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Jongwook Lee, Sanghee Oh and Gary Burnett

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Organizational Socialization of Academic Librarians in the United States

Jongwook Lee (Corresponding author)

Address: School of Information, Florida State University, 142 Collegiate Loop, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2100, USA

E-mail address: nadoopro@gmail.com

Sanghee Oh

Address: School of Information, Florida State University, 142 Collegiate Loop, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2100, USA

E-mail address: shoh@cci.fsu.edu

Gary Burnett

Address: School of Information, Florida State University, 142 Collegiate Loop, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2100, USA

E-mail address: gburnett@fsu.edu

Abstract

This study aims to investigate academic librarians' organizational socialization. Successful socialization can increase librarians' commitments to and retention in the libraries, which may enhance the quality of information services to library patrons. In addition to collecting demographic information, we measured the organizational socialization of 314 academic librarians using Chao et al.'s (1994) content framework. Study participants possessed high levels of socialization in their libraries overall. They were well socialized in Politics, followed by Performance Proficiency (task/skills), and Language; however, their socialization in Organizational goals/values, History, and People were relatively low, suggesting that there is the room for improvement. Other key findings are: (1) male participants had lower levels of socialization in the People dimension than did females; (2) participants who were tenured had higher levels of socialization than did those who had not yet achieved tenure; (3) participants who had informal mentoring experiences had higher levels of socialization overall compared to those who had not received any mentoring; and (4) participants' socialization was associated negatively with the number of employees in their libraries and with the highest degree offered by their institutions. The study findings can be used to understand the learning and adjustment process of academic librarians in the United States, predict their retention and job satisfaction, and develop and improve library training or orientation programs.

Keywords: organizational socialization, academic librarians, socialization content framework, United States

Introduction

Socialization is “the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make them more or less able members of their society” (Brim, 1966, p. 3). Socialization is one of the important factors leading to the success of an organization and individuals who belong to the organization. Organizational socialization refers to the process by which an individual acquires knowledge, skills, culture, and roles as a member of an organization (Fisher, 1986; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), and the learning and adjustment process of employees to their roles within an organization (Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994). Individuals are viewed as socially constructed selves in the context of their organizations because their behaviors may be influenced by social norms in those organizations (Schein, 1971). Successful organization socialization is positively associated with individuals’ career outcomes, such as job performance, job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Feldman, 1981; Fisher, 1986).

Successful socialization can improve librarians’ commitments to and retention in their libraries (Ballard & Blessing, 2006; Black & Leysen, 2002; Chapman, 2009), which may enhance the quality of information services to library patrons. For this reason, the assessment of librarians’ socialization experiences in their libraries can be referenced as indicators of future performance and as markers of any individual or organizational issues to address. Nevertheless, relatively few attempts have been made to examine librarians’ socialization processes and experiences within library settings. A few prior studies have investigated the socialization of academic librarians, but they have focused on the development and improvement of orientation programs for new librarians only. Organizational socialization, however, takes place throughout an individual’s career (Matthews, 2002; Schein, 1971). Therefore, in this study we aim to measure the socialization process of full-time librarians who are currently working in academic libraries. Specifically, three research questions are examined:

RQ 1. To what extent are academic librarians socialized into their libraries?

RQ 2. How is the socialization of academic librarians related to their demographic characteristics?

RQ 3. How is the socialization of academic librarians related to the characteristics of those libraries?

Organizational socialization can be assessed in two ways: by 1) measuring a process of learning socialization content (e.g., performance proficiency, people, politics, languages, organizational goals and values, and history) (Chao et al., 1994; Klein & Heuser, 2008) or 2) evaluating performance outcomes, namely proximal and distal socialization outcomes (e.g., role clarity, social integration, job satisfaction, commitment, retention, and tenure) (Klein & Heuser, 2008). Of two assessment approaches, measuring learning outcome using a socialization content framework has strengths in that it is a relatively more direct approach than measuring performance outcomes. Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, and Gardner’s (1994) framework has been most frequently used to measure the socialization of employees in several different organizational settings such as an educational institution (Klein & Weaver, 2000), a hotel (Hart, 2012), and a consulting firm (Wesson & Gogus, 2005). Our study uses Chao et al.’s (1994) framework to assess the organizational socialization of academic librarians.

Organizational Socialization of Academic Librarians

Only a few researchers have examined the topic of organization socialization in library settings, although they have acknowledged its importance in improving librarians' retention, job commitment, and job satisfaction (Chapman, 2009; Oud, 2008; Simmons-Welburn & Welburn, 2003). Such researchers have discussed proposing ways to enhance librarians' socialization levels in academic libraries, focusing on orientation programs, based on the belief that early socialization is critical for employee job satisfaction and retention. For example, Ballard and Blessing (2006) proposed three elements of an effective orientation program for newly employed librarians at North Carolina State University Libraries, including (1) orientation sessions, (2) orientation checklists, and (3) individual meetings. Chapman (2009) also pointed out the need for improvement in orientation programs to retain librarians, proposing three components for successful employee orientation and socialization: (1) use of checklists, (2) role of supervisors, and (3) buddy/mentor relationships.

