

# Process of Chinese Career Starters Adapting to Their Work: The Differentiated Roles of Proactive and Reactive Organizational Socialization

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## Abstract

This study is to explore how socialization tactics and proactive behavior affect proximal and distal adjustment outcomes of Chinese career starters jointly after organizational entry. Using a three-wave longitudinal survey data of college graduates working for various enterprises in China, this study examines the predictive effects of reactive and proactive socialization on adjustment process. Results indicate that institutionalized socialization tactics of organization (reactive socialization) facilitate affective commitment directly, and proactive information seeking behavior of career starters (proactive socialization) facilitates overall job satisfaction directly. Both reactive and proactive socialization positively influence work performance indirectly through socialization content. Furthermore, proactive socialization reinforces the positive relation between reactive socialization and adjustment outcomes. For career starters who have full-time work experiences, relation between proactive behavior and socialization content is the strongest, but for those have no work experience, the relation between reactive socialization and socialization content is the strongest. Despite some limitations, this study contributes to fully understand effects of reactive and proactive socialization during organizational entry of Chinese career starters.

**Keywords:** socialization tactics, proactive behavior, socialization content, adjustment, longitudinal study

## 1. Introduction

Increasing turnover-rate of career starters in Chinese enterprises, which has drawn more and more attention, could be partly due to unsuccessful organizational socialization of the newcomers. Organizational socialization" (OS) is the process through which employees gradually acquire new job tasks, learn about organization roles, and adjust to their workplace context (Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Many studies come to a conclusion that OS plays an important role in newcomer adjustment (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007; Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998) and the process of organization culture transmission (Louis, 1980; Van Vianen, 2000). Whenever an employee crosses the boundary of a certain organization, organizational socialization will take place regardless the transition is external or internal.

A career starter, who is an outsider at first, can become a qualified organization member through successful organizational socialization process (Fisher, 1986; Louis, 1980). The process of adapting to the first job is critical to new graduates. For Chinese new graduates, the process of organizational socialization is especially significant for two reasons list following. Firstly, most Chinese new graduates are quite lack of knowledge of occupation world and have no practical work experience. These two defects make it tougher of them react to tasks in workplace initially. Secondly, Chinese culture has a high collectivism tendency and the Chinese tends to exhibit relational orientation

(Hofstede, 1980). Unsuccessful school-to-work transition makes the career starters feel not to be accepted and leads to stress and nervous. Therefore, it would be serious frustration of a career starter not being admitted into a work organization at career entry period. There are possibly particular patterns of work adjustment for Chinese career starters.

## 2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

OS is an interactive process between newcomers and organizations (Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000; Reichers, 1987). Although researchers have come an agreement that organization's socialization tactics and newcomers' proactive behavior both affect adjustment outcomes of newcomers, their specific conclusions were contested (e.g. Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a, b). Furthermore, literature continuously focuses on relations between OS and distal outcomes of adjustment, for example, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work performance (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer et al., 1998), but neglects the point that some irrelevant factors may influence these distal or secondary variables (Haueter et al., 2003). Some recent empirical studies come to the conclusion that relationships between socialization and distal outcomes are mediated, at least in part, by proximal outcomes (e.g., Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Klein, Fan, & Preacher, 2006). But few empirical research identifies clearly how socialization's proximal and distal outcomes work in tandem, which prevents offering a complete view of newcomer's whole work adjustment process (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003).

For relatively little has been known about how socialization tactics and Chinese employee's proactive behavior affect proximal and distal adjustment outcomes jointly after organizational entry, this study extends previous works by examining the relations between OS and work adjustment process of the career starters after entry using longitudinal method.

### 2.1. Organizational Socialization Tactics, Socialization Content and Outcomes

OS contains two aspects: reactive socialization and proactive socialization. Reactive socialization refers to socialization tactics of organizations, organization-driven or more or less formalized means of socializing individuals (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Proactive socialization refers to initiative behavior of newcomers, informal means of "self-socializing" (Ashford & Black, 1996; Miller & Jablin, 1991).

Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) model is the most widely accepted model for understanding organizational socialization tactics. They propose six organizational tactics influencing newcomers, each of which is bipolar. The six tactics are: collective vs. individual, formal vs. informal, sequential vs. random, fixed vs. variable, serial vs. disjunctive, and investiture vs. divestiture. Jones (1986) summarizes the tactics into two different typical categories: institutionalized (collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture) and individualized (the opposite side in the above list) tactics, which will result in different role orientations of newcomers.

Socialization content refers to the substance of what an individual learns to become proficient member of the organization (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007), or is conceptualized as the primary outcomes of socialization which will enhance the achievement of individual and attitudinal outcomes (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999). Many

researchers has been come to conclusions that socialization content should be measured through at what degree a newcomer accomplished three domains, which include task mastery, role clarity and social integration (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Chao et al., 1994; Morrison, 1993a, b). These three domains are conceptualized as main indicators of socialization content of career starter for they are closely related to newcomer adjustment goals.

Institutionalized socialization tactics is considered to be congruence with organizational values by some empirical studies (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007). Institutionalized socialization tactics help to reduce uncertainty to the unfamiliar work tasks and new roles of the newcomer, furthermore, they can successfully increase the acquaintance between the newcomers and the senior employees.

H1: Institutionalized socialization tactics relate positively to the career starters' socialization content (task mastery, role clarity and social integration).

Saks, Uggerslev, and Fassina (2007) argue that institutionalized socialization tactics relate positively to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to remain through a meta-analytic review. They also consider that relations between institutionalized socialization tactics and adjustment outcomes of career starters are stronger than other type newcomers because they initially experience work environment, and are more susceptible to organization's influence. However the relation between institutionalized tactics and performance of recent graduates remain ambiguous (Bauer et al., 2007). Because institutionalized socialization tactics are proved relate to positive work attitude and congruence with organizational values (Chatman, 1991; Jones, 1986), we argue that institutionalized socialization tactics contribute positively to adjustment outcomes of recent graduates.

H2: Institutionalized socialization tactics relate positively to the career starters' (a) affective commitment, (b) job satisfaction and (c) performance.

## *2.2. Individual proactive socialization, socialization content and outcomes*

For a newcomer, organizational socialization is a process more than passively to accept organization's influence; they proactively join in an organization. Entering in an unfamiliar organizational environment is usually associated with lack of control and full of uncertainty, which will lead to stress and anxiety because individuals have a general need for control and predictability (Ashford & Black, 1996; Fisher, 1986). Therefore, most newcomers take effort to use kinds of proactive actions, including learning about the environment, seeking for information, developing social support, so as to regain sense of control and to meet organizational expectation during the role transition process (Morrison, 1993a; Louis, 1980). Career starters' initiative efforts will improve their socialization content.

H3: Proactive behavior (information seeking) of career starters will be positively related to the career starters' socialization content (task mastery, role clarity and social integration).

Some researchers argue that OS is an uncertainty reduction process, during which initiative of newcomer is quite critical (Jones, 1986). Proactive behavior of newcomers, especially information seeking actively can obviously reduce the anxiety caused by uncertainty (Morrison, 1993a, b). Seeking for normative and social feedback information is turned to be positively related to social acceptance (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Morrison, 1993a), then improve psychological attachment to group and organization. The study assumes that newcomers who acquire adaptive skills and competence will complete tasks easier, receive more pleasure from work, and show more

attachment to their organization.

H4: Proactive behavior of the career starters (information seeking) will be positively related to (a) affective commitment, (b) job satisfaction and (c) performance.

Reactive and proactive processes of socialization interactively influence work adjustment although these two aspects are relatively independent (Griffin, et al, 2000; Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006).

H5: Proactive behavior of the career starters moderates the relationship between institutionalized socialization tactics and socialization content (task mastery, role clarity and social integration).

