

# **The Influence of Socialization on Citizens of Mexico Working in the U.S. on an H-1B Visa: A Preliminary Investigation**

**Paul E. Madlock**  
**Southeast Missouri State University**

*The current study examined the influence that work group and task socialization has on citizens of Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and is grounded in Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT). The participants (N = 241) were citizens of Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. The findings indicated that work group socialization was found to be positively related to organizational commitment and negatively related to role ambiguity and work alienation. Additionally, work group socialization was found to be a greater predictor of organizational commitment and negative predictor of role ambiguity, and work alienation than was task socialization.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The current study served as a preliminary investigation of citizens from Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. It was reasoned here that organizations may want to employ well-educated individuals from Mexico to better serve the Hispanic population, which is the fastest growing in the U.S. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002). Yet, it appears that research has been slow to thoroughly examine the population of workers in the U.S. with an H-1B visa. An H-1B visa requires workers to have obtained a job in the U.S. and have an associate degree and at least three years of work experience, a bachelor's degree or higher associated with that job. Additionally, out of the over one-quarter million petitions for H-1B visas yearly from countries across the globe, the U.S. only grants 65,000 new H-1B visas each year to those who have undergraduate degrees and 20,000 visas to those with advanced degrees (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Visas Division, 2016). In 2016 there were 2540 new H-1B visas issued to citizens of Mexico to work in the U.S. The H-1B visas are initially issued for three years, renewable for another three years and are able to be renewed again under certain conditions for yet another four years for a total of up to ten years. Based on the previous numbers, there could be over 25,000 citizens from Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa at a given time out of the possible 850,000 citizens from other countries working in the U.S. with an H-1B visa. In addition to the worker's petition for an H-1B visa, the company must file an I-129 petition that can cost the company tens of thousands of dollars depending on the size of the company and if there are associated attorney fees.

Based on the cost associated with recruiting employees with an H-1B visa, the associated fees that accompany an I-129 petition, and the value added component of having a specialized employee from another country, it is important to organizations that the newcomers are sufficiently socialized to ensure their success and retention. An evaluation of socialization through a cultural lens was emphasized here because of the influence personal culture has on newcomer expectations and workplace behaviors. More

specific, it was speculated here that citizens of Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa would have strong ties to their native culture and their culture should be something to consider during the socialization process. Numerous prior studies have examined socialization from a process perspective (Jablin, 2001) and the structures that impact the socialization process, such as the interview (Jablin, 2001). However, the current study differs based on a practical applied approach to the socialization of a specific population of newcomers, the type of socialization, and the subsequent outcomes. The socialization into a new work environment involves the movement from outsider to valued insider through communication (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) and involves many processes, forms, and domains: the organization, the group, and the job/task (Haueter, Hoff-Macan, & Winter, 2003). Specifically, task and work group socialization were of interest here due to their possible association with the culture of Mexico. Thus, it was reasoned that there would be a congruency between work group socialization and the collectivistic culture of Mexico and between task socialization and the high uncertainty avoidance culture of Mexico (see Hofstede, 1983). It was also reasoned that the aforementioned forms of socialization would be congruent with the expectations of citizens from Mexico entering the U.S. workforce. To elucidate this point, work group socialization, which involves the newcomer learning the specifics about the work group and the behaviors associated with the group's rules, goals, and values would be associated with a collectivistic culture and would meet the expectations of newcomers from Mexico. Additionally, task socialization, which involve clear rules and directions that govern behaviors, centers on uncertainty avoidance and would also meet the expectations of newcomers from Mexico working in the U.S. Therefore, the task and workgroup socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa are important factors to consider that assist in the retention and work experience of newcomers. Further, the value of the current study is found in the impact socialization has on the work alienation, organizational commitment, and role ambiguity experienced by newcomers from Mexico in the U.S. workforce on an H-1B visa.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Theoretical Background**