Other researchers have introduced methods to improve the socialization process in academic librarians in general. For example, Black and Leysen (2002) argued that effective socialization tactics are significant for new academic librarians, given that library graduate programs do not provide sufficient training in developing "a professional identity" or "peer interaction" (p. 4). Based on an analysis of 122 survey responses, they suggested several strategies to improve the socialization experiences of new librarians, including a proactive recruitment process, effective orientation programs, and a supportive mentoring environment. In addition, Simmons-Welburn and Welburn (2003) described the importance of formal orientation, mentoring, interaction with the campus community, and information seeking behaviors in the socialization process. Furthermore, Oud (2008) suggested providing reasonable expectations to job candidates during recruiting, effective training and orientation programs, and mentoring to facilitate new librarians' job transitions.

Overall, previous organizational socialization studies conducted in library settings were superficial in that they did not address any antecedents or consequences of socialization with empirical data. However, we can infer that successful socialization improves librarians' job commitment, satisfaction, and retention from other studies done in different contexts; for example, Chao et al. (1994) conducted a longitudinal study that relates the level of socialization to changes in jobs/organizations and career effectiveness. They found that the level of socialization has a positive association with career effectiveness, such as career involvement, personal income, and job satisfaction. Also, Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) surveyed newcomers in the British Army at three different times and found that their level of socialization positively predicted outcome variables, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitments, and retention. Moreover, Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, and Tucker (2007) conducted a meta-analysis on studies about organizational newcomers and found that socialization dimensions were partly related to the outcomes of newcomers. They also found that information seeking and socialization tactics were related to newcomers' socialization.

Although no studies have directly examined an association between the socialization outcomes and the service quality in libraries, we can assume their possible linkage through the studies conducted in different service organizations. For example, Hartline and Ferrell (1993) surveyed three different groups (hotel general managers, customer-contact employees, and hotel guests) in the hotel industry. They found that employees' overall organizational socialization is positively associated with job satisfaction, a major determinant of service quality. Hoffman and

Ingram (1992) explored a relationship between the job satisfaction of employees and customer-oriented behavior in the home healthcare market. Based on the correlations between overall job satisfaction dimensions and customer-oriented behavior, Hoffman and Ingram suggested monitoring and improving the job satisfaction of service providers. Furthermore, Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) tested the relationship between the job satisfaction/organizational commitment and the service quality of customer-contact employees in call centers of a bank in the UK. Their study revealed significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and service quality and between affective commitment (defined as an “employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (p. 166)) and service quality. Another study (Kelley, Skinner, & Donnelly, 1992) extended the scope of research to suggest the importance of organizational socialization of service customers. Kelley, Skinner, and Donnelly (1992) found that the socialization level of service customers is positively related to their perceptions of the organizational climate for service, motivational directions, and levels of satisfaction, which contribute to the improvement of service quality.

Overall, researchers have acknowledged the significance of successful socialization of academic librarians to their libraries. However, previous studies were limited to proposing several ways to improve the process, and few researchers have related the level of socialization to its outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and retention. Given the positive associations between such outcomes and service quality, we can further speculate that successful socialization helps libraries achieve their organizational goals of providing high quality services to their patrons, warranting future research. As a first step for linking librarians’ socialization to their outcomes, the current study attempted to measure the extent to which librarians are actually socialized.

Socialization Content Framework

Many researchers have proposed content frameworks for assessing the organizational socialization of employees (Chao et al., 1994; Feldman, 1981; Klein & Heuser, 2008; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993). In particular, Chao et al. (1994) proposed a 34-item scale for measuring six content dimensions of socialization through confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis. Because of the validity of the scale items, their framework has been used frequently in organizational socialization research (Hart, 2012; Klein & Weaver, 2000) despite its limited coverage and its inconsistency in measuring different types of socialization outcomes (e.g., learning outcomes and proximal outcomes) at different levels (e.g., job-level, organization-level) (Haueter, Macan, & Winter, 2003; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Therefore, in our study, we adapted Chao et al.’s (1994) content framework to measure the organizational socialization of academic librarians.

Chao et al.’s (1994) framework proposes six dimensions of organizational socialization:

1. **History** reflects the degree to which individuals have acquired the traditions, customs, myths, and rituals of their organization.
2. **Language** shows the “individual’s knowledge of the profession’s technical language as well as knowledge of the acronyms, slang, and jargon that are unique to the organization.”
3. **Politics** covers the “individual’s success in gaining information regarding formal and informal work relationships and power structures within the organization.”

