

Navigating Uncharted Waters: Newcomer Socialization Through the Lens of Stress Theory

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Although the stress and socialization literatures have flourished over the past several decades, they have done so largely independently, and our understanding of the cost of stress to organizations in the form of newcomer turnover, lowered adjustment, and the health and well-being of newcomers is largely unknown. This review takes an explicitly newcomer-centric perspective toward the socialization process by examining newcomer experiences through the lens of popular models of work stress, including the job demands-resources model, the transactional theory of stress, and the challenge-hindrance stressor framework. In doing so, we identify individual and work-related factors that contribute to the experience of stress for newcomers and point to ways in which organizational and employee-driven inputs can assist in building and acquiring important resources needed to cope with the demands faced in a new work role. In addition, we offer a framework that incorporates individual experiences and behaviors as they relate to newcomer stress in the context of socialization. This framework delineates the newcomer stress appraisal process and describes the impact these appraisals have on the experience of stress or engagement for new employees as well as the behaviors that can be expected in reaction to those states. Through this process, our review highlights natural points for integration between stress and socialization research and identifies potential areas for future investigation that leverage understanding of work stress to expand socialization theory and practice.

Keywords: *organizational socialization; onboarding; newcomers; work stress; stress appraisal*

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Organizational socialization scholars examine the process by which newcomers successfully navigate the uncertain and uncharted waters of a new job and effectively adjust to the demands of their new work environment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) estimates that the average baby boomer changes jobs 10 times in his or her working life, and future generations are expected to do so even more frequently. Inherent in these transitions is the assumption that entering a new working environment is stressful. Accordingly, organizational socialization has been defined, at its most fundamental level, as a process of reducing the stress of uncertainty for newcomers so they may feel confident and able to successfully contribute to their new organizations (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

Notwithstanding this definition, our current understanding of the role of stress in the socialization process—including the roles of both short-term stressors and long-term outcomes of the stress process—is lacking, as these two literatures have largely developed independently with only a few explicit empirical connections having been established between them. This is a significant gap in the current socialization literature as work-related stress has been found to contribute to lower physical and psychological health for employees, reduced performance, poorer job attitudes, and increased turnover (M. A. Griffin & Clarke, 2011). On the whole, work-related stress costs organizations in the United States upwards of \$300 billion per year (Rosch, 2001); yet the costs to organizations in the form of newcomer turnover, thwarted newcomer adjustment, and lost productivity are largely unknown. Furthermore, newcomer socialization studies have tended to focus on newcomer attitudes and workplace behaviors, neglecting effects on newcomer well-being and making the relationship between newcomer socialization processes on newcomers' health and well-being even less clear.

To be sure, some studies have examined constructs borrowed from the stress literature, such as role ambiguity, anxiety, and burnout (e.g., T. D. Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999; Kammeyer-Mueller, Simon, & Rich, 2012; Thomas & Lankau, 2009). However, these efforts have been piecemeal and diffuse—the exception rather than the rule in socialization research—making it difficult to develop a comprehensive understanding of the impact of stress as it relates to socialization and nearly impossible to provide useful, evidence-based guidance to practitioners looking to mitigate stress for new employees. Nevertheless, a small but growing number of studies have revealed significant relationships between newcomer experiences and stress-related constructs (e.g., Bravo, Peiró, Rodríguez, & Whitely, 2003; M. C. Jones, Smith, & Johnston, 2005; Liang & Hsieh, 2008; Nelson, Quick, & Eakin, 1988; Nelson & Sutton, 1990).

The need to investigate the role of stress in the socialization process has long been stated, but progress has been slow. More than 25 years ago, Nelson pointed out that *no* empirical studies had addressed the socialization process from a stress perspective; she called for an integration of these lines of research, stating that “an appreciation of what newcomers face in terms of demands is essential input for the effective design of socialization programmes” (1987: 312). More recently, Saks and Gruman (2012) have argued that understanding socialization from a stress-oriented perspective is important. We address these calls because although there remains a relative paucity of empirical, integrative work in this area, we believe that a comprehensive review of the socialization literature through the lens of current models of stress can provide valuable insights into conceptual overlaps and potential areas for future investigation. The time is ripe for such a review as there is increasing interest in the socialization process and expanding scholarly interest in the role of stress (see Figure S1 in the supplemental material available online).

Thus, the primary goals of the current review are three-fold. First, we aim to enhance our understanding of the role of stress in the socialization process by focusing on socialization from the newcomer's perspective. That is, we consider the experience of the newcomer in light of current models of work stress in order to elucidate how stressors might be appraised and understood by newcomers. Specifically, we draw on three current theories of work-related stress—the job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001), the transactional theory of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), and the challenge-hindrance stressor framework (Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004; Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000) in order to introduce a model of newcomer appraisal and establish a more comprehensive understanding of stress and socialization.

Second, we identify individual and work-related factors that may serve as resources for newcomers, providing a means to cope with and effectively buffer against the deleterious effects of stress (Demerouti et al., 2001; Hobfoll, 2001). In particular, we highlight parallels between adjustment indicators in the socialization literature and current conceptualizations of job and psychological resources important to the stress process, discussing how such categorization and conceptualization can provide insight into how resources contribute to newcomers' experiences. Relatedly, we explore how organizational and employee-driven inputs (e.g., organizational tactics and newcomer proactive behaviors) can positively affect newcomers' experiences by helping to build and acquire resources.

Finally, throughout the review, we offer a number of future research directions aimed at advancing our understanding of the role of stress in the socialization process and summarize these suggestions at the conclusion of the article. However, it is important to note that our goal is not to review the entire body of organizational socialization research, nor is it to review the entire body of stress research. Rather, we strove to include representative and key studies on the basis of our comprehensive review of the empirical literatures. In the end, 106 articles were reviewed and serve to demonstrate meaningful links between the socialization and stress literatures, as well as highlight potential insights and areas for future investigation. A comprehensive list of our search and inclusion criteria, the studies reviewed, as well as relevant supplemental tables and summary information are provided in the online supplemental material.

Overview of Organizational Socialization and Stress

In order to understand the implications of viewing organizational socialization through the lens of stress models, it is important to first understand what we know about how the two literatures currently inform one another. To this end, we provide an overview of both literatures starting with the concept of uncertainty. It is widely acknowledged that the organizational socialization process is a means for reducing uncertainty related to entry into a new job. Berger and Calabrese's (1975) uncertainty reduction theory is an often-cited socialization framework. From this perspective, newcomers go through a process of information gathering and sense making in order to assess their fit with the organizational environment and garner insight into expected attitudes and behaviors (Louis, 1980). Successful socialization provides opportunities for learning and facilitates clarity around expectations related to work tasks, appropriate behavior, and cultural norms within the organization (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Accordingly, a primary goal of organizational socialization is to provide information to new employees that assists

in the learning process and effectively reduces uncertainty (Klein & Heuser, 2008) and, by implication, stress (Wang, Kammeyer-Mueller, Liu, & Li, *in press*). Indeed, organizational socialization is often assessed as the extent to which one has a clear sense of one's role and can demonstrate a working knowledge of the organization's history, language, and people (Chao et al.; Klein & Heuser).

Uncertainty associated with new tasks, roles, and social relationships is innately stressful (Jackson, Schuler, & Vredenburg, 1987) and is one reason that newcomers may fail to develop positive attitudes toward their new organization. Indeed, a well-established body of research has demonstrated that role stressors (i.e., role conflict and role ambiguity) are meaningful indicators of effective socialization and predictors of subsequent employee attitudes and behavior (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). Consequently, in addition to providing information that is relevant to task performance and bringing new employees up to speed from an operational standpoint, uncertainty reduction is an important means by which stress is reduced for newcomers.

While there is no doubt that increased knowledge and understanding of one's work role is important for adjustment and performance, other scholars have taken a more direct approach to the explanation of associations between role stressors and adjustment—one that presumes that the experience of role stress causes strain that impedes performance. That is, adjustment, be it attitudes or performance, is negatively affected by the experience of either physical or psychological strain associated with uncertainty. An important implication of this latter perspective is that models of organizational socialization that focus on role stressors at the exclusion of other potentially important stressors may be failing to address other demands that have implications for employee well-being and adjustment. Recognizing this perspective, Nelson (1987) argued that newcomers are at risk of experiencing a number of task, role, and interpersonal demands. She asserted that socialization research would benefit from taking an expanded approach to the study of demands faced by newcomers, including a focus beyond role stressors.

