

**The Role of the Big Five Personality Traits, Proactive Behaviour, and  
Socialisation Influences in Newcomer Adjustment**

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**Abstract**

**“The role of the Big Five Personality Traits, Proactive behaviour, and Socialisation Influences in Newcomer Adjustment” (301 Words)**

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During the early stages of employment, newly hired employees find out what their new organisations are like. Their first impressions are extremely important in determining the course of subsequent attitudes and behaviour.

Recently, a considerable progress has been made towards the understanding of adjustment process, however, the literature remain divided along a number of fronts. Moreover, newcomer research has been conducted independent and irrespective of newcomer personality individual differences. This seems to be a critical oversight because there is overlap in predictions involving these constructs.

The current research extended the previous one by examining these multiple antecedents, including Big Five personality traits of newcomer to the tandem process of adjustment as well as outcomes that immediate, or “proximal” to the process of newcomer adjustment.

Following a cross sectional pilot study of recent college graduate, a three- wave longitudinal study of newcomers in seven organisations examined Big Five personality traits, proactive behaviour, and socialisation influence (formal training, leaders, co-workers) as antecedents of proximal adjustment outcomes (group integration, political knowledge of organisation, and task performance).

The main study results suggested that personality traits were related to proximal adjustment outcomes, specifically, Conscientiousness was positively related to all proximal adjustment outcomes. Openness to experience was related to task performance and political knowledge. Group integration is independently related to Agreeableness, Extraversion and Neuroticism. The socialisation influence moderate these relations, for example, leader socialisation moderate Conscientiousness as it relates to political knowledge and group integration, while co-worker moderate Extraversion as it relates to task performance. Finally, it was found that, the relationship between proximal adjustment outcomes and the personality dimensions Openness was mediated by proactive behaviour. Overall, the results suggested that individual differences have a role in newcomer adjustment as it facilitate the socialisation influence, and Big Five was one of the key determinants of newcomer adjustment

**Key words:** newcomer adjustment, personality traits, socialisation influence, proactive behaviour

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## **CHAPTER 1: DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

### **1.1. Background:**

During the early stages of employment, newcomers (i.e. newly hired employees) find out what their new organisations are like and decide whether they "fit in." Theory suggests that newcomers' first impressions are extremely important in determining the course of subsequent attitudes and behaviour (e.g. Ashforth & Fried, 1988; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Wanous, 1992). Numerous labour market studies have further shown that recently hired employees have the highest rates of turnover (e.g. Jovanovic, 1979; Farber, 1994; Topel & Ward, 1992). This early turnover will be especially costly because employees are departing after investments have been made into recruitment, selection, and training but before the organisation has been able to realise returns on these investments in the form of performance (Griffeth & Horn, 2001). Not only can well-adjusted newcomers reduce the rate of turnover (Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg, 2003), but they can also contribute to overall job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Bauer et al, 1998, Fisher, 1986; Saks & Ashforth, 1997), supervisors' assessment of their performance rating (Nelson, Quick & Joplin, 1991) and performance (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). It has been suggested that newcomers should be well adjusted first in order to perform. For example, an underlying assumption driving much of the expatriate literature is that poor adjustment will "spill

over” to poor observable performance (Shaffer & Harrison. 1998). To summarise, it is clear that understanding newcomer adjustment is of critical importance.

## **1.2. Research Stream/ Gaps:**

Organisational entry research focuses on newcomer adjustment, which includes commitment to the organisation and its goals, and the knowledge, confidence, and motivation for performing a work role (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Hanisch & Hulin, 1991; Nicholson, 1984). In recent years considerable progress has been made toward understanding how adjustment arises, but the literature remains divided along a number of fronts. Some theories emphasise the influence of newcomers' characteristics, including pre-entry knowledge regarding the job (Louis, 1980; Nicholson, 1984; Wanous, 1992), and newcomer proactivity (Jones, 1983; Miller & Jablin, 1991). Others emphasise organisations' use of formal socialisation tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1992). Still others suggest adjustment arises primarily through interpersonal communications between newcomers and established members of the organisation such as leaders and co-workers (Moreland & Levine, 2001; Reichers, 1987; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003).

Few recent studies examine mediating effect of proximal adjustment outcomes on distal adjustment outcomes or broad work attitudes like organisational commitment and job satisfaction, for example, a meta-analytic review conducted by Bauer, Bodner & Tucker (2007) concluded that proximal adjustment outcomes (role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance) mediated the effects of organisation socialisation tactics and

information seeking on distal socialisation outcomes (job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job performance, intentions to remain, and turnover).

Despite the number of studies that have been published on the topic of newcomers' adjustment, there are a number of limitations. *First*, as mentioned earlier, adjustment research remains divided along a number of fronts. This seems to be a critical oversight of newcomer adjustment research because there is an overlap in predictions involving these constructs, so relatively little is known about how the adjustment process works in tandem from studies which examine each component individually. This study extends previous research by examining these multiple antecedents as they relate to adjustment outcomes.

*Second*, most research has neglected outcomes directly relevant to adjustment theory (Bauer et al, 1998; Fisher, 1986; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). These researchers specifically criticise the frequent use of broad work attitudes like organisational commitment and job satisfaction as outcomes. Newcomers will primarily be interested in resolving questions of how to act and how well they match the new environment, while appraisals of the new environment and behavioural reactions are secondary concerns (Ashford & Taylor, 1990). The separation of proximal and distal outcomes is an important way to improve our understanding of adjustment. This study focuses on examining multiple antecedents as they relate to outcomes that are more closely related or "proximal" to the process of newcomer adjustment.

*Third*, newcomer research has been conducted independent and irrespective of newcomer individual personality differences. This was an unfortunate oversight, as personality traits are individuals' stable, even innate mental structures which provide

general direction for their choices and behaviour (Cattell, 1943; Hogan, 1991), and therefore should affect individuals' adjustment in a new setting. There is also a strong methodological reason for including personality traits in the study of adjustment. Research which has probed on some personality variables has shown that it might influence newcomers' socialisation, for example, self-efficacy is positively associated with adjustment (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison & Brantner, 1992; Jones, 1986; Saks, 1995), as is the similar concept of behavioural self-management (Saks & Ashforth, 1996). Furthermore, extraversion and openness to experience are associated with higher levels of proactive socialisation behaviour such as feedback seeking and relationship building (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

The expanding literature on job and organisational choice indicates that applicants are attracted to work environments that are compatible with their personal characteristics (Kristof, 1996). Although past investigations have made important contributions, research is needed to explain the system of relationships between personality traits and socialisation influence after an applicant has been hired. Specifically, it is important to establish the antecedents and consequences of newcomer adjustment, in addition to the basic theoretical importance of understanding the factors that relate to individual differences and how these differences interact with socialisation influences. In fact, no published research has investigated the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and socialisation influence on newcomers' adjustment, more specifically how each of these personality traits of a newcomer interact with each multiple socialisation influence as they relate to outcomes, for example, will an extravert newcomer be more likely to resist a supervisor's influence than an introvert?

Would extraverts be more likely to mimic colleagues than introvert? So we expect that an extrovert newcomer will respond better to co-worker socialisation influence as it relates to his or her adjustment.

The implications of newcomers getting adjusted to organisations, and how their personality traits interact with other persons inside the organisations, are important for organisations, because organisations may be able to use trait measurements during the screening and selection process to identify individuals who will have difficulty with adjustment. Based on the lack of research on these important questions, this study will contribute to adjustment research by examining how newcomer personality traits (especially the Big Five) interact with the socialisation influence during the adjustment process.

*Fourth*, previous research conceptualises socialisation as either the frequency of interactions between newcomers and others or the level of training and development or orientation programs or the number and types of contacts the newcomer had with others. Such methods can distinguish between sources of information that are present but ignored from those that actually influence newcomers. As an example, an organisation may provide extensive training and development, but these efforts will be ineffective if the respondent does not pay attention to them. Evidence shows that the helpfulness of early entry training is a better predictor of work outcomes than level of early entry training (Saks, 1996). Accordingly, the operationalisation of relative influence, which will be used in this study, directly focuses on how much newcomers feel their attitudes, behaviour, and cognition have been altered by agents of socialisation (organisational, co-workers, and supervisors).



One possible criticism of the emphasis on perceived influence comes from researchers who propose that behavioural measures are superior to more subjective estimates of how much newcomers were influenced, because behaviours are more objectively verifiable. Research on survey responses, however, suggests that many “objective” measures are highly contaminated by recall biases, reconstruction errors, and other cognitive distortions (Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski, 2000). Attitudes and aggregated judgments, on the other hand, are more directly cognitively accessible and may therefore be more accurate, although they are less specific.