When individuals enter organizations from other cultures they experience met or unmet expectations. The notion of met or unmet expectations is captured by Burgoon's (1978) expectancy violation theory (EVT). In general, EVT posits that when individuals' expectations are not met or violated, negative psychological reactions occur or when experiences meet or exceed expectations a positive psychological reaction occurs. Prior research examining culture and indirectly, EVT, looked at expectations and actual experiences among South Asian immigrants living in the U.S. (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004). These authors discussed how discrepancies between pre-immigration expectations and post-immigration experiences of South Asian immigrants might have negative outcomes for their future in the U.S. More specific to the Mexican culture is the work of Negy, Schwartz, and Reig-Ferrer (2009) who examined the potential influence of expectancy violations on the acculturative stress levels of Hispanic people living in the U.S. Their findings indicate that expectancy violations experienced by non-U.S. citizens resulted in increased acculturative stress. Based on prior work examining EVT and culture, which is limited, it appears that EVT may provide a valuable theoretical underpinning when examining citizens from another culture working in the U.S. There appears to be even less research examining EVT and citizens of Mexico working here in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. Additionally, citizens of Mexico will have strong cultural ties to their native country and therefore, may have expectations about their socialization into the work place. Thus, it could be extrapolated that violations of cultural expectations during the socialization of workers from Mexico could result in negative outcomes where the converse could also be true.

### **Hispanic Culture**

The primary focus here is on citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and how attachment to their native culture may have an influence on their socialization into the work place. To better understand the culture of Mexico, the following will highlight Hofstede's (1983) original four cultural factors of masculinity versus femininity, power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance.

Hofstede, (1983) found Mexico to be high in Power Distance, meaning that there is a high level of inequity between persons in positions of formal power and those individuals who are not in positions of power. For example, in high power distance cultures such as Mexico employees who are in low positions of power, prefer his or her supervisor, a person in a high position of power, to dictate what needs to be done and how to do it. Mexico is also considered to be a masculine culture, characterized by a distinct definition of roles within the family, with an authoritative husband-father who ideally is the breadwinner and a submissive wife-mother who cares for the home and rears the children (Kras, 1995). Hofstede's (1983) work also indicated that Mexico was a collectivist country, where the overall "group" is preferred over individualistic roles, meaning that the good of the whole is preferred over the good of the individual. Lastly, Mexico is considered to be relatively high in uncertainty avoidance, which means that its members do not tolerate uncertainty and therefore prefer strict laws and rules that govern behavior (Hofstede, 1983). It is reasoned here that citizens of Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa may require socialization into the workplace that is congruent with their native culture. Therefore, the following section will discuss the value of socialization in greater detail.

### **Socialization**

When newcomers join organizations, they must learn to understand and make sense of their new surroundings, which is done through communication (Louis, 1980). The method by which this sense-making occurs is known as organizational socialization. Socialization is the process by which the newcomer acquires the attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge required to participate as an organizational member (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Socialization is critical in providing newcomers with the information necessary to help them get up to speed and contribute to the organization's goals (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). More specifically, organizational socialization is considered to be a component of the assimilation process defined as the way of teaching those ongoing behaviors and cognitive processes by which individuals join, become integrated into, and exit an organization (Jablin, 2001). Jablin described assimilation as "the processes by which individuals become integrated into the culture of an organization" (p. 755). Rousseau (1990) suggests that the behavioral norms encouraging employees to follow the values of the organization will be driven by an organization's espoused values communicated by supervisors, coworkers, and the organization itself. These values, according to Rousseau (1990), are "the preferred states that are often manifested in observable behaviors" (p. 159).

The success of an organization in terms of its productivity, employee job satisfaction, and minimal turnover rate (organizational commitment) depends primarily on the effective communication practices of the organization (Downs & Hazen, 1977). The behaviors employees' display in the workplace are best understood as a reflection of the organizational communication practices, such as those utilized during employee socialization (Hargie, Dickson, & Tourish, 1999). More specific to the current study, the procedures, rules, and policies for appropriate behaviors of newcomers from Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa are the result of the communication interactions that take place during the socialization of the organizational newcomers. Since communication is thought to be "the central binding force that permits coordination among people and allows for organized behavior" (Myers & Myers, 1982, p. 2) it could be reasoned that the communication interactions that take place during socialization serve to shape its members attitudes and perceptions of the values and practices of the organization. It is also reasoned here that newcomers from Mexico on an H-1B visa socialized into a corporate culture that clearly communicates its values about teamwork and task knowledge would likely development more positive attitudes toward the workplace than those newcomers socialized into a corporate culture of secrecy and uncertainty.

