Chapter 9
Concluding Observations and Managerial Implications

The purpose of the study was to examine the factors influencing socialization as an adaptive process for newcomers in an organization, given their age, gender, personality characteristics, qualifications (MBA or BTech/BE) and socialization tactics used by the employer organization. With the help of perception based responses of engineering and management graduates, we gathered information about personality reflecting variables like self-efficacy, self-mentoring, perception about new job, the nature of socialization tactics used and comprehensive socialization outcomes achieved. This information was culled through a primary survey and responses were gathered on proxy statements on a 7 point Likert type scale.

The survey was conducted through three phases, one before joining the organization, engineering and management graduates with confirmed job offers were asked proxy questions to quantify and categorize the independent variables like personality traits of the respondents, incidence and effect of pre placement talks. The types of socialization tactics used were enquired through another set of proxy statements after the first four weeks of joining the new organization. After twelve weeks from the date of second survey we measured the dependent variable i.e. newcomers adjustment within the organization. While measuring this we considered both organizational socialization outcomes (job satisfaction) and individualized socialization outcomes (comprising reduction in role conflict and role ambiguity and enhanced role orientation).

At the outset of the analysis Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (r) was used to identify if a relationship existed between independent variables (demography and personality traits of the respondents and socialization tactics) and dependent variables (comprehensive, organizational and individualized socialization outcomes). The significance level was set at .01 (p < .01) and .05 (p < .05).

We tried to note the relationship between demographic profile of the respondents and comprehensive socialization outcomes. Measuring the strength of association, we observed
that comprehensive socialization outcomes are found to have significant correlation with age and gender. This implies that

- Older employees achieve comprehensive socialization outcomes easily and quickly and also try to experience adjustment related benefit within the organization. As gender is found to have negative correlation which indicates that male respondents of either profession (engineering and/or management) achieve successful socialization compared to their female counterpart. The study also revealed that the male respondents are found to adjust within the organizational environment, using their skills and knowledge in order to become active and successful organizational member.

Next a disaggregated view of socialization is considered. Comprehensive socialization is broken up into organizational and individualized socialization. Organizational socialization is found to be significantly correlated with age and gender, but only age is found to have statistically significant association with individualized socialization. This can be interpreted as follows

- Older and male individuals (in comparison to younger and female) have achieved higher organizational socialization but older employees achieve lower individualized socialization outcomes. It may be said that age increases organizational socialization as older employees are more prone to have higher organizational commitment and gain on organizational socialization faster than younger employees.

- The older employees have higher possibilities of role conflict (a reflector of individualized socialization outcomes) which does not stand in the way of their higher organizational socialization outcomes. So the tendency of the older respondents is found to be to overcome their role conflict in the altar of organizational socialization outcomes.

- Thus a managerial implication on this issue would be that when the age of the respondent is on the higher side, he/she is required to be given focused emphasis on individualized socialization tactics rather than organizational socialization tactics to achieve the organizational objectives. Hence it can be recommended to the organization that they should give stress on individualized socialization tactics to achieve successful socialization of older employees.
Further to measure the strength of association between personality traits of the respondents (indicating external variable perception about new job and internal variables self-efficacy, self-mentoring and attitude towards group) with comprehensive socialization outcomes, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation test has been used. From the result it has been noticed that all the personality indicating variables are found to be positively correlated with comprehensive socialization outcomes. The reason behind this association may be explained as follows

- Perception about new job deals with the expectations of the employees about their job as well as regarding the organization. A pre placement talk conducted by recruiter enhances the perception of the employees regarding their new job. This ultimately accelerates the speed of achieving successful comprehensive socialization outcomes, by giving a clear idea regarding the organization and various job related issues as a part of organizational activity.

- Self-efficacy is the ability to withstand failures and uncertainty combined together in the form of challenges. Stronger sense of self-efficacy helps the employees to achieve successful socialization by reducing the obstacles faced by the newcomers entering into the organization.

- Self-mentoring also enhances the pace of achieving successful socialization, by enabling the newcomer to develop an adequate decision making power by scrutinizing minutely both job and organizational structure.

- Similarly attitude towards group is found to have a significant relationship with socialization as positive attitude results in development of relationship building ability within the work group which leads to proper learning that ultimately focuses towards socialization outcomes of the newcomers.

