognitive self-management. Through controlling the different situation framing consciously, newcomers can increase self-efficiency and self-confidence (Ashford & Black, 1996). Researchers found that positive framing is related to newcomer performance and job satisfaction (Ashford & Black, 1996).

2.5.6 Involvement in Work-related Activities

Involvement in work activities can be defined as newcomers' proactive involvement in "extra-curricular" work-related activities (Griffin et al., 2000). Bauer and Green (1994) found that this tactics is related to newcomers' performance, role ambiguity, social acceptance and organization commitment.

2.5.7 Behavioral Self-management

Behavior self-management tactics can be defined as newcomers increase efficiency and learning effect through controlling their behavior. Saks and Ashforth (1996) indicated that behavioral self-management includes self-observation, goal setting, self-reward and punishment and rehearsal. They also found that such behavioral

management techniques could reduce entry anxiety in the first month and improve performance after 6 months.

2.5.8 Observation/Modeling

Observation and modeling is one of the primary ways that people learn socialization. Researchers found that observation was the most common way that newcomers reported learning on their job (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

We can conclude that the proactive behavior is related to positive effect. Therefore, in this research, we use relationship building, positive framing and behavioral self-management as the moderate variables to examine if the newcomers who use proactive socialization tactics are more easily to achieve successful adjustment. Therefore, we suggest:

Hypothesis 2-1 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity.

Hypothesis 2-2 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration.

Hypothesis 2-3 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2-4 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 3-1 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity.

Hypothesis 3-2 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration.

Hypothesis 3-3 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3-4 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4-1 Self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity.

Hypothesis 4-2 Self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration.

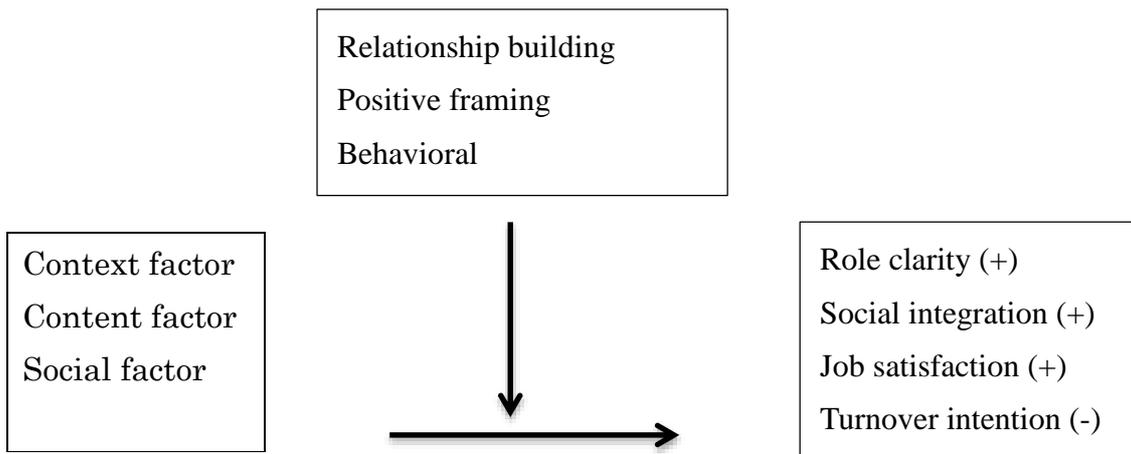
Hypothesis 4-3 Self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4-4 Self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Overview Model in This Research

Based on the previous research, the model we use in this research is as followed:



3.2 Samples

In this research, we made a questionnaire and put it website in China. 156 Chinese university graduates whose work experience within 4 years answered our questionnaire. Among the participants, 51 are male (32.7%) and 105 are female (67.3%).