Despite the number of conceptualizations of newcomer socialization (see Moreland & Levine, 1982) the current study utilized that offered by Haueter et al (2003). The newcomer socialization process involves three domains: the organization, the group, and the job/task (Haueter et al, 2003). Relevant to the current study, and mentioned earlier, are task and work group socialization due to their relationship with the culture of Mexico being collectivistic (work group socialization) and high in uncertainty avoidance (task socialization). According to Haueter et al (2003), work group and job/task socialization are two key

factors to the integration of newcomers into the organization. Task socialization entails the newcomer acquiring information about the job and understanding the tasks for which he or she had been hired, whereas work group socialization involves the newcomer learning the particulars about the work group and the behaviors associated with the group's rules, goals, and values. Both forms of socialization appear relevant here due to their congruency with the cultural factors of collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, both prevalent in the culture of Mexico. Additionally, the examination of socialization types/forms, such as work group and task have a practical interest to organizations in that the effective socialization of newcomers, especially those from Mexico with an H-1B visa, ultimately saves organizations time, money, and the retention of newcomers.

### **Role Ambiguity**

Role ambiguity is defined as "deficient or uncertain information about role behaviors available to a given organizational position" (King & King, 1990, p. 49) and represents an individual's feelings of uncertainty regarding their organizational role requirements and/or the means by which they should fulfill them (Organ & Greene, 1974; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). At the same time, role ambiguity may be avoided by gaining information about expected role behaviors through effective communication (Dougherty & Pritchard, 1985; Rizzo et al., 1970). In many cases, role ambiguity can be thought of as an organizational stressor (Ashforth & Saks, 1996) or as a main component of role stress (Bravo, Peiro, Rodriguez, & Whitely, 2003).

It follows, therefore, that those who perceive role clarity (through efficacious communication during socialization) do not experience role ambiguity, and as the definition suggests, clarity of role expectations may be gained through the attainment of information about expected role behaviors through both task and work group socialization. Such information enables newcomers to create a sense of meaning to their role (Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Weick, 1979), particularly expected role performance. Role ambiguity is considered to be an unwanted psychological state (King & King, 1990), and is problematic for organizations because the resulting unfavorable outcomes such as employee stress, decreased performance, and poor relationships with superiors, combined, are likely to lead to poor organizational performance and turnover (Miles & Perreault, 1976). Prior research has demonstrated that role ambiguity had a significant negative effect on employee job satisfaction (Grant, Cravens, Low, & Moncrief, 2001) and employee performance (Tuten & Neidermeyer, 2004). Additionally, given the trend in organizations toward increased complexity and ambiguity of work activities (e.g., Howard, 1995), and the importance of role clarity to overall job performance (e.g., Jackson & Schuler, 1985; Tubre & Collins, 2000), one variable that may be a result of inadequate socialization is the extent of role ambiguity experienced by newcomers. This may be especially relevant here due to the cultural influence associated with citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. In this case, failure to adequately socialize this population into their work group and task may lead to role ambiguity. Therefore, the following hypotheses were advanced:

H1: There will be a negative relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their role ambiguity.

H2: There will be a negative relationship between the work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their role ambiguity.

Another negative outcome of interest here that results from ineffective newcomer socialization is work alienation (see Madlock & Chory, 2014).

### **Work Alienation**

Work alienation is defined as a general cognitive state of psychological disconnection from work (Kanungo, 1979). The study of work alienation began with Hegel (1910) then by Marx (1964). According to Hegel, alienation involves a state of separation that when viewed from the context of work involves the separation of work from job and organization and is not a desirable state. According to Marx (1964), work alienation represented a loss of individuality or separation of the individual from their task and group. It has been hypothesized that worker alienation results in the loss of an individual's autonomy,

decision-making, and communication with others (Kanungo, 1979, 1982a; Mottaz, 1981). In this environment, employees may experience feelings of separation and dissatisfaction (Mottaz, 1981). Work alienation has also been found to be negatively related to organizational commitment and job involvement (Hirschfeld & Field, 2000). Thus, inadequate newcomer task and work group socialization may create conditions that alienate workers, especially if the newcomers are from a different culture.

