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〔Article〕

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Abstract

This study explored the factor of role innovative behaviors within the organizational socialization. A questionnaire survey was conducted among young adults (N=113; maximum age, 30 years) at a public job placement office in Japan. The results showed that knowledge of self-image learned in the process of organizational socialization was positively associated with role innovation. However, knowledge of organizational contexts (job, social group, organizational system, etc.) was not associated with the role innovation, but was instead positively associated with content innovation and custodianship, of which neither was concerned with self-image. Given all the above considerations, I have emphasized the function of the self-image, as generated in the organizational socialization process, as a key factor in role innovation. The implications of this research are also discussed.

Key words: organizational socialization; socialization tactics; learned knowledge; self-image; role innovation

The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between role innovations at the individual level and the process of organizational socialization. Organizational socialization is "the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; p.211). The term "role" means "the set of often diverse behaviors that are more or less expected of persons who occupy a certain defined position within a particular social system" (*ibid.*; p.226).

Properly speaking, organizational socialization is a subordinate concept of socialization, and the former refers to socialization within an organizational context. Socialization is used as "a broad term for the whole process by which an individual, born with behavioral potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behavior which is confined within a much narrower range – the range of what is customary and acceptable for him according to the standards of his group" (Child, 1954; p.655). Organizational socialization can thus be regarded as the process by which an individual, entering into an organization with behavioral potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behavior which is confined within a much narrower range – the range of what is customary and acceptable for the individual according to the standards of that particular organization. From the above definition, organizational socialization can essentially be considered as the process of standardization that brings common knowledge and a frame of reference that enables an individual to cooperate within the organization.

This raises a question, how does the process of organizational socialization mold individual behaviors

and thereby cause role innovative behaviors that contradict the expectation that such pressure would standardize individual behaviors to assume an existing role? Why does the process "by which an individual is led to develop actual behavior which is confined within a range of what is customary and acceptable for the individual according to the standards of that particular organization" mold an individual who can then cause a change of a role as a subsystem of an organization?

Reviews & Hypotheses

1. Tactics and behavioral responses

The problem of how to efficiently socialize employees within an organization is a common point of departure in this field of study. Therefore, this issue has been studied repeatedly much the same as the well-known studies of the stage models (e. g., Feldman, 1976; Katz, 1980; Takahashi, 1994). For instance, Caplow (1964) cited schooling, training, apprenticeship, mortification, trial and error, assimilation, co-option, anticipatory socialization, screening, and nepotism all as the modes of organizational socialization.

Van Maanen & Schein (1979) identified this set of policies and methods of socializing employees as "organizational socialization tactics" to be used by an organization to systematically integrate those socialization policies of organization with regard to individual role responses. Organizational socialization tactics have been defined as "the ways in which the experiences of individuals in transition from one role to another are structured for them by others in the organization" (*ibid.*; p.230).

Socialization tactics comprise six dimensions, with each dimension containing a pair of opposing tactics: collective vs. individual; formal vs. informal; sequential vs. random; fixed vs. variable; serial vs. disjunctive; and investiture vs. divestiture. Collective vs. individual tactics refer to the method of treating the people who are to be socialized (in the following discussion, the term "new members" will be used for the sake of convenience). Collective tactics mean the extent to which an organization deals with its new members as a group unit and provides them all with same experiences. Conversely, with individual tactics, the organization deals with new members as individuals and lets each have original experiences independently. Formal vs. informal tactics represent the extent to which training specifically for new members is provided separately from existing employees. With informal tactics, new members are mainly trained on-the-job among senior employees and receive less training in a separate induction process (Off-JT). Sequential vs. random tactics offer an indication of how clearly the routes or steps to a certain role are specified. The more tactics become sequential, the more clearly specified the steps. The more random the tactics, the less specified the steps. Fixed vs. variable tactics measure how definitely the time needed to pass a course to the role one should accept is scheduled and how clearly such information is offered to new members. Serial vs. disjunctive tactics show the extent to which the predecessors or existing employees in a similar role train new members who are candidates for that role, either more (serial) or less (disjunctive). When disjunctive tactics are practiced, the new member has less of a role model, or none at all. Investiture vs. divestiture tactics refer to whether the original characteristics of a new face are likely to be approved (investiture) or denied and stripped away (divestiture).

According to Van Maanen & Schein (1979), depending on which facet of each tactics-pair is more intensive, the new member could show two different responses to the assigned role. One response is the custodial role response in which the new member accepts and plays the assigned role as it previously existed. Another is the innovative response, which shows the new member assigned to an existing role adds something new to or otherwise changes the role. Furthermore, the innovative response falls within the concept of content innovation and role innovation. Content innovation involves changing the methods of performance or procedures, while role innovation involves changing the original mission, goal, or role itself. In a sense, role innovation can represent a rejection of the existing role.