Table 4 Demographic information of research sample (N=156)

Characteristic	No.	Percent
Gender		
Male	51	32.7%
Female	105	67.3%
Industry		
Finance and assurance	16	10.3%
Manufacture	14	9.0%
Service	17	10.9%
Administrative machinery	46	29.5%
Health care	14	9.0%
IT and communication	17	10.9%
Others	32	20.5%
Job type		
Sales and marketing	17	10.9%
Administration	59	37.8%
Operation and support	12	7.7%
Research and development	27	17.3%
Others	41	26.3%
Tenure		
Less than 6 months	39	25.0%
6~12months	16	10.3%
1~2years	28	17.9%
2~3years	25	16.0%
3~4years	48	30.8%
Organization size		
Fewer than 100	58	37.2%
100~200	29	18.6%
200~1000	31	19.9%
1000~10000	17	10.9%
Over 10000	21	13.5%

3.3 Measures

To measure organizational socialization tactics, this research use questionnaire conducted by Cable and Parson (1991). This scale has been tested in socialization studies. The questionnaire includes 12 items, and 4 items for each factor. Participants were required to report from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Example items are: This organization puts all newcomers through the same set of learning experiences; There is a clear pattern in the way one role leads to another, or one job assignment leads to another, in this organization; My colleagues have gone out of their way to help me adjust to this organization.

This research chooses role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention as variables to measure the effectiveness of organizational socialization tactics on newcomer adjustment. Role clarity was measured 5-item role ambiguity scale by Rizzo (1970). A sample item is: I feel certain about how much authority I have. Social integration was measured with a 4-item scale developed by Morrison (1993a). A sample item is: I feel comfortable around my co-workers. Job satisfaction was measured with a 3-item scale developed by Cammann (1983). A sample item is: All in all, I am satisfied with my job. Turnover intention was measured with 2 items developed by Cammann (1979). A sample item is: I often think about quitting my job with my present organization.

Since China is a relationship-oriented society, this research chooses relationship building as a representative variable to measure the moderating effect of proactive behavior tactics. Relationship building was measured with 5-item scale adapted from

Ashford&Black (1996). Sample items are: Tried to spend as much time as I could with my boss; Started conversations with people from different segments of the company. This research also uses positive framing and self-management as variables because positive framing can represent for newcomers' mental activity, and self-management can represent behavior. Positive framing was measured with a 3-item scale adapted from Ashford&Black (1996). A sample item is: Tried to see my situation as an opportunity rather than a threat. Self-management was measured with 5-item scale developed by Manz (1983). A sample item is: I try to keep track of how well I'm doing while I work.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In order to present the overall features of data, descriptive statistics such as mean, Cronbach's alphas, internal correlations are first conducted (Table 5).

Sample means for all three aspects of socialization tactics were moderate (3.84 to 3.92), with standard deviations of around 1.0 demonstrating a reasonable amount of variation due to individual perceptions. The three aspects of socialization tactics were significantly with each other, correlations ranging from .62 to .75, which suggested that although socialization tactics can be categorized into three aspects, those three aspects of organizational socialization were internally related. The three aspects of organizational socialization tactics were significantly associated with the role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention. Those provide support to the relationships between socialization tactics and socialization outcomes. The relationship building, positive framing and self-management were all significantly associated with all aspects of socialization tactics and socialization outcomes. The Cronbach's alphas of all variables were above .7, which indicated an acceptable internal consistency within each other.

Table 5 Means, standard deviations, internal correlations and measurement reliabilities

	Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 context	3.92	1.03	(0.81)									
2 content	3.97	.87	.66**	(0.80)								
3 social	3.84	.77	.62**	.75**	(0.70)							
4 role clarity	4.17	.81	.66**	.61**	.58**	(0.90)						
5 social integration	4.13	.85	.51**	.66**	.52**	.60**	(0.90)					
6 job satisfaction	3.95	.96	.49**	.60**	.54**	.62**	.63**	(0.84)				
7 turnover intention	2.35	1.30	-.37**	-.45**	-.42**	-.48**	-.32**	-.74**	(0.91)			
8 relationship building	3.39	.78	.46**	.33**	.32**	.38**	.35**	.31**	-.30**	(0.77)		
9 positive framing	3.97	.93	.43**	.43**	.49**	.53**	.46**	.53**	-.37**	.51**	(0.88)	*
10 self-management	3.73	.76	.40**	.46**	.47**	.56**	.51**	.39**	-.26**	.48**	.60**	(0.78)

N=156, *P< .05 **P< .01 The Cronbach's alphas for each scale are presented on the diagonal

4.2 Organizational Socialization Tactics and Socialization Outcomes

This research uses hierarchical regression to examine the effect of context, content and the social factors on role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention. Table 6 summarizes results involving the relationship between socialization tactics and socialization outcomes. When controlling for gender, industry, job type, tenure and organization size, the context socialization tactics had significant effects on role clarity ($\beta = .42, p < .001$), the content socialization tactics had significant effects on all socialization outcomes (β from $-.27$ to $.57$) and the social socialization tactics had no

statistically significant effects on any socialization outcomes (β from $-.17$ to $.17$) in this sample. Therefore, Hypothesis 1-1, 1-2, 1-3,1-4 was only partly supported and Hypothesis 1-5 was not supported. The findings suggested that, of the three factors of socialization tactics provided by the organization, only the content factor explained the variances of all socialization outcomes, which suggested that the content factor could have the strongest influence.

