Socialization Tactics: Antecedents for Goal Interdependence and Newcomer Adjustment and Retention

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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.

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 (G. 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 (G. 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 (G. Q. Chen & Tjosvold, 2008). This study finds that serial and investiture tactics are important antecedents to cooperative goals.

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; E. W. 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 sense making 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 (R. L. Morrison, 2008). Co-worker relationships help to embed newcomers in their new environment and lower turnover (D. G. Allen, 2006; D. G. 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 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 et al., 2007; Bauer &

Erdogan, 2012; 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. Sakes 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 (D. G. 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 (1973) theorized that how they consider their goals are related to each other very much affects their interaction and relationship. There are three types of goal interdependence.

In cooperation, people perceive their goals to be positively related, i.e., as one person moves toward goal attainment, others move toward reaching their own goals. People believe that they can reach their goals if and only if the others also reach their goals. People seek outcomes that are beneficial to all those with whom they are cooperatively linked.

In competition, people believe that their goals are negatively related, i.e., as one person moves toward goal attainment, others are less likely to attain their goals. People assume that they can reach their goals if others are ineffective. People seek an outcome that is personally beneficial but detrimental to others in the situation. In independence, people conclude that their goals are unrelated, i.e., one person moving toward goal attainment neither helps nor frustrates the goal attainment of others. People seek an outcome that is personally beneficial without concern for the outcomes of others.

Socialization tactics may affect goal interdependence and thereby affect outcomes. When

these tactics strengthen cooperative goal interdependence between newcomers and their teams, they promote newcomer adjustment and high intentions to remain. When entering a new organization, new recruits self-interestedly want to learn their roles as soon as possible.

This study argues that by employing the serial and investiture tactics of acting as role models and providing positive social support for new recruits, experienced team members communicate their concern for newcomers. Specifically, they demonstrate that they have cooperative goals in that they want to help newcomers achieve their goals of adjusting to their new environment quickly (Feldman, 1981; Reichers, 1987). When teams deploy serial and investiture tactics, teams show newcomers that teams as a whole want to help them assume their roles as smoothly and trouble-free as possible (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Based on the evidence of team members' actions, newcomers will conclude that their goals are positively related to the goals of team members.

In contrast, low levels of serial and investiture tactics communicate that team members are leaving newcomers alone to discover their roles and letting them experience the uncertainty of learning their new roles and environment by themselves (Jones, 1986). In these ways, teams communicate that they do not much care about newcomers and their goals. These interactions induce new recruits to conclude that they have competitive goal interdependence or independent goal relationship.

Based on this literature and reasoning, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1. To the extent that teams use serial and investiture tactics, newcomers believe that they have cooperative goal interdependence with their teams rather than competitive or independent goal relationships.

According to the theory of goal interdependence, how group members believe their goals are related very much impacts their dynamics and success (Deutsch, 1973). Meta-analyses document that cooperative goals promote the type of interaction that results in group productivity, individual learning, psychological health, and relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, Nelson, & Skon, 1981).

Compared to competitive and independent goals, cooperative goals were found to foster supportive climates, mutual trust and open-minded discussion of diverse views (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Tjosvold, 1998). The mutual trust and open discussion of diverse views increase sensitivity to similarities and common interests and encourage people to understand each other's feelings (Tjosvold, 1998; Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 1995). With cooperative goals, newcomers are likely to acquire information and feedback to learn and adjust, form deep understanding about teams and organizations, and hold realistic expectations about jobs.

A primary goal of effective socialization is to retain new recruits (Feldman, 1981). Cooperative goals increase newcomers' organizational commitment and job satisfaction, thereby decreasing their intentions to quit (Tjosvold, 1998). Cooperative goals also assist newcomers to develop constructive co-worker relationships which can help them reduce uncertainty and find structure in the new environment; co-worker relationships help new recruits become more embedded and thereby reduce turnover (D. G. Allen, 2006; D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013).

An experimental study has provided direct evidence that a cooperative, in comparison to a competitive or independent, team climate strengthens relationships and interactions between newcomers and team members, and contributes to socialization (Y. F. Chen, Lu, Tjosvold, & Lin, 2008). Newcomers in cooperation were found to feel respected and trusted other team members, sought open-minded communication by listening carefully to others and

by expressing their own views fully, believed that they received help from others, and felt

socialized (Y. F. Chen et al., 2008).