Despite this call to action so many years ago, studies that directly apply a stress perspective to socialization-related phenomena remain scarce. Our review of the literature identified only a handful of studies that explicitly apply theories of work stress to newcomer experiences. While these studies indicate that the experience of stress and burnout is highly relevant to the socialization process experienced by newcomers, these studies vary considerably in how both socialization and stress are operationalized and what theoretical explanations are employed. For instance, Kleinman, Siegel, and Eckstein (2002) framed socialization as an indicator of organizational learning and argued that access to team members facilitated increased knowledge about the work environment and a sense of social support that reduced burnout for new employees in their sample. Similarly, Thomas and Lankau (2009) used an uncertainty reduction framework to argue that socialization represented a degree of understanding of the work context (i.e., the organizational culture, politics, etc.) that reduced role stress and subsequently burnout. Taris and Feij (2004) used the demand-control model (Karasek, 1979) to show that high strain jobs impeded newcomer learning. Liang and Hsieh (2008) showed that an understanding of people and organizational goals was negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and that performance proficiency was positively related to feelings of personal accomplishment (the opposite of professional inefficacy, one dimension of burnout).

Importantly, these studies have pointed out the need to better understand which aspects of socialization are central for mitigating newcomer stress (e.g., knowledge, learning, social support, etc.), what types of demands newcomers face when entering a new organization, and how the socialization process can serve to buffer the stressor-strain process for new employees. Building on these questions, in the following sections, we take an explicitly person-centric and stress-oriented approach to understanding the relationships between organizational socialization phenomena and outcomes. In order to guide this discussion, we propose a conceptual model of newcomer stress appraisal that provides potential explanations for current socialization findings in relation to newcomer stress and offers a framework to guide future research on this important intersection.

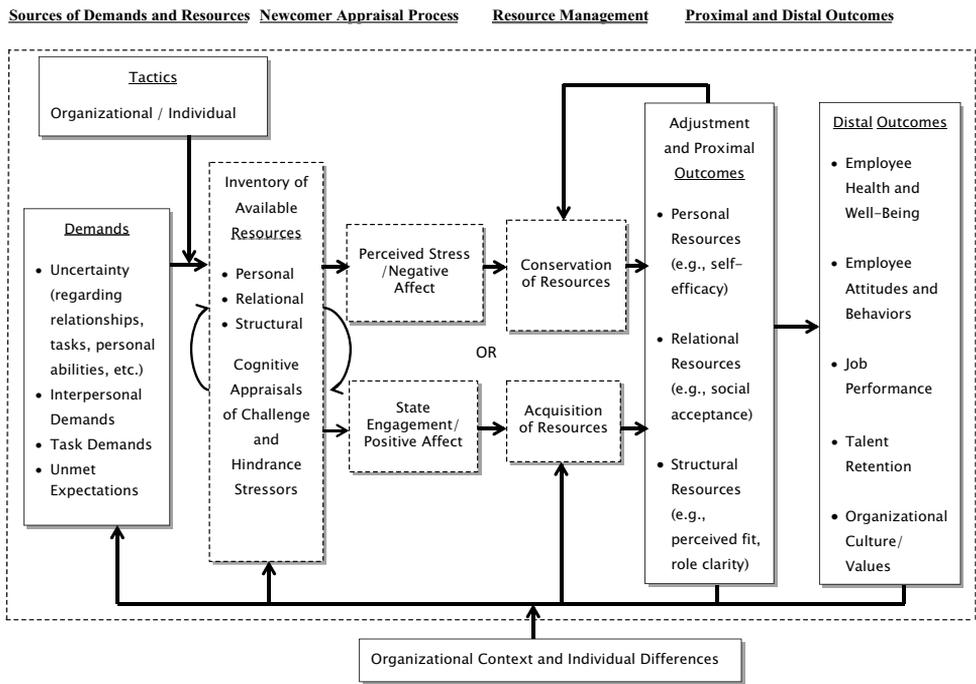
Model of Socialization Through the Lens of the Newcomer Stress Appraisal Process

Figure 1 represents our integration and summary of the socialization process, which is also described in overview here. The model begins by acknowledging that the organizational context, such as the industry in which an organization competes, as well as individual differences, such as newcomers' prior work experiences, influence this process. More specifically, following Chao (2012), we note that organizational context and practices (e.g., Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Klein & Polin, 2012; Louis, Posner, & Powell, 1983) and individual differences, such as proactive personality (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003), Big Five personality factors (e.g., Gruman & Saks, 2011; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000; Wang, Zhan, McCune, & Truxillo, 2011), and newer concepts such as trait curiosity (Harrison, Sluss, & Ashforth, 2011), are important precursors to organizational and individual tactics and are likely to affect other aspects of the model, including the cognitive appraisal process and experience of stress for employees, as well as socialization outcomes themselves, and so are included in our model.

The model continues with sources of demands and resources. According to the JD-R model, strain results from the mismatch between job demands and job resources. Demands refer to those aspects of the job that require sustained effort, whereas resources refer to aspects of the job that stimulate individual growth or reduce job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001). Integrating influential models of stress research that have emphasized the important role of these components (Demerouti et al.; Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014; Hobfoll, 1989), we conceptualize organizational socialization tactics as well as individual proactive tactics *both* as potential sources of demands and resources for newcomers. In turn, these demands and resources are expected to either exacerbate or buffer the relationship between the experience of stressful circumstances and subsequent appraisal.

The sources of demands and resources, depicted in our model as tactics, are proposed to influence, via moderation, subsequent newcomer cognitive appraisals in response to demands. Akin to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) primary and secondary appraisal (as depicted in the model by dual curved arrows), this process includes newcomers taking inventory of resources available to them and using this information to determine the extent to which they have the available resources to meet the demand. Some research suggests that in order to be effective, resources should be appropriately matched to the demands faced by individuals (Cohen & McKay, 1984). Thus, although not explicit in the figure, our model

Figure 1
Model of Socialization Through the Lens of the Newcomer Stress Appraisal Process



presumes that when employees take inventory of their available resources, they consider the extent to which these resources are applicable in meeting demands.

On the basis of this appraisal process, and consistent with theorizing from the work stress literature (reviewed in detail below), we assume that newcomers will either perceive the demand as a hindrance, leading to the experience of both physical and psychological stress and prompting them to take steps to conserve resources, or they will understand the demand to be an opportunity that can be overcome and will engage in meeting the demand, thereby enabling the acquisition of other resources (Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Halbesleben et al., 2014). That is, we assume individuals are motivated to protect, maintain, and acquire resources and will engage in specific actions to effectively manage those resources (Hobfoll, 1989). For example, if newcomers perceive that a company’s rules and regulations are in place to get employees in trouble, they may begin to put in as little effort as possible toward trying new things or asking questions. This will conserve the newcomers’ resources as less effort will be expended figuring out how to get things done within the organization and more energy will be expended in simply avoiding trouble. Conversely, if newcomers perceive that the stressors are challenging in nature, they may be motivated by this and choose to engage to an even greater extent.

We posit that these resource management decisions of conserving or investing one’s resources will influence newcomer adjustment and proximal outcomes, which in turn will

influence distal outcomes as identified in the literature. Proximal outcomes are indicative of the building and acquisition of newcomer resources and include personal resources such as self-efficacy, relational resources such as social acceptance, and structural resources such as perceived fit and role clarity. Distal socialization outcomes include job attitudes, behaviors, job performance, talent retention, and understanding organizational culture and values (Chao, 2012). In addition, we include newcomer health and well-being.

Finally, our model includes reciprocal arrows, as we posit that resources acquired by newcomers, as indicated by adjustment and proximal outcomes, feed back into the model and influence other aspects of the model over time. For example, resources acquired initially may contribute to differential appraisals of demands down the line or engagement in subsequent organizational tactics. At this point in our review, we turn our attention to summarizing the literature we identified as relating to our model.

Sources of Demands and Resources: Individual and Organizational Socialization Tactics Through the Lens of Stress

Organizational socialization has a long, rich history of theorizing and empirical investigations. Central to this line of inquiry has been the important role that both organizational and individual tactics play in the socialization process (Reichers, 1987). Tactics refer to methods used by the individual or organization to facilitate the socialization process (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). These concepts have been consistently reviewed over time (e.g., Chao, 2012; Wanberg, 2012) and supported in meta-analyses (e.g., Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Saks et al., 2007) and empirical studies (e.g., N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth et al., 2007; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998; G. R. Jones, 1986; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Saks, Gruman, & Cooper-Thomas, 2011).