### **1.3. Conceptualisation of the current study:**

Based on trait theories of personality, which will be reviewed in details in next chapter (chapter 2), personality traits are individuals' stable, even innate mental structures which provide general direction for their choices and behaviour (Cattell, 1943; Hogan, 1991), thus the trait concept is relevant to newcomer adjustment because the proximal outcomes allowed a broad range of behaviour to be observed across the adjustment period and to be demanding enough that differences in candidates' adjustment can be observed. The Big five personality traits predicted expatriates adjustment in recent research (Huang, 2005; Shaffer, 2006), but this relationship was adjunct to more complex adjustment model in international domain. The current study examined the role of newcomer personality, which apparently has been neglected in domestic adjustment research, as antecedent of newcomer adjustment

Moreover, Buss (1984) claimed that there are existing stable architectural units that define a person's personality, but that these units are dependent for their activation

on relevant contextual output. In order for researchers to understand and predict behaviour, they must consider both person and situation factors and how these factors interact (Chatman, 1989). Recently Tett & Guterman (2000) developed the Trait Activation Theory (TAT) that focuses on the person-situation interaction to explain behaviour on the basis of responses to trait-relevant cues found in situations (Tett & Guterman, 2000). In part, the use of influence measures as moderators in this study is an attempt to match the trait activation theory in addition to interpersonal and sensemaking theories of adjustment. The symbolic interactionist (Reichers, 1987; Stryker & Satham, 1985), social information processing (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Zalesny & Ford, 1990), and social learning (Bandura, 1989), perspectives all suggest that due to reciprocal influences between individuals and their environments, observed behaviour is the result of both the actions of the person and the situation. The construct of social influence is proposed as an emergent construct that only exists at the person-by-situation level of analysis which can be contrasted with a disposition towards proactive behaviour.

The current study also proposed a mediating role for proactive behavior. Proactivity-based theories describe how entrants to a social situation engage in self-regulatory processes, checking their current understanding of the situation against their standards for information adequacy. Based on these self-evaluation processes, newcomers are motivated to learn from their environment to meet their own goals (Bandura, 1999). Conceptually proactive behavior is more closely related to the assertive component of extraversion, and achievement striving components of conscientiousness. Also intellect and curiosity component of openness will lead those

who are high in openness to engaged in sense making (feedback seeking, information seeking) of proactive behavior. In general, dispositional variables, such as extraversion, openness to experience have empirically demonstrated effects on the proactive behaviours newcomers enact to fit into their work environments (Chan & Schmitt, 2001), higher levels of proactive socialization behaviour such as feedback seeking and relationship building (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

In sum, the current study aimed at enhancing the understanding of how the adjustment process works in tandem. It extends previous research by linking previously separated lines of research on newcomer adjustment in one conceptual model. Thus, based on trait theories of personality, and adjustment, proactivity, it examined the personality traits, as antecedent of proactive behaviour, and adjustment. And based on interactionist, and trait activation theories it investigated how the traits interact with the different sources of socialization influences as they relate to adjustment outcomes. Moreover, unlike previous research, which focused on various work outcomes, the current study focuses on examining these multiple antecedents as they relate to outcomes that are more closely related or "proximal" to the process of newcomer adjustment as the newcomers will primarily be interested in resolving questions of how to act and how well they match the new environment.

#### **1.4. Purpose:**

The goal of this research is to extend previous research by examining the newcomer traits as they relate to adjustment outcomes. Specifically, this study will examine the Big Five Personality Traits as antecedents of proactive behaviour and

newcomer adjustment. In addition, the moderating role of organisational socialisation influence in newcomer adjustment and the mediating role of proactive behaviour in order to build on recent research findings. The research questions were developed as follows

- 1) Do traits and organisational socialisation influence interact in predicting newcomer adjustment?
- 2) Does proactive behaviour mediate the effect of traits on newcomer adjustment?

### **1.5. Contribution:**

Socialisation is a learning process, therefore a direct and immediate outcome should be the mastery of the content of socialisation (Chao et al, 1994). This study makes several important contributions to organisational socialisation research. *First*, theoretical arguments for examining the newcomer Big Five as antecedents of the newcomer adjustment process advances research on newcomer adjustment. This is the first study to include personality traits of a newcomer as a predictor of his/her adjustment. It also considers additional newcomer attributes (i.e. personality traits) which have been suggested as predictors of proactive behaviour but have not been adequately examined in the literature (Bauer et al, 1998). In addition, the research will extend academic understanding of the socialisation process, given attributed variables, so that future research may probe deeper into the impact of individual differences on newcomer adjustment.

*Second*, this study contributes theoretical arguments for examining the interaction between socialisation influences and newcomer personality traits as it relates to newcomer adjustment as an outcome, since the study integrates the substantial body of personality traits behavioural research with that of socialisation influence research by considering the moderator effect of supervisors, co-worker and formal organisational programmes. This method will distinguish between sources of information that are present and those that actually influence newcomers on the basis of personality traits. While understanding this interaction would be critical to our understanding of the newcomer adjustment process, none of these interactions have been examined in the newcomer adjustment literatures.

*Third*, this study contributes theoretical arguments for including proactive behaviours' mediating effect on newcomer adaptation.

Individuals have a need to reduce uncertainty in novel situations (Ashforth & Fried, 1988; Ashford & Taylor, 1990). Moreover, a stress management perspective suggests that individuals will engage in coping behaviours and rely on support systems in order to reduce uncertainty. This study will extend the previous research on predictors and outcomes of proactivity (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000) by focusing on proximal adjustment outcomes rather than general work outcomes.

*Fourth*, many of the factors examined in this study will also advances research on expatriate adjustment, since it is critical to examine domestic work transition as part of the adaptation process (Ashford & Taylor, 1990). Some of the variables that will be hypothesised to be part of the transition and individual factors are also specific to

expatriates. Recent research on expatriate adjustment starts to examine the role of Big Five traits on expatriate adjustment (Shaffer et al, 2006; Huanget al, 2005). This study will provide theoretical arguments on newcomer adjustment, which together with the existing literature, can enhance expatriate adjustment research.

*Fifth*, from a practical perspective, this research, combined with the results of previous studies, will serve as a tool for organisations to define the required level of their socialisation influences (organisation formal training, supervisors, and co-workers), given newcomer personality traits and proactive behaviour. Organisations may be able to use trait measurements during the screening and selection process to identify individuals who will have difficulty with adjustment. Moreover, if some socialisation techniques do not work well for employees with certain personality traits, it is critical to know what those traits are and how they interact with the socialisation influence of the organisations, thus enabling a more controlled and effective socialisation. For example, organisations may make investment decisions regarding selection and socialisation processes based on the perceived malleability of job seekers' work values (Chatman, 1991). This will inform managers and everyday HRM practices including those of selection, induction, and job entry training about individual differences in personality traits in order to successfully negotiate the newcomer adjustment process to help him/her become socialised more quickly and effectively into organisations

The unified perspective on newcomer adjustment suggested in this study involves the following elements:

## **1.6. Scope:**

1) Personality dimensions: some research suggests that certain traits among the Big Five can influence information seeking directly and via the mediation of social cost (Tidwell & Sias, 2005). However, very little is known about the direct role of the Big Five in socialisation, and there is no published research on the interaction between Big Five and socialisation influences. This could be of critical importance if we understand that newcomers might interact differently to various socialisation influences as they relates to adjustment outcomes. To fill this gap, the current research proposes that the Big Five personality dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992) will have a direct effect on newcomer adjustment and will be moderated by the socialisation influence which includes:

2) Organisational influence: formal organisational training and orientation programme.

3) Individual influence: interpersonal influence of supervisors: those in hierarchically higher positions, and co-workers' influence: learning from those occupying similar roles.

4) Proactivity: The study will also examine the mediating role of proactive behaviour on adjustment outcomes.

## **1.7. Organisation of the Study:**

This study was organised into seven chapters. The specific information contained in these seven chapters is listed below. Chapter one discusses the research background, research questions and objectives, scope and contribution. Chapter two

provide a review of the literature on newcomer adjustment, relevant adjustment theories, empirical findings, and the research boundaries. Chapter three provides a review of the laws of interaction among constructs in the model and each of its proposed antecedents and consequences. Following an extensive review of literature, theoretical model and hypotheses are proposed in this chapter.

Chapter four presents the methodology of the study. It explains both pilot and main study methodology in terms of sampling data, collection procedures, objectives, participants, timing, measures, and analysis. Chapter five presents the results of the pilot study and preliminary analysis of the main longitudinal study. Chapter six presents the detailed statistical analysis and results of the main study. Chapter seven includes the findings of the study in relation to the hypotheses, and provides managerial implications. In addition, the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are also discussed.



## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Definition and Importance of Organisational Adjustment and Organisational Socialisation:**

Organisational newcomers typically have high uncertainty regarding how to do their job, how their performance will be evaluated, what types of social behaviours are normative, and what personal relationships within the organisation might be beneficial to them (Miller et al, 1999; Miller & Jablin, 1991). Effective socialisation reduces these uncertainties, helps newcomers cultivate productive relationships at work, and ensures that individuals and organisations benefit from their working relationship (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Fedor, Buckley, & Davis, 1997; Jablin, 1987, 2001; Lee, Ashford, Walsh & Mowday, 1992; Meyer&Allen, 1988). Consequently, newcomers and experienced organisational members typically engage in formal and informal organisational socialisation activities before, during, and after their entry into the organisation.