### *2.3. Socialization content and adjustment outcomes*

Several linkages exist between adjustment content and outcome (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Bauer et al., 1998; Kammeyer- Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Klein, Fan, & Preacher, 2006). Two recent meta-analytic reviews provide further supports to their relations. Bauer et al. (2007) propose a summary model of socialization process, in which newcomer socialization content is the mediator between OS and adjustment outcomes. Their results reveal that role clarity and social acceptance are positively related to performance, job satisfaction and commitment; task mastery is positively related to performance. Saks et al. (2007) also find strong relationships between proximal socialization outcomes and distal attitude outcomes.

H6: Socialization content of career starters will be positively related to (a) affective commitment, (b) job satisfaction, (c) performance.

### *2.4. Differentiated role of reactive and proactive socialization*

Work experience has been suggested to affect a newcomer's adjustment process into an organization. As Feldman (1976) proposed, individuals with previous work experience in a similar setting may learn new work tasks more quickly, achieve work role definition earlier, and develop interpersonal relationships faster. Jones (1983) tried to explain the reasons. Jones (1983) considered individuals as developing "cognitive maps" through past experience. A newcomer will get to become socialized into an organization with influence of experiences of previous setting. We suppose that reactive and proactive organizational socialization play differentiated roles during socialization process for career starters with and without work experiences.

Those who have previous work experience are supposed to develop more realistic expectations about a job and gain superiority on developing proactive behaviors. To those who have work experience in a similar setting, proactive socialization behavior will be more effective than institutionalized organizational socialization tactics because of similar previous experience. In other words, proactive socialization behavior of experienced career starters contributes much on socialization content development than reactive socialization tactics of organizations. Career starters' work experience facilitates the effectiveness of their proactive socialization behaviors.

H7: Work experiences of the career starters will be positively moderate the relationships between proactive behaviors and socialization content.

The career starters with no any work experience are supposed to experience great uncertainty as initially exposed to

occupational environment. It supposed that they comparatively be more sensitive to institutionalized organizational socialization tactics. Career starters' work experience blocks the effectiveness of institutionalized socialization tactics. In other words, to those career starters who have no work experience, institutionalized socialization tactics contribute much on socialization content development than proactive socialization behavior.

H8: Work experiences of the career starters will be negatively moderate the relationships between institutional socialization tactics and socialization content.

Based on hypotheses listed above, a proposed model is summarized in figure 1.

Insert figure 1 here

### **3. Method**

#### *3.1. Sample and procedures*

This study uses a three-wave survey across 6 months. We surveyed various majored college graduates of 2004 in five large national universities in China, all participants were hired as full-time employees by enterprises of all kinds.

We carried out a preliminary survey one month before graduation, and arranged the survey in cooperation with school counselors. The participants were voluntary. They were requested to leave their frequently used e-mail for subsequent investigation if they wanted to keep on participating in this longitudinal study on newcomers in workplaces in the following six months. 1388 graduates returned complete questionnaires. We collected demographic variables (i.e., gender, major, job type and work experience) and organizational features (i.e., size and type), as well as e-mail addresses of potential participants for subsequent formal survey before organizational socialization process began.

The first wave of formal survey was carried out one month after graduates began their career (T1). We sent 662 e-mails and received 354 valid replies with a response rate of 53.5%. Organizational socialization tactics and career starter's proactive behavior were measured at time point 1. The second wave of formal survey was carried out three months after time point 1 (T2). Only complete responses from those who stayed in the same organizations were considered to be valid. 354 mails were sent and 238 valid responses were received with a response rate of 67.2%. Socialization content was tested at time point 2. Three months after the second wave survey, 7 months after the graduate's hire, we surveyed the third time (T3). 238 sent mails received 187 valid replies with a response rate of 78.6% in this stage. Adjustment outcomes were investigated at time point 3.

In order to reveal whether there is response bias, we examine demographic differences between respondents and the non-respondents across three time points using crosstab analysis. This study finds no significant demographic differences between the two parties ( $\chi^2$  varied from 0.49 to 1.66,  $p > 0.05$ ). The result reveals that demographic features do not lead to dropout from participants across waves.

The final sample of 187 participants includes 91 males (48.66%) and 126 technicians (67.38%). The average age of this sample is 21.8 years (SD = 0.27). All participants have bachelor's degrees and none has prior full-time work experience.