Both organizational and individual tactics influence a number of proximal (closer in time) and distal (further away in time) socialization outcomes, such as new employee adjustment. Research shows that the use of more institutionalized socialization tactics (those characterized by collective experiences and formal socialization processes) were more advantageous for proximal outcomes, including role clarity, self-efficacy, and social integration. In contrast, organizations using more individualized socialization approaches (those characterized by less structured, “sink or swim” approaches where the newcomer is left to figure out the organization’s culture, norms, and one’s job) tend to result in lower levels of clarity, efficacy, and social integration (Bauer et al., 2007; G. R. Jones, 1986). In addition, organizational tactics have been associated with other proximal outcomes, such as perceptions of fit (Chao, 2012; Ostroff, 2012). In turn, these proximal outcomes are related to more distal outcomes, such as performance, satisfaction, commitment, and intentions and behaviors to remain with the organization (Bauer et al.; Saks et al., 2007).

As shown in Figure 1, our model suggests that both individual and organizational tactics may relate to proximal and distal socialization outcomes through their impact on newcomers’ experience of stress to the extent that they influence new employees’ perceptions of their ability to cope with the demands they face in their new environment. We suggest that through both individual tactics, such as newcomer proactive behaviors, and by actively engaging in organizational socialization tactics presented by the organization, newcomers are seeking to accumulate and maintain organizational resources that are essential to the experience of

stress and contribute to newcomer adjustment (Hobfoll, 1989; Saks & Gruman, 2012). Rather than a comprehensive review of this literature (which has occurred elsewhere, such as in Bauer & Erdogan, 2011, 2014; Chao, 2012; Saks & Ashforth, 1996), our goal is to provide a basic overview of these areas and begin to orient the reader to a slightly different perspective—that from the work stress literature. We begin this section by reviewing the literature related to acquiring resources through individual tactics and then move on to how organizational tactics facilitate the building of resources.

Individual Tactics

According to their model of job performance, M. A. Griffin, Neal, and Parker (2007) maintain that when environments are characterized by change or uncertainty, the proactivity of employees is especially important. Thus, although focusing on task proficiency increases effectiveness while in stable and predictable environments, adaptive and proactive behavior is more effective when work roles and requirements are dynamic. Distinct from newcomer proactive personality, which refers to the tendency to be proactive, proactive behavior is a particular form of motivated behavior that is characterized by self-directed action to initiate change, challenge the status quo, expand the current boundaries of work roles, and actively understand work roles (Ashford & Black, 1996; Crant, 2000; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Accordingly, the research suggests that when employees encounter ambiguous situations, such as at organizational entry, they are more likely to actively engage in proactive behavior (e.g., Ashford & Black; Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Callister, Kramer, & Turban, 1999; Morrison, 1993a; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Within the context of socialization, proactive behavior has primarily been studied in terms of the tactics or behaviors that newcomers use to accomplish their work goals or generally facilitate their own socialization. The most commonly studied and cited proactive socialization tactics are delineated by Ashford and Black (1996) and fall within three general categories: sense making, relationship building, and positive framing. Seeking feedback about one's work and performance (Ashford, 1986) and information about one's job and role within the organization (Morrison, 1993a, 1993b) helps new employees make sense of their new role and gain clarity about how things work in the organization (Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006; Morrison, 1993a, 1993b; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Socializing, networking, and building new relationships at work characterize a proactive attempt to build important relational resources that contribute to newcomer adjustment in the form of social acceptance and adjustment to the group. Finally, positive framing, described as a cognitive self-management mechanism through which newcomers actively alter their understanding of the experiences of uncertainty, can be viewed as a type of emotion-focused coping that is related to newcomers' desire for control and serves as the mechanism through which they increase their job performance (Ashford & Black).

Accordingly, newcomer proactive behaviors (i.e., individual tactics) have been found to relate to both proximal socialization outcomes, such as task mastery, learning, and role clarity (Ashforth et al., 2007; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Gruman et al., 2006), and more distal outcomes of job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and turnover (A. E. Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000; Morrison, 2002; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Overall, increased newcomer proactivity is associated with better adjustment and assimilation that aligns with the overall literature on the benefits of employee proactivity (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

One explanation for these relationships, as proposed by our model, is that these tactics build important resources that newcomers rely on when faced with demands in their new work role. For instance, seeking information about tasks can assist the newcomer to achieve greater role clarity and reduce stress. Similarly, active attempts at building relationships may serve as an important source of social support and friendship. From this perspective, it is easy to see how individual tactics that arm newcomers with important job and psychological resources can have important implications for the experience of stress. If employees' perception and experience of stress is contingent on their perceived ability to adequately meet and cope with demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), then new employees who are equipped with resources like greater role clarity, more positive competence beliefs, or a strong social network are more likely to appraise demands as challenges that can be overcome and, in turn, exhibit more positive affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to those demands (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005).

Organizational Tactics

Organizational tactics have long been a focus of research on organizational socialization (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Arguably the most influential typology of organizational tactics was introduced by Van Maanen and Schein (1979), who delineated six tactics used by organizations to socialize new employees. The tactics range from those more collective and systematic (institutionalized) to those unstructured and variable by person (individualized). Later, G. R. Jones (1986) built upon Van Maanen and Schein's typology of organizational socialization tactics by classifying these tactics into higher order categories of content (collective, formal), context (sequential, fixed), and social tactics (serial, investiture).

Drawing on G. R. Jones' (1986) typology, Cable and Parsons (2001) found support for the proposed "buckets" of tactics and found that they were related to socialization outcomes. Research has consistently found that newcomers prefer and tend to be more successful when their socialization process includes more institutionalized practices (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007). One explanation for the success of these methods is the ability for them to reduce stress and facilitate positive coping for new employees through the provision of organizational resources. For example, in a study of nurses in Hong Kong, Taormina and Law (2000) examined a number of socialization features in relation to newcomer burnout. They found that newcomer training negatively related to newcomer emotional exhaustion, and coworker support had a negative relationship with decreased personal accomplishment—two aspects of burnout. Although they did not directly examine organizational tactics, it is not a far stretch to see how formal practices aimed at providing a systematic socialization experience in which newcomer learning and relationship building are facilitated can serve to affect adjustment through their effects on newcomer stress.

Recognizing the role of resources in facilitating the socialization experience, Saks and Gruman (2012) proposed socialization resource theory as a way to summarize the activities organizations may or may not engage in. They argued that too much focus on the "structural" aspects of socialization had left researchers and practitioners with little information beyond what we knew 25 years ago, which is that institutionalized tactics are more effective than individualized tactics. In an effort to better inform organizations about the activities they should be engaging in, Saks and Gruman focused on the resources new employees need to be

successful. For example, they recommended that organizational efforts focus on building work-related (e.g., training, tools needed to do work, information about the job) and social capital (e.g., social events, socialization agents, supervisor support) resources. In the case of the former, research has shown that those newcomers who attended an optional half-day training program understood the organization better and reported being more committed to the organization than those who did not (Klein & Weaver, 2000). With respect to social capital resources, the role of social connection in socialization has been consistently found. For example, Nelson and Quick (1991) found that helpfulness of others in the work environment was a positive predictor of newcomer adjustment.

Research on both individual and organizational tactics demonstrates the important role both play in facilitating positive newcomer adjustment because both represent sources of potential resources that can be leveraged in order to facilitate better adjustment (M. A. Griffin et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007). From a stress perspective, the extent to which resources are effectively garnered through engagement in these tactics will serve to not only influence cognitive appraisals of demands faced by newcomers but also provide important coping resources needed to meet demands. In the following section, we discuss in greater detail the process through which perceptions of job demands and resources influence the cognitive appraisal process and subsequent experiences of stress or engagement for new employees.

Newcomer Stress Appraisal Process

Occupational stress research has predominantly emphasized the negative effects of stressors (Boswell et al., 2004). However, findings involving the effects of stressors on outcomes have, at times, been inconsistent with this view (e.g., Boswell et al.; Cavanaugh et al., 2000). The challenge-hindrance stressor framework offers an explanation for these inconsistent findings. According to this framework, there are two broad categories of stressors. Both deplete energy and result in strain. However, hindrance stressors (e.g., red tape, role ambiguity) thwart goals and result solely in negative outcomes, whereas challenge stressors (e.g., workload, time pressure) can result in positive outcomes, such as goal achievement and positive well-being, that serve to offset the negative effects of strain (LePine et al., 2005; Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007). Employees are likely to cope with challenge stressors in an effective, problem-focused manner (e.g., increased effort) because they perceive such efforts as having a high probability of success and, thus, as beneficial for achieving gains. Hindrances, on the other hand, are more commonly addressed with avoidant or emotion-focused coping strategies (e.g., withdrawal) because they are viewed as unlikely to be overcome with any reasonable amount of effort and, thus, as thwarting goal attainment (LePine et al.). Meta-analytic evidence has supported the challenge-hindrance stressor distinction for a variety of work-related outcomes (LePine et al.; Podsakoff et al.).