We also find significant correlation between dependent variable organizational socialization and independent variable perception about new job. Perception about new job which is incidence upon of pre placement talks helps to develop a clear idea about the job as well as the organization and accelerates organizational socialization outcomes of the new employees. Thus it is recommended that organizations should focus on effective pre-placement talks for their newcomers.
Additionally it is seen that role conflict possess significant relationship with all the personality indicating variables whereas role orientation posses significant relationship with self-mentoring and attitude towards group. Similarly role ambiguity is found to have a significant relationship with perception about new job, self-efficacy and attitude towards group. The result highlighted that

- Role conflict is found to be higher, indicating slower individualized socialization for individuals with low perception about new job and low self-efficacy and those with high self-mentoring capability.

- High pre placement expectations regarding job and organization are the outcome of perception about new job which sometimes leads to ambiguous role information. Similarly high self-efficacy increases role ambiguity due to lack of specificity and predictability of an employee’s role function and responsibility.

- But at the same time self-mentoring capability also brings about conformity to established roles and procedures and innovating skills to enact the role function properly. Thus respondents with high self-mentoring ability are prone to facing high role orientation which leads to successful socialization, overcoming their role conflicts.

- Respondents who have high score on attitude towards group may face role conflict issues but are also able and willing to share with the members of the group and hence cooperate and collaborate with each other so that role ambiguity is reduced, an indicator of effective socialization.

Therefore it would be wise for an organization to focus on new employees with high self-mentoring abilities and positive group attitudes, in socializing them by using their already existing personality characteristics to solve role conflict issues and bring about successful socialization.

Keeping these in mind we extended our study to analyze whether there is any significant association between comprehensive socialization outcomes and socialization tactics used by the organizations. The analysis highlighted that all the different types of socialization tactics namely content, context and social support related tactics exhibit significant positive correlation with comprehensive socialization outcomes. This gives us reason to believe that
the accepted tactics have yielded effective results in case of comprehensive socialization, among the sampled respondents.

- **Job content related tactics (Fixed and Sequential)** helps the newcomers to adjust within the organization through proper socialization process as both the tactics indicates formal time bound sequential steps to be followed in order to achieve a desired goal. These steps lead to the reduction of anxiety and fear of uncertainty from the minds of the newcomers and they utilize their ability fully to become an active member of the organization.

- **Job context related tactics (Formal and Collective)** focuses towards the adjustment of newcomers by achieving socialization outcomes. Formal type of socialization tactics segregate newcomers from existing organizational members there by develops a strong sense of independence which ultimately guides them to use their own intelligence and knowledge to solve and excel in job related issues. On the other hand Collective socialization tactics initiates the development of sense of belongingness among the newcomers by clubbing them together and allowing them to go through common sets of challenges.

- **Social support related tactics (Serial and Investiture)** indicates the influence of senior experience colleagues on the working ability of the newcomers as mentors and also the acceptance of the self identity of the newcomers by the organization. Both these tactics helps the newcomers to become a loyal member of the organizational family and also makes their journey towards successful socialization outcomes easier.

But there are few variations when individualized and organizational socialization outcomes are considered separately as dependent variables. Further correlation co-efficient analysis was also used to verify if any trend existed in the relationship between independent variables (normally used socialization tactics by the organizations) and dependent variables (job satisfaction as a measure of organizational and reduction in role conflict, role ambiguity and enhanced role orientation as individualized socialization). Collective socialization tactics possess maximum influence on achieving job satisfaction. While doing so it may initiate role conflict due to variations in opinion and working procedure between two or more employees working together. Thus Collective socialization tactics are more prone to achieving organizational than individualized outcomes.
• Similarly, Fixed tactics is significantly related to reduction in role conflict, as predetermined tasks may create burden for the employees, which may give rise to conflict between job demands and expectations. At the same time, this time bound assignment gives rise to both custodial and innovative role orientation reducing the chances of ambiguous job related information. Not only this, in case of clear and easily understandable job related information, Fixed tactics is having a significant positive relationship with organizational socialization as it deals with pre assumed time bound progression for the assumption of the job role. Thus more the tactics is Fixed it is equally suitable for organizational as well as individualized socialization outcomes.

• Summarizing the relationship between socialization outcomes and socialization tactics, it has been further observed that Fixed and Collective tactics help to bring about successful individualized socialization of employees.

In brief the correlation coefficient analysis highlighted that age and gender among the demography and more or less all the personality indicating variables are showing significant correlation with job satisfaction, thereby bringing successful organizational socialization, where as only age, perception about new job and self-mentoring ability is highly correlated with individualized socialization outcomes. Similarly all the established socialization tactics are found to be significantly correlated with organizational socialization, but only Fixed and Collective type of socialization tactics showed a significant relationship with individualized socialization outcomes. But the presence of significant relationship is not enough because incidence of socialization outcomes is not affected by personality, tactics and demographic character individually. It is a combined effect of the tactics having impact on the individual given his personality and demographic feature.

Therefore to assess the influence of these on socialization simultaneously linear regression analysis were used. We have considered the effect of independent variables (personality and socialization tactics) on the outcome variables (comprehensive, organizational and individualized outcomes).
We find that perception about new job and self-mentoring ability significantly influences the comprehensive socialization outcomes as well as organizational and individualized outcomes of the newcomers. This may be explained by the fact that

- Self-mentoring ability encourages the new employees to scrutinize each and every aspect of their job role. Hence employee with high self-mentoring ability can find out various innovating approaches to achieve job satisfaction. At the same time self-mentoring capability encourages the newcomer to judge the job role properly to reduce ambiguous information which leads to dissatisfaction and intention to quit. Hence high self-mentoring ability gives rise to successful individualized socialization to achieve desired and expected goal.

- Similarly perception about new job which deals with pre entry expectations of the employees plays a role in ensuring successful comprehensive socialization. If this expectation of the newcomer can be satisfied, job satisfaction is inevitable. When there is clarity in pre entry expectation about a job and the number of met expectations is more than unmet, the employees try to adjust with the new environment which leads to successful comprehensive socialization of the newcomer. In such a situation the incumbent tries to reduce conflict between his/her expectation and organizational demand with the help of innovative role orientation.

- Among the independent variables socialization tactics, it has been found that Fixed (in comparison to Variable) have significant positive impact on comprehensive socialization outcomes. This is probably because as part of Fixed socialization tactics the job is time bound and fixed, it reduces initial uncertainty and anxiety. The more the tactics is Fixed the less will be the chance of uncertainty occur. The question of ambiguous role behavior does not arise at all. The employees know when and how they have to finish the job assignment given to them, so that the desired organizational objectives can be achieved. At the same time, it can also be highlighted that this predetermined fixed timetable may create incompatible pressure on the employees and they get overburdened with work, still as they know their job properly they can easily handle it with the help of their innovative skills. Hence the situation gives rise to both custodial and innovative role orientation.

- At the same time the Collective socialization tactics helps the newcomers by sharing values which reduces uncertainty of work related issues. Collective socialization tactics
possess a good significant relation with organizational socialization outcomes (job satisfaction) and also with individualized outcomes (role conflict, role orientation and role ambiguity). This tactics actually work for grouping and exposing the newcomers to a common set of experience rather than treating them individually. Hence it establishes that bonding enhances job satisfaction as it reduces fear of uncertainty. As the newcomers are grouped together two or more employees may have different views regarding their work which makes them experience conflicting demands and expectations, and lead them to make incompatible decisions, a situation of role conflict exists. Thus newcomers exposed to common set of experiences can face role conflict. At the same time the tactics helps the newcomers to accept the status quo and the requirements of their assigned tasks or roles. Differentiated responses are allowed within the group which may further encourage newcomers to change the conventional methods of performing their roles or even their tasks and missions. In this situation if the job is not at all well defined it does not affect newcomer’s satisfaction as they all tries unanimously to solve the problem with the help of their innovative ideas. Thus the tactics helps in successful comprehensive socialization of the employees.

- On the other hand the study indicates that Sequential (instead of Random) tactics positively influences comprehensive socialization outcomes. Sequential tactics help the newcomers to develop a sense of personal control and desire to establish routines in order to maintain a proper sequence of learning activities and experiences.

- Sequential (in comparison to Random) tactics also influence organizational and individualized socialization separately. Sequential tactics speaks about maintaining a proper planned sequence to perform the job. Hence it has a high significant relationship with job satisfaction because when anxiety and stress has been reduced through proper learning, newcomers try to adjust themselves in the new environment in a better way thus developing competency to perform the job properly. Hence job satisfaction is achieved which ultimately may reduce turnover. Though it reduces anxiety and stress during adjustment to a new environment, but in practice, the newcomers are overburdened with more and more information, which ultimately reduces their opportunity for proper orientation and incompatible pressure on employee which results in conflict.
Similarly with the application of Investiture tactics the organization accepts the newcomers by accepting their self identity and personal characteristics. This acceptance develops a sense of competence and confidence of the newcomers to achieve job satisfaction. It also helps the newcomers learn to work freely with a proper sense of independence with a view to achieve their unmet expectations. Slowly and steadily they adjust with the changing organizational culture with a view to become insiders from being organizational outsiders.

In brief the highlight of the study is that comprehensive socialization takes place more effectively for employees with high self-mentoring capabilities and is also significantly influenced by perception about new job, created by employer during the pre entry job related discussions with the employees.