Based on this literature and reasoning, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2. To the extent that newcomers believe that they and their teams have

cooperative goal interdependence, they have high organizational commitment, high job

satisfaction, low intentions to quit, and strong co-worker relationships.

The primary task of socialization is 'learning' (Chao et al., 1994; E. W. Morrison, 1993).

When newcomers perceive that they have competitive goals with their teammates, they

conclude that they are in a win-lose situation where information may not be exchanged fully

or accurately. They also likely develop suspicious and hostile attitudes, including that team

members will try to mislead and obstruct them as they pursue their own interests. Even when

new recruits receive information from insiders, they are not confident that the information is

accurate and suspect that others might share the information in order to take advantage of

them. These suspicious and hostile attitudes very much hinder co-worker relationships

building. When newcomers perceive that they have independent goals with their teammates,

they conclude that people do not care about each other. Independence induces indifference to

one another. Since people are indifferent to each other's performance and well-being,

individuals are not motivated to strengthen relationships, fail to communicate with each other,

and have little information and resource sharing. In situations with independent goals,

newcomers learn little and do not much develop relationships.

Researchers have suggested that the effects of independent goals are similar to those of

competitive goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1981). Overall, newcomers have

been found to have low organizational commitment and job satisfaction and weak co-worker

relationships when they had either competitive or independent goals with their teams (Y. F.

Chen et al., 2008). With either competitive goals or independent goals, newcomers may want

to leave the organization. Leaders' competitive and individualistic orientations have been

found to reduce employee desire to stay on the job (Tjosvold, Andrews, & Jones, 1983).

Based on this literature and reasoning, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3. To the extent that newcomers believe that they and their teams have

competitive goal interdependence, they have low organizational commitment, low job

satisfaction, high intentions to quit, and weak co-worker relationships.

Hypothesis 4. To the extent that newcomers believe they and their teams have independent

goals, they have low organizational commitment, low job satisfaction, high intentions to quit,

and weak co-worker relationships.

Serial and investiture tactics are the most important and useful predictors of newcomer

adjustment (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007). The above theorizing and reasoning suggest

that new recruits' perception of goal interdependence between them and teams mediates the

relationship between serial and investiture tactics and adjustment outcomes.

Hypothesis 5. The effects of serial and investiture tactics on newcomer adjustment outcomes,

i.e., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, intentions to quit, and co-worker

relationships, are mediated by cooperative goal interdependence, competitive goal

interdependence, and independent goal relationships.

5. Method

5.1. Participants and interview schedule

One hundred and two respondents from Anqing, Nanjing, and Shanghai, China, participated in this interview study. The criterion to select participants was that the person had entered organization no longer than half a year ago. Participants were identified with the help of the first author's former college classmates and relatives. To overcome the sample bias, the first author approached different organizations so that participants could represent diverse industries and education levels in China. Each interview lasted 20 – 50 minutes.

Among the participants, 40 (39.2%) were male and 62 (60.8%) were female. The average age was 25 years, with 76 (74.5%) between 21to 25 years old, 24 (23.5%) between 26 to 30 years old, and 2 (2.0%) were 31 or above years old. Regarding the educational level, 28 (27.5%) had tertiary degrees, 51 (50%) had bachelor degrees, 23 (22.5%) had master degrees. As for industry, 6 (5.9%) were from government agencies, 14 (13.7%) from manufacturing, 29 (28.4%) from IT industry, 16 (15.7%) from hospital, 22 (21.6%) from consulting, 9 (8.8%) from education and training, 4 (3.9%) from banking, and 2 (2.0%) were from sales industry. For 62 (60.8%), the current job was their first, and 40 (39.2%) had other jobs before the current job. On average, respondents worked in the current company for 3.6 months.

This study used the critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) to develop the interview structure. It is a particularly useful method to study complex interpersonal phenomena (Walker & Truly, 1992). This technique also can help moderate errors when people are asked to summarize across many incidents to provide response in most surveys (Schwartz, 1999). At the beginning of the interview, participants first recalled and described in detail a concrete example how the team treated them. Team was defined as those people with whom new recruits worked very frequently. Then they rated specific questions based on the recalled

incidents on 7-point Likert-type scales. Interviewees were informed that the objective of the study was to investigate newcomers' entry experience in China and that their responses were absolutely confidential. We used the survey data to test the hypotheses while we used the recalled incidents to verify the conclusions drawn from the quantitative data analyses.

As the interview schedule was original written in English, the first author translated it into Chinese. The questionnaires were back translated and checked by two MPhil students and one bi-lingual researcher for possible deviation (Brislin, 1970).

5.2. Measures

5.2.1. Serial and investiture tactics

The serial and investiture tactics scale consisted of seven items, which were modified from Jones (1986) to be used in the work team context. A sample item for serial tactics is "In this incident, I was generally left alone to discover what my role should be (reverse scored)." A sample item for investiture tactics is "In this incident, most of my colleagues were supportive of me personally." Jones (1986) categorized serial and investiture tactics into one dimension and varimax factor analysis supported that serial and investiture tactics load on a single factor. In this study, the one factor had a coefficient alpha of .72.

5.2.2 Goal interdependence

The goal interdependence scale was derived from a previous questionnaire study conducted in North America (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 1998). Three items measured cooperative goal interdependence (α = .85). A sample item is "In this incident, the team and I wanted each other to succeed". Two items measured competitive goal interdependence (α = .81). A sample item is "In this incident, the team did things in ways that favor its own goals rather my goals". Two items measured independent goal relationship (α = .75). A sample item is "In this incident, the team and I worked for our own independent goals".

5.2.3 Adjustment and retention outcomes

Two items adopted from the Affective Commitment Scale measured organizational commitment (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990) (α = .75). A sample item is "Because of this incident, this organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me". Job satisfaction scale consisted of two items (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983) (α = .87). A sample item is "Because of this incident, in general, I like working here". Scholars found that people cannot empirically and reliably distinguish job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Schmidt, 2010). Factor loadings indicated that combining organizational commitment and job satisfaction yielded an effective measure. The combined one factor had a better reliability (α = .89). This study used affective attitudes instead of organizational commitment and job satisfaction in subsequent analyses.

Two items measured newcomers' desire to leave (Colarelli, 1984) (α = .94). A sample item is "Because of this incident, I frequently think of quitting my job". The co-worker relationships scale consisted of five items (α = .78) (Y. F. Chen, Tjosvold, Huang, & Xu, 2011b). A sample item is "Because of this incident, other team members and I have good personal relationships".

5.3. Scale validation

Harman's one-factor test is one of the most widely used techniques to deal with the common method variance; according to this technique, if a substantial amount of common method variance is present, either a single factor will emerge from the factor analysis, or one "general" factor will account for the majority of the covariance in the independent and criterion variables (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The Exploratory Factor Analysis resulted in seven factors with Eigen values greater than 1 and the first factor accounted for only 17% of total variance. Results suggest that common method variance was

unlikely to cause significant relationships among variables in our study.

We also used a series of Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) via AMOS 17.0 to

compare the proposed 7-factor model (M0) to five different 6-factor models, one 5-factor

model, and one factor solution model. We selected the seven alternative models on the basis

of the logical possibility that each pair of adjacent variables in the model might not be

empirically distinct. Results (Table 1) indicate a good fit between the proposed 7-factor

model (M0) and the data, with $\chi^2 = 318.1$, $df = 245$, CFI = .94, IFI = .95, and RMSEA = .05.

Moreover, the Chi-squares of the alternative models were significantly greater than that of the

7-factor model and the fit index scores of the seven models were also lower. Results suggest

that the proposed seven factors were distinct measures of the constructs in the present study.

---------------------------------- Insert Table 1 about here ----------------------------------

6.   Results

6.1. Correlational findings

Correlations (Table 2) lent initial support to the first hypothesis that serial and investiture

tactics were positively related with cooperative goals and were negatively related with

competitive and independent goals ($r = .50$, $p < .01$; $r = -.49$, $p < .01$; $r = -.51$, $p < .01$).

Consistent with the other three hypotheses (H2, 3, and 4), cooperative goals were positively

related to affective attitudes and co-worker relationships and negatively related to intentions

to quit ($r = .54$, $p < .01$; $r = .49$, $p < .01$; $r = -.45$, $p < .01$), whereas competitive and

independent goals were negatively related to affective attitudes and co-worker relationships

and positively related to intentions to quit (competitive goals $r = -.49$, $p < .01$; $r = -.30$, p

$< .01$; $r = .52$, $p < .01$; independent goals $r = -.44$, $p < .01$; $r = -.24$, $p < .05$; $r = .45$, $p < .01$).