Despite the valuable insight offered by the challenge-hindrance stressor framework that appraisals of demands as challenges or hindrances influence relevant outcomes, scholars have argued that the framework is somewhat limited in its ability to comprehensively explain stress processes (B. D. Edwards, Franco-Watkins, Cullen, Howell, & Acuff, 2014; Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, De Witte, & Vansteenkiste, 2010). Both the JD-R model and the challenge-hindrance stressor framework tend to treat stressors as characteristics of the job that are perceived similarly across all employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; LePine et al., 2005). By integrating the challenge-hindrance framework with the transactional model of

stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), B. D. Edwards et al. argued that our understanding of the stress process could be improved. The transactional model of stress considers that reactions to stressors can depend on how they are interpreted, or appraised, by the perceiver (Lazarus & Folkman). According to this model, stressful experiences involve the interplay of person (via appraisals) and environment (via stressors). When encountering a stressor, individuals first engage in primary appraisal to assess whether the stressor is a threat to their goals or well-being. This appraisal, in turn, influences cognitions and emotions, which further influence coping efforts. If the stressor is appraised as threatening, or stressful, individuals engage in secondary appraisal and decisions are made regarding how to cope. In turn, coping efforts help to determine outcomes.

Given its emphasis on the appraisal and coping processes, integrating the transactional model of stress and the challenge-hindrance stressor framework can, as noted by B. D. Edwards et al. (2014), help shed light on affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions to stress processes that are more proximal to work-related outcomes (e.g., performance) than stressors or perceived stress. Additionally, B. D. Edwards et al. argued that the central role afforded to appraisal in the transactional model of stress makes it easier to disentangle the effects of environmental stressors and individuals' perceptions of those stressors—a difficult feat when stressors are rigidly categorized beforehand, as is typical within the challenge-hindrance stressor framework.

Finally, because the extent to which employees perceive and are able to effectively respond to demands is influenced by the availability of resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), it is also useful to incorporate the JD-R model. The concept of resources in the occupational stress literature has arguably been discussed most extensively within the realm of the JD-R framework. Bakker and Demerouti defined job resources as “those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, or stimulate personal growth, learning and development” (2007: 312). Job resources are presumed to both positively and directly relate to motivation outcomes, such as work engagement, as well as buffer against the effects of job demands on strain. Moreover, resources are considered particularly salient for employees in the context of high demands—such as entering a new work role—in which job resources are needed to effectively address or cope with stressful circumstances (Bakker & Demerouti).

According to the model, job demands comprise “those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007: 312). Demands positively and directly relate to strain outcomes and are expected to moderate (reduce) the impact of job resources on motivation (Demerouti et al., 2001). However, because the JD-R model conceptualizes demands as resulting in negative outcomes, and does not distinguish whether certain demands may be more prone to positive outcomes than others, the challenge-hindrance stressor framework also informs the JD-R model (Van den Broeck et al., 2010).

Indeed, empirical results support the notion that there is value in considering the nature of the demand in the context of the JD-R model. For instance, Van den Broeck et al. (2010) found that challenge stressors, hindrance stressors, and resources were empirically distinct constructs in confirmatory factor analysis performed between two different research samples. Likewise, Crawford, LePine, and Rich (2010) conducted a meta-analytic path model and found that categorizing demands as challenging or hindering explained roughly 50%

more variance in engagement than when demands were considered as a single category. More specifically, the authors found that both challenge and hindrance demands positively predicted burnout. However, whereas hindrance demands were negatively related to engagement, challenge demands were positively related to engagement. Additionally, resources negatively predicted burnout and positively predicted engagement.

Consistent with this integrated framework is our contention that newcomers are likely to perceive certain demands as challenging and others as hindering. Given empirical support for the JD-R and challenge-hindrance stressor perspectives that, as argued previously, tend to treat stressors as job characteristics that have shared meaning across individuals, it seems likely that certain demands are more prone to being perceived as hindrances and others as challenges for most newcomers. However, despite commonalities in appraisals across newcomers, we argue that individual differences in personal, relational, and structural resources may lead to some variation in appraisals of the nature, severity, and level of job demands. Resources and socialization tactics that reduce uncertainty could thus play an especially crucial role in determining whether *newcomers* perceive stressors as challenges or hindrances.

Resource Management

Consistent with a focus on newcomers' appraisal and experience of stress during the socialization process is our argument that the experience of stress (or lack thereof) as a result of the appraisal process should predict whether a new employee withdraws and disengages from the socialization process or actively embraces and participates in it. Foundational to the JD-R model is the conservation of resources (COR) framework (Hobfoll, 2001), which suggests that individuals consciously monitor and manage their resources in order to protect current resources, recover from resource loss, or acquire new resources. More specifically, Hobfoll (1989) argues that when there is a surplus of resources available to individuals, they are inclined to invest those resources for the sake of potential resource gain, propelling an upward gain spiral in which resources beget additional resources. Conversely, individuals who perceive a deficit of resources experience strain and are motivated to protect and conserve their resources, consciously choosing not to invest additional resources. Halbesleben and colleagues (2014) note that this interplay between resource loss and acquisition not only has implications for employee well-being but also contains motivational elements that can differentially affect behavior at work (Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007).

Applying this perspective to the newcomer experience, we could expect that newcomers who lack adequate resources to cope with the uncertainty and demands of their new environment will be more likely to disengage from the process and instead take measures to protect themselves through withdrawing from the source of the demands and conserving resources. In the short-term, this protection or withdrawal could be observed as reduced engagement in the learning process, less effort exerted toward building new relationships at work, or heightened strain reactions to ambiguity or other demands in the new work environment. The proximal outcomes of this conservation process are reduced adjustment (i.e., lack of social acceptance, low self-efficacy or role clarity). In the long-term, a failure to adjust can lead to reduced performance, negative job attitudes, or turnover (Bauer et al., 2007). From this perspective, the salience of resource loss and subsequent engagement in protective behaviors and cognitions aimed at conserving resources not only affects new employee attitudes and

performance but also has implications for newcomer health and well-being, including, for example, burnout, depression, and adverse physiological outcomes (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

Alternatively, newcomers who perceive that adequate resources are available to them would be more likely to interpret demands in the environment as challenges that can be overcome or opportunities for growth (i.e., challenge appraisal). In turn, they will be more inclined to invest resources that further their integration with the organization (Hobfoll, 2001). Indeed, research supports the notion that individuals understand and consciously invest resources for the sake of acquiring or accessing other valued resources (Hakanen, Peeters, & Perhoniemi, 2011). For example, those who perceive a personal sense of competence, understand the availability of organizational policies or support systems, or interpret interactions with others in the organization as the beginning of positive relationships, may engage more wholly in learning about their organization, may invest time and effort in making connections with others, or may be more likely to voice concerns early on in the process, protecting themselves from future loss of resources (Ng & Feldman, 2012). Future research investigating these processes within-persons can help to understand what these upward gain spirals might look like in the context of socialization and what factors are particularly relevant for prompting and maintaining them.

Socialization Resources in the Context of Newcomer Stress Appraisal

Consistent with an emphasis on resource acquisition and management, a substantial portion of the remainder of our review discusses newcomer resources that may be particularly salient during the socialization process as identified in both the socialization and stress literatures. Our goal is to highlight parallels between the two literatures and point to how our proposed model can be leveraged to better understand the mechanisms underlying these associations as well as where future research is needed. By highlighting critical findings from the organizational socialization literature in the context of the models of work stress previously reviewed, we are able to identify three categories of newcomer resources—personal, relational, and structural resources. Table 1 provides a summary of socialization studies identified in our review in which the factors examined are indicative of psychological resources important to the experience of stress.

Personal Resources During Newcomer Socialization

Personal resources refer to characteristics of the individual that promote positive adjustment in the new work role. In the context of COR theory, Hobfoll (1989) argued that personal characteristics and conditions (e.g., self-esteem, mastery) serve as resistance against stressors and are motivating in and of themselves. Like other resources in the model depicted in Figure 1, personal resources are expected to both result from and contribute to more positive cognitive appraisals of demands at work for newcomers. For instance, organizational tactics that help new employees build a sense of mastery over their work tasks can be expected to reduce perceptions of demands and increase employees' propensity to invest additional time and effort into their new role. In turn, increased mastery beliefs feed back into the process through bolstering confidence to engage in newcomer proactive behaviors or provide the

Table 1
Studies Examining Identifiable Socialization Resources and Stress or Well-Being Outcomes

Source	Predictor Variables	Resource Identified	Sample Characteristics	Stress/Well-Being Outcomes	Other Outcomes Examined
Bauer & Truxillo (2000)	Tolerance for ambiguity	Personal	139 temporary clerical workers	Physical symptoms of stress	
Holton & Russell (1997)	Newcomer anticipation	Personal	378 new college graduates	Challenging jobs Job control Stress	Psychological success Commitment Job satisfaction Work motivation
M. C. Jones, Smith, & Johnston (2005)	Neuroticism	Personal	434 new health-care workers	Emotional distress	
Nelson & Sutton (1990)	Coping technique	Personal	97 newcomers in three organizations	Distress symptoms	Self-report mastery Supervisor-rated performance
Saks (1994)	Self-efficacy	Personal	198 newly hired entry-level accountants	Anxiety Stress	
Saks & Ashforth (1996)	Behavioral self-management	Personal	153 entry-level professional newcomers across two time periods	Ability to cope Anxiety Internal motivation Stress	Performance Commitment Job satisfaction Quit intentions
Saks & Ashforth (1997)	Self-esteem	Personal	231 recent graduates over three time points	Stress symptoms	Commitment Intent to quit Job satisfaction Turnover
Saks & Gruman (2011)	Self-efficacy	Personal	140 undergraduates in a work term	Job engagement	
Spector & O'Connell (1994)	Locus of control Negative affect	Personal	109 recent college graduates with full-time employment	Somatic symptoms Work anxiety Role ambiguity Role conflict	
Zahrly & Tosi (1989)	Locus of control Self-monitoring Skill level Work experience	Personal	64 hourly employees at start-up of manufacturing plant	Work/family conflict Role ambiguity Role conflict	Cohesion
Bravo, Peiró, Rodríguez, & Whitley (2003)	Superior relations Coworker relations	Relational	661 newcomers doing office technology or machine operations	Role ambiguity Role conflict	Newcomer intermediate strategies
Chen & Klimoski (2003)	Social exchange relationships	Relational	70 team newcomers	Psychological empowerment	Role performance
Chen (2005)	Newcomer empowerment Team expectations Team performance	Relational	Multisource from 65 project teams	Subsequent newcomer empowerment	Newcomer performance Team performance Turnover intent
Fisher (1985)	Social support from supervisor and coworkers	Relational	210 new nurses	Unmet expectations Stress	Commitment Job satisfaction Performance Turnover

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Source	Predictor Variables	Resource Identified	Sample Characteristics	Stress/Well-Being Outcomes	Other Outcomes Examined
M. C. Jones et al. (2005)	Managerial support	Relational	434 new health-care workers	Emotional distress Job control Job demand Sickness absence Role clarity	Job satisfaction
Nelson & Quick (1991)	Supervisor and coworker helpfulness	Relational	91 newcomers in three organizations	Distress symptoms	
Nigah, Davis, & Hurrell (2012)	“Buddying” (contact within the organization)	Relational	78 newcomers to a professional services organization	Work engagement Psychological capital	
Smith, Amiot, Smith, Callan, & Terry (2013)	Social validation from peers and leaders	Relational	139 newcomers across two time points	Coping strategies Identity conflict	Organizational identity Turnover intent
Saks & Ashforth (1997)	Person-job fit Person-organization fit	Structural	231 recent graduates over three time points	Stress symptoms	Commitment Intent to quit Job satisfaction Turnover
Saks (1996)	Amount and helpfulness of training	Structural	152 newly hired entry-level professionals	Ability to cope	Performance Commitment Intent to quit Job satisfaction
Saks (1994)	Training method	Structural	198 newly hired entry-level accountants	Anxiety Stress	
Vandenbergh, Panaccio, Bentein, Mignonac, & Roussel (2011)	Role stressors	Structural	170 university alumni across three time periods of early entry	Psychological well-being	Commitment Job satisfaction Turnover intentions

Note: A full list of articles and expanded summary tables may be found in the supplemental material available online.

impetus for other forms of resource investment. Alternatively, personal resources may constitute individual differences that newcomers draw upon when faced with demands. In the latter case, variation in these individual differences may represent within-person improvements or decrements in personal resources that are made salient by the socialization context, events at work, or resource management behavior. The following section reviews prior socialization and work stress research that has demonstrated the connections between newcomer personal resources and more distal outcomes of the socialization process, making connections where appropriate to newcomer stress appraisal.

Socialization and newcomer personal resources. A number of individual differences that can be considered personal resources to newcomers have been cited and tested as antecedents to socialization outcomes. These include self-efficacy, proactivity, Big Five personality traits, and other personal characteristics, such as locus of control. In addition, certain adaptability subtraits have recently been examined as antecedents of socialization outcomes. Taken together, research suggests that within the context of socialization, individual characteristics that promote active engagement in the socialization process are central to effective adjustment.

From early in the socialization literature, self-efficacy (i.e., belief in one's capability to perform at a specified level; Bandura, 1991) has been examined as an antecedent to various socialization outcomes both for its main and moderating effects. For instance, self-efficacy has been found to relate to newcomer proactive behaviors (Gruman et al., 2006) and intentions to return to the organization among college interns (Song & Chathoth, 2010). Such main effects for self-efficacy were also confirmed meta-analytically (Bauer et al., 2007), with self-efficacy related to a number of subsequent socialization outcomes, such as social acceptance, satisfaction, performance, organizational commitment, intentions to remain, and turnover.

In addition, the interactive effects of self-efficacy have received even more attention and support in the literature. For example, G. R. Jones (1986) found that institutionalized socialization tactics were more negatively related to innovative role orientation when newcomers' self-efficacy was low. Sluss, Ashforth, and Gibson (2012) found that task significance was more strongly related to newcomers' satisfaction and intentions to quit when self-efficacy was high. Furthermore, using a sample of employed interns, Major and Kozlowski (1997) found a three-way interaction among self-efficacy, task interdependence, and accessibility of insiders and their effects in relation to information seeking. Specifically, they found that newcomers with low self-efficacy sought more information if task interdependence and insider accessibility were high. Finally, Saks and Ashforth (2000) found that role conflict was more negatively related to organizational commitment and identification when general self-efficacy was low. In short, self-efficacy has been shown to affect newcomers directly as well as interact with other contextual variables, such as tactics, which suggests that newcomers may react differently to their environments depending on their levels of self-efficacy.

Proactive personality has also commonly appeared in socialization research. Proactive personality refers to the tendency to affect environmental change (Bateman & Crant, 1993) and has been found to relate to newcomer adjustment (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003), career satisfaction (Kim, Hon, & Crant, 2009), perceived insider status (Kim et al.), and proactive intentions (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Proactivity as an antecedent of socialization outcomes makes intuitive and conceptual sense because the propensity to seek out and act on opportunities in the environment is key to the success of newcomers. In addition, proactive behaviors are cited as important indicators of socialization themselves (e.g., Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Gruman & Saks; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). A related concept, newcomer curiosity, has also been found to influence newcomer adaptation behaviors such that diversive curiosity promoted positive framing behaviors and specific curiosity predicted information seeking behaviors (Harrison et al., 2011).

In addition, the Big Five personality factors (also known as the five-factor model or FFM) have been examined for effects on indicators of socialization. Specifically, extraversion (e.g., Gruman & Saks, 2011; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), neuroticism (e.g., Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller), conscientiousness (e.g., Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller), agreeableness (e.g., Gruman & Saks), and openness to experience (e.g., Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller; Wang et al., 2011) have all been found to relate to a range of socialization indicators.

Other individual differences that have been found to have main effects on socialization outcomes include job involvement (Ashford & Cummings, 1985), positive and negative affect (e.g., Ashforth et al., 2007), need for control (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Black & Ashford, 1995), need for feedback (Black & Ashford), tolerance for ambiguity (Fedora,

Rensvold, & Adams, 1992), and learning goal orientation (van der Rijt, Van den Bossche, van de Wiel, Segers, & Gijsselaers, 2012). Other individual differences include career goals (e.g., Colarelli, Dean, & Konstans, 1987), work-related values such as need for autonomy (e.g., de Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2005), and age, which has a positive relation with job satisfaction and role clarity via covert information seeking (Finkelstein, Kulas, & Dages, 2003). Kammeyer-Mueller, Livingston, and Liao (2011) found that perceived demographic similarity related to proactive behavior among newcomers. Finally, a recent study by Wang et al. (2011) found that four types of adaptability—cultural adaptability, work stress adaptability, interpersonal adaptability, and learning adaptability—were related to improvement in person-environment fit perceptions among newcomers after controlling for proactive personality and openness to experience.