The association here between work alienation and workers from Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa revolves around their adequate task (related to high uncertainty culture) and work group socialization (related to a collectivistic culture). It could be extrapolated that the inadequate task and work group socialization of newcomers from Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa could leave the newcomers feeling disconnected from their work group and task, as well as a reduction in communication with others resulting in a loss of commitment to the organization. As a result, work alienation was considered here and the following hypotheses were advanced:

H3: There will be a negative relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their work alienation.

H4: There will be a negative relationship between the work group socialization citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their work alienation.

Another outcome of interest to the current study is that of organizational commitment. It is reasoned that task and work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa will be related to their organizational commitment. Along with the cost associated with recruiting and hiring a new employee from Mexico on and H-1B visa, coupled with the time and money it takes to socialize that employee, retention is of extreme value, therefore; organizational commitment was included here.

### **Organizational Commitment**

Although several definitions of organizational commitment exist it is best defined as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization as well as the willingness to exert effort and remain in the organization” (p. 87, Ferris & Aranya, 1983). Prior research found strong negative relationships between organizational commitment and levels of absenteeism and turnover (Steers, 1977) and also indicated strong positive relationship to leadership (Morris & Sherman, 1981), information adequacy (Bruning & Snyder, 1983), and job performance (Cohen, 1992). More specific to this study is the work of Wiener (1982) who added that the attachment an employee feels toward an organization is based on the identification the employee develops toward the organization during socialization, which in turn, influences the newcomer’s level of commitment. As previously mentioned, the value of examining organizational commitment here is the cost associated with recruiting, hiring, socializing and the retention of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. For example, it was also mentioned earlier that it could cost in the tens-of-thousands of dollars for each employee just to file an I-129 petition. This fee, coupled with the costs associated with recruiting and socialization; the retention of this group of newcomers (citizens of Mexico working in the U.S.) is at minimum a fiscal concern. Further, prior research indicated that organizational commitment was found to be an important positive outcome of socialization (Madlock & Chory, 2014; Wiener, 1982). Therefore, it could be reasoned here that adequate task and group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H1-B visa would result in employee retention and commitment. Thus, the following hypotheses were advanced:

H5: There will be a positive relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their organizational commitment.

H6: There will be a positive relationship between the work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B work visa and their organizational commitment.

To this point, the hypotheses predicted correlational outcomes, however one area that still needs to be examined is which form of socialization (task or work group) would be the greatest predictor of role ambiguity, work alienation, and organizational commitment. Therefore, the following research question was advanced:

RQ1: Which dimension of socialization, task or work group will serve as the greatest predictor of the role ambiguity, work alienation, and organizational commitment of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa?

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

Participants were 241 working adults living in Mexico working in the U.S. on a visa ( $n = 140$ , male and  $n = 101$ , female) from a variety of organizations, whose average tenure at their current job was ( $M = 8$ ,  $SD = 3.5$ ) months, which met the criteria set by the current study of one year or less. Overall work experience for the current sample ranged from 1-35 ( $M = 6.80$ ,  $SD = 6.30$ ) and ages ranged from 24-61 ( $M = 32.71$ ,  $SD = 12.47$ ). Participants reported working for a variety of organizations including, education (8.3%), government (13.3%), service (30.2%), high tech (14.6%), manufacturing (12.1%), civil service (1.2%), and other (20.3%).

### **Procedures**

There were two surveys developed for the current study, one in English and one in Spanish. The reason for two surveys is that participants may feel more comfortable completing the survey in Spanish rather than English. The Spanish survey used for the current study was originally written in English, translated into Spanish by a bi-lingual Professor and back translated into English by another bi-lingual Professor at the same university to ensure that no meaning was lost during the translation. The sample for this study was citizens of Mexico with H-1B visas working in the U.S. The surveys were distributed by the author throughout Texas border cities along the U.S. Mexico border and undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in communication and business courses at a mid-size South Texas University. The students were instructed to deliver the questionnaire to citizens of Mexico with an H-1B visa who were working full time in the U.S. To ensure that the participants were working adults with an H-1B via the participants were to complete a personal information sheet attached to the survey that included their name, the name of their organization, and contact information. Participants were also asked to return the completed questionnaire including the information sheet in the postage paid, addressed envelope provided. Each sheet of every survey was given an identifying number so the contact information could be linked to the corresponding survey. The personal information sheets were removed from the surveys and the verification process took place, where the author attempted to contact each participant. Only completed questionnaires that were verifiable were used in the study. The questionnaire used in the study was comprised of a variety of established instruments measuring employees' perceptions of their task and work group socialization and their role ambiguity, work alienation, and organizational commitment.