Jones (1986) carried out the first empirical research on the effect of socialization tactics developing a scale for the tactics based on the framework of Van Maanen & Schein (1979). He partly modified the hypotheses of Van Maanen & Schein (1979), and rearranged the six dimensions into one contrastive dimension of institutionalized vs. individualized, or into three dimensions comprising context, content, and social aspects (Fig. 1). I shall further discuss the former framework of one dimension, which is more relevant to role responses as follows.

Figure 1.　The Classification of Socialization Tactics

Tactics concerned mainly with :	INSTITUTIONALIZED	INDIVIDUALIZED
CONTEXT	Collective Formal	Individul Informal
CONTENT	Sequential Fixed	Random Variable
SOCIAL ASPECTS	Serial Investiture	Disjenctive Divestiture

From Jones (1986; p.263)

The one-dimension classification is based on role orientation defined as "the manner in which individuals perform their roles and adjust to task requirements" (Jones, 1986; p.263). As shown in Figure 1, institutionalized tactics contain collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture dimensions, while individualized tactics consist of the opposites, with individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture dimensions. Institutionalized tactics are hypothesized to cause custodial responses, whereas individualized tactics cause innovative responses. In sum, this is classified according to expected role responses.

Jones (1986) pointed out that this framework also represents the degree to which organizational socializing activities are structured. Jones (1986) hypothesized that innovative responses result from lower levels of socializing pressure, since individualized tactics were regarded as being less organized by design or less directed by a definite policy. That is, innovative responses were considered to result from a dearth of organizational socialization. The hypotheses of socialization tactics modified by Jones (1986) were approximately supported by his own research in addition to the following empirical studies (Table 1).

Although some socialization tactics studies have been conducted, one issue has as yet received little attention from researchers. If the organizational socialization is "the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; p.211), it can be understood as a kind of learning. What affects the outcomes of socialization directly is thus not only a way of socializing, but also learned contents or knowledge as a result of the method, socialization tactics. Put another way, researches investigating relationships between socialization tactics and role responses have missed intervening variables. I think the assumption underlying the framework of socialization tactics is deeply rooted in the Stimulus-Response connection model in psychology. Similar to the criticism that has been leveled at behaviorism, a cognitive and invisible process should also exist between socializing actions (tactics) and the outcomes (role responses or, rather, role behaviors). My opinion is that role behaviors should be explored in relation to contents or knowledge learned within the process of organizational socialization.

2. Learned knowledge

The series of studies focusing on what has been learned in the organizational socialization process is called content theories (Ogawa, 2005). Fisher (1986), in a famous early review of the field of organizational socialization, indicated five content areas or domains learned in the process: preliminary learning; learning about the organization; learning to function in the work group; learning to do the job; and personal learning. Preliminary learning describes the anticipatory socialization that primarily contains learning about the necessity to adapt on the part of the individual and about what must be learned before entry. Learning about the organization consists of knowing the rules, reporting channels, reward systems, organizational characteristics, and other such qualities. Learning to

Table 1. Socialization Tactics Studies

reserches	samples	N / measure point of time			tactics dimension	effect on role response	
		first	second	third		custodial	innovative
Jones (1986)	MBA graduates	127 entry	102 after five months		1 & 6	insti.+	indi.+
Allen& Meyer (1990)	College and MBA Graduates	132 after half a year	102 after a year		6		serial−
Black (1992)	expatriate American senior managers	220			6		collective+ fixed− serial−
King & Sethi (1992)	employees less than two years	160			1	insti.+	indi.+
Black&Ashford (1995)	MBA graduates	103 before entry	83 after half a year	69 after a year	6		fixed−
Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden (1995)	Graduates	306			1	insti.+	insiti.−
Ashforth & Saks (1996)	MBA graduates	295 after four months	222 after ten months		6		insiti.−
Saks & Ashforth (1997)	young new accountants	154 after a month	154 after half a year	91 after ten months	1	insti.−	

The blanks demonstrate either lack of data or no effect.

From Ogawa (2006). Translated and extracted the studies which used role responses as dependent variables.

function in the work group contains facets such as names of the members, job responsibilities, and how to get along with coworkers and superiors. Learning to do the job can be divided into cognitive content and physical skill development subcategories. The former include rules, terms, and procedures, while the latter include speed, accuracy, strength, and stability. Lastly among these spheres is personal learning, which is the further discovery of the needs of the individual and other related concerns. This means a self-awareness of the *self image* (Caplow, 1964), or a *career-anchor* (Schein, 1978) representing a self image generated from job experiences.

The question of what is learned in the organizational socialization did not begin to be taken up by empirical studies until the 1990's. At that time, four types of learned contents or knowledge during socialization were often mentioned in early studies such as those by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) and Morrison (1993). For example, Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) referred to the learning domain as comprising task, role, group, and organizational components. The task domain reflects understandings of task duties, assignments, priorities, and so forth. The role domain focuses on authority boundaries and the appropriate behaviors for each position. The group domain is that of interactions among coworkers, organizational group norms, and other related issues. The organizational domain reflects politics, value premises of an organizational system, missions, terms, leadership styles, and related issues. Around the same time, Morrison (1993) also presented four domains to be used to measure the extent of learning in the organizational socialization process: task mastery; role clarification; acculturation; and social integration. These domains are closely equivalent to those used by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992), matching up with task domain, role domain, organizational domain, and group domain, respectively.

In contrast to Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) and Morrison (1993), each of which referred to the domains of learned knowledge concomitantly along with other main themes, Chao, et al. (1994) were concerned with the learned knowledge itself and developed a genuine scale for organizational socialization during a five-year longitudinal study of a population comprising 6,000 people. This research resulted in the finding of six dimensions of the knowledge: performance proficiency; politics; language; people; organizational goals/values; and history. However, as Chao, et al. (1994) themselves pointed out, there could be room for additional dimensions. Bauer, et al.

(1998), in one of the most comprehensive review of this field after Fisher (1986), also indicated that the measure was not always exhaustive and was required to add new dimensions as needs arose.

Haueter, et al. (2003) developed a new scale through a critical examination of the measure developed by Chao, et al. (1994). In my view, they pointed out two important faults in the work of Chao, et al. (1994). First was the lack of distinction between analytical levels such as individual, group, and organization. In the dimension of "language", for example, the term could include both the language used in a certain group and the language widely known throughout the whole organization. Second, Chao, et al. (1994) overlooked the learning about roles referred to by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) and Morrison (1993). To perform a job successfully, a new member requires not only skill learning, but also role learning, that is, learning about what one should do (Feldman, 1981). This shortcoming was also noted by Cooper-Thomas & Anderson (2002). Considering these criticisms, Haueter, et al. (2003) added those items that reflected the four dimensions cited in earlier researches (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Morrison, 1993) as well as the six dimensions of Chao, et al. (1994) to their scale, and used factor analysis to put these together in three dimensions: the organization; the group; and the job/task. I think this measure is comparatively useful and reliable among the existing measures.

However, these empirical studies placed in content theories have tended to ignore the self-learning that was taken up in Fisher (1986) and other theoretical socialization researches. As a new role needs new skills, behaviors, attitudes, and modes of interactions, a basic change within the self definition should occur (cf., Hall, 1976; Schein, 1978; Ibarra, 1999). Ibarra (1999) said that "Despite consensus in the socialization literature that identity changes accompany work role change, the process by which identity evolves remains underexplained" (p.765). With the contextual learning such as about job skills, human relations, and organizational cultures, self-learning proceeds. Through interactions between organizational contexts and the original self, that is, as a result of organizational socialization, self-image is also learned and modified. However, scant attention has been paid to learning about the self during the process of organizational socialization, which is very the process of interaction between organizational contexts and the individual. The reason why the self has not received more attention might be that organizational socialization has traditionally been studied from a managerial perspective, and problems of individual identity or self-image have been relegated to the domain of personal matters bearing little relationship to organizational performance.

When we think about role responses in the organizational socialization process, however, I think the self is as important an element as other learned contents. Role succession requires knowledge of the existing system, but any role change that redefines a role goal or even the role itself can not be understood by succession alone. Something original or different from the past appears likely to be taken up in the role innovation process. As a key source of peculiarity or idiosyncrasy, I am focusing on the self with individuality that has been regarded as the object to be socialized from organizational perspectives. For that reason, I am emphasizing learning about self-image in the socialization process in addition to learning about organizational contexts such as jobs, roles, groups, and the organization as a whole.

3. Research question and hypotheses

In the survey of previous studies regarding the socialization tactics and the content theories, two problems have been suggested. The first problem is little attention paid to the learned contents or knowledge, either as a direct factor of role behaviors, or as a mediating factor between socialization tactics and role responses. The second is the oversight of learning about self in the process of organizational socialization.

Having described the relevant literatures, I have now reached the stage where I reframe the broad question, "Why does the process 'by which an individual is led

to develop actual behavior which is confined within a range of what is customary and acceptable for the individual according to the standards of the organization' mold the individual who brings about uncustomary changes of a role which is a subsystem of an organization?" into a more limited version, and then offer several explanatory propositions.

RQ: What is the factor that causes individual innovative role responses in the process of organizational socialization, which is originally a process of standardization for a role succession?

As working hypotheses in answer to this question, I will take up socialization tactics and the learned knowledge in the organizational socialization process based on our previous literature review. To begin, with regard to the function of socialization tactics, the following hypothesis can be presented empirically based on Jones (1986) and others.

Hypothesis 1: Individualized socialization tactics will be positively associated with innovative role behaviors.