Table 6 Relationship between socialization tactics and socialization outcomes

Model	Role clarity			Social integration			Job satisfaction			Turnover intention		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
Step 1 Add control variables												
R ¹²		.08			.13			.16			.19	
Adjusted R ²		.00			.05			.09			.12	
F		.52			1.67			2.14*			2.59**	
Step 2 Add main effect: socialization tactics												
Context	.41	.08	.42***	.12	.07	.14	.06	.06	.09	-.02	.06	-.03
Content	.25	.11	.21*	.56	.10	.57***	.32	.09	.38***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.23	.12	.17	-.02	.10	-.02	.15	.09	.16	-.14	.09	-.17
R ²²		.54			.51			.46			.35	
Adjusted R ²		.49			.46			.40			.28	
ΔR^2		.46***			.38***			.30***			.16***	
F		10.22***			9.17***			7.46***			4.75***	

*P< .05 **P< .01 ***P< .001

4.3 Moderating Effect of Proactive Behavior Tactics

4.3.1 Relationship Building

This research used hierarchical regression models to examine the moderating role of relationship building in the relationships between organizational socialization tactics and socialization outcomes.

Socialization outcomes (i.e. role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention) were first regressed on the control variables and organizational socialization tactics in step 1, the main effects of relationship building were added in step 2, and the interactive term between socialization tactics and relationship was added in step 3. As shown in Table 7, the main effect of relationship building was significantly associated with turnover intention ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $\beta = -.17$, $p < .05$). The moderate effect of relationship building between the content aspect socialization tactics and role clarity was statistically significant, explaining an additional 4 percent of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $\beta = -.21$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2-1 was considered to be supported. However, there was no statistical support for Hypothesis 2-2, 2-3, 2-4.

Table 7 The moderating effect of relationship building

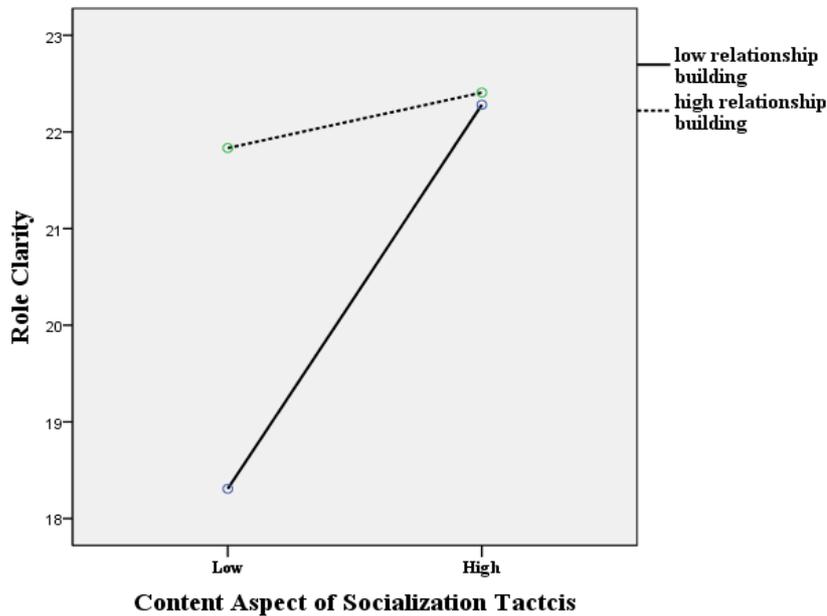
Model	Role clarity			Social integration			Job satisfaction			Turnover intention		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
	Step 1 Add control variables											
Context	.41	.08	.42***	.12	.07	.14	.06	.06	.09	-.02	.06	-.03
Content	.25	.11	.21*	.56	.10	.57***	.32	.09	.38***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.23	.12	.17	-.02	.10	-.02	.15	.09	.16	-.14	.09	-.17
R ²	.54			.51			.46			.35		
Adjusted R ²	.49			.46			.40			.28		
F	10.22***			9.17***			7.46***			4.75***		
Step 2 Add main effects												
Context	.39	.09	.40***	.07	.07	.08	.02	.07	.03	.03	.07	.05
Content	.25	.11	.21*	.55	.10	.56***	.32	.09	.38***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.23	.12	.17	-.02	.10	-.02	.15	.09	.16	-.14	.09	-.16
Relationship building	.05	.07	.05	.12	.06	.13	.11	.06	.14	-.11	.05	-.17*
R ²	.54			.53			.48			.37		
Adjusted R ²	.49			.47			.41			.30		
ΔR ²	.00			.01			.01			.02*		
F	9.61***			9.00***			7.37***			4.82***		
Step 3 Interactive effects												
Context	.30	.09	.30***	.01	.08	.01	.00	.07	.00	.02	.07	.03
Content	.21	.11	.18	.53	.10	.54***	.31	.09	.38***	-.21	.09	-.28*
Social	.24	.12	.18*	-.01	.10	-.01	.17	.09	.18	-.14	.09	-.17
Relationship Building	.10	.07	.09	.14	.06	.16*	.10	.06	.13	-.10	.06	-.15
Context*Relationship	-.38	.39	-.10	-.43	.34	-.13	-.46	.31	-.16	.10	.31	.04
Content*Relationship	-.82	.40	-.21*	.14	.35	.04	.43	.32	.15	-.12	.32	-.05
Social*Relationship	.35	.39	.09	-.26	.34	-.08	-.07	.31	-.02	-.18	.31	-.07
R ³	.58			.55			.49			.38		
Adjusted R ²	.52			.48			.41			.29		
ΔR ²	.04**			.02			.01			.01		
F	9.29***			8.12***			6.42***			4.10***		