### **Measures**

Task and Work Group Socialization was measured by the Newcomer Socialization Questionnaire (NSQ) (Haueter, Macan, & Winter, 2003). *Task and Work Socialization* items were measured on a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The *Work Group Socialization* measure consists of 12 items inquiring about newcomers' work group knowledge and work group role-behavior knowledge (e.g., "I know my work group's objectives" and "I know my work group role"). The *Task Socialization* measure consists of 11-item scale inquiring about newcomers' job knowledge and job role-behavior knowledge (e.g., "I understand how to perform the tasks that make up my job"). According to Haueter et al. (2003), the task and work group socializations instruments were found to have reliabilities ranging from .88 to .92. Cronbach's coefficient alpha in the current study for task socialization was .92 and .94 for work group socialization.

Organizational Commitment was measured using the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979). The items were measured on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. According to Barge and

Schlueter (1988), internal reliability coefficients for the OCQ ranged from .82 to .92. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the current study was .82.

Work Alienation was measured by 10 items adapted from a 12-item measure developed by Maddi, Kobasa, and Hoover (1979). Items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Two items from the original measure, (i.e., one item concerning a career dealing with matters of life and death and one item concerning a more dangerous job being better) were deemed inappropriate for the study and omitted. Five of the 10 remaining items were altered slightly to improve readability in the work setting. Prior research has shown sufficient scale reliability of .80 (Hirschfeld, & Field, 2000). Cronbach's alpha for the current study was .87.

Role Ambiguity was measured using the 6-item Role Ambiguity Scale developed by Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970). Smith, Tisak, and Schmieder (1993) reported alpha coefficients of .73, .80, and .73 across three different organizational samples. Employees responded to each item using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the current study was .82.

## RESULTS

Hypothesis 1 predicted that there would be a negative relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their role ambiguity. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, task socialization was found to be negatively related to role ambiguity  $r = -.38, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported (see Table 1 for all the correlational analyses).

**TABLE 1**  
**MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND CORRELATIONS AMONG STUDY VARIABLES**

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Work Group Socialization	64	12.3	---				
2. Task Socialization	47.7	5.0	.17**	---			
3. Organizational Commitment	51.6	7.9	.40**	.19**	---		
4. Role Ambiguity	16.8	5.3	-.52**	-.38**	-.44**	---	
5. Work Alienation	28.2	9.9	-.26**	-.23**	-.60**	.40**	---
Note: ** statistically significant at $p < .001$ , * statistically significant at $p < .01$							

Hypothesis 2 predicted that there would be a negative relationship between the work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their role ambiguity. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, work group socialization was found to be negatively related to role ambiguity  $r = -.52, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that there would be a negative relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their work alienation. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, task socialization was found to be negatively related to work alienation  $r = -.23, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that there would be a negative relationship between the work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their work alienation. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, task socialization was found to be negatively related to work alienation  $r = -.26, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that there would be a positive relationship between the task socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their organizational commitment. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, task socialization was found to be positively related to organizational commitment  $r = .19, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that there would be a positive relationship between the work group socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and their organizational commitment. Results of Pearson's correlational analysis indicated a significant relationship between the variables. Specifically, work group socialization was found to be positively related to organizational commitment  $r = .40, p < .001$ . As a result, the hypothesis was supported.