Nicholson's (1984) theory of work adjustment provides a solid foundation for exploring the adjustment process and is the basis for Black's (1988) seminal work on adjustment. While Nicholson never defined "adjustment," he did describe it as the ultimate outcome of any work transition. This is consistent with Ashford and Taylor's (1990) definition of adaptation, in which they defined adaptation as the process by which individuals learn and maintain appropriate behaviours to the organisational environment. Furthermore, "appropriate indicates some degree of fit

between the behaviours demanded by the environment and those produced by the individual to the extent that the individual is able to achieve valued goals (Ashford & Taylor, 1990).” As will be discussed, their definition of “appropriate” is equivalent to definitions of adjustment.

Nicholson’s (1984) theory proposed that a person can adjust to new work-roles through either personal development, role development, or both. A person who adjusts by using the personal development mode is likely to identify new values and skills in order to adapt to a new role. In contrast, through role development, the person will alter the role requirements of the new work role in order to meet his or her existing needs, skills, and values. Nicholson (1984) further proposes that the degree to which a person uses both forms of adjustment identifies four modes of adjustment: (a) replication involves low role development and low personal development; (b) determination involves high role development and low personal development; (c) absorption involves low role development and high personal development; and d) exploration involves high role and high personal development. The theory suggests that the mode of adjustment that the person chooses will depend on characteristics of the role (role discretion and role novelty), socialisation provided by the organisation and the individual’s own need for control and desire for feedback. These characteristics will be examined in subsequent sections as they relate to research on adjustment.

Nicholson's (1984) theory on work adjustment largely overlaps with propositions and findings from Dawis and Lofquist's (1984) Theory of Work Adjustment. Their Theory of Work Adjustment argued that individuals can adjust by changing the environment in the new situation to match their needs and abilities (active adjustment) or individuals can adjust to the new situation by changing themselves (reactive adjustment). Dawis and Lofquist (1984) further suggested that the degree of adjustment is just as important as the mode of adjustment. The degree of adjustment is defined as the extent to which the work environment meets the needs of the individual (satisfaction) plus the extent to which the individual's abilities meet the demands of the work environment (satisfactoriness). The higher the degree of satisfaction and satisfactoriness, the more adjusted the individual will be to the work environment.

Nicholson's (1984) and Dawis and Lofquist's (1984) concepts of adjustment are similar in that Dawis and Lofquist's active adjustment is synonymous with Nicholson's deterministic mode of adjustment, whereas, reactive adjustment is synonymous with Nicholson's absorption mode of adjustment. However, Nicholson went beyond Dawis and Lofquist's theory by suggesting that these two modes of adjustment can also interact with each other to create a replication and exploration mode of adjustment. Dawis and Lofquist went beyond Nicholson's theory by suggesting that the degree of adjustment is just as important as mode of adjustment

(Blacket al, 1991). Nevertheless, all authors agreed that adjustment occurs when the individual's abilities and skills matches the demands of the environment and is the ultimate outcome of any work transition process.

Borrowing from Nicholson (1984) and Dawis and Lofquist (1984), Black (1988) developed the concept of expatriate adjustment by defining adjustment as the person's psychological comfort with respect to the environmental demands. Black and colleagues identified three facets: work adjustment, general adjustment, and interaction adjustment (Black, 1988; Black & Gregersen, 1991, Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990).

Organisational socialisation is the process by which individuals learn the knowledge, skills, behaviours, values, beliefs, and so forth necessary to function effectively as members of an organisation (Feldman, 1981; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Because this process of learning can continue throughout one's career, any individual in an organisation may be subject to socialising forces. However, socialisation is most intense following organisational entry or other significant transitions such as promotion or transfer (Chao et al, 1994). Therefore, this study distinguishes between "newcomers" and "insiders." "Newcomers" are those being socialised, while "insiders" are those acting as socialising agents like supervisors and colleagues.

Socialisation research has evolved from the perspective of the newcomer as a passive recipient of socialising forces to the perspective of the newcomer as an active participant in his or her own socialisation. As the socialisation literature is followed

from its early roots in the 1970's to its current form, it progressively comes to portray the newcomer as an active participant in the socialisation process.

Research from the 1970's was predominantly descriptive, describing the stages newcomers go through as they make the transition from outsider to insider (e.g., Feldman, 1976; Porter, Lawler & Hackman, 1975). In the 1980's, recognizing that all newcomers do not become equally socialised, researchers began to search for factors affecting the socialisation process. The search began by looking for socialising forces, or contextual factors, that affect how successfully an organisation socialises its newcomers. The individual's role remained passive; the assumption was that all individuals experience and react to socialising forces in a similar manner (e.g., Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). A separate stream of research from the early 1980's considered the role of the individual in socialisation. However, the individual's role was purely a cognitive or sensemaking one (Louis, 1980). That is, researchers recognised that individuals cognitively experience and react to socialising forces differently depending on individual attributes (e.g., Louis, 1980; Jones, 1983). Only within the past fifteen years have researchers viewed the individual's role in socialisation as behaviourally active. Researchers now recognise that individuals differ in how proactive they are in bringing about their own socialisation (e.g., Morrison, 1993a, 1993b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

To summarise, research can be traced through four stages: (a) descriptions of what occurs during socialisation; (b) the newcomer as a passive recipient of socialising forces; (c) the newcomer as one who cognitively reacts to socialising forces; and (d) the newcomer as a behavioural force in his or her own socialisation.

## **2.2. Overview of Relevant Adjustment Theories:**

The literature on newcomer adjustment focuses on individual proactive behaviour, and socialisation draws upon broader theories of social behaviour and adjustment. The five theoretical traditions considered here relate to (a) stage models (descriptive); (b) Socialisation tactics (passive); (c) sensemaking (cognitively active); (d) Interpersonal behaviour (interactive), and (e) proactive socialisation (behaviourally active). A quick review of these theories will provide a greater coherence between research streams, in addition it will indicate how it informs the proposed research variables.

### **A. Stage Model Theories**

The earliest research into socialisation simply described the experiences of newcomers as they entered an organisation (Wanous & Colella, 1989). A variety of newcomers were studied, including army recruits (Bourne, 1976), AT&T managers (Bray, Campbell, & Grant, 1974), Harvard MBAs (Cohen, 1973), and police recruits (Van Maanen, 1976). This descriptive research paved the way for a number of stage models.

Stage models portray socialisation into organisations in terms of a sequence of stages through which newcomers typically pass in their transition from naive newcomer to socialised insider. A number of models have been proposed (e.g., Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Jablin, 1982; Porter et al, 1975; Schein, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980). Though the labels vary, researchers generally agree on three stages: (a) anticipatory socialisation; (b)

encounter; and (c) adaptation.

**Anticipatory Socialisation:** The first stage of socialisation, alternatively referred to as “anticipatory socialisation” (Van Maanen, 1976), “getting in” (Feldman, 1976), or “prearrival” (Porter et al, 1975), refers to all the learning that prepares an individual for organisational entry (Van Maanen, 1976). During this stage, expectations are developed based on past experience and pre-entry contact (i.e., recruitment and selection), which presumably facilitate or hinders assimilation into organisation (Feldman, 1976; Porter et al, 1975).

**Encounter:** The second stage of socialisation, alternatively referred to as “encounter” (Porter et al, 1975), “accommodation” or “breaking in” (Feldman, 1976), refers to the early to the early organisational entry period, where task are learned and relationships are formed (Feldman, 1976). Organisational reality must be accepted, as expectations formed during the first stage are either confirmed or proven to be the unfounded (Buchanan, 1974; Porter et al, 1975; Schein, 1978). Experiences during this stage are critical in shaping the individual’s adjustment to the organisation (Fisher, 1986; Louis, 1980).

**Adaptation:** The third stage of socialisation, alternatively referred to as “adaptation” (Louis, 1980), “settling in” (Feldman, 1976), “mutual acceptance” (Schein, 1978), “change and acquisition” (Porter et al, 1975), or “metamorphosis” (Jablin, 1982), signals the completion of the transformation from newcomer to insider (Louis, 1980). This is less of a stage and more of a state of being socialised, of understanding “how things really work” (Fisher, 1986; Schein, 1978).

Stage model research: Few attempts have been made to empirically test stage models of socialisation. Buchanan (1974) identified three stages of socialisation, classified according to tenure (1 year; 2-4 years; 5 or more), using a cross-sectional study of new managers from five governmental agencies and three large manufacturing companies. He predicted that commitment at each stage would be a function of a unique set of experiences. For example, the realisation of one's expectations and the attitudes of one's work group towards the organisation were hypothesized to predict commitment at stage one but not at stages two or three. However, contrary to the model, work group attitudes predicted commitment at stages one, two and three, and realisation of expectations predicted stage three commitment, but not stage one commitment (Buchanan, 1974).