---------------------------------- Insert Table 2 about here ----------------------------------

6.2. Structural equation findings

The hypothesized fully mediated model, the non-mediated model, and goal interdependence as antecedent model were compared (Table 3). With $\chi^2 = 13.6$, $df = 3$, CFI = .96, IFI= .96, RMSEA = .19, the fully mediated model is by convention considered a good fit with the data. Moreover, the model Chi-squares of the alternative two models were significantly greater than that of the fully mediated model (χ^2 difference (9) = 76.3, $p < .001$; χ^2 difference (6) = 23.5, $p < .001$) and the fit indices for the two models were also lower.

The path estimates of the fully mediated model reveal the findings more specifically (Figure 1). Serial and investiture tactics promoted cooperative goal interdependence ($\beta = .50$, $p < .001$) and undermined competitive and independent goal relationships ($\beta = -.49$, $p < .001$; $\beta = -.51$, $p < .001$, lending support to Hypothesis 1. Cooperative goals contributed to affective attitudes ($\beta = .33$, $p < .001$) and co-worker relationships ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$), but were not significantly related to intentions to quit ($\beta = -.17$, *ns*). Hypothesis 2 is then partially supported. Moreover, competitive and independent goals undermined affective attitudes ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .01$; $\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$) and strengthened intentions to quit ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .26$, $p < .01$). However, contrary to the hypotheses, competitive and independent goals were not significantly related to co-worker relationships ($\beta = -.05$, *ns*; $\beta = -.05$, *ns*). These results partially support Hypotheses 3 and 4.

-------------------------------- Insert Table 3 about here ---------------------------------

-------------------------------- Insert Figure 1 about here ---------------------------------

6.3. Bootstrapping findings

This study proposed cooperative, competitive, and independent goals as multiple mediators for the relationships between serial and investiture tactics and adjustment outcomes. Bootstrapping provides the most powerful and reasonable method of obtaining confidence

limits to assess and compare indirect effects in multiple mediator models under most

conditions (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). We used the INDIRECT program to generate 95%

bias-corrected and accelerated bootstrap confidence intervals for total and specific indirect

effects of independent variables on dependent variables through one or more mediator

variables by bootstrapping with 1000 samples. Results (Table 4) partially support Hypothesis

5. The confidence intervals do not contain zero for total indirect effects. Specifically, serial

and investiture tactics have significant indirect effects on affective attitudes and co-worker

relationships through cooperative goal interdependence and a significant indirect effect on

intentions to quit through competitive goal interdependence.

--------------------------------- Insert Table 4 about here ---------------------------------

6.4. Summary of the incidents and illustrative cases

Participants' descriptions on the incidents and ratings on goal interdependence indicated

that 71 cases received mentors or positive social support or both from their teams in which 59

cases reported cooperative goals with teams; 31 cases reported that they did not receive

mentors or positive social support and in which 23 cases considered that they had competitive

or independent goals with teams. These results are consistent with the correlations and

structural equation analyses that serial and investiture tactics promoted cooperative goals.

6.4.1. Case 1 with serial (providing role models) tactics

A recent graduate, who had two months earlier joined an IT company as technical

support personnel in Nanjing, described her case. At the beginning, she was assigned a

mentor and the mentor introduced her to four experienced members. In an incident, she was

required to do a public presentation. The mentor taught her presentation skills. The

experienced members lent reference books, helped her do the presentation rehearsal, and

helped her record the presentation for improvement. In this incident, she felt that the team

and her 'swam or sunk' together with each other. Because of this incident, she liked her job

very much, cared about other team members and did not want to change her job.

6.4.2. Case 2 with investiture (providing positive social support) tactics

An experienced graphic designer joined a Shanghai real estate consulting firm four

months ago. When she just entered the organization, the whole team was required to do a

business trip to Changchun. During the business trip, the team members very much cared

about her feelings and she felt enthusiasm and encouragement from others. For example, she

disliked the food and did not eat very well. Other members encouraged her to eat to keep

strength, and bought her cakes to refresh. One member provided water to her during work. In

this incident, she felt that the team and she wanted each other to succeed and afterwards she

liked working here and had good personal relationships with teammates.