4. **People** are associated with “establishing successful and satisfying work relationships with organizational members.”
5. **Organizational goals and values** embody the understanding of the rules, principles, group norms, and values within the organization.
6. **Performance proficiency** refers to “the extent to which the individual has learned the tasks involved on the job” (pp. 731-732).

Some authors have applied Chao et al.’s framework with modifications; for example, Klein and Weaver (2000) assessed the effect of an orientation program on the organizational-level socialization of newcomers. Because their study focused only on socialization outcomes at the organizational level, they eliminated six scale items that measure other levels, such as job- or unit-levels. Wesson and Gogus (2005) compared the effectiveness of social and computer-based orientation programs using Chao et al.’s framework. In their study, the authors changed the focus of seven scale items from “work group” to “organization” on the grounds that “...the orientation and outcomes of interest were organizationally based” (p. 1021). In addition, Hart (2012) used 24 scale items after rewording all the items to study the socialization of newly hired hotel managers.

To measure the socialization of academic librarians in the current study, we use the Chao et al. (1994) framework of six dimensions of organizational socialization by rewording the scale items, focusing on the organizational-level socialization of librarians rather than measuring multiple other levels of socialization as in the original framework. Further, we modified or eliminated certain ambiguous or redundant items, resulting in a 24 item scale. Table 1 shows the six socialization dimensions and associated statements that we developed for testing academic librarians’ socialization in their library settings.

Table 1
The modified Chao et al. (1994) scale items

| Dimension | Scale items |
|-----------|--|
| History | I know my library’s long-held traditions |
| | I am familiar with my library’s customs, rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations. |
| | I would be a good resource in describing the background of my library. |
| | I am familiar with the history of my library. |
| Language | I have mastered the specialized terminology and vocabulary of my library. |
| | I have mastered my library’s slang. |
| | I understand the specific meanings of words and jargon used in my library. |
| | I understand what most of the acronyms and abbreviations used in my library mean. |
| Politics | I know who the most influential people are in my library. |
| | I understand how things work politically in my library. |
| | I have a good understanding of the politics in my library. |
| | I can identify the people in my library who are most important in getting the work done. |
| People | I consider any of my coworkers as my friends. |
| | I am usually included in social get-togethers given by other people in my library. |
| | Within my work group, I would be easily identified as “one of the gang.” |
| | I am usually included in informal networks or gatherings of people within my |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | library. |
| Organizational Goals/Values | The goals of my library are also my goals. |
| | I believe in the values set by my library. |
| | I would be a good example of an employee who represents my library's values. |
| | I support the goals that are set by my library. |
| Performance Proficiency | I have learned how to successfully perform my job in an efficient manner. |
| | I have mastered the required tasks of my job. |
| | I have developed the appropriate skills and abilities to successfully perform my jobs. |
| | I understand what all the duties of my job entail. |

Methods

Data Collection and Analysis

The population of this study is full-time librarians (tenured and untenured) who are currently employed in four-year college or university libraries in the United States. We developed an online survey using Qualtrics and sent an email solicitation to potential academic librarians through four American Library Association (ALA) mailing lists: (1) the University Libraries List, (2) College Libraries Section, (3) ACRL Scholarly Communication, and (4) ILI-L Discussion List. Data collection lasted one week (April 6-12, 2015). The survey link was opened 366 times, and 314 full-time librarians answered all questions. We analyzed the 314 completed survey responses using both descriptive and inferential statistics (correlations, T-tests, One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests). The normality of the observations was checked through the calculation of standardized residual of the outcome variable (i.e., participants' average socialization score), and the histogram of the standardized residual appeared to be normally distributed.

Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire included two sections: background questions and an organizational socialization measure (see Appendix A). Survey participants were asked to answer demographic and institutional background questions. Demographic questions included gender, age, ethnicity, educational level, primary responsibility, job status (part-/full-time), tenure status, work and mentoring experiences (Black & Leysen, 2002; Palmer, Dill, & Christie, 2009; Sweeper & Smith, 2010). Institutional questions included library size (number of full-time library employees) and the highest degree granted by an institution. We included a question for library size due to a possible impact of organizational size in socialization (see Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005).

The scale items for the organizational socialization measure were presented in a matrix table in random order, and participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with a statement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree). To ensure content validity of the questionnaire, we conducted pilot testing with two academic librarians and revised the questionnaire based on their feedback. After collecting survey data, Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the reliability of the 24 modified scale items in Table 1. The scores ranged from 0.814 to 0.881 as described in Table 2, showing "good" reliability according to the guidelines of George and Mallery (2003).