Research question 1 sought to answer the question, which dimension of socialization, task or work group would serve as the greatest predictor of the role ambiguity, work alienation, and organizational commitment of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa? Using multiple regression analysis, each criterion variable was regressed on a linear combination of the two predictor variables. The enter method was used in which both predictor variables, work group and task socialization, were entered into the model together. Regression analysis indicated that work group socialization was a greater negative predictor of role ambiguity and work alienation, and a positive predictor of organizational commitment than was task socialization. Table 2 contains all the regression analyses.

**TABLE 2**  
**REGRESSION ANALYSIS INVOLVING WORK GROUP AND TASK SOCIALIZATION AND OUTCOME VARIABLES**

	B	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	t	p
<b>Work Group Socialization</b>					
Organizational Commitment	.228	.16	.35	.190	.001
Role Ambiguity	-.203	.36	-.47	-8.90	.001
Work Alienation	-.185	.13	-.23	-3.70	.001
<b>Task Socialization</b>					
Organizational Commitment	.211	.16	.06	.092	.136
Role Ambiguity	-.317	.36	-.29	-5.62	.001
Work Alienation	-.383	.13	-.19	-3.12	.001

## DISCUSSION

The overarching goal of the current study was to extend research and provide practitioners with practical information by examining the socialization of citizens from Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and the influence task and workgroup socialization had on work related outcomes. This study serves as a preliminary analysis of the socialization of this group of newcomers working in the U.S. through a cultural lens. The interest in this group of workers centers on the time and money companies incur as a result of hiring citizens of Mexico in the U.S. on an H-1B visa and the value of socialization on their work-related attitudes and retention. Through a broader lens, the current study sought to supply practitioners with practical information designed to assist with the socialization of newcomers from various countries working in the US on an H-1B visa by examining the influence of culture.

Specific to the current study and the first findings of interest indicated that both work group and task socialization were positively related to and served as positive predictors of organizational commitment and were negatively related to and negative predictors of role ambiguity, and work alienation. These findings have practical value in that practitioners need to be aware of the positive impact that task and work group socialization have on citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. The findings



shed light on the value of task and work group socialization on newcomers from Mexico through the reduction of uncertainty associated with task socialization and the promotion of community as a result of work group socialization.

It appears that both task and work group socialization had a positive impact on the organizational outcomes of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. whereas, the same two forms of socialization may not have yielded the same results with workers from another culture. This finding indicates that not only is the socialization process of value (see Jablin, 2001) but the types/forms of socialization and the culture of the newcomer are also factors to consider. These findings serve as a starting point to begin to better understand how to adapt training programs to the newcomer and make sure these programs are modifiable to serve this growing population in the U.S. workforce. Organizations may not fully benefit from the dollars spent on recruiting, government and legal fees, and the socialization process itself because of inadequate socialization practices. Meeting the cultural expectations of employees through the socialization process (using the correct type/form of socialization) may be a key aspect of socializing those from another culture. Further, these findings indicate that the one size fits all form of socialization is no longer the appropriate way to introduce newcomers to the organization, especially those from a different culture. Given that the current study is a preliminary investigation of workers in the U.S. on an H-1B visa, it is possible that similar cultural considerations may be applicable to the socialization of newcomers from other cultures as well.

Additionally, the current study found that work group socialization was a greater positive predictor of organizational commitment and a negative predictor of work alienation and role ambiguity than was task socialization. Organizations that socialize newcomers with a focus on acquiring information about the job and adherence to the tasks for which the newcomer had been hired, may want to consider the inclusion of work group socialization, especially with the workforce from Mexico working in the U.S. These findings are important because it suggests that perhaps task socialization is less of a factor than work group socialization and offers direction to organizations when developing training programs. Also, from a cultural perspective, perhaps newcomers from Mexico are able to learn more details about the task for which they were hired than specific details about the group in which they will work. It is possible, that being high in uncertainty avoidance newcomers took it upon themselves to examine the details of their upcoming task prior to starting their employment in the U.S. This explanation involves a level of anticipatory socialization engaged in by the newcomers. The anticipatory socialization of this population was not assessed here but will be discussed further in the limitations section of this study. However, what we do know is that examining socialization through a cultural lens should be a practice when devising training programs for newcomers from Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa.