*P< .05 **P< .01 ***P< .001

Figure 1 shows the pattern of the interaction effect of content organizational socialization tactics and relationship building on role clarity. As is seen, role clarity was greater when both the levels of content organizational socialization tactics and relationship building were high. In contrast, role clarity was lower when both content organizational socialization tactics and relationship building were low. When the content socialization tactics was low, the newcomers who had high levels of relationship building achieved higher quality of role clarity than those who had low levels of relationship building. This finding suggested that even though organization did not provide a clear timetable of role assumption or development steps, newcomers who had a high quality relationship building reported higher levels of role clarity compared to newcomers who had low quality relationship building.

Figure 1. Interaction of the content aspect of socialization tactics and relationship

building on role clarity



4.3.2 Positive Framing

As shown in Table 8, the main effect of positive framing was significantly associated with role clarity ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $\beta = .24$, $p < .001$), social integration ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $\beta = .20$, $p < .01$) and job satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $\beta = .31$, $p < .001$). The moderate effect of positive framing between socialization tactics and role clarity was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$). This finding supported hypothesis 3-1. The moderate effect of positive framing between the three aspects socialization tactics and social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention had no statistically significant. Therefore, hypothesis 3-2, 3-3, 3-4 was not supported.

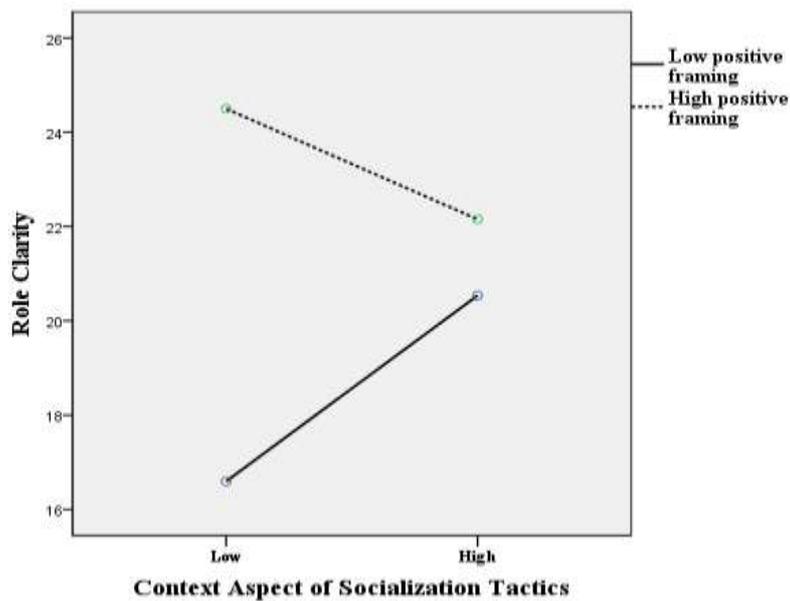
Table 8 The moderating effect of positive framing