Table 2
Cronbach alpha scores of scale items

| | History (n=4) | Language (n=4) | Politics (n=4) | People (n=4) | Organizational goals/values (n=4) | Performance proficiency (n=4) |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Alpha (α) | 0.881 | 0.871 | 0.822 | 0.814 | 0.867 | 0.846 |

Results

Characteristics of Participants

Demographic characteristics. The total number of survey participants was 314. As reported in Table 3, females (80.3%) outnumbered males (19.7%) approximately 4 to 1, reflecting that librarianship continues to be a predominantly feminine profession (Piper & Collamer, 2001). The participants' mean age was 43.6 years ($SD = 11.59$, range 24-71). The majority were Caucasian (87.6%). The remainders were African American (2.9%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2.9%), Hispanic/Latino (2.2%), and Other (2.5%); 6 participants declined to indicate their ethnicity. All participants had at least a master's degree, and 8.9% of them had doctoral or professional doctoral (e.g., JD) degrees. The highest degree attained by 90.20% was a master's degrees in library and information science.

On average, participants had worked as librarians for 13.3 years ($SD=10.97$) and 8.7 years ($SD=8.69$) at their current institutions. One hundred and eleven participants (35.4%) were on a tenure track and eligible for promotion; 55 (49%) were tenured, 110 (35.0%) were eligible for promotion only, and 93 (29.6%) were ineligible for either tenure or promotion. One hundred and ninety eight (63.1%) reported that they had participated in mentoring activities, while 116 participants had not. Among those who had, 123 (39.2%) had participated in informal mentoring only, while 48 (15.3%) had participated in both formal and informal mentoring, and 27 (8.6%) in formal mentoring only.

Table 3.
Demographic characteristics of survey participants

| Demographic variables | Categories | N | Percent |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----|---------|
| Gender | Female | 252 | 80.3% |
| | Male | 62 | 19.7% |
| Age | Under 35 | 86 | 27.4% |
| | 35-44 | 95 | 30.3% |
| | 45-54 | 63 | 20.1% |
| | Over 55 | 70 | 22.3% |
| Ethnicity | Caucasian | 275 | 87.6% |
| | Hispanic or Latino | 7 | 2.2% |
| | African American | 9 | 2.9% |
| | Asian/Pacific Islander | 9 | 2.9% |
| | Other | 8 | 2.5% |
| | Decline to answer | 6 | 1.9% |
| Highest degree | Master's degree in LIS | 258 | 82.2% |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----|-------|
| | Master's degree in other fields | 28 | 8.9% |
| | Doctoral degree | 28 | 8.9% |
| Eligibility for tenure/promotion | Tenure and promotion | 111 | 35.4% |
| | Promotion only | 110 | 35.0% |
| | Ineligible | 93 | 29.6% |
| Tenured/untentured | Tenured | 55 | 17.5% |
| | Untenured | 259 | 82.5% |
| Work experience (at current institutions) | Less than 5 years | 139 | 44.3% |
| | 5-10 | 77 | 24.5% |
| | 11-16 | 43 | 13.7% |
| | 17-22 | 25 | 8.0% |
| | More than 22 years | 30 | 9.6% |
| Work experience (as librarians) | Less than 5 years | 80 | 25.5% |
| | 5-10 | 84 | 26.8% |
| | 11-16 | 54 | 17.2% |
| | 17-22 | 26 | 8.3% |
| | More than 22 years | 70 | 22.3% |
| Mentoring experience | Formal mentoring | 27 | 8.6% |
| | Informal mentoring | 123 | 39.2% |
| | Formal/informal mentoring | 48 | 15.3% |
| | None | 116 | 36.9% |

Institutional characteristics. Table 4 shows the institutional characteristics of participants' libraries. The average number of full-time employees working in these libraries was 55.6, but the standard deviation was very large ($SD = 78.47$) as the value ranged from 1 to 450. Participants were divided into four groups using the quartile values of the number of full-time library employees. While almost 75% worked in libraries with 1 to 65 full-time employees, 25% worked in libraries with 66 to 450 full-time employees.

More than 60% of the participants worked in institutions with doctoral programs. The average number of full-time library employees at such institutions ($M=80.30$, $SD=90.17$) was significantly greater than those institutions with bachelor's- ($M=12.38$, $SD=9.10$) or master's- ($M=14.83$, $SD=10.32$) degree programs alone. Specifically, all libraries with more than 60 full-time employees worked in institutions with doctoral programs. Two variables were correlated positively ($\text{tau-c}=0.451$, $p < 0.01$) with this relationship, such that, as the number of full-time employees increased, the level of the degrees granted by the institutions increased.