Feldman (1976) identified three stages of socialisation: (a) anticipatory socialisation, (b) accommodation, and (c) role management. He also identified critical processes specific to each stage, such as realism during stage one, role definition during stage two, and resolution of conflicting demands during stage three. Only stage three processes should be related to socialisation outcomes, such as job satisfaction and involvement. This model has been tested twice. Feldman (1976) studied hospital employees using a cross-sectional design. Contrary to the model, he found that the strongest relationship between process and outcome variables was the relationship between congruence, a stage one process, and job satisfaction, a stage three outcome (Feldman, 1976). Dubinsky, Howell, Ingram, and Bellenger (1986) tested the model on sales personnel using structural equation modelling, but the model did not achieve adequate levels of fit. Then alternative



models were tested, stage one processes such as congruence and stage two processes such as initiation to the group were strongly related to outcomes, even though Feldman's (1976) model only predicts a relationship between stage three processes and outcomes. Thus while the processes Buchanan (1974) and Feldman (1976) identified may be important for socialisation, there is little evidence of the existence of clear stages of socialisation with separate and distinct processes.

Though not specifically a test of a stage model, research by Graen, Orris, and Johnson (1973) does provide some support for distinct stages of socialisation within an organisation. During the first 16 weeks on the job, clerical employees decreased "assimilation behaviours" (e.g., going to others for help, learning the amount of work required) and increased behaviour aimed at dealing with conflict. This is consistent with Feldman's (1976) model, in which conflict resolution occurs in the "settling in" or role management stage.

Stage model theory and research has been reviewed three times (Fisher, 1986; Wanous & Colella, 1989; Wanous, 1992). Together, these reviews conclude that the available evidence is weak in terms of support for distinct, sequential stages which are the same in terms of order, content, and duration for all people in all jobs in all organisations (Fisher, 1986; Wanous & Colella, 1989). Of course, the lack of longitudinal tests of these sequential models somewhat limits the ability to draw firm conclusions. While stage models may not describe the complete range of socialisation experiences, they have made some important contributions to the socialisation literature. First; the models recognise that organisational entry changes people. People learn from and adjust to the organisation. Thus, insiders

are different than outsiders and newcomers. Second, the stage models recognise that learning is most intense immediately following entry (Fisher, 1986). Third, the models recognise that newcomers must master various tasks (e.g., learn new behaviours, form new relationships) and resolve various conflicts (e.g., with expectations, needs, values, and so forth) in order to adjust to the organisation (Fisher, 1986).

In summary, the stage models provide a useful heuristic for understanding what separates “less socialised” from “more socialised” individuals and the kinds of tasks accomplished during socialisation.

## **B. Socialisation Tactics Theories**

Stage models help us understand what occurs during organisational socialisation and what characterises socialised individuals. However, stage models do not identify individual or contextual influences on socialisation outcomes. Researchers began the search for predictors of socialisation by examining organisational or contextual influences on socialisation, while the individual remained a passive recipient of various socialising forces. Initially, researchers looked at the way organisations structure the socialisation process.

Van Maanen (1978) identified six “tactical dimensions” of socialisation which describe “the ways in which the experiences of individuals in transition from one role to another are structured for them by others in the organisation” (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p104). The underlying proposition is that the organisation, consciously or unconsciously, can influence the adjustment and role

orientation of its newcomers by the manner in which it structures their socialisation experiences. While these dimensions do not represent an exhaustive list of the ways in which socialisation experiences may be differently structured (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), they have received the most attention in both theory and research.

The six socialisation dimensions are: (a) collective (versus individual) tactics; (b) formal (versus informal) tactics; (c) sequential (versus random) tactics; (d) fixed (versus variable) tactics; (e) serial (versus disjunctive) tactics; and (f) investiture (versus divestiture) tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Each dimension represents a continuum of socialisation experiences. Although it may appear that, for example, socialisation is either “collective” or “individual,” in reality there is a continuum of possibilities between a purely collective model of socialisation and a purely individual model of socialisation. It may be more appropriate to consider socialisation experiences as “more collective” or “less collective,” rather than as “collective” or “individual.” Doing so eliminates the confusion of using different labels for the ends of each of the continua, and thus making continuous variables appear to be dichotomous. Therefore, each continua will generally be referred to by the label on the institutionalised end for the purpose of this study.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) originally described six dimensions or tactics. However, the tactics have been grouped and described in terms of one (institutionalised), three (context, content, and social aspects), and six (collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture) dimensions. Jones(1986) was the

first to note that six tactics could be grouped different ways. First, the tactics could be conceptualised as representing a single underlying dimension or continuum. The ends of the continuum differentiate two basic forms of socialisation, institutionalised and individualised. Institutionalised socialisation encompasses collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture tactics (Jones, 1986). With institutional tactics, newcomers are formally socialised as a group, provided role models, and given clear information about the sequence and timing of events in the socialisation process. Individualized socialisation encompasses individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture tactics (Jones, 1986). With individualised tactics, newcomers are socialised informally and individually, with no role models, and are given few clues about the sequence and timing of events in the socialisation process. In addition to categorising the tactics along the institutionalised-individualised continuum, Jones (1986) recognised that the tactics could also be grouped into three dimensions, as primarily concerned with either the context, content, or social aspects of socialisation. The context dimension, encompassing the collective and formal tactics, concerns the structure of the initial socialisation program. Collective and formal tactics represent a highly structured approach to socialising newcomers, while individual and informal tactics represent an absence of structure. The content dimension, encompassing the sequential and fixed tactics, concerns whether the sequence and timing of events in the socialisation process are clearly communicated to the newcomer. Sequential and fixed tactics represent clear communication, while random and variable tactics represent an absence of communication. Finally, the social aspects dimension,

encompassing the serial investiture tactics, concerns the availability of social support for newcomers. Serial investiture tactics represent the presence of social support, in terms of the presence of role models and organisational support for the newcomer's values, while disjunctive divestiture tactics represent the absence of such support.

There is little evidence to support a six, three, or one dimensional model. The measure of tactics, developed by Jones (1986), is intended to measure six separate dimensions. Each is represented by five items, measured from the point of view of the newcomer, using an even point scale anchored from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The six scales have demonstrated relatively low inter-item reliabilities. For example, of the 36 published reliabilities for the six individual scales, 32 are below .80 and 15 are below .70 (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Black & Ashford, 1995) and the majority of between-scale bivariate correlations range from .35 to .80 (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996). On the other hand, when items from the six scales are averaged to form a single scale, the inter-item reliability is consistently above .80 (e.g., Laker & Steffy, 1995; Teboul, 1995). Thus, reliability and bivariate correlation evidence would seem to support a single, underlying institutionalised-individualised continuum.

Three studies have examined the factor structure of the measures, Jones (1986) conducted an exploratory factor analysis on data from a group of recently graduated MBA students. A four factor solution emerged from the data. The first three factors were consistent with Jones' (1986) three dimension classification: (a)

serial and investiture items loaded on a social factor, (b) sequential and fixed items loaded on a content factor, and (c) collective and formal items loaded on a context factor. However, a fourth factor emerged which included three items from the formal scale and one item from the fixed scale (Jones, 1986). Jones did not combine the six scales into three (or four) scales, but instead retained the six scales and used them in canonical analyses. This method was an attempt to derive a canonical variate (or variates) from each of two sets of variables (attempted and actual role innovation), to maximize the correlation between the two sets. Consequently, this analysis accommodates potential redundancies expected among the two sets of variables.

Black (1992) also used exploratory factor analysis to examine the factor structure of the measure using data from a group of American expatriates in Asia. A seven factor solution emerged from the data: (a) formal, plus one item from the sequential scale, (b) serial, (c) collective, (d) sequential, (e) investiture, (f) fixed, and (g) one item each from the sequential and fixed scales (Black, 1992). Black (1992) retained the original six scales for use in regression analyses. Most recently, Ashforth, Saks, and Lee (1997) examined the dimensionality of Jones' (1986) measure using confirmatory factor analysis. They concluded that the six factor model fitted the data better than the competing three and one factor models, although the model did not attain conventional levels of adequate fit and the six dimensions were moderately to highly correlated (Ashforth et al, 1997). Using the same dataset, Ashforth and Saks (1996) retained the original six scales, plus a new investiture scale, for use in canonical analyses. None of these studies provide clear

and convincing evidence of the validity of either a six or three factor model, although they do seem to rule out the one factor model. Clearly, construct and measurement issues related to socialisation tactics need to receive more attention.

Socialisation tactics research has made important contributions to our understanding of the socialisation process. The evidence clearly supports Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) underlying proposition that the organisation, consciously or unconsciously, can influence the adjustment and role orientation of its newcomers by the manner in which it structures their socialisation experiences.

