

DOCTORAL THESIS

The formal mentoring program and socialization outcomes: testing the assimilation process

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ABSTRACT

Organizations use the formal mentoring program as a human resource intervention in the socialization of newcomers. Mentoring scholars have found that effective mentoring leads to various socialization outcomes of newcomers, partially because mentors, seen as organizational agents, can facilitate the learning process in the socialization. Despite this progress, several limitations can be found in the literature. First, it is largely unknown how mentoring influences socialization outcomes in addition to the learning process (e.g. assimilation process). Second, the assumption that mentors are organizational agents in the socialization has never been tested. Third, previous studies of mentoring mainly focused on the white-collar workers, calling into the question about the generality of the findings in the mentoring literature.

To fill the research gaps, this study applied the belongingness theory as the theoretical basis to explain how mentoring functions influence socialization outcomes through assimilation process. Drawing on the belongingness theory, this study proposed a research model and tested the mediation effects of organization based self-esteem (OBSE) and person-organization fit on the relationship between mentoring functions and three socialization outcomes (i.e. affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior). In addition, this study also tested the moderating effect of mentor's organizational prototypicality on the relationship between mentoring functions and two mediation variables.

Two-wave dyadic data have been collected from blue-collar workers in a manufacturing company. The results supported most of the hypotheses in the model. Specifically, OBSE and person-organization fit significantly mediated the relationship between mentoring functions and two socialization outcomes (i.e. affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction). Only person-organization fit significantly mediated the relationship between mentoring functions and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In addition, mentor's organizational prototypicality significantly moderated the relationship between mentoring functions and two mediation variables.

This study advanced our understanding on how mentoring influences socialization outcomes through assimilation process. It also contributed to the literature by testing the role of mentor's organizational prototypicality as the boundary condition of mentoring-outcome link. Finally, data from blue-collar workers increased the generality of findings in mentoring literature. Limitations and suggestions for future research have been discussed at the end of the study.

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