Stress, strain, and personal resources. Similar findings from the work stress literature support the relationship between individual characteristics and the propensity to experience stress, coping efforts, and work-related outcomes. Demonstrating this parallel, Langelaan, Bakker, van Doornen, and Schaufeli (2006) found in a sample of Dutch employees that there were some relations between Big Five personality factors and the outcomes of burnout and engagement. High neuroticism was associated with burnout, while low neuroticism in combination with high extraversion and high mobility (preference for doing many different tasks in succession) were associated with engagement. Parker and Sprigg (1999) found that proactive personality related to job strain, with a three-way interaction between proactive personality, job demands, and job control. Specifically, job demands were related to strain to varying degrees when either proactivity or control were low, but demands had a weak relationship with strain when there was high control and proactivity. In other words, high proactivity seemed to be a boundary condition or buffer for the effects of demands in the JD-R model. Finally, Halbesleben (2010) found meta-analytic evidence for the association between self-efficacy and work engagement.

Personal resources: Implications of stress research for the socialization process. Although not done so systematically, over the years, a few studies have integrated the concepts of personality, stressors, and strains into socialization research. For example, Spector and O'Connell (1994) found in a sample of graduating college seniors that negative affectivity, locus of control, and Type A personality related to a number of stress and strain outcomes after they were newly employed. Although the goal of this study was not to integrate the newcomer and strain literatures, it does demonstrate the use of strain outcomes during early work experiences. Similarly, M. C. Jones et al. (2005) examined the effects of neuroticism on the mental and physical health and sickness absence of two sets of new health-care workers, finding that neuroticism was related to these newcomer outcomes. Finally, Bauer and Truxillo (2000) examined the effects of personality on "selection success" (being offered permanent employment) of temporary workers. Tolerance for ambiguity was related to both outcomes, and temporary worker self-monitoring was related to selection success.

The parallels between the socialization and stress/well-being literatures are striking in terms of the similarity of the personality variables examined and the consistency of the findings between the two literatures (see Table S2 in the online supplemental material for a full list of socialization articles investigating constructs indicative of personal resources).

Drawing on the model presented in Figure 1, we view personal characteristics as essential newcomer resources that positively affect newcomer appraisals of demands as challenges and prompt engagement and further investment in the socialization process. Research examining the relationship between newcomer stress appraisals and subsequent behavior aimed at acquiring resources, either personal or otherwise, would be an interesting next step. In addition, future research aimed at understanding within-person variation in personal resources may provide a more nuanced look into factors that are important throughout the socialization process, as well as information on the trajectory of personal resources over a new employee's initial tenure.

Relational Resources During Newcomer Socialization

Relational resources refer to those aspects of the social environment that support positive integration and social acceptance. Newcomers develop a number of new relationships, including with their immediate supervisor, coworkers, mentors, and other newcomers within the organization. These relationships are important as newcomers begin to embed within the organizational fabric in terms of their relational identity and identification (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Accordingly, being integrated into one's work group is one of three critical indicators of newcomer adjustment, along with learning one's role and gaining confidence to perform it, as identified by Bauer et al. (2007) in their meta-analysis of the socialization literature.

Socialization and relational resources. The socialization literature has recognized the role of relational resources in facilitating better adjustment of newcomers through better learning of their tasks and the work context (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; see Table S3 in the online supplemental material for a full list of socialization articles investigating constructs indicative of relational resources). These studies examine how relational resources can make organizational adjustment less demanding by increasing other types of resources, such as efficacy or clarity around one's work role. For example, in their study of graduating college students starting their first jobs, Ostroff and Kozlowski (1993) showed that having a mentor was related to information acquisition about the organization, whereas the absence of a mentor resulted in attempts to acquire more information about the job from coworkers. Bauer and Green (1998) showed that managerial clarifying behaviors (e.g., managers' ability to clearly explain expectations) were related to role clarity and perceived efficacy, resulting in performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment in later time periods for the recent college graduates in their sample. Jokisaari and Nurmi (2009) showed that reductions in perceived supervisor support were related to reductions in role clarity. Importantly, these findings point to the potential relationship between different types of resources and provide conceptual support for the notion of resource management; particularly, the investment of resources for the purpose of acquiring new resources as described by Hobfoll (2001). Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb, and Ashforth (2012) found that for their samples of telemarketers and U.S. Army newcomers, newcomers' relational identification with their supervisor mattered such that it related to organizational identification in the cases where supervisors were perceived to be "prototypical" of leaders. Furthermore, Nifadkar, Tsui, and Ashforth (2012) found that supervisors triggered newcomer emotions, or affect, which related to newcomers' adjustment and later performance, indicating how important such relationships are for newcomers.

In addition to specific behaviors, such as mentoring or clarifying behaviors, structural elements of interpersonal relationships may serve the role of a relational resource. For example, in a study of 111 newly employed adults, Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2011) pointed to the importance of similarity to coworkers. In this study, perceived demographic similarity to coworkers predicted perceived work style similarity, resulting in higher levels of role clarity. Morrison (2002) showed that characteristics of one's social network in the form of network size, density, departmental diversity, and status were predictors of task mastery and role clarity. These studies suggest that the socialization literature recognizes the role of relational resources in the socialization process through its influence over other adjustment indicators.

Additional socialization research has identified the role of relationships in directly affecting job performance and organizational attachment. Satisfaction with one's team is negatively related to turnover intentions (Smith, Amiot, Callan, Terry, & Smith, 2012). Fitting in with one's supervisor with respect to concern for people is associated with organizational commitment and intentions to remain (van Vianen, 2000). How helpful one's senior coworkers, peers, and supervisor are is associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Louis et al., 1983). With respect to performance, Li, Harris, Boswell, and Xie (2011) showed that supervisor and coworker developmental feedback interacted to influence task performance. Chen and Klimoski (2003) showed that social exchanges with coworkers related to performance, mediated by empowerment. Taken together, these findings support the direct relationship between relational resources and motivational and performance-related behaviors important for adjustment in a new work role.

Stress, strain, and relational resources. Likewise, interpersonal relationships are recognized influences over an individual's experience of stress at work. Indeed, stress research has regarded social support garnered from relationships at work as a critical ingredient in buffering against work-related strain (Johnson & Hall, 1988). For instance, relationship development with one's immediate supervisor, or leader-member exchange (LMX) quality, has been found to negatively relate to time-based stress (Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994), as well as a number of other stressors, including role conflict, ambiguity, low job scope, and lack of career progress (Nelson, Basu, & Purdie, 1998). LMX quality has also been shown to moderate the relationship between strain and work performance. The role of mentors is also recognized in the work stress literature. For example, Sosik and Godshalk (2000) demonstrated a connection between mentor styles and job-related stress. Furthermore, Nielson, Carlson, and Lankau (2001) showed a negative relationship between supportive mentors and work-family conflict, while Thomas and Lankau (2009) showed that both LMX and mentoring were negatively related to role stress and burnout.

The subset of studies reviewed above demonstrates the ability for meaningful relationships and social support in general to mitigate the impact of work stress on deleterious outcomes and facilitate a more positive workplace experience. Supporting this notion, a meta-analysis of 68 studies showed that social support was negatively related to experienced strain and to stressors and moderated the stressor-strain relationship (Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999). Similarly, another meta-analysis by Halbesleben (2006) found that work-related social support was a more relevant predictor of burnout compared to nonwork social support.

Relational resources: Implications of stress research for the socialization process. Out of the potential functions that may be served by relational resources, the socialization literature to date has considered inverse relationships between relational resources and perceptions of job demands and how relational resources may directly relate to outcomes such as performance, commitment, and turnover intentions. However, relational resources may also indirectly reduce strain by buffering the negative effects of job demands on strains (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Studies from the socialization literature that demonstrate such associations are much more limited.

