



Socialization tactics: Antecedents for goal interdependence and newcomer adjustment and retention

Serena Changhong Lu ^{a,*}, Dean Tjosvold ^b

^a Singapore Management University, Singapore

^b Lingnan University, Hong Kong

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 27 February 2013

Available online 19 May 2013

Keywords:

Socialization tactics

Newcomer adjustment

Goal interdependence

ABSTRACT

This study argues that Deutsch's theory of goal interdependence is useful to examine the dynamics of serial and investiture tactics on newcomer adjustment and retention in work team contexts. Structural equation results of interviews of specific incidents collected from one hundred and two newcomers support the hypothesized model that serial and investiture tactics used by teams promote cooperative goal interdependence and weaken competitive goal interdependence and independent goal relationship between newcomers and their teams. Cooperative goals were also found to promote positive attitudes and strong co-worker relationships whereas competitive and independent goals resulted in intentions to quit and low levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

© 2013 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Organizational socialization involves the processes through which newcomers adjust to their work surroundings and acquire knowledge, attitudes and behaviors to perform effectively (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This process is expected to contribute to both individual well-being and organizational productivity (Chen & Klimoski, 2003). Studies have focused on how organizational socialization tactics can be applied to enhance newcomer on-boarding (Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). This study examines serial tactics where organizational members act as role models and investiture tactics where organizational members provide positive social support (Jones, 1986). It argues that Deutsch's (1973) theory of goal interdependence helps understand the dynamics and outcomes of these tactics. It theorizes that serial and investiture tactics develop cooperative goals and reduce competitive and independent goals between newcomers and experienced members; cooperative goals and low levels of competitive and independent goals in turn result in effective socialization.

This study makes several contributions to the literature on socialization tactics and the theory of goal interdependence as well as provides practical implications for organizations. Managers are experimenting with team-based structures to promote organizational productivity and employee well-being (Chen & Klimoski, 2003; Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). By emphasizing the team relationships' perspective, this study contributes to the knowledge on the mechanisms between socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment and retention in work team contexts. This study also contributes to the socialization literature that has focused on the organizational and individual levels (Anderson & Thomas, 1996) by investigating the interpersonal aspects of socialization tactics. It examines and documents that serial and investiture tactics affect the understanding of newcomers about how their goals are related to the goals of their team members; this understanding very much affects socialization outcomes. Most previous research on cooperation and competition has examined consequences of goal interdependence but research is needed on its antecedents (Chen & Tjosvold, 2008). This study finds that serial and investiture tactics are important antecedents to cooperative goals.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: ch.lu.2012@pbs.smu.edu.sg (S. Changhong Lu), tjosvold@ln.edu.hk (D. Tjosvold).

2. Team relationships for effective socialization

Highlighting the value of the “people” domain of socialization (Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994), researchers have proposed that organizational socialization should be examined in the context of people relations and interactions rather than on individuals as if there were in isolation from one another (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). Establishing successful and satisfying work relationships with organizational members is a main theme in the literature (Louis, 1980; Reichers, 1987). Through a set of in-depth interviews, scholars have found that newcomers are socialized into the work group, not into the organization, and the quality of the relationships newcomers can develop with coworkers and managers affect their efforts to learn to fit in (Korte & Lin, 2013). Examining the relationships among team members directly should then be useful for understanding and developing effective socialization.

Scholars have emphasized that new recruits acquire information from insiders about team goals, history, and role expectations (Chao et al., 1994; Morrison, 1993). The primary task of socialization is ‘learning’, and the primary way people learn is through the observation and modeling of behaviors of experienced members (Bandura, 1971; Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000). Moreover, new recruits also conduct sensemaking activities by turning to experienced members to guide them to assign meaning to events and surprises (Louis, 1980). According to an interactionist perspective, it is the interactions between newcomers and insiders that help new recruits clarify their situational identities (Jones, 1983; Reichers, 1987). In work team contexts, team members are useful role models for newcomers to test their interpretations and establish their identities.

Socialization has been demonstrated to have potentially strong and lasting effects on newcomer adjustment and retention (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998). In previous research, the most common outcomes of organizational socialization are attitudes like job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012).

Supportive co-worker relationships promote newcomer citizenship and task performance, attendance, effort, and satisfaction (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Just one negative relationship in a team can undermine commitment, cohesion, and satisfaction as well as increase turnover for newcomers (Morrison, 2008). Co-worker relationships help to embed newcomers in their new environment and lower turnover (Allen, 2006; Allen & Shanock, 2013). Strong relationships among team members very much contribute to effective socialization (Reichers, 1987; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Effective socialization occurs when newcomers develop organizational commitment, job satisfaction, few intentions to quit, and strong co-worker relationships.

3. Serial and investiture socialization tactics

This study uses Jones’ (1986) definition of socialization tactics to identify how the interaction between newcomers and experienced members affects socialization. It examines serial tactics where experienced organizational members act as role models to socialize newcomers and investiture tactics where experienced organizational members provide newcomers positive social support rather than no positive social support (Jones, 1986). This definition of investiture as social support differs significantly from Van Maanen and Schein’s (1979) original model of investiture as the degree to which a socialization process confirms or disconfirms the entering identity of the recruit (Ashforth & Saks, 1996).

Jones (1986) theorized that serial and investiture tactics very much affect the interpersonal dynamics of socialization. These tactics provide the social cues and facilitation during the entry and encounter stage (Jones, 1986). They help newcomers learn diverse aspects of the organization even those beyond the necessary job requirements (Jones, 1986). Applying Jones’ definition, researchers have found that serial and investiture tactics reinforce each other (Jones, 1986; Saks et al., 2007). In addition, serial and investiture tactics are the most useful predictors of adjustment outcomes (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Saks et al., 2007). Serial and investiture tactics strengthened organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance and reduce intentions to quit (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007).

In addition to linking tactics to outcomes, researchers have argued that studies should identify the processes by which socialization tactics influence newcomer adjustment (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Bauer et al. (2007) found that role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance mediate the relationship between tactics and outcomes. Saks et al. (2007) presented evidence suggesting that tactics improve socialization by reducing employee uncertainty through clarifying roles, reducing role ambiguity, and increasing perceived job fit. Focused on relationships with the organization overall and relationships with others in the organization, Allen and Shanock (2013) found that perceived organizational support and on-the-job embeddedness are relational mechanisms that bind employees to the organization as a result of socialization tactics. Since team relationships play an important role in effective socialization, it is important to study the mechanisms by which serial and investiture tactics influence newcomer adjustment in team contexts. This study uses the theory of goal interdependence to examine the relationship dynamics between newcomers and teams in order to understand how serial and investiture tactics contribute to effective socialization.

4. Theory of goal interdependence

Organizational socialization defined as the process through which newcomers adjust and learn can also be viewed as the beginning of new relationships (Allen & Shanock, 2013; Korte & Lin, 2013). In socialization, newcomers begin to form relationships with team members and attach meanings to these relationships. The nature and quality of these relationships would seem to very much affect socialization outcomes. Assuming that individuals self-interestedly seek their own goals, Deutsch

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات