An investigation into the Practice of socialization at workplaces in Bangladesh: Human Resource Departments and Employees point of view

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the human resource departments' and employees' point of view regarding socialization process at workplace in context of Bangladesh. Socialization is a primary process to facilitate work adjustment for new employees or employees taking new roles. It typically includes early learning and adjustments after organizational entry. This process is entirely controlled neither by the organization, nor by the individual. This paper considers the effectiveness of socialization related to employees' commitment to their organizations, their level of satisfaction, negative turnover ratio, and performance and productivity. With reference to research evidence, that we have studied both from Human Resource Departments' (HRDs') and employees' point of view on the basis of a questionnaire survey, we have found that socialization has impact on employees' performance and productivity, motivation, negative turnover ratio, and organizational stability.

Key words: Socialization, Management, Human Resource Department (HRD), Employee, Motivation, Employees turnover

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

Socialization is the process by which newly-hired employees learn about, adapt to, and come to identify with the organization. Increasingly, researchers have recognized the important consequences of the socialization experience of newcomers to the organization in terms of productivity and performance, attitudes organizational commitment, and turnover (Bauer, Marrison & Callister, 1998). Also, socialization is important to individuals in terms of their access to opportunities in the organization and career development. Organizations may facilitate this process to varying degrees by providing information and mentoring; however the individual is perceived as the primary agent of socialization. Relationship building is the most important step in the socialization process and that the workgroup is the most important context for socialization. Without an orientation or program, new employees may misunderstand the company's mission and reporting relationships, and may get inaccurate views of how and why things work.

Actually, orientation is only a small part of the overall socialization process for a new organizational member. To understand the socialization we must consider the organizational culture, socialization process, underlying assumptions, a standard socialization model as well as different styles of socialization.

The study has targeted both the employers and employees to get the real scenario of practicing socialization at workplace and what the organizations think about this strong management tool.

2. <u>Literature Review</u>

Typically, the literature portrayed socialization as a learning process whereby it was the individual's responsibility to learn to fit into the organization (Bauer, et al., 1998). Past research described the socialization process as a series of stages through which newcomers passed as they learned to fit into the organization. These stages were summarized by Wanous (1992) as a four steps process:
   a. Confront the reality of the new job: newcomers adjust their expectations to the reality of the job.
   b. Achieve role clarity: newcomers learn and negotiate the expectations and requirements of their role in the organization.
   c. Locate oneself in the organization: new comers learn how their work contributes to the work of the organization.
   d. Assess success: newcomers assess the value of their contributions to the organization.

Socialization process contains four basic underlying assumptions. Based on these assumptions the whole survey has been conducted and hypothesis has been developed. The assumptions are as follows;
   a. socialization influences employees' performance,
   b. new employees suffer from anxiety,
   c. socialization does not occur in vacuum, and
   d. people adjust in a similar way (DeCenzo, Robbins, 2007).

Kathleen Finigan (1998) states, "To retain and maximize the human resources who were so carefully selected, organization must pay careful attention to the introduction of newly hired employees to the organization, the work group and job. A through and systematic approach to socializing new employees is necessary if they are to become effective workers. Without an

orientation program, new employees may misunderstand the company's mission and reporting relationships, and may get inaccurate views of how things work and why."

Chao (1994) said, "organizational socialization is a primary process of facilitate work adjustment for new employees or for employees taking on new roles. For individuals, a good fit within the organization can lead to several positive benefits. People who are well socialized are more committed to their organization, more satisfied with their jobs, and earn more than people who don't learn to fit in with their organizations. Furthermore, people who are well socialized are less likely to quit their jobs and more likely to build successfully careers within the organization." He maintained "The research literature on information seeking and successful socialization is mixed. Some studies support a positive link with findings that show information seeking reduces uncertainty about the new comer's job/organization, which in turn, helps build the new comer's competence and self-efficacy. Conversely, studies found negative links between information seeking and newcomer socialization when there are social costs if a newcomer is constantly asking questions, or if feedback   is not positive."

Chao, O'Leary- Kelly, Wolf, Kliein, and Gardner (1994) developed six content areas for organizational socialization and developed scales to research learning in these areas: performance proficiency, language, people, politics, organizational goals and values, and history. Performance proficiency involves learning special acronyms and terminology used by the organization. The people dimension includes learning to get along with the other organizational members. Politics involves learning formal and informal power structures. Organizational goals and values involve understanding the organization's culture. Finally, history involves learning about the organization's past as well as the specific history associated with the new comer's / employee's business unit.

This study specifically, considers the effectiveness of socialization related to employees' commitment to their organizations, their level of job satisfaction, and their tendency of quitting job. It has been assumed that if employees' performance and productivity improves, employees' turnover ratio is low and employees are motivated; it will lead the organization to a stable condition.

3. Objective of the Study

The study has been carried out with the following objectives:
  a. to understand the HRDs and employees' viewpoint regarding socialization to the organizational performance, productivity, and stability
  b. to understand the employees' and HRDs' opinion regarding the performance and productivity through practicing socialization at workplace
  c. to identify the impact of socialization on the employees turnover
  d. to compare the employers and employees viewpoint concerning socialization.

4. Research Methodology

The research is exploratory in nature. The target population of this study is employees working in different organization in Dhaka city. More specially, the target population of this study is the top and mid-level employees of different multinational companies (MNCs) in Dhaka city.

Since the complete list of population was not found available, the non probability sampling technique (convenience) is applied while selecting respondents. Only 100 employees and 20 human resource departments have been selected as sample for data collection purpose for this

study. The survey was conducted during April'08 to June'08. A complete list of organizations is given in the appendix A. Two sets of formal questionnaires have been used to collect data. The questionnaires include all close ended questions.

Before using the questionnaire, the questionnaires have been pre-tested. After collecting the data, they have been processed and tabulated using MS Excel.

We developed two sets of questionnaires. Five Hypotheses have been developed in this study. They are:

Hypothesis 1: Socialization has impact on employees' performance
Hypothesis 2: Socialization improves employees' productivity
Hypothesis 3: Socialization at work place has an impact on organizational stability
Hypothesis 4: Socialization has a direct impact on employees' turnover
Hypothesis 5: Socialization through events motivates employees

5. Findings of the Study

Employees' and HRDs' viewpoint regarding Socialization at work place

*Testing Hypothesis ONE***:** *Socialization has impact on employees' performance*

5.1 Orientation program

Our collected data show that 90% of HRDs organized orientation programs for the newly hired employees and 76% of the employees attended the orientation programs.

5.2 Duration of Orientation Programs

Human Resource Department (HRD)								Employees							
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*		*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Hour/s	15%	15%	10%					Hour/s	11%	8%	9%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Day/s	5%							Day/s	8%	1%	3%				
Week/s	20%				5%			Week/s	7%	5%	1%	2%			
Month	20%							Month	10%	1%	2%			2%	

Table 1: Duration of orientation program

In this table, it is seen that 20% HRDs organized even a month-long program for their employees. In other cases 40% HRDs organized only 1 to 3 hours orientation programs. 34% employees' said that they received less than one day long orientation program.

5.3 Types of Socialization program

Here we found a similar result from both the parties regarding the types of socialization program. Both 75% went for informal and 25% for formal orientation program at the organization.

5.4 <u>Orientation Program delivered adequate information about organizational and job related activities</u>

All the HRDs claimed that orientation programs delivered adequate information to the employees about the organization and job responsibilities. 93% employees agreed with HRDs and only 7% employees disagreed.

5.5 (a) <u>HRDs' and employees' rating on the impact of employees' performance</u>

Party/ opinion	*Human resource departments point of view*	*Employees' point of view*
Strongly agree	55%	37%
Agree	35%	42%
Moderate	5%	17%
Disagree	5%	3%
Strongly disagree	0%	1%

Table 2(a): Orientation program rating

On average 90% HRDs at least agreed that socialization programs have definite impact on employees' performance, whereas at least 79% employees agreed on this impact.

5.5 (b) <u>HRDs' point of view on employees' performances related to organizational culture and working environment</u>

HRDs' point of view	**Percentage**
Definite impact	65%
impact	30%
Not Sure	5%
No link at all	0%

Table 2(b): Effect of organizational culture and working environment on employees' performance

In this table 95% HRDs found that organizational culture and working environment had impact on employees' performance.

Test result of Hypothesis ONE: Socialization has impact on employees' performance.

This study got similar opinions regarding socialization and employees' performance. 90% HRDs and 93% employees were of the similar opinion that organizations organized adequate, informative, and job orientation programs to socialize the employees at organization. Again, understanding of organizational culture and working environment through socialization is definitely linked (95% opined) with employees' work performance. So from the above discussion we can come to the conclusion that socialization has positive impact on employees' performance.

Testing Hypothesis TWO: Socialization improves employees' productivity

5.6 *<u>Management encourages employees to be socialized</u>*

95% of the HRDs and 87% employees opined that management encourages and organizes training programs to socialize the employees to perform better at workplace. Only a small percentage of both parties disagreed in this point.

5.7 Socialization among the employees has a positive impact on productivity

Party/ opinion	HRDs' point of view	Employees' point of view
Strongly agree	45%	40%
Agree	50%	47%
Moderate	5%	12%
Disagree	0%	1%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

Table 3: Socialization among the employees

In this table, we found that 45% HRDs and 40% employees strongly agreed and 50% HRDs and 47% employees only agreed that socialization among the employees has a positive impact on employees' productivity.

5.8 Employees' performance and productivity improve after receiving orientation

Scale in percentage/Party	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
HRDs' assumption	5%	5%	10%	5%	15%	5%	20%	**30%**	5%	0%
Employees' assumption	2%	4%	11%	10%	17%	15%	**19%**	13%	4%	5%

Table 4: Employees' performance and productivity improve after receiving orientation

It is remarkable that whereas 30% HRDs claimed their employees' performance and productivity increased upto 80%, there only 19% employees found it to be improved upto 70%.

5.9 Continuous socialization improves employees' skills and service knowledge

All the HRDs and 84% employees agreed that a continuous socialization process facilitated the employees to improve their skills and service knowledge which also helped employees to deliver better output.

Test result of Hypothesis TWO: Socialization improves employees' productivity

Majority (95%) of HRDs responded that they encouraged employees to be socialized using different tools and training programs which improved employees' productivity. Both the parties observed that employees' productivity was improving to a significant level after receiving orientation and training program. So we can conclude that socialization improves employees' productivity.

Testing Hypothesis THREE: Socialization at work place has an impact on organizational stability

5.10 O<u>*rganizational performance and individual performance are co-related*</u>

Party/ opinion	Human Resource Departments' (HRDs') point of view	Employees' point of view
Strongly related	65%	48%
Related	30%	44%
Not sure	0%	6%
No relation	5%	2%

Table 5 Organizational performance and individual performance

The table demonstrated 65% HRDs and 48% employees strongly agreed that there was a strong relationship between organizational performance and individual performance. Only 5% HRDs & 2% employees responded that there was no relationship at all.

5.11 <u>*Organizational stability is important and necessary for organizational growth and employees' career development*</u>

99% employees opined that organizational stability is significant for organizational growth as well as employees' career development and 90% HRDs supported the opinion.

5.12 <u>*Programs run with an interval informing employees about organizational changes*</u>

It is mentionable that 85% HRDs organized refresher programs to inform employees about the organizational changes and majority (79%) of employees agreed to be informed about the organizational changes.

5.13 <u>*Management evaluates employees' adaptation process*</u>

With regard to management evaluation toward employees' adaptation process, 60% HRDs informed that they evaluated employees' adaptation process to ensure employees' understanding of organizational goals and objectives which confirmed organizational growth. 75% employees agreed that they had been evaluated and attended different programs arranged by management.

5.14 <u>*Socialization improves employees' commitment for work*</u>

Party/ opinion	Human Resource Departments' (HRDs') point of view	Employees' point of view
Strongly agree	25%	31%
Agree	60%	50%
Moderate	15%	18%
Disagree	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	1%

Table 6: socialization process and employees commitment for work

Majority (60%) of HRDs and 50% of employees agreed that socialization improved the employees' commitment to work.

Test result of Hypothesis THREE: Socialization at work place has an impact on organizational stability.

Socialization at workplace could be used as a strong tool for organizational stability. The above findings (opinion of 90% HRDs and employees) indicated that relationship between organizational and individual performances is positive. 90% HRDs stated that organizational stability is important and necessary for organizational growth and 99% employees supported it. These findings proved that socialization at workplace has positive impact on organizational stability and growth.

Testing Hypothesis FOUR: Socialization has a direct impact on employees' turnover

5.15 The time employees received was sufficient to develop employees understanding of job responsibilities

Party/ opinion	Human Resource Departments (HRD) point of view	Employees' point of view
Appropriate	45%	28%
Not Appropriate	5%	14%
Need to allocate more time	50%	48%
Not sure	0%	9%

Table7: Time employee received is sufficient to develop employees understanding

In this table HRDs (50%) and employees (48%) agreed that more time was needed to develop employees' understanding and skills regarding job responsibilities. Rest of the HRDs (45%) and 28% employees said that the time employees received was appropriate.

5. 16 Management encourages group interactions among the employees

60% HRDs used different management techniques to encourage group interaction among employees and 95% employees stated that they received feedback from HRDs which motivated them to be socialized at workplace.

5.17 Socialization at workplace reduced employees turnover ratio

Party/ opinion	Human Resource Departments point of view	Employees' point of view
Strongly agree	30%	19%
Agree	50%	41%
Not sure	20%	29%
Disagree	0%	9%
Strongly disagree	0%	1%

Table 8: Socialization at workplace reduce employees turnover

41% employees agreed that if they had been well socialized at workplace there were less chance to quit from the current job and 50% HRDs supported based on their experience. Only 9% employees disagreed that only socialization could not change their decision regarding quitting the job.