Table 4
Distribution of survey participants by institutional characteristics

| | | Highest degree offered by institution | | | Total |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | | Bachelor | Master | Doctorate | |
| Number of full-time library employees | 1 to 10 | 21 | 32 | 26 | 79 (25.2%) |
| | 11 to 23 | 13 | 32 | 33 | 78 (24.8%) |
| | 24 to 65 | 5 | 14 | 63 | 82 (26.1%) |
| | 66 to 450 | 0 | 0 | 75 | 75 (23.9%) |
| Overall | | 39 (12.4%) | 78 (24.8%) | 197 (62.7%) | 314 (100%) |

Socialization of Participants

As shown in Table 5, the overall socialization was quite high ($M=4.04$). It was the highest in Politics ($M=4.29$), followed by Performance Proficiency ($M=4.28$) and Language ($M=4.23$). A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare the means across the socialization dimensions, and there was a significant effect for the dimension (Wilks' Lambda = .45, $F(5, 309) = 76.39$, $p < .05$, multivariate partial eta squared = .55). Post-hoc comparisons with the Bonferroni test showed that Language, Politics, and Performance Proficiency differ significantly from History, People, and Organizational Goals/Values. The participants were more highly socialized in Language, Politics and Performance Proficiency than Organizational Goals and Values ($M=3.92$), History ($M=3.87$), and People ($M=3.65$).

Table 5
Descriptive statistics of socialization dimensions

| Dimension | N | Mean | SD |
|---------------------------------|-----|------|------|
| History | 314 | 3.87 | 0.85 |
| Language | 314 | 4.23 | 0.64 |
| Politics | 314 | 4.29 | 0.64 |
| People | 314 | 3.65 | 0.77 |
| Organizational goals and values | 314 | 3.92 | 0.71 |
| Performance proficiency | 314 | 4.28 | 0.58 |
| Overall | 314 | 4.04 | 0.52 |

Note. *SD* = standard deviation

Correlation analyses were conducted to check the bivariate relationships among these six dimensions (Table 6). All of the dimensions were significantly and positively correlated with each other, although there were some differences in the strength of the correlation. According to Dancy and Reidy's (2004) categorization of correlation, the dimensions of History, Language, Politics, and Performance Proficiency were moderately correlated with one another (range: $.55 \leq r \leq .70$). Further, Organizational Goals and Values were moderately correlated with History ($r = .40$), Language ($r = .41$), Politics ($r = .41$), and People ($r = .42$). There were several weak correlations; the People dimension was correlated weakly with History ($r = .27$), Language ($r = .40$), Politics ($r = .34$), and Performance Proficiency ($r = .26$), while Organizational Goals/Values was also correlated weakly with Performance Proficiency ($r = .36$).

Table 6
Correlations among socialization dimensions

| Dimension | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. History | 1 | | | | | |
| 2. Language | .69** | 1 | | | | |
| 3. Politics | .68** | .70** | 1 | | | |
| 4. People | .27** | .40** | .34** | 1 | | |
| 5. Organizational goals/values | .40** | .41** | .41** | .42** | 1 | |
| 6. Performance proficiency | .55** | .65** | .62** | .26** | .36** | 1 |

Note. ** Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Characteristics and Socialization of Participants

Demographic characteristics and socialization. The demographic characteristics of participants (gender, age, eligibility for tenure/promotion, tenured/untentured, work experience, and mentoring experience) were related to their level of socialization in the libraries. However, the ethnicity and the highest degree of participants were not used in the comparison of their socialization, as the majority was Caucasian (87.6%) with master's degrees in LIS (82.2%).

The dimension of People was significantly different between male and female participants, while there was no significant gender difference in overall socialization (Table 7); female participants had a higher level of socialization ($M=3.69$) than males ($M=3.45$).

Table 7
Socialization by gender

| Dimension | Male (N=62) | | Female (N=252) | | T-test | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------|----------------|------|--------|---------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | t | df | sig |
| History | 3.95 | 0.75 | 3.85 | 0.87 | .929 | 105.329 | .355 |
| Language | 4.26 | 0.58 | 4.22 | 0.65 | .463 | 312 | .644 |
| Politics | 4.40 | 0.57 | 4.26 | 0.66 | 1.460 | 312 | .145 |
| People | 3.45 | 0.83 | 3.69 | 0.75 | -2.224 | 312 | .027* |
| Organizational goals/values | 3.86 | 0.72 | 3.93 | 0.70 | -.754 | 312 | .451 |
| Performance proficiency | 4.23 | 0.57 | 4.29 | 0.58 | -.696 | 312 | .487 |
| Overall | 4.02 | 0.48 | 4.04 | 0.53 | -.221 | 312 | .826 |

Note. SD = standard deviation; * Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Participants' age was related positively to their overall level of socialization ($r = .27$), and there were positive correlations between ages and the dimensions of History ($r = .45$), Language ($r = .21$), Politics ($r = .26$), Organizational goals/values ($r = .12$), and Performance proficiency ($r = .23$). However, there was no statistical correlation between age and the People dimension.