In one of the few examinations of relational resources as they relate to stress outcomes in newcomers identified in our search, Nelson and Quick (1991) examined supervisor and coworker helpfulness in relation to distress symptoms. They showed that supervisor helpfulness and helpfulness of other newcomers starting their jobs at the same time were negative predictors of distress symptoms. M. C. Jones and colleagues (2005) tested the relationship between managerial support (both academic and clinical) in relation to distress in a sample of newly recruited health-care workers; however, they did not find support for this association. Similarly, Fisher (1985) showed that social support was an important factor in reducing newcomer stress associated with unmet expectations. Other research has pointed to a relationship between relational resources and newcomer empowerment (Chen, 2005; Chen & Klimoski, 2003). Given the relatively high amount of stress that can be experienced during organizational entry, it is critical to understand how relational resources in the form of helpful behaviors, role modeling, or a high quality exchange with insiders may relate to burnout, experienced stress, and anxiety.

By viewing the socialization process through the lens of the newcomer it becomes clear that interactions and experiences with coworkers, mentors, and supervisors contribute to whether newcomers feel they can rely on others for information, support, and acceptance that will allow them to overcome the demands of a new job. Moreover, strong social ties not only should provide newcomers the resources needed to cope with the demands of a new role but also can encourage longer-term learning through increased information (Kleinman et al., 2002) and risk taking (Detert & Burris, 2007) that, over time, promote increased effectiveness.

Alternatively, viewing this process through the lens of stress research could potentially provide understanding into when things go wrong. For example, significant research from occupational health psychology has indicated that interpersonal conflict and aggression in the work context are toxic for employees (Hershcovis et al., 2007). Some research even suggests that conflicts with others at work can carry over and affect functioning in the home domain (Demsky, Ellis, & Fritz, 2014). In the socialization context, it is possible that current employees may feel threatened or otherwise harbor unhelpful cognitions about new employees. The extent to which interactions play out between new and current employees is an unexamined area of research in socialization.

Structural Resources During Newcomer Socialization

Finally, structural resources include aspects of the job or organization that facilitate understanding and performance in one's work role. Of the various structural resources one might consider, two of the most heavily researched in the socialization context are person-

organization (P-O) fit and role clarity (see Table S4 in the online supplemental material for a full list of socialization articles investigating constructs indicative of structural resources). Kristof defined P-O fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (1996: 4-5). This definition emphasizes fit between individuals and their organizations as a whole, rather than between persons, vocations, jobs, work groups, or supervisors. It is notable that research supports the importance of other forms of fit, such as person-vocation fit (Holland, 1959), and suggests there is value in examining these constructs in relation to socialization and newcomer stress and well-being. However, we focus on P-O fit in our review because it is the most thoroughly studied form of fit and because most research on P-O fit has tended to focus on the compatibility of values held between an organization and its employees (Kristof; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Relative to other aspects of fit, we argue that value congruence is an especially important structural resource in that values (1) are likely to transcend other aspects of the job and work environment; (2) provide the overarching rationale for numerous actions, behaviors, and decisions; and (3) are fundamental and relatively enduring (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Enz, 1988; Rokeach, 1973). Given the fundamental role of values in organizations, compatibility with core values should greatly enhance the understanding of one’s role and, thus, could be considered one of the most vital structural resources.

In addition to P-O fit, we consider role clarity to be an important structural resource. Role clarity occurs when one possesses adequate information about one’s responsibilities, priorities, and goals as well as knowledge of how to appropriately pursue those goals (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Whereas the socialization literature is typically focused on understanding how one gains clarity in one’s role, the stress literature frequently focuses on *role ambiguity*, or lack of clarity about one’s role (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970), as a potential stressor. Although other role stressors (e.g., role conflict, role overload) have been studied, scholars have argued that role ambiguity is the most structurally determined (or least controllable, from the employees’ perspective) of these stressors (Kahn et al.). Accordingly, we argue that role ambiguity’s opposite, role clarity, is fitting to position as a structural resource. Next, we review research that has examined P-O fit and role clarity in relation to socialization and stress outcomes.

Socialization and structural resources. The socialization literature focused on P-O fit has typically been grounded in Schneider’s (1987) attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) framework. According to the ASA framework, individuals are attracted to and select themselves into organizations on the basis of their perceived compatibility with the organization. Individuals who are initially attracted to the organization, and who possess attributes desired by the organization, join the organization. Organizational members who are compatible with the work environment remain, whereas members who are incompatible with the work environment are theorized in the ASA framework to eventually exit the organization. Because the selection process is based on limited information (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995), and because labor market conditions often prohibit employers or employees from being optimally selective (Chatman, 1991), initial value incongruences between newcomers and their employers are common. Socialization efforts can influence the selection–attrition link by facilitating the alignment of employee and organizational values (Cooper-Thomas, van Vianen, & Ander-

son, 2004; De Cooman et al., 2009). Illustrating this, acculturation—or helping employees to learn about and adjust to the organization’s culture—has been identified as a key element of the socialization process (Morrison, 1993a). Through these acculturation efforts, socialization decreases the likelihood of unfavorable outcomes for employees and organizations due to initial misfit.

Empirical research examining socialization and P-O fit has shown that organizational efforts to increase fit are worthwhile. P-O fit has been favorably associated with a number of distal socialization outcomes, including intentions to stay or leave an organization (Chatman, 1991; Saks et al., 2007; van Vianen, 2000; Wang et al., 2011), organizational commitment (Chow, 2002; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Saks et al.; van Vianen), turnover (Carr, Pearson, Vest, & Boyar, 2006; Chatman; van Vianen & Prins, 1997), expected organizational tenure (Chow), job satisfaction (e.g., Chatman; Cooper-Thomas et al.; Saks et al.; Wang et al.), job performance (Saks et al.), role orientation (Saks et al.), the extent to which individuals believe they will be successful in their career (Chow), and career satisfaction (Chow). Additionally, fit has been conceptualized as a mediator between socialization tactics and newcomer characteristics and more distal outcomes (Carr et al.; Cooper-Thomas et al.; Saks et al.; Saks & Gruman, 2011; Wang et al.).

Along with acculturation, Morrison (1993a, 1993b) conceptualized role clarification as a key element of the socialization process. Consistent with this perspective are studies by several researchers who have considered role clarity to be a proximal outcome of socialization tactics and newcomer characteristics that, in turn, predicts longer-term socialization outcomes (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Saks et al., 2007). Recent meta-analytic evidence supports this view. More specifically, Bauer et al. found that role clarity was positively associated with newcomers’ job performance, satisfaction, commitment, and intentions to remain. Furthermore, role clarity partially mediated relationships between socialization tactics and information seeking and these outcomes.

Stress, strain, and structural resources. Person-environment fit has a long history in the stress literature. According to French, Caplan, and Harrison (1982), stress is the result of misfit between individuals and their work environments, whereas enhanced well-being is the result of alignment between individuals and their work environments. Meta-analyses examining the impact of P-O fit on stress and well-being outcomes have tended to support this view. For example, Verquer, Beehr, and Wagner (2003) meta-analyzed the relationships between P-O fit and well-being outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, and found significant correlations in favorable directions for each relationship. Similarly, Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found positive meta-analytic correlations among P-O fit and several indicators of well-being (i.e., organizational commitment, coworker satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, organizational satisfaction) and negative correlations with indicators of stress or poor well-being (i.e., strain and turnover intentions). This lends to the notion that P-O fit is a resource that independently decreases stress.

Role clarity has typically been examined in the stress literature as its inverse—role ambiguity. Unlike challenge stressors, which have the potential to result in positive net outcomes despite the experience of strain, role ambiguity is thought to be a hindrance stressor—that is, a stressor that results in strain with little to no potential for benefits (LePine et al., 2005). Several meta-analyses have shown that role ambiguity is negatively related to important stress and well-being outcomes. In a number of meta-analyses, role ambiguity has been found to be

negatively associated with personal accomplishment, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Örtqvist & Wincent, 2006) and positively associated with anxiety, tension, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, propensity to quit (Fisher & Gitelson, 1983; Örtqvist & Wincent), and physiological symptoms of stress (Nixon, Mazzola, Bauer, Krueger, & Spector, 2011). Role ambiguity has also been meta-analytically linked to performance outcomes (Fisher & Gitelson; Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008). For example, Gilboa et al. found negative meta-analytic correlations between role ambiguity and several different ratings of job performance (e.g., self-rated, supervisor-rated, objective assessments).

Meta-analyses on hindrance stressors further confirm the deleterious effects of role ambiguity. In their meta-analysis, LePine et al. (2005) revealed that hindrance stressors were positively related to strain and negatively related to motivation. Additionally, hindrance stressors were related to performance via these effects as well as directly. A subsequent meta-analysis (Podsakoff et al., 2007) also found that hindrance stressors were negatively related to organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, through these effects and the indirect effects of strain, hindrance stressors were positively related to turnover intentions, withdrawal behavior, and turnover.