However, there are still several issues to be resolved and research questions to be addressed in this area. First, there appears to be a trade-off between role innovation and performance, achieved through more individualised socialisation programs, satisfaction, and commitment, and identification, achieved through more institutionalised socialisation programs. Yet this trade-off may be illusory (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Black, 1992). Ultimately, the influence of a socialisation program is affected by its content and the predispositions of its audience as well as its structure. Black (1992) found that the collective tactic led to role innovation in his sample of expatriates, which he concluded was due to the predispositions of expatriates and the content of the material delivered collectively. Research needs to examine the specific content transmitted during socialisation as well as the structure of socialisation programs.

Second, while research is fairly conclusive in showing that tactics do influence many aspects of newcomer adjustment to the organisation, it does not

explain how or why specific tactics act as they do. Research has only recently started to examine possible mediators and moderators of the relationship between tactics and outcomes, and to examine the relationship between tactics and proactive behaviours (e.g. Mignerey et al, 1995; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a; Teboul, 1995).

Finally, while Jones' (1986) self-report scale has served to greatly advance research, its construct validity is still an issue. Many of the subscales tend to have low inter-item reliabilities, and some of the items represent potential construct overlap between program structure and support received as a result of the structure. To more fully understand socialisation, these issues need to be addressed. Ashforth and Saks (1996) developed a new investiture measure which addressed potential weaknesses in the original items. However, more work is needed to address subscales inter-item reliabilities.

### **C. Sensemaking Theory**

Tactics research helps to explain situational variability in socialisation outcomes, but it does not address why newcomers to same job in the same organisation may not become equally socialised. To understand this, researchers need to examine the role of the individual newcomer in socialisation. Early research into the individual's role in socialisation focused on the ways in which newcomers internally process their experiences as newcomers. (Louis,1980). It focused on cognitive coping, or reaction, to the new setting, and to the individual differences which might affect this "sensemaking."



Sensemaking is a process of retrospective explanation that occurs when individuals are faced with new situations (Louis, 1980). In familiar situations, individuals are guided by cognitive scripts and schemas. However, when faced with something “out of the ordinary,” conscious thought is provoked and individuals develop retrospective explanations for the surprise and revise assumptions about predicted future events (Louis, 1980). There are four categories of inputs into the newcomer’s sensemaking process: (a) others’ interpretations, (b) local interpretation schemas, (c) predispositions and purposes, and (d) past experiences (Louis, 1980). The first two are related to the situation and the insiders encountered, while the second two are related to attributes of the newcomers. Before newcomers can adequately “make sense” of a new situation, they need to understand the interpretative schemas of specific insiders and of the organisation in general. The primary task of socialisation is the formation of these schemas through interactions with organisational insiders (Louis, 1980; Reichers, 1987). There are a number of individual attributes which may affect the way in which newcomers attribute meaning to surprise elements. A great deal of the theory and research has focused on past experiences (Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980; Reichers, Wanous, & Steele, 1994). Sensemaking theory informs the choice of organisational political knowledge variable as a proximal adjustment outcome. When individuals enter a new situation they lack the knowledge required to predict likely outcomes of their own actions and the actions of others. Desire for control is therefore an important motivator for individuals in uncertain situations (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Nicholson, 1984).

Newcomers with high conscientiousness will seek to gain control over the environment by establishing an identity and seeking to understand inter group relationships within the organisation (Hogg & Mullin, 1999; Nicholson, 1984; Reichers, 1987). An important adjustment process not described in role theory or interpersonal theories is the development of causal maps (Weick, 1979). Weick (1979) defines causal maps as the perceived patterns and cause-effect relationships among raw data elements identified during enactment processes. Thus, causal maps include relationships (hierarchical, causal, circular, etc.) expressed in the form of beliefs, values, and perceptions held by individuals about the organisation and its ecology. These topics became the focal concern of sense making researchers.

Weick (1979) proposed that interpretations of the social situation are constructed retrospectively as members of the situation develop theories to fit the facts. Because of this, members who are embedded in a social situation may develop elaborate logical puzzles to explain the environment that are not interpretable to newcomers. The experience of organisational entry leads to a shock to one's system of causal maps as newcomers find that their typical understanding of situations and their ability to control events is no longer functional. As a result of this surprise newcomers will begin to re-evaluate their schemas by incorporating others' interpretations of events with their past experiences and predispositions. Louis (1980) noted that during adjustment, "newcomers need situation- or culture-specific interpretation schemes in order to make sense of happenings in the setting and to respond with meaningful and

appropriate actions" (p.229)

Sensemaking theory and research makes some important contributions to our understanding of organisational socialisation. First, it recognises that the individual newcomer plays a role in his or her own socialisation, and thus not all newcomers will become equally socialised if exposed to the same socialising forces. Second, it emphasises the importance of expectations and experience in developing and applying interpretive schemas in new settings. However, while sensemaking recognises that the newcomer plays a role in his or her own socialisation, the role is a relatively passive, cognitive one in that the newcomer internally or cognitively responds or reacts to the realities of organisational life. He or she does not take an active role in his or her own socialisation and does not make extra effort in order to facilitate the speed at which they learn to think and act like an organisational insider.

In uncertain situations individuals are especially likely to observe others to find clues for how to act. The heuristic rule that may underlie this influence is that if a large number of other individuals behave in a similar manner, newcomers will conclude that it must be adaptive to behave that way (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). This further suggests that there is much more to adjustment than organisational orientation efforts. The outcome is that the newcomers will observe and interact with co-workers and supervisors to make sense of politics of the organisation as a proximal adjustment outcome.

#### **D. Interpersonal Socialisation Theory**

This theory will inform the choice of supervisor and co-worker as a moderator variable which interacts with newcomer personality traits for all proximal adjustment outcomes. Newcomers build relationships, or seek out “interaction opportunities” (Reichers, 1987, p.41). This helps newcomers build friendship networks and gain social support (Nelson & Quick, 1991), as well as information. While building relationships is one of the primary tasks of socialisation (Adkins, 1995; Morrison, 1993a), little has been done to clarify and understand newcomer proactive behaviour in this area. One exception is a study by Ashford and Black (1996), which examined three types of proactive behaviour: (a) general socialising; (b) networking, and (c) relationship building with the manager. General socialising, which consists of participating in office parties, lunches, and other social gatherings, was positively related to job satisfaction. Relationship building boss, which involves spending time with and getting to know the manager, was positively related to job performance. Networking, or socialising with people outside of the work group, was not associated with either satisfaction or performance. However, both networking and general socialising were predicted by desire for control (Ashford & Black, 1996).

The mentoring literature is also concerned with building relationships at work, specifically developmental relationships (Kram, 1985). This literature has generally advanced independently of the socialisation literature (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992). However, it does provide evidence of the importance of social and career-related support (Russell & Adams,

1997). For example, Chao et al (1992) found that protégés involved in either formal or informal mentoring relationships reported higher levels of knowledge of socialisation content than individuals not involved in a mentoring relationship.

Symbolic interactionist socialisation involves, "the processes through which newcomers establish situational identities and come to understand the meaning of organisational realities in particular" (Reichers, 1987, p279). Because established employees have resource control over the flow and interpretation of information between the organisation and the newcomer, the most critical socialisation may occur within work groups (Moreland & Levine, 2001). Relationships are fundamental determinants of role adoption because frequent interactions increase opportunities to exchange information regarding normative behaviour and established members serve as behavioural models (Feldman, 1976; Reichers, 1987). As meaning is developed over time in distinct interactional subsystems, informal authority relationships develop that are entirely distinct from the formal role structure (Pfeffer, 1981). The idiosyncrasies in social settings that arise from continuous negotiation of the social order also imply that newcomers to organisations will have to learn at least some of the properties of their roles through interpersonal communication.

Research on affiliation does support the idea that social ties are valued even when they are not useful for facilitating the acquisition of extrinsic rewards (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This means that one of the goals of the newcomer is to be accepted by others. However, newcomers may react differently according to their personality traits, for example people scoring low on agreeableness place

self-interest above getting along with others (Costa & McCrae, 1992), but because other members of the organisation also seek social acceptance, newcomers have access to social resources of their own to exchange as part of the negotiation of social order. Based on that, in addition to other empirical findings, this study examines the relationship between newcomer trait agreeableness and adjustment outcome of team /group integration

The outcomes of supervisor and co-worker interaction with a newcomer are task performance and a well-established social system for team/ group integration.

### **2.3. Overview of Study Variables & Empirical findings:**

The fundamental theories of adjustment described in the previous section propose that newcomer individual differences, newcomer proactive behaviour, and socialising influences affect newcomer adjustment. This section reviews literature on the proximal adjustment outcomes variables, trait theories of personality and empirical findings linking traits to adjustment, proactive socialisation theory, and exploring empirical research on the effect of the socialisation influence on newcomer adjustment. Then, building on the discussion from both sections, describes the relationships between antecedents of adjustment and the proximal outcomes of adjustment and propose the hypotheses examined in this study in Chapter three.