Like the correlations between age and socialization, participants' work experience both at their current institutions and as librarians were correlated positively with their overall level of socialization ($r = .39$ and $r = .32$). Participants' work experience at their current institutions was correlated positively with all of the dimensions except People (History ($r = .58$), Language ($r = .33$), Politics ($r = .33$), Organizational goals/values ($r = .12$), and Performance proficiency ($r = .29$)). In addition, participants' work experience as librarians was correlated positively with their socialization in History ($r = .49$), Language ($r = .27$), Politics ($r = .29$), Organizational goals/values ($r = .13$), and Performance proficiency ($r = .28$). However, the People dimension was not correlated with the participants' work experience as librarians.

With respect to the participants' eligibility for tenure or promotion, there was no statistically significant difference in socialization. However, as shown in Table 8, participants who were tenured had significantly higher levels of socialization than did those who had not yet attained tenure. Specifically, tenured participants had significantly higher levels of socialization than untenured participants in the dimensions of History, Language, Politics, and Performance Proficiency ($p < .05$).

Table 8
Socialization of tenured and untenured participants

| Dimension | Tenured (N=55) | | Untenured (N=259) | | T-test | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------|-------------------|------|--------|---------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | t | df | sig |
| History | 4.25 | 0.74 | 3.79 | 0.85 | 3.684 | 312 | .000* |
| Language | 4.44 | 0.54 | 4.18 | 0.65 | 2.691 | 312 | .008* |
| Politics | 4.47 | 0.54 | 4.25 | 0.65 | 2.361 | 312 | .019* |
| People | 3.52 | 0.80 | 3.67 | 0.76 | -1.351 | 312 | .178 |
| Organizational goals/values | 4.00 | 0.72 | 3.90 | 0.70 | .876 | 312 | .382 |
| Performance proficiency | 4.45 | 0.49 | 4.24 | 0.59 | 2.560 | 312 | .011* |
| Overall | 4.19 | 0.42 | 4.01 | 0.54 | 2.771 | 96.138* | .007* |

Note. SD = standard deviation; * Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Participants' socialization differed according to their mentoring experience overall (Table 9), and the post-hoc comparisons with the Tukey HSD test showed that participants with informal mentoring experience had a significantly higher level of socialization than did those with no mentoring experience, overall. In individual socialization dimensions, there were significant mean differences by mentoring experience in History, Language, and Politics; participants with informal mentoring experience had significantly higher scores than did those with none.

Table 9
Socialization of participants by mentoring experience

| Dimension | Formal (N=27) | | Informal (N=123) | | Formal/Informal (N=48) | | None (N=116) | | F-test | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------|------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------|------|--------|-----------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | F | df | sig. |
| History | 3.65 | 0.81 | 4.00 | 0.79 | 4.05 | 0.77 | 3.71 | 0.92 | 3.82 | 3, 310 | .010* |
| Language | 4.26 | 0.66 | 4.33 | 0.59 | 4.31 | 0.61 | 4.08 | 0.67 | 3.74 | 3, 310 | .012* |
| Politics | 4.13 | 0.79 | 4.44 | 0.54 | 4.23 | 0.59 | 4.19 | 0.69 | 4.39 | 3, 89.252 | .006* |
| People | 3.59 | 0.82 | 3.75 | 0.73 | 3.74 | 0.74 | 3.50 | 0.80 | 2.42 | 3, 310 | .066 |
| Organizational goals/values | 3.87 | 0.69 | 3.99 | 0.72 | 4.05 | 0.71 | 3.80 | 0.69 | 2.02 | 3, 310 | .111 |
| Performance proficiency | 4.13 | 0.83 | 4.35 | 0.54 | 4.31 | 0.52 | 4.22 | 0.56 | 1.38 | 3, 88.982 | .255 |
| Overall | 3.94 | 0.54 | 4.14 | 0.47 | 4.12 | 0.50 | 3.92 | 0.55 | 4.69 | 3, 310 | .003* |

Note. SD = standard deviation; * Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Institutional characteristics and socialization. Although weak, there was a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -.20$) between the number of full-time library employees and socialization. Participants were less socialized into their libraries as library size increased. When compared in four groups using the quartile values in Table 4, there were statistically significant differences in overall socialization and in the dimensions of History, Politics, and Organizational goals/values. Post hoc tests with the Tukey HSD indicated that the overall socialization of participants who worked in libraries with more than 66 employees was less than that of those in

libraries with 1 to 10 employees or 11 to 23 employees, and such differences were observed across History, Politics, and Organizational goals/values; in Language, People, and Performance proficiency, there were no statistically significant differences.