6.4.3. Case 3 with low levels of serial and investiture (providing neither mentors nor positive

social support) tactics

A sales assistant who worked in a Nanjing company for one month described her incident.

The former sales assistant had left the organization and she was left alone to discover how to

do her job properly. The leader criticized members a lot. Others only cared about themselves

as they avoided being blamed. The interviewee informed the financial department to issue

and send an invoice to a customer. But the leader would only issue the invoice after receiving

the payment and criticized her for not asking him. The interviewee felt very upset because

she had not been taught this. She thought that the environment was unfriendly and others only

cared for themselves; at times she wanted to leave.

7. Discussion

Results support the argument that goal interdependence plays an important mediating

role in the relationship between serial and investiture tactics and newcomer adjustment. Serial and investiture tactic were found to be important antecedents of cooperative goal interdependence. When new recruits perceived cooperative goals between themselves and teams, they had high organizational commitment and job satisfaction and built strong co-worker relationships. However, when newcomers considered that they had competitive or independent goals with teams, they had low levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction and strong intentions to quit.

Previous research has suggested that uncertainty reduction partially mediates the relationships between socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Saks et al., 2007). Different from Allen and Shanock's (2013) study, which focused on overall organizational relationships, this study indicates that it is also useful to investigate socialization tactics from the team relationships perspective and shows that the theory of goal interdependence aids understanding the link between socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment. The study's mediating model demonstrated a better fit to the data than the model relating socialization tactics directly to outcomes. Bootstrap confidence intervals indicated that serial and investiture tactics had significant indirect effects on affective attitudes and co-worker relationships through cooperative goals and on intentions to quit through competitive goals. These results suggest the value of newcomers forming cooperative goal interdependence rather than competitive and independent goal relationships with teams during the entry phase.

The current study also contributes to research on goal interdependence. Previous studies have focused on the dynamics and outcomes of goal interdependence (G. Q. Chen & Tjosvold, 2008). But antecedents of goal interdependence are important theoretical issue and practical problem (Deutsch, 1973). Results of this study contribute to our understanding of

antecedents by showing that how new recruits are treated very much affects their goal interdependence with their teams. Socialization tactics such as providing new recruits role models and positive social support can help new recruits conclude that their goals and team members' goals are cooperatively related, and to do so at important period of their career.

7.1. Limitations and Future Research

The sample and operations, of course, limit the results of this study. The data are self-reported and subject to biases and may not be accurate. Some research though suggests that self-reported data are not as limited as commonly expected (Spector, 1992). Harman's one-factor test suggested that common method variance cannot explain the research findings in the present study. Future research may obtain data from other sources such as peers and supervisors and use behavioral outcomes such as job performance and turnover. The findings are also cross-sectional and do not provide direct evidence of the causal links. Scholars have suggested that the most effective way to overcome recall and other methodological weaknesses is to test ideas with different methods (Spector & Brannick, 1995). Developing longitudinal or experimental verification of the effects of serial and investiture tactics on goal interdependence and newcomer adjustment would very much strengthen this study's findings.

Results were obtained in China, which is a collective and high power distance culture (Kirkbride, Tang, & Westwood, 1991). Contrary to previous studies and our expectation, the paths from competitive and independent goal interdependence to low levels of coworker relationships were not significant. It may be speculated that in China with its collectivist values, team members want to have good relationships even though they have competitive and independent goals. Research is needed to explore this speculation that the Chinese culture limits the impact of competitive and independent goals. In addition, as findings found in one culture cannot be assumed to apply in another (Hofstede, 1993), replications in a different

population (e.g. with Western employees) could lend important support to the hypotheses.

Results suggest future research to develop our understanding of effective socialization. This study demonstrates the important role of cooperative goal interdependence in organizational socialization process. In addition to serial and investiture tactics, research can examine other factors that can promote cooperative goal interdependence to aid newcomer on-boarding. For example, previous studies have indicated that the effects of relationship and open conflict values on goal interdependence and newcomer socialization (Y. F. Chen, Tjosvold, Huang, & Xu, 2011a; Y. F. Chen et al., 2011b). Deutsch (1973) argued that mutually beneficial rewards, structures, and values are antecedents to cooperative goals; future research can investigate rewards, structures, and values that promote cooperative goal interdependence that in turn may result in effective organizational socialization.