Similarly it has been found that among all the socialization tactics Fixed, Sequential, Collective and Investiture brings about successful organizational socialization, where as only Fixed, Sequential and Collective tactics can bring individualized socialization of the respondents.

Next we tried to estimate if there is any a difference in predictability of socialization outcomes for engineering and management graduates. We conducted the same regression analysis with socialization outcomes as the dependent variables and tactics and personality as the independent variables on two different sub sets. One set comprising of 92 engineering graduates and another with 130 management graduates.

- When subsets are considered, the study indicated that for both engineering and management graduates, clarity in perception about new job and self-mentoring bring about higher organizational socialization and Fixed tactics give higher impact.

- The study also observed the influence of nature of job assignments (technical, non technical, financial and others) on the successful socialization of both Engineering and management graduates. It revealed that for engineering graduates non technical jobs reduces comprehensive as well as organizational socialization. Thus it can be predicted that as engineering graduates are more inclined towards technical activities and line operations, non technical jobs demoralizes them and decreases their satisfaction level.
• On the other hand in case of management graduates types of job assignments do not impose any impact on the satisfaction level of the employees. Management graduates can avail successful socialization working in any organization (financial, technical and others), if other socializing factors like personality traits and socialization tactics are perfectly matched with the organizational environment.

Thereafter we tried to estimate the extent of comprehensive socialization outcomes of respondents, considering the sub set of respondents with high and low personality score. For this we considered two sub sets of the data set, high self–efficacy as well as high self-mentoring ability as high personality score (79 respondents) where as low score for both the variables indicates low personality of respondents (35 respondents). The results highlighted by the study are as follows

• For the employees with strong personality scores (high self–efficacy and high self-mentoring) successful socialization is achieved by Sequential, Collective and Serial type of socialization tactics. Sequential tactics helps the employees to proceed through a fixed sequence of steps while Collective type of socialization tactics encourages them to work in groups sharing views and experiences in order to achieve the desired goal. At the same time Serial tactics help them to get guidance from senior experienced colleagues to understand and solve job related problems as well as to perform given assignments successfully and easily.

• For the employees with weak personality scores (low self–efficacy and self-mentoring) socialization of the respondents focuses on Sequential and Investiture tactics irregardless of the fact whether job profile is clearly defined to the employees or not. Focused Investiture tactics/Sequential helps them to proceed through proper sequence of steps side by side the organization should also accept their sell identities and personality to develop confidence among them which give rise to the sense of belongingness so that they can avail successful socialization.

Limitations

As a limitation we submit that the previous work experiences of the respondents have not been considered and therefore this study has been unable to capture the impacts of previous
job experience on socialization. The quantitative (in number of years) and qualitative experiences of the respondents prior to this job have not been taken into consideration in this study. This is because for some respondents, it is their first job and their self-efficacy, self-mentoring, perception about new job and attitude towards group are their own, but for others who have worked elsewhere before, these attributes may have been influenced by their individual characteristics as well as experience in earlier jobs. However though work experience in previous job have not been considered, age may be thought of as a proxy to experience in previous job.

Moreover it must be mentioned that the survey was conducted on respondents over sixteen week period, during which all of them continued in the same job.

There are a number of schools of thought about the most appropriate period for socialization to take effect. We have followed Brett’s (1984) school of thought. As a result all the inherited limitations of Brett have been reflected on our research work also.

**Managerial implications**

- From the study it has been observed that attributes like self–efficacy, self-mentoring and attitude towards group are suppose to be internal to the employee, where as perception about new job is a factor that can be enhanced by the organization. Therefore it may be recommended to the employer that through pre placement talk’s clear idea about the prospective job is to be communicated to the prospective employees; this would bring about more effective socialization.

- The study further recommends that for achieving organizational socialization, an organization is free to choose any organizational socialization tactics, but to gain successful individualized socialization the organization should prefer Fixed and Collective socialization tactics.

- For employees with strong personality, socialization is sure to be achieved by applying only Fixed tactics but those who are having weak personality the study recommends that the employer should give them proper space by accepting their self identity so that they have the feelings of being a member of the organizational family. At the same time they
should be supported and guided by experienced mentors to achieve successful socialization.

- If job specification is clearly explained to the employees through their pre entry talks, the organization is free to choose from any socialization tactics varying with personality types.

- If the job specification is not clearly explained to the employees, their self identity should be used by the organization to customize the socialization tactics according to the need of the employee.

- In case of freshers without having any experience in any field, it is recommended to the organization to use experience senior colleagues as role model to inculcate successful socialization. This is because these employees usually suffers from initial job related uncertainty and anxiety which can be successfully overcome only by receiving a good deal of social support from existing organizational member rather than merely on–the–job training on job related techniques.