Individualized tactics include the following six tactics: individual tactics, meaning that new members are free from group deterrents; informal tactics, meaning that they have various role models and influences in each workplace; random tactics, meaning that they have a variety of courses to a target role; variable tactics, meaning that they have different timetables of career paths; and divestiture tactics, which are expected to cause some degree of revolt by the individual in response to the denial of existing traits. All the above six tactics as an integrated individualized tactics collectively bring about effects to let individuals change theirs work-roles. As the tactics in total mean that the organization gives a variety of experiences to each new member, comprising feeble socialization according to Jones (1986), employees have more diversity and more room for changing their roles.

Next, let us examine the effects of learned knowledge in the process of socialization. The learned knowledge can be roughly divided into two categories; knowledge about the organizational context and knowledge about one's self-image. Contextual learning in the socialization process, such as learning about an organizational structure, group norms, and a way to perform each job, is basically learning about part of the usual knowledge system of the organization. Learning about organizational contexts thus means the acceptance of existing working contexts. At the very least, knowing about the existing organizational contexts will not directly link to the role innovative behaviors.

Another inference may be possible. According to King (1990), innovation does not always require absolute novelties, and innovations can include introduction of an area of knowledge into another context. This way, even in an existing organizational context, the more knowledge is acquired about different departments or roles in the organization, the more a "new" point of view can be introduced into other roles in the same organization. In addition, Kanter (1983) stated that information, resources, and legitimacy to obtain support were needed to achieve innovation in an organization. Although she analyzed changes or innovations at the organizational level, role innovation at the level of the individual may also need actions to obtain legitimacy to some extent, because a role change would often involve changes in other roles since an organization is a role system. When appealing for the need of a role change to other organizational members and securing the legitimacy of a role change, the knowledge about human relations and authority in the group and about to whom one should make approaches might be useful. This knowledge means the usual contextual knowledge. Knowledge about organizational contexts learned in the process of organizational socialization performs the function of maintaining an existing role as it is, but at the same time, such knowledge can also form a resource for the individual to bring about role innovations.

Although it is not clear a priori which contextual knowledge will result in innovative or custodial role responses, a guiding hypothesis is needed for the

present. I thus present the following hypothesis for this study, considering the socialization as a process of standardization.

Hypothesis 2: Learned knowledge in the organizational socialization process about organizational contexts will be negatively associated with innovative role behaviors.

Finally, I would like to examine the effect of learning about the internal self. White (1959) referred to an innate need for the human being to master its environment as competency. Similarly, Greenberger & Strasser (1986) argued that individuals have the general desire to cause a change in circumstances to one's satisfaction. Applying these advocacies to our discussion, the attempts of a new employee to integrate the organizational role can be seen to occur in a manner consistent with personal needs. The idea of self-actualization, which Maslow (1943) identified as a motive to stimulate creativity in the case of scientists, can also be applied to the individual who embodies the self at work.

What, then, is the self learned in the organizational socialization process? Schein (1978) proposed the term career-anchor, an idea that represents a self-image discovered through interactions between an organizational or a work world and the individual. Career-anchor is composed of three elements: self-perceived talents and abilities, as factors identified strengths; self-perceived needs and motives, as what the individual wants to do; and self-perceived attitudes or values, as the concepts the individual sees purpose in. Bell & Staw (1989) suggested the career-anchor could have a function in inspiring a desire to control the environment. This suggests that self-images learned in the process of organizational socialization should work as a basic motive for role innovative behaviors. All of these arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Knowledge about self-image learned in the organizational socialization process will be positively associated with role innovative behaviors.

Methods

1. Data

Data was obtained from "*The Young Workers Attitude Survey* (N=321; response rate, 16.05%)", conducted by competent authorities during March and April of 2005. The survey was administered to approximately 14,000 people who are 30-years-old and under. They all registered with a specific public employment security office servicing young adults, and 2,000 subjects were extracted from the database at random.

Due to the local location of the office, the number of large companies in that city was less than would have been present in a larger city. As a result, most of users of that office (the unemployed) found works in small to medium-sized businesses. However, the database used here has strength in comparison with many other socialization studies, in that the sample included various people from different companies, and thus the results were not company-specific. I therefore believe this sample provides as much or more generalizability than company-specific samples.

2. Samples

The 321 respondents consisted of young people with various backgrounds: job seekers (the unemployed); permanent part timers (so-called the *freeter* in Japan); short-term contract employees; temporary employees; regular employees, and other types. Controlling these properties, I only selected regular employees for inclusion in the population sample for this research (N=113), as types of employment contract might have various affects on workers' attitudes. Table 2 shows the properties of the samples.