#### **2.3.1. Adjustment Outcomes:**

Outcomes of adjustment are distinguished based on existing theory and research into proximal and distal categories where the proximal might also be called indicators

(Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). The separation of proximal and distal outcomes is an important way to improve our understanding of adjustment. Research has neglected outcomes directly relevant to adjustment theory (Bauer et al, 1998; Fisher, 1986; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Further reflecting the peripheral status of traditional work attitudes in adjustment research, Wanous (1992) refers to attitudes towards the organisation and work effort as “signposts of successful socialisation,” as opposed to direct outcomes of socialisation.

Table 2.1 below provides the basic overview of these. An examination of the literature to date reveals several typologies delineating proximal outcomes of adjustment have been advanced. For example, that it is possible to synthesise multiple frameworks on newcomer adjustment into three primary proximal outcomes: task performance team/group integration, and political knowledge. The primary goal in defining proximal outcomes for this study was the generation of an effective model that captures as large a portion of the outcomes space as possible. A secondary goal was to target only those constructs that relate to the proximal adjustment process. Following from these goals, not all constructs found in the adjustment literature are included in the model, for example, expectations for future rewards from Taormina (1999) are not incorporated because this construct includes an overall appraisal of one’s satisfaction with the organisation’s promotion policies, and the organisational values and goals dimension from Chao et al (1994) is not incorporated because of the nearly complete overlap between this construct and organisational commitment. Moreover, Chao et al (1994) considered politics as a content of socialisation (as opposed to proximal

outcome) since it was argued that politics can be further used to examine other distal outcomes. For example, individuals who are well socialised in organisational politics may be more promotable (distal outcome) than those who are not socialised in politics.

Table 2.1: Proximal Outcomes of Adjustment

Adjustment Focus	Current study dimensions	Feldman 1981	Fisher, 1986	Reichers, 1987	Chao et al, 1994	Taormina, 1994	
Task domain	Task performance	Task mastery	Learning to do the job	Development of work skills and abilities	Performance proficiency		Training
		Role demands		Acquisition of appropriate role behaviour	History	Language	Understanding/perceptions
Organisational Domain	Group/Team integration	Adjustment to work group norms and values	Learning to function in the work group	Adjustment to work group norms and values	People		Co-worker support
	Political Knowledge		Learning about the organisation	Sensemaking regarding organisational norms, practices and procedures	Politics		Prospects for the future
					Organisational values and goals		

Sources: Feldman, D.C. (1981). The multiple socialisation of organisation members. *Academy of Management Review*, 6, 309-318.



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### **2.3.1.1. Task Performance:**

This study will focus on task performance (often production or deadline driven and sometimes referred to as “in-role”) as a proximal adjustment outcome. Most theories propose that adjustment includes learning the knowledge and skills to complete expected task behaviour (e.g., Chao et al, 1994; Fisher, 1986; Reichers, 1987; Taormina, 1994), which is consistent with role theory, and sensemaking theory. Task performance reflects this learning as a self-appraisal of one’s ability to successfully fulfil job responsibilities. Given this definition, self-report measures of task knowledge (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999) and task-related self-efficacy (e.g., Jones, 1986; Saks, 1995) are closely related to task performance.

### **2.3.1.2. Team/Group Integration:**

Outside of these task-related elements, developing a social sense of the new work environment is a critical indicator of adjustment (Chao et al, 1994; Fisher, 1986; Reichers, 1987) as emphasised by the role theoretic and interpersonal perspectives on adjustment. Group integration relates to perceived approval from co-workers and inclusion in their activities. A sense of social integration in the work group involves believing that one is accepted by the group and included in important communications

between co-workers. Given the central role for integration in the fundamental theories of adjustment, it is not surprising that Saks and Ashforth (1997a) called for research investigating social integration since it is so theoretically closely related to socialisation.

### **2.3.1.3. Political Knowledge of the Organisation:**

Political knowledge, involving the informal network of power and interpersonal relationships in an organisation, is an often-overlooked dimension of learning how to fit into a new organisation (Chao et al, 1994; Taormina, 1994). Unlike roles, which describe well-defined and structural components of the workplace, organisational politics are the informal power relationships between individuals and departments (Drory & Romm, 1990; Kacmar & Baron, 1999). With greater understanding of the organisation and on-going observation of new organisational members, there is a gradual unfolding of the tacit structure of decision making as newcomers passes through a series of inclusion boundaries through radical moves (Schein, 1978). Schein further notes that many newcomers he interviewed reported surprise at the extent to which political forces shape resource allocation and reward decisions in organisations. Thus, learning about politics may be an important component of adjusting to the world of work.

### **2.3.2. Newcomer Personality and Adjustment**

This study looks into personality traits that can predict whether a newcomer will adjust successfully. It examines how the personality traits (Big Five) of newcomer interact with socialisation influence from the organisation

(formal, supervisors, and co-worker) as it related to his or her adjustment (task performance, political knowledge, and team integration). As noted earlier, few recent studies have examined the role of personality traits as related to expatriate adjustment (Huang et al, 2005; Shaffer et al, 2006) these studies have most often been adjuncts to larger and more complex adjustment models in the international domain. Therefore, the overall legacy of research on the effect of newcomers' personality traits in their adjustment to a new organisation is unclear. Another potential reason is the lack of consensus regarding the choice of which personality traits to measure. This study seeks to explore the specific role that personality traits might play, and this work will be grounded in contemporary personality theory, especially work connected to the so-called Big Five personality traits (Digman, 1990; Mount and Barrick, 1995). For instance, Teagarden and Gordon (1995) found that open-mindedness was related to expatriate adjustment, while de Vries and Mead (1991) suggested the personality trait of curiosity was a factor in the level of adjustment. However, both of the two traits may belong to the construct of 'Openness to experience' in the Big Five framework (Barrick and Mount, 1991). Therefore, it is argued that to move beyond isolated personality traits and to consider the broad factor structure of personality traits is a more appropriate method for examining the effect of personality traits on the adjustment of newcomers.

Based on the above, the researcher reviewed the debate over personality structure, trait theories of personality, emerge of the big five model, variables definition, prior to the introduction of the empirical findings which informed the

variable choice for this study in the following section.

### **2.3.2.1 Debates over personality structure & trait theories of personality:**

An important debate within personality psychology has centred on whether personality is more accurately described as relatively more stable or variable over time. Is it the case, as Allport (1931) suggested over seven decades ago, that personality can best be described in terms of the relatively invariant trait “a generalized response-unit in which resides the distinctive quality of behaviour that reflects personality” across disparate contexts (p. 368)? Or perhaps personality is best described, as Murray (1938) suggested, at the level of the need: “an organic potentiality or readiness to respond in a certain way when certain conditions occur” (p. 23)? Here again we are led to believe that at some level personality is stable, as needs are generally stable (although variably ‘latent’ or ‘activated’) over time (Shackelford, 2006). Yet Murray, more than Allport, suggests that a fixed personality unit cannot fully characterize the structure of personality; there is also the matter of need activation and relative satiation.

On the other side of the spectrum, various theorists – most notably, Mischel & Shoda (1995) have argued that individuals were assumed to differ in (a) the accessibility of cognitive-affective mediating units (such as encodings, expectancies and beliefs, affects, and goals) and (b) the organization of relationships through which these units interact with each other and with psychological features of situations. That is, a given person’s behaviour is dependent on the context of the moment and, therefore, it makes no sense to speak of ‘personality’ per se (Shackelford, 2006). One’s

personality is whatever responses are emitted in the particular environmental context. Straddling the fence between these two camps are personality psychologists who argue from an interactionist perspective – that personality is both stable and variable over time (e.g., Buss, 1984, Buss, 1987, Buss, 1992, Kammrath et al, 2005 and Magnusson and Endler, 1977). That is to say, that there exist stable architectural units that define a person's personality, but that these units are dependant for their activation on relevant contextual input. Thus, the interactionist perspective argues that there is a basic level at which personality is best described as consistent or stable, but that at a more 'surface' level what we call personality is as variable as the current context. Shackelford (2006) extend the range of responses to this debate, and argue that all three positions on the structure of personality have merit.

### **Trait theories of personality**

The trait approach to personality is one of the major theoretical areas in the study of personality. The trait theory suggests that individual personalities are composed broad dispositions. Consider how you would describe the personality of a close friend. Chances are that you would list a number of traits, such as outgoing, kind and even-tempered. A trait can be thought of as a relatively stable characteristic that causes individuals to behave in certain ways.

Unlike many other theories of personality, such as psychoanalytic or humanistic theories, the trait approach to personality is focused on differences between individuals. The combination and interaction of various traits combine to form a personality that is

unique to each individual. Trait theory is focused on identifying and measuring these individual personality characteristics.