Model	Role clarity			Social integration			Job satisfaction			Turnover intention		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
	Step 1 Add control variables											
Context	.41	.08	.42***	.12	.07	.14	.06	.06	.09	-.02	.06	-.03
Content	.25	.11	.21*	.56	.10	.57***	.32	.09	.38***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.23	.12	.17	-.02	.10	-.02	.15	.09	.16	-.14	.09	-.17
R1 ²		.54			.51			.46			.35	
Adjusted R ²		.49			.46			.40			.28	
F		10.22***			9.17***			7.46***			4.75***	
Step 2 Add main effects												
Context	.36	.08	.37***	.08	.07	.10	.02	.06	.03	.00	.06	.01
Content	.24	.11	.20*	.55	.10	.56***	.31	.08	.37***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.12	.12	.09	-.09	.11	-.08	.06	.09	.06	-.10	.09	-.11
Positive framing	.35	.10	.24***	.24	.09	.20**	.32	.07	.31***	-.15	.08	-.16
R2 ²		.58			.54			.52			.37	
Adjusted R ²		.53			.48			.47			.30	
ΔR ²		.04***			.03**			.06***			.02	
F		11.16***			9.51***			8.94***			4.76***	
Step 3 Interactive effects												
Context	.32	.08	.32***	.06	.07	.08	.02	.06	.03	-.01	.06	-.02
Content	.21	.11	.18	.54	.10	.55***	.31	.08	.37***	-.21	.09	-.28*
Social	.12	.12	.09	-.08	.10	-.07	.06	.09	.07	-.09	.09	-.11
Positive framing	.33	.10	.23***	.19	.09	.16*	.33	.08	.32***	-.18	.08	-.20*
Context*positive	-.52	.31	-.17	-.54	.28	-.21	-.16	.25	-.07	-.13	.25	-.07
Content*positive	-.52	.39	-.16	.47	.35	.17	.08	.30	.03	.15	.31	.07
Social*positive	.50	.36	.16	-.16	.33	-.06	.20	.29	.09	-.30	.29	-.14
R3 ²		.61			.56			.53			.38	
Adjusted R ²		.55			.50			.46			.29	
ΔR ²		.03*			.02			.01			.02	
F		10.48***			8.50***			7.57***			4.21***	

*P< .05 **P<.01 ***P<.001

Figure 2 provides an interesting finding such that context aspect of organizational socialization was positively related with role clarity when newcomer had a low quality of positive framing, but for newcomers who had a high-quality positive framing, there appeared a slightly negative relationship between organizational socialization tactics and role clarity.

Figure 2. Interaction of the context aspect of socialization tactics and positive framing on role clarity



4.3.3 Behavioral Self-management

Table 9 The moderating effect of self-management

Model	Role clarity			Social integration			Job satisfaction			Turnover intention		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
Step 1 Add control variables												
Context	.41	.08	.42***	.12	.07	.14	.06	.06	.09	-.02	.06	-.03
Content	.25	.11	.21*	.56	.10	.57***	.32	.09	.38***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.23	.12	.17	-.02	.10	-.02	.15	.09	.16	-.14	.09	-.17
R1 ²	.54			.51			.46			.35		
Adjusted R ²	.49			.46			.40			.28		
F	10.22***			9.17***			7.46***			4.75***		
Step 2 Add main effects												
Context	.37	.08	.38***	.09	.07	.11	.06	.06	.08	-.02	.06	-.02
Content	.18	.11	.16	.51	.10	.52***	.30	.09	.37***	-.20	.09	-.27*
Social	.13	.11	.10	-.09	.10	-.08	.13	.09	.14	-.14	.09	-.16
Self-management	.32	.07	.30***	.22	.06	.24***	.07	.06	.09	-.01	.06	-.02
R2 ²	.60			.55			.47			.35		
Adjusted R ²	.55			.50			.40			.27		
ΔR ²	.06***			.04***			.01			.00		
F	12.28***			10.08***			7.12***			4.44***		
Step 3 Interactive effects												
Context	.34	.07	.34***	.06	.07	.08	.04	.06	.06	-.01	.06	-.02
Content	.11	.10	.09	.50	.10	.51***	.30	.09	.37***	-.22	.09	-.30*
Social	.14	.11	.11	-.08	.10	-.07	.13	.09	.13	-.12	.09	-.14
Self-management	.31	.06	.29***	.20	.06	.23***	.07	.06	.09	-.03	.06	-.04
Context*self-management	-.92	.31	-.28**	-.47	.29	-.17	-.57	.27	-.24***	.52	.26	.25
Content*self-management	-.77	.30	-.25**	.01	.28	.00	.06	.26	.03	-.23	.26	-.12
Social*self-management	1.10	.32	.35***	.10	.30	.04	.45	.28	.20	-.52	.27	-.25
R3 ²	.66			.57			.49			.39		
Adjusted R ²	.62			.51			.41			.30		

ΔR^2	.06***	.02	.02	.04*
F	13.36***	8.91***	6.41***	4.38***

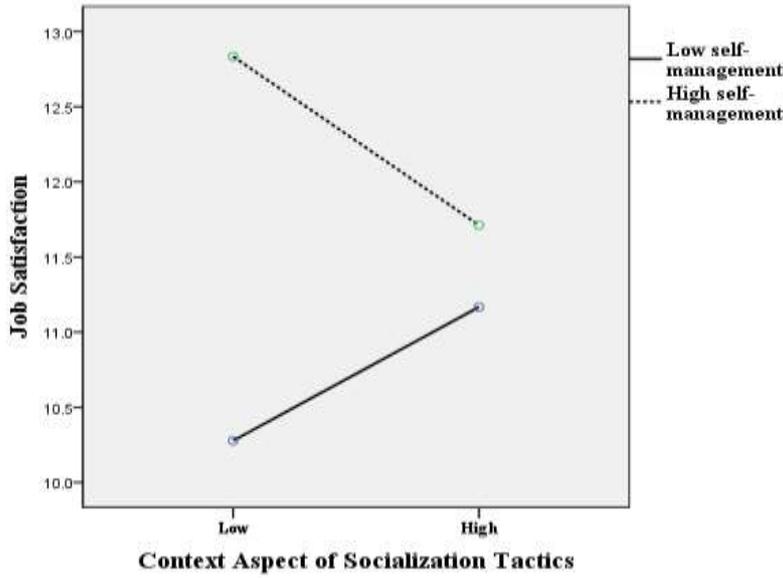
*P < .05 **P < .01 ***P < .001

As shown in Table 9, the main effect of self-management was significantly associated with role clarity ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $\beta = .30$, $p < .001$), social integration ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $\beta = .24$, $p < .001$). The moderate effect of self-management between the three aspects socialization tactics and role clarity had statistically significant. The moderate effect of self-management between context aspect of socialization tactics and job satisfaction were highly significant ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .001$). This finding supported the hypothesis 4-1 and 4-3.

Figure.3 also provides an interesting finding such that context aspect of organizational socialization tactics was positively related with job satisfaction when newcomer had a low quality of self-management, but for newcomers who had a high-quality self-management, there appeared a slightly negative relationship between organizational socialization tactics and job satisfaction.

Figure 3. Interaction of the context aspect of socialization tactics and self-management

on job satisfaction



4.4 Result Conclusion

Table 10. Summary of hypothesis and findings

Hypotheses	Finding
H1.1 Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to newcomers' role clarity.	
Context tactics are positively related to newcomers' role clarity	Support
Content tactics are positively related to newcomers' role clarity	Support
Social tactics are positively related to newcomers' role clarity	Not support
H1.2 Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to newcomers' social integration	
Context tactics are positively related to newcomers' social integration	Not support

Content tactics are positively related to newcomers' social integration Support

Social tactics are positively related to newcomers' social integration Not support

H1.3 Context, content, social tactics are all positively related to job satisfaction.

Context tactics are positively related to job satisfaction Not support

Content tactics are positively related to job satisfaction Support

Social tactics are positively related to job satisfaction Not support

H1.4 Context, content, social tactics are all negatively related to turnover intentions.