The first reason for choosing this site, which consisted of only young people, was the particular career stages of this population. People are more easily affected by organizational influences during early career stages. As the early career stages are the period of greatest susceptibility to socializing affects by an organization, I theorized that this would be suitable for prospecting to more easily identify changes in individual behaviors. The second reason

was that I expected experiences in the early career stages to represent a critical factor for role innovative behaviors, as later experiences are built on these early experiences.

Table. 2. Samples

1. age	M = 25.7years(s.d. = 2.2)	
2. gender		
	male	53 (46.9%)
	female	60 (53.1%)
	sum	113 (100%)
3. tenure	M = 16.5months(s.d. = 12.9)	
4. education		
	junior/high school	8 (7.1%)
	special school	13 (11.5%)
	junior college	13 (11.5%)
	college	77 (68.1%)
	graduate school	2 (1.8%)
	sum	113 (100%)
5. number of employmees of workplace		
	1-10	25 (22.1%)
	11-100	36 (31.9%)
	101-500	22 (19.5%)
	501-1000	8 (7.1%)
	over 1001	15 (13.3%)
	unkown	5 (4.4%)
	missing	2 (1.8%)
	sum	(100%)
6. occupational categories		
	sales/representetives	31 (27.4%)
	manufacturing	12 (10.6%)
	personnel/general affairs	5 (4.4%)
	information technology	7 (6.2%)
	accounting/finance	12 (10.6%)
	administration	5 (4.4%)
	others	38 (33.6%)
	missing	3 (2.7%)
	sum	113 (100%)

3. Measures

3.1 Socialization tactics

In the researches on organizational socialization tactics, the measure developed by Jones (1986) are often used. However, even with the use of the full scale, a few dimensions display low reliability. To give actual examples, the coefficient alpha of reliability has been reported as .61 (Black, 1992; Black & Ashford, 1995) and .62 (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Given the low reliability of the measure and my concerns about the respondent rate, I made a scale of socialization tactics specifically for this research through literature review (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Jones, 1986) to better clarify the meanings of tactics. In addition, I took the answering load of respondents into consideration, and provided a shorter scale comprising 12 items. Referring to the results of factor analysis for these items, I selected nine items for an individualized socialization tactics scale (Table 3). The measure is tolerable for further analysis (α = .653).

3.2 Learned knowledge in organizational socialization

Scales for learned contents in the process of organizational socialization consist of two parts. One measures the degree of learning or learned knowledge about the organizational contexts or environment in which the individual is situated. Organizational contexts cover jobs, roles, groups, institutions, cultures, and like. The other part of the scale measures learning about self-images, which, as previously mentioned, has often been neglected in the context of organizational socialization studies.

Among some kinds of measures for learning about organizational contexts, I adopted the scale of Haueter, et al. (2003), which was comparatively comprehensive and had simple structures. After translation into Japanese*, I conducted a maximum-likelihood factor analysis with promax rotation on the measure. Items with low loadings (under .400) and with cross-loading over multiple items were dropped from the measure and were not used in subsequent analyses. Consequently, 17 items were selected to represent the extent to which employees learn the organizational environment or contexts.

Through factor analysis, I also developed a measure representing the degree of learning about self-images specifically for this study, taking into account the argument of Schein (1978) that the self-images contain three components: ability (or aptitude); interests; and values. Only one factor of the self-image was defined by 10 items, which contained these three components.

Table 3.　Items of Individualized Socialization Tactics

Collective vs. individual	All the new faces had same training collectively (R).
Formal vs. informal	Separated from existing employees, there was a training for new faces (R).
Sequential vs. random	I was informed to a certain extent when and what kind of official post and rank I would be assigned to in the days of newface (R).
Fixed vs. variable 1	A typical career pattern in the company was shown to me clearly near after entering the company (R).
Fixed vs. variable 2	It was shown some career paths to a certain section or a position which show how long one has to engage in what kind of work, when I was a newface (R).
Serial vs. disjunctive 1	A predecessor or senior employee was accompanied and taught me work until I got experienced in work (R).
Serial vs. disjunctive 2	Senior employees gave me careful instructions on the job (R).
Investiture vs. divestiture 1	Stripped off my view and way of working, I was trained severely.
Investiture vs. divestiture 2	At the beginning of their career, newcomers had a way of thinking peculiar to my company hammered into their heads.

Note. R in parentheses means reversed item.

To ensure that learned knowledge about organizational environment was conceptually and empirically independent from learned knowledge of the self, factor analysis was performed comprising all these items (total, 27 items). The result supported the analytical separation of these two variables. Table 4 provides the result, specifying items, reliabilities, and correlations.

3.3　Role behaviors

Role behaviors or role responses as dependent variables were composed of both content innovation and role innovation. Content innovation refers to the change of methods in an existing role, and role innovation refers to the change of the goal in an existing role or the role itself as well as the methods. Content innovation was measured using a single item: “I usually try to change or devise new methods or procedures in my work.” Role innovation was measured by the item: “I dare to change or innovate the role itself or the work-goal.” To identify the critical factor of role innovation, custodial behavior, in which new members accept the status quo and passively accept the substantive requirements of tasks or roles, was also measured by the item: “I do my work by usual or traditional methods and remain faithful to the given goal.”