Findings of this study are consistent with previous research that the effects of independent goals are similar to the effects of competitive goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 1981). Studies are needed to test the different mechanisms through which competitive and independent goals undermine newcomer adjustment.

7.2. Practical implications

The hypotheses, if further supported, have important practical implications for helping newcomers on-boarding through teams. Results suggest that managers should train and orient team members to rely on giving new recruits role models and positive social support rather than holding them at a distance and leave them alone to discover their roles.

In addition to relying on serial-investiture tactics, organizations can promote the effectiveness of these tactics by strengthening cooperative goals in their teams. Feeling cooperatively related goals is possible but newcomers and insiders can also develop competitive and independent goals that make coordination difficult. The early experience of

socialization appears to have important effects on developing goal interdependence.

To help new recruits adjust and remain, findings emphasize the value for teams to promote cooperative goals and reduce competitive and independent goals. People conclude that their goals and teams' goals are cooperatively related by using cognitive and affective cues (Deutsch, 1973). In addition to serial and investiture tactics, teams can promote relationship and open conflict values which can influence goal interdependence and newcomer socialization (Y. F. Chen et al., 2011a, 2011b). Managers also can help teams develop cooperative goals though shared aspirations, common tasks, and shared reward distributions (Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 1995). Team members can have structured opportunities to engage in mutually beneficial interactions such as team discussion and reflection (Hambrick, 1994; Hanlon, Meyer, & Taylor, 1994; Li, Xin, Tsui, & Hambrick, 1999). They become willing to express their ideas and positions, ask each other for more information and arguments, and integrate their best ideas to create effective solutions. These interactions can contribute to cooperative relationships and thereby effective socialization.

This study has contributed to the socialization tactics literature by examining a multiple mediator model that suggests newcomers' understanding of goal interdependence between themselves and their teams as an important process underlying the relationship between serial and investiture tactics and adjustment outcomes. The results indicate that serial and investiture tactics promote desirable adjustment through strengthening cooperative goal interdependence and reducing competitive and independent goal relationships.

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Figure 1 Path estimates for the hypothesized model
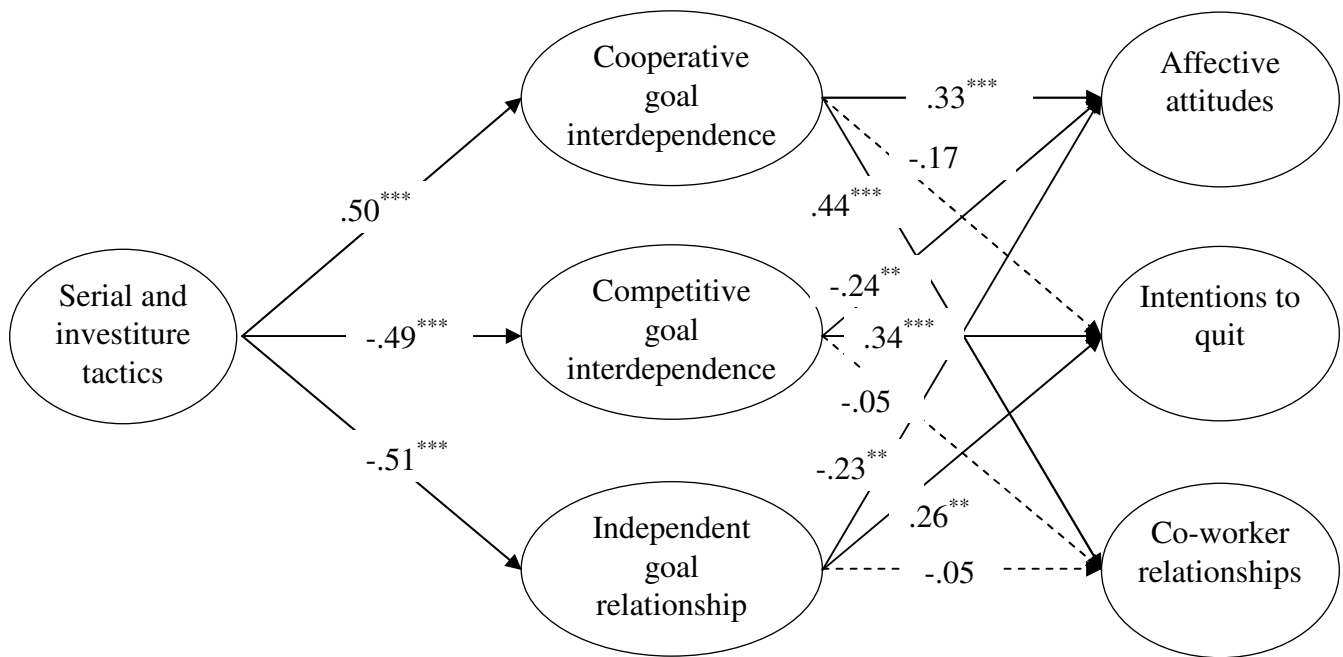
Note: N = 102;