Context tactics are negatively related to turnover intentions Not support

Content tactics are negatively related to turnover intentions Support

Social tactics are negatively related to turnover intentions Not support

H1.5 Of the three factors of socialization tactics, the social factors of socialization tactics have the strongest influence.

H2.1 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity. Support

H2.2 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration. Not support

H2.3 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction. Not support

H2.4 Relationship building moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions. Not support

H3.1 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity. Support

H3.2 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration. Not support

H3.3 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction. Not support

H3.4 Positive framing moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions.	Not support
H4.1 self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and role clarity.	Support
H4.2 self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and social integration.	Not support
H4.3 self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and job satisfaction.	Support
H4.4 self-management moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and turnover intentions.	Not support

5. Discussion

5.1 Organizational Socialization Tactics and Newcomer Adjustment

It has both theoretical and practical meanings to explore the influence of organizational socialization tactics on newcomer adjustment because managers can use the effective tactics to help newcomers make the socialization process successfully. According to the analysis of the previous research, we use role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction and turnover intention as the adjustment measures to discuss the effect of organizational socialization tactics.

Results of this research indicate that organizational socialization tactics have some impacts on university graduates adjustment, particularly on the content aspect of socialization tactics. This indicates that if organizations adopt sequential and fixed socialization tactics, newcomers are in general more likely to make a clear career development plan, to enhance the levels of role clarity and job satisfaction and to integrate to the organization in China. This finding is consistent with the result of previous research (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks and Ashforth, 2002). The result of this research also suggests that social aspects of socialization tactics are not significantly related to any socialization outcomes. This finding is different from the results in the western context (e.g. Saks and Ashforth, 1997). One possible explanation is that the participants are working at competitive environment and the experienced members do not willing provide enough support to newcomers. The results indicate context tactics are related to role clarity, which suggest that a collective and formal socialization context affect the newcomers' understanding of job duty. This finding is consistent with the result

of Bauer et al. (2007). It is lack of support for the positive relationship between social socialization tactics and socialization outcomes in this research, however, provides evidence that the content tactics has strong impact on socialization outcomes. This indicates clear timetable training and career path are particularly critical for newcomer adjustment in China.

5.2 The Moderating Role of Proactive Behavior

The present research indicates that the proactive behavior served as a moderator to influence the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and socialization outcomes in China. It is found that relationship building has positive moderating role between content aspect of socialization tactics and role clarity. Moreover, when the content socialization tactics is low, the newcomers who have high levels of relationship building can achieve higher quality of role clarity than those who have low levels of relationship building. This result indicates that even though organizations do not provide enough information of job content and career development, the newcomers who proactively build relationship with supervisors and colleagues can still find ways to clear the job role and responsibility due to the more opportunities to communicate with experienced members. We can also find that when under high content socialization tactics, newcomers with high relationship building and low relationship building are both achieve high levels of role clarity. It is surprisingly that relationship building doesn't serve as a moderator between organizational socialization tactics and social integration because it is known that China is a relationship-oriented country. One possible reason is

that the participants are working at a competitive or stiff environment. Under such an environment, employees who stand out to build relationship with supervisors in the organizations are more likely to be disliked and regarded as shoe polishers. Therefore, they may use more cautious ways to integrate into organizations instead of building relationship.

It is interesting that although the results support the interactive effect of positive framing in the linkage of context aspect of organizational socialization tactics and role clarity, a slightly negative relationship has been found for newcomers with a high quality of positive framing. One potential explanation is the when the organizations do not provide structured settings like job orientation or training program, the newcomers should learn jobs from real work. Therefore, the newcomers with high level of positive framing can be more confidence in daily work and clear the job content quickly. However, when the organizations provide formal training classes and clearly defined socialization process, the newcomers with high positive may be over optimistic even conceited about jobs and situations so that they are more easily to misunderstand the job content and make mistakes. It is noted that under high levels of context tactics, newcomers with low quality of positive framing can also achieve high levels of role clarity.

Another interesting thing is that a slightly negative relationship between context socialization tactics and job satisfaction has been found for newcomers with a high quality of self-management. One possible reason is that under low context socialization tactics, newcomers are usually provided with a great control of their learning process.