Each of the measures, socialization tactics, learning about organizational contexts and self-images, and role behaviors, were answered on 5-point Likert scales, and were regarded as interval scales.

Results

Correlations for all the variables appear in Table 5.

To test the hypotheses, three multiple regression analyses were conducted, with the three role response measures (role innovation, content innovation, and custodial role behavior) regressed on socialization tactics (individualized tactics) and learned knowledge in the process of organizational socialization (organizational contexts and self-images) after controlling for age, gender, education, tenure, job, and company size. Table 6 presents the results of these regression analyses.

The results failed to support hypothesis 1: individualized tactics will be positively associated with innovative role behaviors. Individualized tactics did not explain a significant amount of the variances. I suspect the measure did not have sufficient reliability to reflect any effect, and further empirical research is required.

Hypothesis 2, that the learned knowledge in the organizational socialization process about organizational contexts will be negatively associated with innovative role behaviors, was likewise not supported. Learning about organizational contexts was unrelated to role innovation on the one hand, and was positively related to content innovation (β =.416) significant at the .001 level and custodial role behavior (β =. 371) at the .01 level on the other.

Table 4. Results of Factor Analysis of Items for the Learned Contents in Organizational Socialization Process

	items	Factor loading	
		factor 1	factor 2
		knowledge about organizational context	knowledge about self image
1	I understand how my job contributes to the larger organization.	**0.756**	−0.110
2	I understand which job tasks and responsibilities have priority.	**0.720**	0.007
3	I know my work group role.	**0.687**	−0.150
4	I understand the expertise (e.g., skill, knowledge) each member brings to my particular work group.	**0.674**	−0.005
5	I understand how each member ' s output contributes to the group ' s end product/service.	**0.660**	0.017
6	I know what constitutes acceptable job performance (i.e., what does my supervisor and/or customers expect from me).	**0.658**	−0.185
7	I know the structure of the organization (e.g., how the department fit together).	**0.642**	0.151
8	I understand the operations of this organization (e.g., who does what, how sites, subsidiaries and/or branches contribute).	**0.602**	0.232
9	I understand how various departments, subsidiaries, and/or sites contribute to this organization ' s goals.	**0.594**	0.141
10	I know who to ask for support when my job requires it.	**0.593**	−0.133
11	I understand how to operate the tools I use in my job (e.g., voice mail, software, programs, machinery, broom, thermometer).	**0.568**	−0.068
12	I know this organization ' s overall policies and/or rules (e.g., compensation, dresscode, smoking, travel expense limitations).	**0.564**	0.052
13	I understand the politics of the group (e.g., who is influential, what needs to be done to advance or maintain good standing).	**0.556**	0.021
14	When working as a group, I know how to perform tasks according to the group ' s standards.	**0.554**	0.059
15	I know the history of this organization (e.g., when and who fouded the company, original product/services, how the organization survived tough times).	**0.536**	−0.008
16	I know the specific names of the products/services produced/provided by this organization.	**0.519**	0.106
17	I know when to inform my supervisor about my work (e.g., daily, weekly, close to deadlines, when a request is made).	**0.500**	0.028
18	As my job experience enlarges, I have understood the work that I want to do than before.	−0.050	**0.856**
19	In my work experience, the job or the type of occupation that I want to engage in has gradually become clearer.	−0.087	**0.844**
20	I know what I want to do in my work well.	0.014	**0.825**
21	It has become clerarer to some extent what type of job is suitable for me.	0.049	**0.825**
22	I have difficulty in answering the question what type of job I want to do, because I have no idea about it (R).	−0.094	**0.791**
23	In spite of enlarging my job experience, I don ' t know at all what type of work I could do well (R).	−0.045	**0.763**
24	I know well what type of jobs would give full scope to my ability	0.140	**0.695**
25	I have a plan for my career goal.	−0.125	**0.689**
26	My goal in my career is very clear.	0.094	**0.596**
27	Work Experiences have taught me my values.	0.071	**0.581**
	Correlation	(0.908)	
	Value in parentheses are coefficient of α	0.334	(0.928)

Note 1. Maximum likelihood method (promax rotation)
Note 2. Items ending with (R) indicate reversed items, and such items were used reversed in factor analysis.