Structural resources: Implications of stress research for the socialization process. The above-mentioned research, drawn from both the socialization and stress literatures, demonstrates that P-O fit and role clarity result in positive outcomes for individuals. More specifically, prior research indicates that each of these concepts influences both stress and engagement, as well as important adjustment and performance outcomes. For example, Saks and Ashforth (1997) found negative relationships between person-job fit and stress symptoms in a sample of recent graduates. Similarly, other research has shown that aspects of newcomer training are associated with increased ability to cope and reduced anxiety for newcomers (Saks, 1994, 1996). Despite the similarity between the outcomes studied in the socialization and stress literatures in relation to P-O fit and role clarity, studies involving these concepts typically do not integrate prominent socialization and stress perspectives. However, that findings in both literatures point to salutary effects of P-O fit and role clarity suggests that each concept can be framed as a resource within the context of the JD-R framework, among others; P-O fit and role clarity should each directly shield individuals from stress and facilitate coping with job demands.

Conceptualizing P-O fit and role clarity in this way is useful because it can mutually inform the stress and socialization literatures. For example, classifying P-O fit and role clarity as structural resources expands the repertoire of resources typically studied in the work stress literature, shedding light on how to empower individuals and organizations to increase employee well-being. Likewise, using this lens to frame P-O fit and role clarity as resources informs the socialization literature. That is, rather than conceptualizing P-O fit and role clarity primarily as proximal consequences of socialization efforts and newcomer characteristics, our model explains how P-O fit and role clarity can be important tools not only for increasing well-being directly but also for influencing how stressful organizational socialization tactics (e.g., divestiture socialization) or job demands affect strain and related outcomes. In sum, although more research is needed to fully understand the myriad ways in which P-O fit and role clarity can serve as structural resources for employees, both are clearly advantageous for newcomers to possess as they navigate their way through the excitement, trials, and tribulations of their new surroundings.

Agenda for Future Research

A primary objective of the current review is to encourage future research that bridges the gap between the organizational socialization and work stress literatures. Indeed, research of this sort is foundational to the ability to provide concrete and actionable recommendations to organizations that seek to mitigate newcomer stress and enhance socialization outcomes. We contend that there is much to learn in terms of both theory and practice by taking a newcomer-centric view of the socialization process especially as it relates to stress and strain experienced by newcomers. The following provides a brief summary of these areas.

Resources That Matter

Through our model, we provided a framework for the categorization of resources and proposed that resources can both contribute to and result from the socialization process. Using this model, we believe that there is ample opportunity to expand on current socialization research by taking an explicitly stress-based view of the socialization process. Foundational to this approach will be articulating the resources that matter to socialization, understanding how and why they matter through the examination of mechanisms proposed in our model, and understanding how they can be developed through socialization practices. For example, a key insight from the current review is that resources beyond those traditionally examined in the socialization literature may be critical to mitigating the experience of stress (e.g., positive affect and optimism; Halbesleben, 2010; Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008), especially when those resources are appropriately matched to the demands faced by newcomers (Cohen & McKay, 1984). As such, research that provides insight into the salient demands faced by newcomers and their interaction with specific resources is an important next step. Relatedly, research aimed at understanding how resources might work together is an interesting research area. For example, it is plausible that the effects of certain resources (e.g., role clarity and self-efficacy) are contingent on other resources (e.g., social acceptance) such that the former become more or less salient under the presence of the latter. Finally, clarification of what socialization practices—either individual or organizational tactics—contribute to enhanced resources critical for new employees is needed. Identification of such practices establishes evidence from which interventions aimed at reducing stress can be based.

The Role of Time

Central to optimizing the socialization experience for new employees is understanding the role of time. Bauer and Erdogan (2011) noted that the socialization process unfolds over a period of 1 year, with more intense socialization occurring within the first 30 to 60 days. Saks and Gruman (2012) added that certain resources are likely to be more or less important at different times during socialization. Similarly, work stress researchers have argued for both short- and long-term processes, particularly, that momentary experiences of stress, if sustained over time, can accumulate and result in strain (Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Hobfoll, 2001). Through integration of these research streams and our proposed model, we have argued that the experience of stressors for new employees is one mechanism that explains how socialization practices might be related to longer-term outcomes of the socialization process. It seems

likely, then, that socialization practices (that provide relevant resources for newcomers) that are appropriately matched, in terms of their timing with experienced stress, will be most successful. However, in order to substantiate these statements, research examining the trajectory of stress as experienced by newcomers is needed. For example, within-person studies carried out over an employee's initial tenure could demonstrate whether there are spikes or settling of stress at different times during the socialization process and whether organizational tactics or newcomer efforts to build and maintain important resources affect these trajectories. Also, integration of stress theories, such as COR theory (Hobfoll), and in accordance with the feedback loops included in our model, suggests that new employees may experience gain or loss cycles that unfold over time and relate to socialization outcomes (such as engagement or turnover, respectively). Research that answers the questions of whether socialization practices can break loss cycles or spur gain cycles to occur would be both theoretically and practically valuable. Finally, it has been suggested that engagement in normative roles and institutions (such as a new career) may affect development of adult personality (e.g., Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006). In this sense, to the extent that today's socialization experiences can affect personal resources available to employees and facilitate the development of more enduring personality characteristics, they can potentially influence resources employees take with them to future socialization experiences.

Social Context

We believe that taking a newcomer-centric perspective on the socialization process makes the social context in particular a highly salient feature of the socialization process and offers a number of interesting avenues for integration of stress theory. For example, how does the relational climate of a work group affect stress experienced by newcomers? Work groups that a newcomer joins may not be equally harmonious. Some work groups may be characterized by more aggressive, competitive relationships among veteran employees, whereas other work groups may be more cooperative and harmonious. Indeed, work stress research has shown that although social support can buffer the negative impact of stressors on strain (Viswesvaran et al., 1999), negative interactions with others can themselves be a major source of stress (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). Relatedly, even when a team is supportive, trustworthy, and welcoming to newcomers, strain may still be experienced when joining a highly interdependent group consisting of high performing employees (De La Torre-Ruiz & Aragón-Correa, 2012). It may be that formal socialization tactics that segregate and train newcomers prior to entering a work group are more successful because they reduce the stress associated with team performance for both the newcomer and the current team members. By extension, an interesting question concerns what motivates incumbent employees to behave in certain ways toward new employees. For instance, factors such as team support or cohesion may serve to either hinder or enhance stressful interactions with the team and, therefore, new employee adjustment.

Health and Well-Being Outcomes

Finally, socialization research has established clear links between proximal adjustment outcomes, such as role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance, and more distal organizational outcomes, including job attitudes and performance (Bauer et al., 2007). Using the

framework proposed in this review, we believe that these adjustment indicators may actually serve as job or personal resources that both affect organizational outcomes and feed back into the stress appraisal process, influencing employee motivation and engagement. Integration with prominent stress theories opens the door to examining new relevant constructs, such as need satisfaction, work engagement, and flow—states that are positively affected by the availability of resources and have been shown to have implications for employee well-being (Demerouti et al., 2001; Salanova, Bakker, & Llorens, 2006; Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008). Furthermore, garnering an understanding of how the experience of stress affects newcomer work and nonwork outcomes related to health and well-being is an important next step for socialization research. For example, initial research within the socialization context has shown relationships between socialization and distress (e.g., Nelson & Quick, 1991). Research that builds on these findings and examines the impact of these experiences on newcomer motivation and behavior (e.g., willingness to engage in proactive socialization tactics) and subsequent adjustment is needed. In addition, the extent to which such experiences spillover into the nonwork domain and affect outcomes such as work-family conflict (J. R. Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) or the ability to psychologically detach from work during time at home (Sonnetag & Krueger, 2006) are likely to have implications for newcomer performance and the development of positive job attitudes, but they have not been systematically examined in the socialization context (an exception is Zahrlly & Tosi, 1989). We suggest that the proposed model can help to guide future research of this sort and provide greater insight into the impact of newcomer stress on the socialization experience and its outcomes.

Conclusion

The ways in which new employees experience and cope with stressful events influence their adjustment, well-being, and, ultimately, decision to remain with an organization. Newcomers face uncertainty when entering new organizations, but the impact of this uncertainty has rarely been explicitly addressed through the lens of a stress-based perspective. We sought to integrate the work stress and socialization literatures to establish a coherent, parsimonious framework that we hope will help guide future scholarship in these areas. The newcomer-centric view of the socialization process offered in our review allows for the introduction of new streams of research that integrate research from work stress and address both theoretical and practical concerns.

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