Organizational Socialization, Individual Adaptability and Organizational Career Growth: the mediating role of Person-Organization Fit

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Research question: Does person/organization fit mediate the relationship between organizational socialization and organizational career growth?

**Organizational Career Growth (OCG)** is defined as one’s perceptions of the chances of development and advancement within an organization (Jans, 1989). Although the organizational change processes that occurred in the last two decades have involved hindering career advancement interventions, such as downsizing, flattening organizational structure, wage freezes, and job enrichment, career growth interventions may still play a strategic role. **OCG** may still play a relevant role in the process leading to the development of positive attitudes toward the work itself and the organization and individual performance (McElroy & Weng, 2016; Spagnoli, 2017). Studies in this field have been mainly focused on the consequences of OCG, whether the study of the process eliciting OCG is still in its infancy.

Building on the **organizational socialization** theoretical framework, a recent study by Spagnoli (2017) reported a significant relationship between organizational socialization and organizational career growth.

**P-O fit** is a proximal outcome of the organizational socialization process (e.g., Cable and Judge, 1996; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007), it refers to the compatibility between people and the organizations in which they work (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Schneider, 1987).
Research question: Does person/organization fit mediate the relationship between organizational socialization and organizational career growth?

Theory of work adjustment (TWA; Swanson & Schneider, 2013), which posits a relation between person–environment fit and job satisfaction and tenure, suggests that person–organization fit may have a direct influence on extrinsic measures of career success such as salary and job level attained (Bretz & Judge, 1994). Practically, the more an employee successfully adapts to/fits the organization, the more it is likely for him or her to attain further job level and salary increase.

In organizations where employees’ career advancement is still possible, the employees’ adjustment could be a necessary precondition to be promoted within the organization and achieve organizational and individual positive outcomes.

Target: high potential and knowledge workers.
H1: Organizational socialization is related to OCG.

H2: Organizational socialization is related to P-O Fit.

H3: P-O Fit mediates the relationship between Organizational Socialization and OCG.

Note: Individual Adaptability was inserted in the model as control variable.
Method: Participants

- 476 men (51.3%)
- 451 women (48.7%)
- 258 temps (27.8%)
- 669 perms (72.2%)

- 593 low to medium (64%)
- 334 higher (36%)
- 155 up to 1 year (16.8%)
- 132 up to 2 years (14.2%)
- 640 more than 2 years (69%)
## Method: variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Item example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational socialization</strong> (Haueter, Hoff Macan, Winter, 2003)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>- Organization (12 item): “History of this organization”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Group (12 item): “Group’s objectives”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Task (11 item): “Responsibilities, tasks, and project”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3 sub-scales</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Adaptability</strong> (Ployhart &amp; Bliese, 2006)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I believe it is important to be flexible in dealing with new people”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P-O Fit</strong> (Cable &amp; DeRue, 2002)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“My personal values match my organization’s values and culture”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCG</strong> (Spagnoli &amp; Weng, 2017)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>- Career goal progress (4 item): “My present job moves me closer to my career goals”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Professional ability development (4 item): “My present job encourages me to continuously gain new and job-related skills”</td>
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<td>- Promotion speed (4 item): “My promotion speed in the present organization is fast”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Remuneration growth (3 item): “My salary is growing quickly in my present organization”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A self-report questionnaire was administered by hand delivery and return through the snowball technique involving graduated students on Work psychology who voluntarily took part in the data collecting phase of the study. As part of a class assignment meant to integrate the research experience with the classroom experience, each of these students received a limited number of questionnaire to distribute to workers.

Structural Equation Modelling
Bootstrap Method (Bias-corrected confidence interval)
### Descriptives, zero-order correlation, reliabilities (Cronbach’s alphas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>sd</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Individual Adaptability</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organizational Socialization</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person-Organization Fit</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organizational Career Growth</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS direct effects
(standardized estimates)

**MODEL FIT**
- $X^2 = 225,197$ df=41
- CFI=.95
- RMSEA=.07

$R^2 = .14$
RESULTS Indirect effects (standardized estimates)

INDIRECT EFFECT
B = 0.78  p=0.002
[LowCI = 0.627, UpCI= 0.957]

MODEL FIT
X²=516.207 df=98
CFI=.95
RMSEA=.07

R² = .51
Discussion

• Organizational socialization predicted Organizational Career Growth (H1 supported)

• Organization socialization predicted P-O Fit (H2 supported)

• P-O Fit Mediated the relationship between Organizational Socialization and Organizational Career Growth (H3 supported)
Conclusions and implications

- Values’ match between employees and organization plays a relevant role in the process leading to the development of the perception of employees career growth. Organization should consider this when recruiting and attracting new employees:
  - Manager should clarifying from the beginning the organizational values.
  - New employees should be selected considering candidates’ values.
- Organizational socialization interventions aimed to foster employees learning regarding organization, group and task should be implemented.

Limits
- Cross-sectional survey.
- Common method variance issues.
- Sampling bias.
- Heterogeneous sample
Thank you for your attention!

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AIP Research Group «Work in Progress»: http://www.aipass.org/node/6938
References