Table 5. Correlations Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	−											
2. Gender	−.197*	−										
3. Education	−.012	−.048	−									
4. Tenure	.234*	.213*	.086	−								
5. Company's size	.068	−.083	−.119	.053	−							
6. Job type	−.010	.295**	−.150	−.005	−.011	−						
7. Individualized tactics	.056	.005	.050	.017	−.226*	−.216*	(.656)					
8. Contextual learnig	−.115	−.067	−.002	.217*	−.003	−.065	−.226*	(.908)				
9. Self image learning	.055	.056	−.076	.078	.087	.026	−.022	.377***	(.928)			
10. Role innovation	.076	.009	−.176	.100	.254**	−.152	−.033	.230*	.324**	−		
11. Content innovation	.014	.102	−.104	.218*	.098	−.024	−.085	.455***	.211*	.315**	−	
12. Custodial behavior	−.009	−.019	−.162	.067	.148	−.039	−.203*	.330**	.051	.186	.210*	−

Note 1. Sex, education, company size, and types of occupation are dummy variables.
Note 2. The number in the parenthesis on a diagonal is alpha coefficient.
Note 3. * p ≦.05, ** p ≦.01, *** p≦.001

Table 6. Results of Regression Analyses

	Role innovation			Content innovation			Custodial behavior		
	B	β	t	B	β	t	B	β	t
Control Variables									
Age	.060	.131	1.235	.052	.123	1.267	.046	.108	.993
Gender	.205	.112	.992	.233	.139	1.355	.138	.081	.700
Education	−.178	−.194	−1.953	−.138	−.164	−1.810	−.170	−.198	−1.949
Tenure	.001	.014	.132	.013	.186	1.895	−.003	−.043	−.388
Size	.124	.191	1.862	.011	.019	.204	.040	.067	.637
Job type	−.030	−.120	−1.128	−.018	−.080	−.820	−.034	−.149	−1.373
Indipendent Variables									
Individualized tactics	−.095	−.070	−.650	−.095	−.077	−.779	−.175	−.138	−1.254
organizational context	.160	.118	1.045	.527	.433	4.122***	.452	.364	3.087**
self-image	.257	.242	2.271*	.065	.068	.696	−.161	−.166	−1.507
R^2		.242			.362			.197	
Adjusted R^2		.159			.293			.111	
F		2.937**			5.290***			2.291*	
Df		9; 83			9; 84			9; 84	

Note. * p ≦.05, ** p ≦.01, *** p ≦.001

Hypothesis 3, that the learned knowledge in the organizational socialization process about self-image will be positively associated with innovative role behaviors, was partially supported. Learning about self-images had a significant effect on role innovation (β =.259) at the .05 level, but had no effect on content innovation or custodial role behavior.

Discussion and Conclusions

1. Theoretical implications

The above empirical evidence suggests that learning about organizational contexts has little effect on the critical changes that innovate role objectives or the role itself, but has considerable effect on moderate changes such adoption of an individualized way of playing a role or altering procedures. In more general terms, contextual learning was found to only affect "improvement," not work role "innovation" itself. In contrast to the effect of contextual learning, self-image learned in the process of organizational socialization worked on role innovation alone.

The results of this research demonstrate something in common with Kuhn (1962)'s view of the science history. Although successive and sequential efforts accelerate the progress of science within a specific frame of reference, a revolutionary change or paradigm shift that entails a change in the predominant framework itself may occur in discontinuous fashion and may not occur based on the existing system of knowledge. Innovations occur with new knowledge and require some "new" ideas unique to an area (which does not always mean an absolutely original idea). Such a new idea would be brought into a conventional realm by individuals with something different, such as perspectives, skill sets, or a way of thinking.

Similarly, I argue that the critical factor for role innovation emerged from the process of organizational socialization is not the existing knowledge represented in this research as the variable called learned knowledge about organizational context, but an awareness of the characteristics of the self, that is, the learned self-image peculiar to the individual.

In consideration of the large subject area initially under consideration, I have to think about why the learned self-image affects role innovations. What mechanisms would be at work between the self-image and role innovation? Using their own terms such as self-actualization, competency, and personal control, Maslow (1943), White (1959), and Greenberger & Strasser (1986) all emphasized that human beings have fundamental need to reflect themselves on the surrounding environment. Put another way, the self-image was considered as a motive for changing the circumstances surrounding the self. The concept of motives could affect three aspects of an action: intensity; persistence; and direction (Locke & Latham, 2004). In this case, I guess that the self-image would act on the direction of an action (role innovation) as a motive. A guiding compass of the self-images such as subjective perception of strengths, desires, and values might be a source of individuality or originality, in turn bringing new objectives to the role of the individual in an organization.

However, the explanation that the learned self-image affects role innovation as a motive did not explain why the learned self-image had little influence on the content innovation, which meant a change of procedures in a role. Organizational contexts can include these procedures. If humans have tendencies to change the environment in the direction of their self-images, learning about self-image could also be positively associated with content innovation.

