

Dynamics of Multiple Social Identifications in Newcomers: Early-Socialization Experiences in an Indian Information Technology Services Organization

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This dissertation research is an attempt to theorize change in organizational, professional and group identifications during early socialization of newcomers. Little is known about how social identifications change and the factors that cause these changes. This research tries to fill significant gaps in theory as well as practice since research related to change in social identifications is relatively sparse and research related to the early socialization of newcomers in the Indian IT services industry is also rare. This longitudinal research uses data from more than 1000 newcomers in an Indian IT services organization over their early-socialization journey consisting of orientation training, their idle time, as well as workgroup socialization. Through four waves of data collection using survey questionnaires and supplementary data from group discussions, the changes in the social identifications as well as the relationships with perceived organizational prestige, psychological contract fulfilment, professional motivation, workplace ostracism and uncertainty are explored. Using hierarchical regressions this study shows that increase in perceived organizational prestige is related to increase in organizational identification, professional motivation is related to changes in professional identification, workplace ostracism is related to changes in group identification, decrease in psychological contract fulfilment is related to a decrease in organizational identification, and increase in organizational identification is related to an increase in professional identification. Results also show a decline in the identifications after the initial increase in the training phase, with significant decline occurring during the idle time of the newcomers. These findings provide new insights for researchers on the dynamics of multiple social identifications, while informing practitioners of the potential problems associated with rapid hiring and subsequent socialization of these large numbers of the new generation workforce.