As mentioned earlier, the current study was grounded in Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) by Burgoon (1978), suggesting that when an action, such as the process of socialization does not meet the expectations of individuals, they experience discomfort and dissatisfaction. The contrary is also true, when expectations are met, individuals experience comfort, satisfaction and from this study, organizational commitment. It could also be reasoned that by socializing newcomers in a fashion that is congruent with their native culture meets their expectations and leads to positive outcomes.

### **Limitations**

Although the research presented in this study demonstrated significant results with respect to the socialization of citizens of Mexico working in the U.S. on an H-1B visa, it is not without limitations. One such limitation involves the newcomers' level of anticipatory socialization prior to entering the organization. For instance, a newcomer who has extensive anticipatory socialization into the organization (i.e., may know individuals working for the organization) may start their new job with a greater level of socialization than newcomers who have little to no anticipatory socialization. Therefore, it is difficult to measure the actual influence of work group and task socialization based on differing pre-entry levels of socialization. Future researchers may want to administer a preliminary socialization measure upon entry into the organization by the newcomer and then follow up with a questionnaire at approximately 8 months to accurately assess the difference between pre and post socialization levels. Further, it also may be of

interest for future researchers to include a qualitative component to the current study. It would be interesting to examine the reasons (in their own words) well educated citizens of Mexico give for working in the U.S., and how they perceived the communication that took place during their socialization into U.S. organizations.