With regard to this question, I can refer to the stage models of organizational socialization. In particular, Feldman (1976) and Katz (1980) provided useful insights, hypothesizing the innovative stage after accommodating stage into their models. Katz (1980) argued that the individual could find room to change roles after the accommodating stage, with the decrease in uncertainty regarding the work environment allowing the individual to apply energy to the role behaviors. Role innovation which means radical changes of a role may require a more sense of certainty than content innoveation which is a kind of improvement of the role procedures.

Considering this argument and looking back at the result of correlation analysis in the present study, which showed that learning about self-images was positively and significantly associated with learning about organizational contexts at the .001 level, after learning about the organizational environment or contexts, the individual might experience a clarification of the self-image, and may then try to affect the circumstances radically in a manner suitable to a newly constituted self-image with low uncertainty.

Ogawa (2006) named this process "organizational individuation," defined as the process by which an organizational member changes the organization or associated subsystems to reflect the desires of that member based on recognized personal characteristic (interest, ability, and value) on the organizational circumstances, in order to let the organization or its subsystems adapt to the individual. Role innovative behaviors can be a kind of organizational individuation that means individuation in organization just like the concept of organizational socialization, because any work role in an organization is an organizational subsystem, and role innovations are motivated based on the learned self-image, as suggested in this research.

2. Practical implications

Based on the theoretical implications of this study, I will make some suggestions about both individual and managerial problems: job hunting of new graduates; and recruiting for youth.

Reinterpreting the general problem peculiar to the Japanese youth of not recognizing what he / she wants to do in work as a problem involving lack of clarity regarding self-images or occupational identity, what the youth individual needs might be not profound self-analyses or reflections before job-seeking, but rather ordinary interactions on the work scene. Traditional theories of decision-making on the matter of occupation suggest matching between an individual and a job or an organization. Job seekers are thus apt to analyze their knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics such as interests and values (KSAOs). This basic principle can apply to the side of job offering. The recruiting section would try to specify the KSAOs for the job or the organization. However, to recognize or establish self-images including KSAOs, certain work experiences might be needed to provide a variety of organizational or work contexts. Accordingly, deciding whether the job or the organization fits the young worker with less work experiences, and vice versa, is essentially difficult.

Given these conditions, one of the practical steps for the youth may be to make full use of the employment interviews. This is also an event providing numerous types of contextual knowledge, feedbacks, and interactions, and could offer opportunities to learn their self-images that could be applied to directing their careers as life-long sequences of roles. The internships also provide such experiences, but it is not always open to students in Japan. To experience "realistic" work-worlds, many Japanese college students have absorbed in part-time jobs. However, most such students know they are just temporary positions and are thus ultimately false. In addition, in any case, such experiences are largely limited to Business-to-Consumer businesses or comparatively simple works. Although doing some part-time jobs is one of a way to know the work-world and the self, without serious commitment or involvement in the experiences, the effect would be reduced considerably. Making full use of serious and real job interviews rather than false experiences at great cost of college life might be more efficient.

Along this line of thinking, the Japanese policy of hiring new graduates based on their potentials would have certain validity. Examination of apparent skills or abilities would not be of great importance, given the condition that even the young individual themselves do not grasp their occupational self-images and thus do not appropriately make decisions about what careers or occupations they would choose. As few job experiences or work opportunities have been had to lead to the formation of their self-images, their internal compasses are not yet fully available to help direct their careers. A more realistic hiring policy would

thus appear to involve making hiring decisions about young workers in consideration of basic and widely used competencies like the intention to cultivate abilities, a relational ability to facilitate social interactions, and mental faculties. The results of this research seem to present a favorable view of the traditional Japanese adoption policy, even if somewhat indirectly.

3. Contributions and limitations

Organizational socialization can be understood as a process to standardize individuals to roles with the aim of their effective functioning in the organization. In other words, the socialization process could be considered as a kind of control, with unexpected factors or areas of difference representing the object of control. On the basis of such a view of organizational socialization, a managerial perspective might be consistent with the so-called "scientific management" in the pursuit of standardization.

I have explored the question of why this standardizing process, contrary to the nature of the process, could generate individuals who cause drastic changes to the roles that comprise the organizational system. In this research, I have grappled with this comparatively big question from the perspective of the individual. That is, I focused on the learned contents of the individual in the socialization process, rather than socialization tactics as a managerial method or a control policy, and the empirical data has shown that the learned self-image might represent a key factor in role innovation.

This finding has complemented the factor that the studies of socialization tactics as an analogy of psychological S-R connection model have been overlooked. I also could pay attention to the learning about the self-image that had received scant notice from researches in the field of organizational socialization, especially in the empirical studies of content theories.

However this study was cross-sectional in nature, based on a small sample size, and a portion of the scales did not demonstrate full reliability. More detailed investigation based on a longitudinal design is needed. In addition, the question of why the self-image should affect role innovation should be investigated using qualitative methods as along with theoretical considerations.

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Note

* See Ogawa (2005: in Japanese) for the full scale of

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