*** *p* < .001; ** *p* < .01; * *p* < .05

Table 1 Confirmatory factor analyses

	df	Model χ^2	Δ df	Δ χ^2	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
Baseline 7-factor Model (M0)	245	318.1			.94	.95	.05
Combined competitive and independent goal interdependence (M1)	251	369.5	6	51.4***	.91	.91	.07
Combined serial and investiture tactics and cooperative goal interdependence (M2)	251	364.0	6	45.9***	.91	.92	.07
Combined cooperative goal interdependence and affective attitudes (M3)	251	415.8	6	97.7***	.87	.88	.08
Combined cooperative goal interdependence and intentions to quit (M4)	251	461.0	6	142.9***	.84	.85	.09
Combined cooperative goal interdependence and co-worker relationships (M5)	251	350.3	6	32.2***	.92	.93	.06
Combined affective attitudes, intentions to quit, and co-worker relationships (M6)	256	441.5	11	123.4***	.86	.86	.09
One factor solution (M7)	266	627.3	21	309.2***	.73	.73	.12

Notes: N of cases = 102; In the one-factor Model (M7), all the factors were combined into one factor.

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

Variables	Mean	Std. D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Serial and investiture tactics	5.24	.85	(.72)						
2. Cooperative goal interdependence	5.81	.86	.50**	(.85)					
3. Competitive goal interdependence	3.00	1.45	-.49**	-.52**	(.81)				
4. Independent goal relationship	2.46	1.14	-.51**	-.39**	.36**	(.75)			
5. Affective attitudes	5.15	1.02	.57**	.54**	-.49**	-.44**	(.89)		
6. Intentions to quit	2.41	1.23	-.59**	-.45**	.52**	.45**	-.74**	(.94)	
7. Co-worker relationships	4.98	.92	.30**	.49**	-.30**	-.24*	.43**	-.26**	(.78)

Notes: Scales reliabilities are on the diagonal in parentheses;

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Table 3 Results of model comparison analyses

	Model χ^2	df	$\Delta \chi^2$	Δ df	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
1. Fully mediated	13.6	3			.96	.96	.19
2. Non-mediated	89.9	12	76.3***	9	.71	.72	.25
3. Goal interdependence as antecedent	37.1	9	23.5***	6	.90	.90	.18

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Table 4 Bootstrap results for indirect effects (bias corrected and accelerated)

Variables	Effect	S.E.	Lower 2.5%	Upper 2.5%
Dependent variable: affective attitudes				
Total	**.34**	**.09**	**.17**	**.55**
Cooperative goal interdependence	**.15**	**.06**	**.02**	**.34**
Competitive goal interdependence	.10	.06	-.03	.31
Independent goal relationship	.08	.06	-.06	.24
Dependent variable: intentions to quit				
Total	**-.35**	**.10**	**-.60**	**-.12**
Cooperative goal interdependence	-.06	.07	-.25	.14
Competitive goal interdependence	**-.18**	**.07**	**-.46**	**-.04**
Independent goal relationship	-.11	.07	-.27	.10
Dependent variable: co-worker relationships				
Total	**.27**	**.09**	**.09**	**.49**
Cooperative goal interdependence	**.23**	**.07**	**.08**	**.41**
Competitive goal interdependence	.02	.06	-.08	.13
Independent goal relationship	.02	.06	-.07	.13

Notes: Level of confidence for confidence intervals: .95; Number of bootstrap resamples: 1000.