The newcomers who are good at making strategy are more likely to achieve goals and get promotion thus improving the job satisfaction. Conversely, when an organization provide collective training and learning classes, newcomers with high quality of self-management may feel rigid and stressful thus reducing the level of job satisfaction.

6. Implications

Studies on the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and socialization outcomes have been tested widely. However, the studies of the influences of organizational socialization tactics on newcomer adjustment are still quite limited in the context of China. Although this research failed to find the significant relationships between social aspect of tactics and socialization outcomes, it has confirmed the results of Bauer et al. (2007) and Saks and Ashforth (2002) that the context and content tactics are positively related to socialization outcomes. This study also provides an antecedent research for the moderating role of proactive behavior tactics between organizational socialization tactics and socialization outcomes. This may help us more entirely understand the mechanism of newcomer adjustment.

In addition to the theoretical implications, this study also offers some practical insights to employers. Firstly, the results suggest that content aspect of socialization tactics was found to be the primary predictor of newcomer adjustment. Therefore, enterprises are encouraged to provide clear career development path and timetable to newcomers. For example, it may be advantageous to build up a public and clear performance evaluation system to help newcomers outline future. Additionally, when designing socialization strategies for newcomers, it is important to consider the typical characteristics of the structure settings and the type of job. Secondly, it is important for enterprises to provide an environment that enable newcomers to become real team members, however, different learning strategies are essential for newcomers with different levels of proactive behavior. For the newcomers with low level of proactive

behavior, it is necessary to support them to involve in a clearly defined socialization activities. Differently, for the newcomers with high level of proactive behavior, strategies should be changed flexible according to the situation. For example, organizations should give more power to the newcomers who have high quality of self-management to manage their work in their ways. It can motivate them to perform better and achieve higher job satisfaction.

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APPENDIX: Survey Measures

Organizational socialization tactics (Cable&Parson, 2001)

Context Factor

1. In the last several months, I have been extensively involved with other new recruits in common, job related activities.
2. This organization puts all newcomers through the same set of learning experiences.
3. I have been through a set of training experiences that are specifically designed to give newcomers a thorough knowledge of job related skills.
4. I did not perform any of my normal job responsibilities until I was thoroughly familiar with departmental procedures and work methods.

Content Factor

1. There is a clear pattern in the way one role leads to another, or one job assignment leads to another, in this organization.
2. The steps in the career ladder are clearly specified in this organization.
3. I can predict my future career path in this organization by observing other people's experiences.
4. The way in which my progress through this organization will follow a fixed timetable of events has been clearly communicated to me.

Social Factor

1. Almost all of my colleagues have been supportive of me personally.
2. My colleagues have gone out of their way to help me adjust to this organization.

3. I have received little guidance from experienced organizational members as to how I should perform my job.

4. I am gaining a clear understanding of my role in this organization from observing my senior colleagues.

Socialization Outcomes

Role clarity (Rizzo et al. , 1970)

1. I feel certain about how much authority I have.

2. Clear, planned goals and objectives for my job.

3. Expectation is clear about what has to be done.

4. I know what my responsibilities are.

5. I know exactly what is expected of me.

Social integration (Morrison, 1993a)

1. I feel comfortable around my co-workers.

2. The atmosphere in my immediate work group is friendly.

3. People in my immediate work group help me find ways to do a better job.

4. My co-workers seem to accept me as one of them.

Job satisfaction (Cammann, 1983)

1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job

2. In general, I don't like my job

3. In general, I like working here

Turnover (Camman, Fichman, Jenkins, 1979)

1. I often think about quitting my job with my present organization.

2. I will probably look for a new job with the next year.

Proactive behavior

Relationship building (Adapted from Ashford&Black, 1996)

1. Tried to spend as much time as I could with my boss
2. Tried to form a good relationship with my boss
3. Worked hard to get to know my boss
4. Started conversations with people from different segments of the company
5. Participated in social office events to meet people

Positive Framing (adapted from Ashford & Black, 1996)

1. Tried to see my situation as an opportunity rather than a threat.
2. Tried to look on the bright side of things.
3. Tried to see my situation as a challenge rather than a problem.

Self-management (Manz, 1983)

1. I try to keep track of how well I'm doing while I work
2. I like to work toward specific goals I set for myself.
3. When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like
4. I tend to get down on myself when I have performed poorly.
5. I often practice important tasks before I actually do them.