#### *3.2 Measures*

All scales chosen in present study have ever been used on Asian participants in previous studies. And all are 5-point response format scales.

*Socialization tactics.* This study measures employee perception of organizational socialization tactics at time point 1. The instrument is a 12-item self-reported scale adapted from Cable and Parsons's socialization tactics scale (2001). A recent study uses this scale in East Asian culture context (see Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009). The higher score of a participant reports, the more institutionalized socialization he has experienced. The overall alpha reliability for 12-item scale is 0.89. Construct validity is examined through confirmatory factor analytic (CFA) using AMOS17.0. This study finds items of this scale load on corresponding factors respectively. The goodness-of-fit indexes ( $\chi^2=111.90$ [df = 40], AGFI=0.88, NFI=0.92, CFI=0.94, RMSEA=0.09) show proposed three-factor model fits the data comparatively well.

*Proactive information seeking.* Questionnaire of proactive information seeking contains 4 self-reported items developed by Chan and Schmitt (2000). This study assesses proactive information seeking at time point 1. Coefficient alpha for this scale is 0.91. Result of CFA shows that one-factor model (AGFI=0.96, NFI=0.93, CFI=0.95, RMSEA=0.04) fits better than null model ( $\Delta\chi^2=56.82$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

Socialization content contains three factors (task mastery, role clarity, and social integration). This study assesses socialization content at time point 2. Subscale of task mastery is consisted of 4 items developed by Morrison (1993a), with coefficient alpha is 0.92 of this sample. Subscale of role clarity is a 4-item subscale adopted by Chan and Schmitt (2000), alpha for this subscale is 0.89. Social integration subscale consisting of 4 items is from Morrison (1993a). Coefficient alpha for this subscale is 0.87. Result of CFA shows that items are loaded on corresponding factors respectively, and the goodness-of-fit indexes indicate three-factor model fits the data well.

*Adjustment outcomes* include three key variables: affective commitment, overall job satisfaction and work performance. This study assesses these variables at time point 3. Affective commitment consists of 3 items extracted from affective commitment scale developed by Mayer and Allen (1991), which have been successfully used on Chinese participants (Chen & Francesco, 2003). Coefficient alpha for this sample is 0.95. Overall job satisfaction is assessed by a 3-item scale (Ashforth and Saks, 1996). Coefficient alpha of this sample is 0.93. Work performance is assessed by a 3-item scale (Chao et al., 1994), and coefficient alpha for this sample is 0.86.

*Demographic variables.* This study takes the following demographic variables into consideration: gender, major, job type (technological and non-technological), work experience of participants (part-time work experiences, internship experiences, no any work experience). This study measures gender, major and job type using three dummy variables, while use two dummy variables to measure work experience.

*Control variables.* The study controls potential variables including size (large, middle, and small) and type (state-owned, private-owned, joint-venture and full foreign-owned) of enterprises.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Preliminary analysis and descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and correlations of variables. ANOVAs are conducted to distinguish which demographic variables and control variables are potential critical variables. Gender, major, job type and

organizational size have no effect on socialization content and adjustment outcomes ( $t$  or  $F$  varied from 0.12 to 1.34,  $p > .05$ ), therefore they are excluded in subsequent analyses. But organization type and work experience influence socialization process and adjustment outcome significantly. So this study controls organization type and examines the moderate effect of career starters' work experiences.

Insert Table 1 here

To identify discriminability among study variables, we conducted factor comparison procedure among three models. The first model was a one-factor model, i.e., all socialization tactics and all proactive behaviors items were loaded on the same factor. The second model was a two-factor model, i.e., socialization tactics and proactive behavior items were loaded to two different factors respectively. The third model was a four-factor model, i.e., items loaded on three factors of socialization tactics and a proactive behavior factor respectively. We compared these three models to each other, result of model comparison showed that the four-factor model fitted the data best ( $\chi^2/df=3.45$  vs.  $\chi^2/df=33.28$  for one-factor model and  $\chi^2/df=14.89$  for two-factor model). The results support our theoretical constructs.