- *Gordon Allport's Trait Theory:* In 1936, psychologist Gordon Allport found that one English-language dictionary alone contained more than 4,000 words describing different personality traits. He categorised these traits into three levels:
  1. **Cardinal Traits:** Traits that dominate an individual's whole life, often to the point that the person becomes known specifically for these traits. People with such personalities often become so known for these traits that their names are often synonymous with these qualities. Consider the origin and meaning of the following descriptive terms: Freudian, Machiavellian, Narcissism, Don Juan, Christ-like, etc. Allport suggested that cardinal traits are rare and tend to develop later in life.
  2. **Central Traits:** the general characteristics that form the basic foundations of personality. These central traits, while not as dominating as cardinal traits, are the major characteristics you might use to describe another person. Terms such as intelligent, honest, shy and anxious are considered central traits.
  3. **Secondary Traits:** Traits that are sometimes related to attitudes or preferences and often appear only in certain situations or under specific circumstances. Some examples would be getting anxious when speaking to a group or impatient while waiting in line.
- *Raymond Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire:*

Trait theorist Raymond Cattell (1943) reduced the number of main personality traits from Allport's initial list of over 4,000 down to 171, mostly by eliminating uncommon traits and combining common characteristics. Next, Cattell rated a large sample of individuals for these 171 different traits. Then, using a statistical technique known as factor analysis, he identified closely related terms and eventually reduced his list to just 16 key personality traits. According to Cattell, these 16 traits are the source of all human personality. He also developed one of the most widely used personality assessments known as the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF).

- *Eysenck's Three Dimensions of Personality:*

British psychologist Hans Eysenck (1992) developed a model of personality based upon just three universal traits:

1. *Introversion/Extraversion:*

Introversion involves directing attention on inner experiences, while extraversion relates to focusing attention outward on other people and the environment. A person high in introversion might be quiet and reserved, while an individual high in extraversion might be sociable and outgoing.

2. *Neuroticism/Emotional Stability:*

This dimension of Eysenck's trait theory is related to moodiness versus even-temperedness. Neuroticism refers to an individual's tendency to become upset or emotional, while stability refers to the tendency to remain emotionally constant.

### 3. Psychoticism:

Later, after studying individuals suffering from mental illness, Eysenck added a personality dimension he called psychoticism to his trait theory. Individuals who are high on this trait tend to have difficulty dealing with reality and may be antisocial, hostile, non-empathetic and manipulative.

- *The Five-Factor Theory of Personality:*

Both Cattell's and Eysenck's theories have been the subject of considerable research, which has led some theorists to believe that Cattell focused on too many traits, while Eysenck focused on too few. As a result, a new trait theory often referred to as the "Big Five" theory emerged. Evidence of this theory has been growing over the past 50 years, beginning with the research of D. W. Fiske (1949) and later expanded upon by other researchers including Norman (1967), Smith (1963), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987). This five-factor model of personality represents five core traits that interact to form human personality. While researchers often disagree about the exact labels for each dimension, the following are described most commonly:

1. Extraversion
2. Agreeableness
3. Conscientiousness
4. Neuroticism
5. Openness



While most agree that people can be described based upon their personality traits, theorists continue to debate the number of basic traits that make up human personality. While trait theory has objectivity that some personality theories lack (such as Freud's psychoanalytic theory), it also has weaknesses. Some of the most common criticisms of trait theory centre on the fact that traits are often poor predictors of behaviour. While an individual may score high on assessments of a specific trait, he or she may not always behave that way in every situation. Another problem is that trait theories do not address how or why individual differences in personality develop or emerge.

#### **2.3.2.2. Overview of the Big Five Personality Traits Model:**

The following section will define the Big Five components, review and discuss the choice of using the Big Five model as a preferred domain to measure the personality traits of newcomers, and finally it's imposed etic approach.

#### **Variables definition:**

The following description of the Big Five traits follows (Ewen, 1998): extraversion is defined as "a trait characterised by a keen interest in other people and external events, and venturing forth with confidence into the unknown" (Ewen, 1998, p. 289). Extraversion (also "extroversion") is marked by pronounced engagement with the external world. Extraverts enjoy being with people, are full of energy, and often experience positive emotions. Introverts, on the other side, lack the exuberance, energy, and activity levels of extraverts. They tend to be quiet, low-key, deliberate, and less dependent on the social world. They respond more poorly to anxiety, anger, guilt, and

depression (Matthews & Deary, 1998). Their lack of social involvement should not be interpreted as shyness or depression; the introvert simply needs less stimulation than an extravert and more time alone to re-charge their batteries (Matthews & Deary, 1998).

Neuroticism is "a dimension of personality defined by stability and low anxiety at one end as opposed to instability and high anxiety at the other end" (Pervin, 1989). Neuroticism (also known as emotional stability) is a fundamental personality trait in the study of psychology. It can be defined as an enduring tendency to experience negative emotional states. Individuals who score high on Neuroticism are more likely than the average to experience such feelings as environmental stress, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. They are often self-conscious and shy, and they may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification (Pervin, 1989).

Conscientiousness concerns the way in which we control, regulate, and direct our impulses. Impulses are not inherently bad; occasionally time constraints require a snap decision, and acting on our first impulse can be an effective response. Also, in times of play rather than work, acting spontaneously and impulsively can be fun. Impulsive individuals can be seen by others as colourful, fun to be with, and zany. Conscientiousness includes the factor known as Need for Achievement (NACH). This might explain why conscientiousness is the best predictor of performance apart from intelligence (Brick & Mount, 1991). Costa & McCrae (1992) suggested that conscientious individuals avoid trouble and achieve high levels of success through purposeful planning and persistence. They are also positively regarded by others as

intelligent and reliable. On the negative side, they can be compulsive perfectionists and workaholics. Furthermore, extremely conscientious individuals might be regarded as stuffy and boring. People who are low in conscientiousness may be criticised for their unreliability, lack of ambition, and failure to stay within the lines, but they will experience many short-lived pleasures and they will never be called stuffy or boring. People high on impulsiveness are unable to resist temptation or delay gratification. Individuals who are low in self-discipline (one facet of conscientiousness) are unable to motivate themselves to perform a task that they would like to accomplish. These are conceptually similar but empirically distinct.

As per Ewen (1998): Openness to Experience (also known as Intellect) describes a dimension of personality that distinguishes imaginative, creative people from down-to-earth, conventional people. Open people are intellectually curious, appreciative of art, and sensitive to beauty. They tend to be, compared to closed people, more aware of their feelings. They therefore tend to hold unconventional and individualistic beliefs, although their actions may be conforming (see Agreeableness). People with low scores on openness to experience tend to have narrow, common interests. They prefer the plain, straightforward, and obvious over the complex, ambiguous, and subtle. They may regard the arts and sciences with suspicion, regarding these endeavours as abstruse or of no practical use. Closed people prefer familiarity over novelty; they are conservative and resistant to change.

Agreeableness is a tendency to be pleasant and accommodating in social situations. In contemporary personality psychology, agreeableness is one of the five

major dimensions of personality structure, reflecting individual differences in concern for cooperation and social harmony. People who score high on this dimension are empathetic, considerate, friendly, generous, helpful, and generally likeable. They also have an optimistic view of human nature and tend to believe that most people are honest, decent, and trustworthy. People scoring low on agreeableness place self-interest above getting along with others. They are generally less concerned with others' well-being, and therefore less likely to go out of their way to help others. Sometimes their skepticism about others' motives causes them to be suspicious and unfriendly. People very low on agreeableness have a tendency to be manipulative in their social relationships. They are more likely to compete than to cooperate (Ewen, 1998).

### **The Big Five model:**

The Table in appendix A summarizes the personality dimensions proposed by a broad range of personality theorists and researchers. These dimensions, although by no means a complete tabulation, emphasise the diversity of current conceptions of personality though they also point to some important convergences (John & Srivastava, 1999). Firstly, almost every one of the theorists includes a dimension akin to extraversion. Although the labels and exact definitions vary, nobody seems to doubt the fundamental importance of this dimension. The second almost universally accepted personality dimension is emotional stability, as contrasted with neuroticism, negative emotionality, and proneness to anxiety. Interestingly, however, not all the researchers listed in the table include a separate measure for this dimension. This is particularly true of the interpersonal approaches, such as Wiggins' and Bales', as well

as the questionnaires primarily aimed at the assessment of basically healthy, well-functioning adults, such as Gough's CPI, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and even Jackson's PRF (McCrae & Costa, 1999) In contrast, all of the temperament-based models include neuroticism.