Test result of Hypothesis FOUR: Socialization has a direct impact on employees' turnover ratio

Employees received sufficient time for understanding job responsibilities and the management encouraged employees in group interactions which motivated them to share knowledge about the job. Again, 60% employees agreed not to quit the job if the had been well socialized. So socialization has a good impact on employees' turnover ratio.

Testing Hypothesis FIVE: Socialization through events motivates employees

5.18 Refresher programs improve employees' knowledge of work

Program frequency	Human Resource Departments (HRD) point of	Employees' point of view
Every month	25%	34%
Every year	60%	55%
Every two years	5%	3%
Every five years	5%	2%
Never organized	5%	6%

Table 9: Refresher programs improve employees' knowledge

Majority 60% HRDs organized refresher program once a year. A similar result was found from employees side; 55% received refresher program every year. Only 5% HRD never organized any refresher program for the employees.

5.19 Adequate orientation and training motivate employees

We found, 90% HRDs and employees believe that employees' motivation will increase if they are provided with adequate orientation and training.

5.20 Socialization increases employees' awareness regarding job expectation

Socialization creates awareness regarding the organizational expectancy from their job, All HRDs and 92% employees ticked 'yes' but only 8% employees disagreed and gave their negative opinion.

5.21 Recreational programs and employees' socialization

70% HRDs and 78% employees mentioned that annual picnic, tea party and other cultural functions were organized by HRDs. This helped employees to be socialized at workplace. Only 30% organizations and 22% employees gave negative response in this regard.

If 'yes' then:

Program interval	HRDs point of view	Employees' point of view
Yearly	55%	50%
Half yearly	15%	10%
Monthly	25%	20%
Irregularly	5%	20%

Table 10: The interval of recreational program

Organizations arranged different types of events to socialize employees. 55% organizations arranged yearly events, 25% monthly, 15% half-yearly and 5% irregularly. In contrast, 50% employees received yearly events, 10% half yearly, 20% monthly and 20% irregularly.

5.22 Socialization and discipline at workplace

Opinion	*HRDs point of view*	*Employees' point of view*
Strongly agree	45%	39%
Agree	50%	50%
Not sure	5%	11%
Disagree	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

Table 11: Socialization and discipline at work place

Socialization can play a significant role in avoiding disciplinary problems at the organization. About 90% HRDs and employees held the opinion that socialization can help avoid disciplinary problems. None of HRDs or employees disagreed on this issue.

Test result of Hypothesis FIVE: **Socialization through events motivates employees**

From above data, it is found that HRDs organized refresher program to improve employees' knowledge of work and job expectations. HRDs organized adequate orientation and training program to motivate employees. Recreational programs are organized at various intervals to make employees socialized. Employees could avoid disciplinary actions through socialization. All these provide evidence for the claim that socialization through events motivates employees towards organization and work.

6. Concluding remarks and recommendations

The study basically attempted to uncover the employees' and HRDs' viewpoint regarding socialization at workplace. Opinions, both positive and negative, were found in this study. HRDs used socialization as a strong tool through organization to improve individual employees' productivity, performance, motivation which reduce turnover rate as well as establish organizational stability. Employees also welcome socialization process at the workplace which will also help them to be socialized with peer groups, understand organizational culture, and avoid disciplinary action and build successful career within the organization.

After careful analysis and consideration of HRDs' and employees' point-of-view a set of recommendations has been prescribed.

> a. Duration of the orientation program needs to be increased to inform employees regarding organizational culture, norms, and values through organizing orientation program for the new hired employees.
> b. Management needs to persuade employees to share information with co-workers.
> c. Management needs to evaluate employee's adaption process with socialization by conducting informal session at workplace.
> d. More time is needed to put employees in training program to develop them understanding regarding organizational standard, culture, and work.

e. While there's no one-size-fit-all formula that will work for every HRD/employee, an effective orientation program should cover certain key topics – job tasks and expectations, company culture and objectives, and basic policies and procedures. In addition, a good orientation program can alleviate the new employee's concerns and anxieties

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Appendix A

Table a: List of the organizations and number of employees from each organization

Name of the organizations	Number of employees
H. M. Textile	5
AEGIS Services Limited	7
Energypac Power Generation Ltd	5
Cosmo Electric System	5
Startech Corporation	5
The Daily Amar Desh	5
Bangladesh Bank	9
Palli Karma-Sahanstan Foundation	4
Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd	3
Haque Group	7
Tele Talk Bangladesh Ltd	4
Bangla Link	5
BRAC Bank Ltd	5
Sonar Bangla Insurance Ltd	5
Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited	3
Warid Telecom	5
World Vision Bangladesh	4
Maisha Group	6
Transcon Beverage Ltd	5
Janata Bank Ltd	3