#### 4.2 Test of base models

Hypothesis 1-6 are tested via structural equation modeling method controlling for organization type. All three final models yield acceptable fit to the data.

Hypotheses 1-6 collectively imply that socialization tactics and proactive behavior of career starters interactively affect adjustment outcomes directly and indirectly via socialization content. In order to achieve simple and valid models, this study tests a series of models for three adjustment outcomes respectively through model revision method. For each adjustment outcome variable, initially hypothesized model allows for direct and indirect effects of socialization to adjustment outcome, then eliminate the non-significant path one-by-one out of the model, until  $\chi^2$  change significantly increase. Table 2 presents the goodness-of-fit of the best model for each adjustment outcome variable.

Insert Table 2 here

Hypotheses 1, 2a-c and 6 collectively suggest that organizational socialization directly and indirectly influences three adjustment outcomes. As shown in Table 2, hypothesis 1 is fully supported. The path coefficients from socialization tactics to socialization contents (as a latent variable) are significant in all three models ( $\gamma$  ranged from 0.22 to 0.35,  $p < .01$ ). Only hypothesis 2a is supported (see model 1,  $\gamma = 0.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ), while hypothesis 2b and 2c fail to be supported (see model 2 and 3). These three models fully support H6 ( $\gamma$  ranged from 0.36 to 0.50,  $p < .001$ ). In sum, institutionalized socialization tactics directly facilitate affective commitment only, but influence job satisfaction and work performance indirectly and positively through socialization content.

Hypothesis 3, 4a-c, and 6 collectively suggest that career starters' proactive behavior has direct and indirect effects on adjustment outcomes. As shown in Table 2, hypothesis 3 is fully supported. The path coefficients from proactive information seeking to socialization content are significant in all three models ( $\gamma$  ranges from 0.43 to 0.55,  $p < .001$ ).

But only hypothesis 4b is supported which means proactive information seeking only has direct effect on overall job satisfaction (see model 2,  $\gamma = 0.18, p < .05$ ). In sum, proactive information seeking behavior directly facilitates job satisfaction only, but influences affective commitment and work performance indirectly through socialization content.

H5 assumes that proactive behavior of the career starter moderate relations between socialization tactics and adjustment outcomes. This assumption is partly supported according to our results. In same socialization tactics context, those career starters whose proactivity maintain a relatively high level increase faster on affective commitment and work performance.

#### *4.3 Test of differentiated roles of reactive and proactive socialization*

H7 and H8 assume that reactive and proactive socialization play differentiated roles in socialization process of career starters with and without work experiences. This study conducts multi-group analysis to examine whether work experience influences the relations between OS and socialization content. Models in which the path coefficients are constrained to be equal across three different work experience groups fail to fit the data well. Estimated value of standard errors of all path parameters in three groups' constrained models are larger than those in unconstrained models, which indicate that constrained models differ from full unconstrained models.

The result shows the constrained model is unacceptable, which means work experience moderates the base models, or moderates the relations between organizational socialization and socialization contents. Path coefficients show that for those career starters have part-time work experiences, the relation between proactive behavior and socialization content is much stronger ( $\gamma=0.56$  vs. 0.41 for those have no work experience, and 0.47 for those have internship experience). For those have no any work experience, the relation between institutionalized socialization and socialization content is stronger ( $\gamma=0.34$  vs. 0.25 for those have part-time work experience, and 0.30 for those have internship experience).

## **5. Discussions**

Organizational entry is the most important phases in career development process especially for the recent graduates. Although previous researches have examined how socialization tactics of organizations and proactive behavior of individuals respectively and interactively affect work adjustment process, seldom study has revealed how socialization process affect proximal (socialization content) and distal (adjustment outcome) change of career starters in detail. The purposes of present study are to explore the substantive and predictive roles that organizational socialization tactics and individual proactivity play in longitudinal adjustment process of Chinese career starters.