Table 10
Number of full-time (FT) library employees and their socialization

| Dimension | 1 to 10 (N=79) | | 11 to 23 (N=78) | | 24 to 65 (N=82) | | 66 to 450 (N=75) | | F-test | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------|--------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | F | df | sig. |
| History | 4.00 | 0.81 | 3.96 | 0.80 | 3.93 | 0.87 | 3.57 | 0.87 | 4.41 | 3, 310 | .005* |
| Language | 4.36 | 0.55 | 4.25 | 0.58 | 4.20 | 0.69 | 4.10 | 0.70 | 2.27 | 3, 310 | .080 |
| Politics | 4.45 | 0.54 | 4.35 | 0.59 | 4.29 | 0.69 | 4.06 | 0.67 | 5.22 | 3, 310 | .002* |
| People | 3.76 | 0.75 | 3.75 | 0.75 | 3.52 | 0.82 | 3.57 | 0.74 | 2.05 | 3, 310 | .107 |
| Organizational goals/values | 4.03 | 0.70 | 4.07 | 0.65 | 3.82 | 0.75 | 3.75 | 0.68 | 4.09 | 3, 310 | .007* |
| Performance proficiency | 4.37 | 0.57 | 4.30 | 0.53 | 4.27 | 0.54 | 4.15 | 0.65 | 2.02 | 3, 310 | .111 |
| Overall | 4.16 | 0.50 | 4.11 | 0.50 | 4.00 | 0.52 | 3.87 | 0.52 | 5.12 | 3, 310 | .002* |

Note. *SD* = standard deviation; * Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

The overall levels of socialization were significantly different across institution types by the highest degrees offered (Table 11). Statistically significant differences were found in the dimensions of Politics, People, and Organizational goals/values. Post-hoc comparisons with the Tukey HSD test showed that the mean score of baccalaureate-granting institutions differed significantly from doctoral-degree-granting institutions in overall socialization and in the Organizational goals/values dimension.

Table 11
Highest degree type offered by institutions and socialization

| Dimension | Bachelor (N=39) | | Master (N=78) | | Doctoral (N=197) | | F-test | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------------|------|--------|------------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | F | df | sig. |
| History | 4.09 | 0.79 | 3.97 | 0.79 | 3.79 | 0.88 | 2.80 | 2, 311 | .063 |
| Language | 4.35 | 0.53 | 4.23 | 0.57 | 4.20 | 0.68 | .82 | 2, 311 | .440 |
| Politics | 4.47 | 0.47 | 4.34 | 0.64 | 4.23 | 0.66 | 3.92 | 2, 107.765 | .023* |
| People | 3.80 | 0.80 | 3.78 | 0.67 | 3.56 | 0.80 | 3.06 | 2, 311 | .049* |
| Organizational goals/values | 4.19 | 0.58 | 3.99 | 0.69 | 3.84 | 0.72 | 4.73 | 2, 311 | .009* |
| Performance proficiency | 4.35 | 0.47 | 4.29 | 0.56 | 4.25 | 0.60 | .52 | 2, 311 | .597 |
| Overall | 4.21 | 0.47 | 4.10 | 0.51 | 3.98 | 0.53 | 4.00 | 2, 311 | .019* |

Note. *SD* = standard deviation; * Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Discussion and Implications

We examined the organizational socialization of academic librarians and found that they possessed high levels of socialization; participants were well acquainted with Politics, followed by Performance Proficiency, and Language, while socialization in Organizational goals/values,

History, and People were relatively low, suggesting room for improvement. The positive correlations between the participants' socialization in Organizational goals/values and History and their ages or work experience showed that socialization in these dimensions could naturally improve over time. However, participants' socialization in the People dimension was not associated with any temporal factor. Furthermore, male librarians had a lower level of socialization in the People dimension than did females, indicating that females have better social relationships with coworkers than do males.

Compared to other studies investigating the socialization of employees in different organizational settings (Chao et al., 1994; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Wesson & Gogus, 2005), our participants had relatively low levels of socialization in the People dimension. This may be attributed to the characteristics of library organizations or librarians' personality traits (Agada, 1994), which requires further investigation. Librarians are expected to have good interpersonal relationships with their coworkers (Gerolimos & Konsta, 2008), which may facilitate the accomplishment of library goals and missions. Therefore, libraries might consider providing further opportunities for their professional staff to build and improve social and working relationships.

Participants' tenure and mentoring experiences were highly associated with their socialization. Those who were tenured had higher levels of socialization than did those without tenure, which might have been influenced by their age or work experience. Moreover, as pointed out by Chapman (2009) and Simmons-Welburn and Welburn (2003), participants who had informal mentoring experiences had higher levels of socialization overall compared to those who had not received any mentoring. Such differences were found in three dimensions of socialization, History, Language, and Politics. This finding may demonstrate the positive role of informal mentoring in the socialization of academic librarians. On the other hand, no role for formal mentoring experience on socialization was detected in the current study. However, given the small number of participants with formal mentoring and the possibility that participants had different levels of socialization before receiving formal or informal mentoring, this finding requires cautious interpretation. Unlike formal mentoring, informal mentoring could naturally develop between individuals without any intervention by their organizations (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992). To foster such informal peer-to-peer mentoring relationships, libraries need to make more efforts to help their members discover shared social or professional interests (Lee, Anderson, & Burnett, 2015).