## REFERENCES

- Ashforth, B. E., & Saks, A. M. (1996). Socialization tactics: Longitudinal effects on newcomer adjustment. *Academy of Management Journal*, *39*, 149-178. doi.org/10.1177/0149206310384630
- Barge, K. J., & Schlueter, D. W. (1988). A critical evaluation of organizational commitment and identification. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *2*, 116-133.
- Bhattacharya, G., & Schoppelrey, S. L. (2004). Preimmigration beliefs of life success, postimmigration experiences, and acculturative stress: South Asian immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Immigrant Health*, *6*, 83-92.
- Bowen, D. E., & Lawler, E. E. (1992). The empowerment of service workers: What, why, how and when. *Sloan Management Review*, *33*, 31-39.
- Bravo, M. J., Peirp, J. M., Rodriguez, I., & Whitely, W. T. (2003). Social antecedents of the role stress and career enhancing strategies of newcomers to organizations: A longitudinal study. *Work & Stress*, *17*, 195-217.
- Bruning, N. S., & Snyder, R. A. (1983). Sex and position as predictors of organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Journal*, *26*, 484-491.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2002). Number of jobs held, labor market activity, and earnings growth among younger baby boomers: Results from more than two decades of a longitudinal survey. Retrieved April 2, 2007, from <http://www.bls.gov/nls/nlsy79r19.pdf>
- Burgoon, J. K. (1978). A communication model of personal space violation: Explication and an initial test. *Human Communication Research*, *4*, 129-142.
- Cohen, A. (1992). Antecedents of organizational commitment across occupational groups: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *13*, 539-558.
- Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review*, *13*, 471-482.
- Dougherty, T. W., & Pritchard, R. D. (1985). The measurement of role variables: Exploratory examination of a new approach. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *35*, 141-155.
- Downs, C. W., & Hazen, D. (1977). A factor analytic study of communication satisfaction. *Journal of Business Communication*, *14*, 63-73.
- Ferris, K. R., & Aranya, N. (1983). A comparison of two organizational commitment scales. *Personnel Psychology*, *36*, 87-98.
- Grant, K., Cravens, D. W., Low, G. S., & Moncrief, W. C. (2001). The role of satisfaction with territory design on the motivation, attitudes, and work outcomes of salespeople. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *29*, 165-178.
- Hargie, O., Dickson, & Tourish, D. (1999). *Communication in management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Haueter, J. A., Hoff-Macan, T., & Winterc, J. (2003). Measurement of newcomer socialization: Construct validation of a multidimensional scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *63*, 20-39.
- Hegel, G. W. F. (1910). *Phenomenology of the mind*. Translated by J. B. Baillie. New York: Macmillan.
- Hirschfeld, R. R., & Field, H. S. (2000). Work centrality and work alienation: distinct aspects of a general commitment to work. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*, 789-800.
- Hofstede, G. (1983). The cultural relativity of organizational practices and theories. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *27*, 75-89.
- Howard, A. (1995). *The changing nature of work*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Jablin, F. M. (1987). Organizational entry, assimilation, and exit. In F. M. Jablin, L. L. Putnam, K. H. Roberts, & L. W. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational communication* (pp. 679-740). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Jablin, F. M. (2001). Organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/exit. In F. M. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 732-818). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Jackson, S. E., & Schuler, R. S. (1985). A meta-analysis and conceptual critique of research on role ambiguity and role conflict in work settings. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *36*, 16-78.
- Kanungo, R. N. (1979). The concept of alienation and involvement revisited. *Psychological Bulletin*, *86*, 119-138.
- Kanungo, R. N. (1982a). *Work alienation: An integrative approach*. New York: Praeger.
- King, L. A., King, D. W. (1990). Role conflict and role ambiguity: A critical assessment of construct validity. *Psychology Bulletin*, *107*, 48-64.
- Kras, E. S. (1995). *Management in two cultures*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Louis, M. R. (1980). Surprise and sense making: What newcomers experience in entering unfamiliar organizational settings. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *64*, 226-251.
- Maddi, S. R., Kobasa, S. C., & Hoover, M. (1979). An alienation test. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, *19*, 73-76.
- Madlock, P. E., & Chory, R. M. (2014). Socialization as predictors of employee outcomes. *Communication Studies*, *65*, 56-71. doi: 10.1080/10510974.2013.811429
- Madlock, P. E. & Sexton, S. (2015). An application of Motivating Language Theory in Mexican organizations. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *03*, 1-18. doi: 10.1177/2329488415572783
- Marx, K. (1964). *Early writings*. Edited and translated by T. B. Bottomore. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Miles, R. H., & Perreault, W. D. (1976). Organizational role conflict: Its antecedents and consequences. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *17*, 19-44.
- Moreland, R. L., & Levine, J. M. (1982). Socialization in small groups: Temporal changes in individual-group relationships. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental psychology* (pp. 137-192). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Morris, J. H., & Sherman, J. D. (1981). Generalizability of an organizational commitment model. *Academy of Management Journal*, *24*, 512-526.
- Mottaz, C. J. (1981). Some determinants of work alienation. *Sociological Quarterly*, *22*, 515-529.
- Mowday, R. T., Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *14*, 234-247.
- Myers, T., & Myers, E. (1982). *Managing by communication: An organizational approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Negy, C., Schwartz, S., & Reig-Ferrer, A. (2009). Violated expectations and acculturative stress among U.S. Hispanic immigrants. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology American Psychological Association*, *15*, 255-264. DOI: 10.1037/a0015109
- Organ, D. W., & Greene, C. N. (1974). Role ambiguity, locus of control, and work satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *59*, 101-102.
- Rizzo, J. R., House, R. J., & Lirzman, S. I. (1970). Role conflict and ambiguity in complex organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *15*, 150-163.
- Rousseau, D. (1990). Assessing organizational culture: The case for multiple methods. In B. Schneider (Ed.), *Organizational climate and culture* (pp. 153-192). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, C. S., Tisak, J., & Schmieder, R. A. (1993). The measurement properties of the role conflict and role ambiguity scales: A review and extension of the empirical research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *14*, 37-48.
- Steers, R. M. (1977). Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *22*, 46-56.

- Tubre, T. C., & Collins, J. M. (2000). Jackson and Schuler (1985) revisited: A meta-analysis of the relationships between role ambiguity, role conflict, and job performance. *Journal of Management*, 26, 155-169.
- Tuten, T. L., & Neidermeyer, P. E. (2004). Performance, satisfaction and turnover in call centers: The effects of stress and optimism. *Journal of Business Resources*, 57, 26-34.
- U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Visas Division (2016). FY 2016 Nonimmigrant Visas Issued Fiscal Year 2016. Retrieved March 20, 2017, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/Non-Immigrant-Statistics/NIVDetailTables/FY16%20NIV%20Detail%20Table.pdf>.
- Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 1, pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing*. New York: Random House.
- Wiener, Y. (1982). Commitment in organizations: A normative view. *Academy of Management Review*, 7, 418-428.