### *5.1 Conclusion and discussion*

Consistent with H1 and H3, institutionalized socialization and career starters' proactive behavior (information seeking) at 1 month after entry are positively associated with socialization content 4 months after entry. As H6a, b, and c are fully supported, we can draw conclusions that socialization content at 4 months after entry is closely related



to career starters' affective commitment, job satisfaction, and work performance all at 7 months. In sum, the study finds neither socialization tactics nor career starters' proactive information seeking behavior at 1 month after entry influences further work performance directly. Socialization content partially mediates the relation between socialization tactics and affective commitment, but fully mediates the relation between socialization tactics and job satisfaction. Socialization content partially mediates the relation between proactive behavior and job satisfaction, but fully mediates the relation between proactive behavior and affective commitment. The moderating role of proactive behavior is verified between socialization tactics and affective commitment (as well as work performance). The findings support H5a and 5c. These findings are evaluated and discussed as following.

First, the results provide corroboration for prior researches suggesting that the mediator role socialization content plays in the socialization-distal change links (e.g., Ashforth, et al., 2007; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Our findings are partially consistent with some prior empirical reports provided by Ashforth and Saks (1996) as well as Allen and Meyer (1990) in that institutionalized tactics facilitates newcomers' social interactions to their seniors, supervisors or other newcomers, thus directly increase the psychological attachment to the organization. A recent study conducted also in Asia (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009) comes to a similar conclusion that increment of organizational commitment is proved to be related to newcomers' socialization perceptions of organization domain. For Chinese career starters, most of them are lack of actual full-time work experience. Their reality shock, uncertainty and anxiety are more serious during organizational entry period, thus their desire for information, identity and social support will particularly strong. Institutionalized socialization tactics help newcomers overcome the fear and remoteness among co-workers including other new-hirers. They consequently prefer institutionalized socialization tactics.

The research here extends prior studies by examining mediator role of socialization content in the relation between proactive information seeking behavior and three distal outcomes. The conclusions are partially consistent with prior empirical study's result provided by Ashforth, Sluss, and Saks (2007), and a meta-analytic review by Bauer et al. (2007). Socialization is actually an uncertainty reduction process especially for career starters. According to uncertainty reduction theory, individual's proactivity significantly decreases the ambiguity to role and shortens psychological distance to the senior, thus accelerates the process of acceptance to an organization. Therefore, proactive information seeking directly leads to higher job satisfaction and faster adjustment to work.

This study finds evidences to support the moderator role of proactive behavior in the relation between organizational socialization tactics and adjustment contents (e.g., Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 1997b). The relationships between institutionalized socialization tactics and two important adjustment distal outcomes (i.e., affective commitment and work performance) are much stronger for the career starters who engage in more positive information seeking behavior.

In addition, this study explores the role of work experience between OS and socialization content. For those career starters have full-time work experiences, the relation between proactive behavior and socialization content is much stronger than those who have no any experience or have full-time experience. For those having no any experiences, the relation between institutionalized socialization and socialization content is the strongest.

## 5.2 Limitations

Two key issues in present study can be taken into account as limitations. First, although it has been previously criticized by Saks and Ashforth (1997a) that self-report and same-source data were common in organizational socialization studies, our study also rely on self-report and same-source data. As researches have concerns with newcomers' reaction to socialization process, self-report data are generally accepted. In fact, almost all recent organizational socialization studies use self-report and same-source data (e.g., Ashforth et al., 2007; Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009). In order to decrease common method variance caused by same-source data, the study here uses longitudinal data across three waves. Other methods decreasing common method variance, taking providing more ratings for example, are not suitable for multi-wave investigation though E-mail, for online investigation requires simple and concise scales. Future research is necessary to extend investigation technology for avoiding the problems caused by same-source and self-report data.

The second potential issue is the time-frame and time intervals in which information are gathered in this study. A recent review find similar time intervals (i.e., entry, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, and 1 year), are the most frequently used in data collection (Bauer, et al., 2007).

The study here adopts similar time intervals of 3 months that other studies use. Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) call for further research on time-frame of organizational socialization. Time-frame of longitudinal researches ranged from 2 months (e.g., Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002) to 2 years (e.g., Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Most studies use 0 to 6 months time span in school-to-work transition context, the study here is in accord with this rule. However, hence research is necessary to investigate time span and change phrases of organizational socialization.