We also explored the relationships between the socialization of participants and the characteristics of their libraries; socialization was negatively associated with the number of employees in the libraries, indicating that librarians in large libraries may have more difficulty learning and adjusting than do those in smaller libraries. Similarly, the socialization of participants decreased as the highest degree offered by their institutions increased, which was not surprising, given the positive correlation between the number of full-time library employees and the highest degree granted by the institutions. This finding suggests that large-scale libraries (more than 66 employees in our study) need to pay more attention to socializing their librarians. For example, participants in large libraries or in doctoral-degree-granting institutions were less socialized across several dimensions, including Politics and Organizational goals/values; however, based on our finding that mentored participants were socialized more thoroughly than those who were not in Politics, libraries should encourage mentoring relationships between librarians regardless of their institutional size

Finally, our study tested the applicability of a socialization content framework developed for general workplace settings to library settings. To do so, we modified Chao et al.'s content framework to make it relevant to academic library settings and to improve the clarity of statements. In this process, we simplified the number of scale items from 31 to 24 while achieving "good" reliability in all six dimensions, demonstrating the applicability of the framework in future studies measuring the socialization of library employees. In addition to assessing the socialization of librarians, this content framework, with its six dimensions, could be used to inform the development and refinement of existing library training programs. For example, such programs could be designed on the basis of the content dimensions in the framework.

Nevertheless, as noted earlier, the content framework used in this study might not reflect all the socialization dimensions comprehensively, suggesting the need for future studies focused on different content dimensions. Our study findings may suffer from self-selection bias as the survey link was sent to potential participants through mailing lists. Also, librarians who have negative experiences with their libraries might have been reluctant to participate in the survey, so it may be difficult to generalize our findings to entire academic librarians in the U.S.

Conclusions and Future Research

We explored 314 academic librarians' organizational socialization and investigated whether or not socialization is different by along demographic or institutional lines. While previous studies have focused on suggesting how to improve librarians' socialization, our study attempted to measure their socialization into their libraries. The use of the six dimension content framework allowed us to grasp socialization in detail and suggested some aspects to be addressed. The findings of our study can be used to improve our understanding of the learning and adjustment process of academic librarians in the United States and to develop and improve library training or orientation programs, which will help to increase job retention and satisfaction of academic librarians, contributing to improvement in library service quality. To improve the validity of the content framework as a tool for measuring socialization in academic libraries, future studies examining relationships between socialization and career outcomes of academic librarians may be necessary. In future research, we will conduct qualitative interviews with some participants to better understand the relationships between demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, mentoring, and tenure) and socialization. Furthermore, a follow-up study comparing participants' socialization experiences in libraries of different sizes will be conducted. It would also be interesting to study the associations between librarians' socialization and their service quality.

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Appendix A

Part 1. Background Questions

1. What is your gender?
 Female
 Male
2. What is your age? _____
3. What is your ethnicity?
 White
 Hispanic or Latino
 Black or African American
 Native American or American Indian
 Asian / Pacific Islander
 Decline to answer
Other, please specify _____
4. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
 Master's degree in LIS
 Master's degree in other disciplines
 Doctorate degree
Other, please specify _____
5. What is the highest degree granted by your institution?
 Baccalaureate
 Master's
 Doctorate
Other, please specify _____
6. How many full-time library employees work in your library? (If you are not certain, please estimate).
7. How many years have you worked at your current institution?
8. What is your primary position type in your library? (Please choose only one).
 Acquisitions/Collection Development
 Administration
 Archives/Special Collections
 Audiovisual/Media Services
 Cataloging/Metadata
 Circulation/Access Services
 Collection Development
 Development/Fundraising
 Digital Libraries

- Government Documents
- Instructional Services
- Interlibrary Loan
- Public Services
- Reference
- Subject Specialist/Liaison
- Systems and Network Services
- Web Development/Coordination
- Scholarly Communication
- Other, please specify _____

9. How many years have you held your current position?

10. What is your current job status?

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Other, please specify _____

11. Is your current position eligible for tenure and/or promotion?

- Tenure and promotion
- Promotion only
- Not eligible for tenure or promotion

12. Do you have tenure?

- Yes
- No

13. How many years have you worked as a librarian in your life?

14. Does your library have a formal mentoring program?

- Yes
- No

15. Have you ever participated in mentoring activities in your library?

- Yes, I participated in formal mentoring activities
- Yes, I participated in informal mentoring activities
- Yes, I participated in both formal and informal mentoring activities
- No

16. If you have participated in mentoring activities in your library, what was your role?

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Not applicable