### **Acknowledgements**

*The research is partially supported by Human and Social Science Project financed by Chinese Ministry of Education, No.11YJZH153.*

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**Tables and figures**

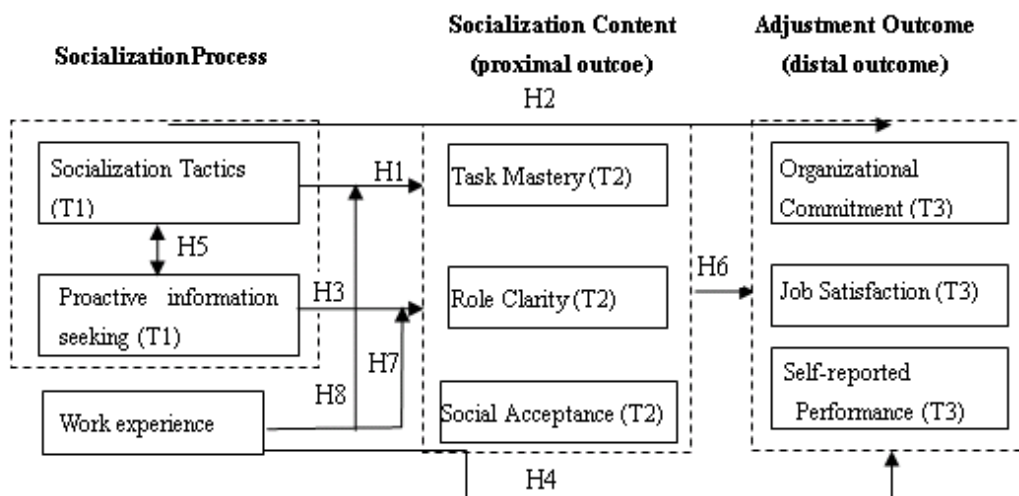


Figure 1. Conceptual model of adjustment process for the career starters

Table 1. Descriptive statistics, correlations, reliability coefficients for socialization tactics, proactive behavior, career starter adjustment contents and outcomes

variables	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Organizational socialization tactics (T1)	34.6	3.22	<b>.89</b>							
2. Proactive Information Seeking (T1)	11.4	5.07	.11	<b>.91</b>						
3. Task mastery (T2)	12.5	2.55	.05	.42	<b>.84</b>					
4. Role clarity (T2)	11.8	1.95	.31	.38	.26	<b>.80</b>				
5. Social integration (T2)	11.3	2.46	.11	.66	.49	.39	<b>.84</b>			
6. Affective commitment (T3)	9.5	2.35	.32	.33	.34	.49	.57	<b>.92</b>		
7. Job satisfaction (T3)	9.7	1.98	.29	.30	.19	.42	.35	.42	<b>.88</b>	
8. Work performance (T3)	9.4	2.13	.19	.35	.37	.38	.55	.48	.48	<b>.87</b>

Note:  $n = 187$ . Scale reliabilities ( $\alpha$ ) are shown in bold on the diagonal. Correlation greater than .16 are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 2. Fit indices and path parameters for final models

Mediators and Dependent variables	Independent variables				Goodness-of-Fit				
	Socialization tactics $\gamma$	Proactive behavior $\gamma$	Tactics×Pr oactivity $\gamma$	Socialization content $\gamma$	$\chi^2$ ( $df$ )	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	$R^2$
Model 1 Socialization content Affective commitment	.31**	.48***	.12*	—	110.47(32)	.90	.92	.0531	.54
	.14*	—	—	.44***					
Model 2 Socialization content Job satisfaction	.35***	.43***	.09	—	105.72(32)	.91	.87	.0437	.49
	—	.18*	—	.36***					
Model 3 Socialization content Work performance	.22**	.55***	.15*	—	90.93(32)	.89	.93	.0361	.45
	—	—	—	.50***					

Note:  $n = 187$ . The control variables, job type and organization type, are partialled out of the covariance matrix before analysis.  
 \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

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