There is less agreement on the third dimension, which appears in various guises, such as control, constraint, super-ego strength and work orientation as contrasted with impulsivity, psychoticism, and play orientation. The theme underlying most of these concepts involves the control, or moderation, of impulses in a normatively and socially appropriate way (Block & Block, 1980). However, the table also points to the importance of agreeableness and openness, which are neglected by temperament-oriented theorists such as A.H. Buss, Plomin; Eysenck, and Zuckerman. "In a comprehensive taxonomy, even at the broadest level, we need a "place" for an interpersonal dimension related to communion, feeling orientation, altruism, nurturance, love styles, and social closeness, as contrasted with hostility, anger proneness, and narcissism" (John & Srivastava, 1999, p.31). The existence of these questionnaire scales, and the cross-cultural work on the interpersonal origin and consequences of personality, stress the need for a broad domain akin to agreeableness, warmth, or love.

Similar arguments apply to the fifth and last factor included in the Big Five. For one, there are the concepts of creativity, originality, and cognitive complexity, which are measured by numerous questionnaire scales (Helson, 1967; Gough 1979). Although these concepts are cognitive, or, more appropriately, psychological in

nature, they are clearly different from IQ. Second, limited-domain scales measuring concepts such as absorption, fantasy proneness, need for cognition, private self-consciousness, independence, and autonomy would be difficult to subsume under extraversion, neuroticism, or conscientiousness. Indeed, the fifth factor is necessary because individual differences in intellectual and creative functioning underlie artistic interests and performances, inventions and innovation, and even humour (Hogan, 1996). Individual differences in these domains of human behaviour and experience cannot be, and fortunately have not been, neglected by personality psychologists (Hogan, 1996).

Finally, the matches between the Big Five and other constructs sketched out in the table should be considered with a healthy dose of scepticism. Some of these correspondences are indeed based on solid research findings. Others, however, are conceptually derived and seem plausible, but await empirical confirmation. All of these matches reflect broad similarities (John & Srivastava, 1999).

The five-factor taxonomy is among the newest models developed for the description of personality, and this model shows promise to be among the most practical and applicable models available in the field of personality psychology (Digman, 1990). One of the apparent strengths of the Big Five taxonomy is that it can capture, at a broad level of abstraction, the commonalities among most of the existing systems of personality traits, thus providing an integrative descriptive model for research (John & Srivastava, 1999). The Big Five model is

the result of comprehensive, empirical, data-driven research. Identifying the traits and structure of human personality has been one of the most fundamental goals in all of psychology. The five broad factors were discovered and defined by several independent sets of researchers (Digman, 1990).

**The imposed etic approach:**

The Big Five may be conceptualised in two ways: a mere taxonomy of personality, or as human universals that represent real underlying internal cognitive and biological systems. The problems with differences among investigators in how they reduce the large pool of descriptors from the dictionary, leading to differences in variable selection that are difficult to specify, has led Costa and McCrae (1997) to prefer the etic imposed design to ask questions about the cross- cultural (rather than cross-language) generality of the Big Five. According to this perspective, cultural specificity would mean that the covariance structure among traits differs across samples drawn from different cultures, and this claim is different and separate from that of lexical invariance which claims that the most important traits in any language factor ought to generate the Big Five. Etic analyses using translations of English Big Five instruments, such as the NEO questionnaires and the BFI, have now been performed across a wide range of different language families and are generally quite supportive of similar underlying covariance structures. Based on the above research, it could be argued that Big Five are more compatible with the theory of human nature view; hence, the etic approach was imposed for the current study.

### **2.3.2.3. Personality traits as antecedents of newcomer adjustment:**

The resurgence of interest in personality at work began in the early 1980s. Since then a very wide range of individual studies have been conducted to reveal links between personality and work performance starting in the early eighties by Schmitt, Gooding, Noe, and Kirsch (1984) which investigated the overall validity to be derived from a mixed set of personalities, that was confirmed in a more recent research project (Bowling, 2007). Studies have also shown links between personality and other criterion variables such as training proficiency (e.g. Driskell, Hogan, Salas, & Hoskin, 1994). Other research that studied being absent from work by choice were related negatively to agreeableness whereas extraversion and openness demonstrated a positive correlation (Darviri & Woods, 2006)

Research on some personality variables has shown that they might influence newcomers' socialisation. Self-efficacy is positively associated with adjustment (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison & Brantner, 1992; Jones, 1986; Saks, 1995), as is the similar concept of behavioural self-management (Saks & Ashforth, 1996). Researchers started to look at the role of the Big Five traits and training proficiency (Barrick & Mount, 1993), and turnover (Barrick & Mount, 1995) & (Salgado, 2002). In the international domain, the application of personality tests to predict adjustment and performance is considered to be useful (e.g., Caligiuri, 1996; Deller, 1997; Ones and Viswesvaran, 1997). Among various personality traits, extraversion (e.g., Benson, 1978; Gardner, 1962; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1988; Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward, Chan-Hoong & Low, 2004), agreeableness (e.g., Black, 1990), openness to new experiences (e.g., Abe and Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman,



1978; Ang et al, 2006) and neuroticism (Ward, Chan-Hoong & Low, 2004), are found to be the most important predictors of cross-cultural adjustment. On the other hand, some research has suggested that the Big Five model may be a useful tool for probing adjustment during the transition to adolescence, for example, adjustment was closely related to evaluations on the Big Five dimension of conscientiousness (Graziano & Ward, 1992) in school students. Other research findings demonstrated that neuroticism and extraversion were related to psychological and socio-cultural adaptation (Ward & Chan-Hoong, 2004). Further research on marital life adjustment found that goal continuity contributes incrementally to older adults' perceived marital adjustment when controlling for the Big Five model of personality (Cook et al, 2005). This study will extend previous research by examining the role of the Big Five on newcomer adjustment. Specifically, Chapter three will look in depth on the proposed relation between Big Five personality traits and certain adjustment outcomes.

### **2.3.3. The Mediating Effect of Proactive behaviour on Adjustment:**

Proactive behaviour was defined by Grant & Ashford (2008) as “anticipatory action that employees take to impact themselves and/or their environments”. This definition is consistent with dictionary definitions of proactive behaviour as that which “creates or controls a situation by taking the initiative or by anticipating events (as opposed to responding to them),” and to proact as “to take proactive measures; to act in advance, to anticipate” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989).

The concept of proactive behaviour as per the above mentioned definition is different from proactive personality as a personality trait. Proactive personality is

defined as “A dispositional construct that identifies differences among people in the extent to which they take action to influence their environment (Bateman, Crant, 1993).” Thus proactive personality is considered as “a trait reflects proactive behaviour”. As per Crant (2000) proactive behaviour involve four related construct; proactive personality, personal initiative, role breadth self-efficacy, and taking charges.

A recent empirical study by Parker and Collins (2010) identified three higher order categories of individual-level proactive behaviour at work. Each varies in the future the individual is aiming to create. The first category is proactive person–environment (PE) fit behaviour, for example, to achieve demand–abilities fit, individuals can actively gather information about their performance or engage in proactive feedback seeking (Ashford & Black, 1996). Likewise, individuals can proactively achieve supplies–values fit (when the environment supplies the attributes desired by an individual) by actively negotiating changes in their job so that it better fits their skills, abilities, and preferences, or job-role negotiation (Ashford & Black, 1996). Proactive work behaviour, the second category, involves proactive goals to improve the internal organizational environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). The third higher order category is proactive strategic behaviour, and this involves taking control and bringing about change to improve the organization’s strategy and it’s fit with the external environment (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Proactive behavior in the current study belongs to the first category, more specifically, it utilised Ashford & Black (1986) seven proactive socialisation behaviour

by the newcomers, which are, information seeking, feedback seeking, job-change negotiating (i.e., trying to modify one's tasks and others' expectations), positive framing (i.e., attempting to see things in an optimistic way), general socializing (i.e., participating in social events), building a relationship with one's boss, and networking. Both Proactive behaviour and proactivity will be used as a synonymous during this thesis.

Proactivity-based theories describe how entrants to a social situation engage in self-Regulatory processes, checking their current understanding of the situation against their standards for information adequacy. Based on these self-evaluation processes, newcomers are motivated to learn from their environment to meet their own goals (Bandura, 1999). While researchers from this theoretical perspective emphasise various components of newcomer efforts to comprehend the new social setting, including information seeking (Miller & Jablin, 1991), feedback seeking (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), and socialisation tasks (Ashford & Taylor, 1990), the common theme of individual proaction is incorporated by all writers.

The critical proactive variables are highlighted by the following definition of adaptation provided by Ashford and Taylor (1990), "Adaptation is the process by which individuals learn, negotiate, enact, and maintain the behaviours appropriate to a given organisational environment. Appropriate indicates some degree of fit between the behaviours demanded by the environment and those produced by the individual with the result that the individual is able to achieve valued goals"(p.4). The most important difference between this concept of newcomer entry to an organisation and prior perspectives is that adjustment is an active process. Although the individuals mentioned

in the definition are often interacting with others, the critical interest is not in the social situation or efforts to socialise newcomers. Instead, Ashford and Taylor (1990) emphasise newcomers' self-regulatory processes and the maintenance of adequate cognitive and affective resources to address situational demands.

Miller and Jablin (1991) proposed that newcomers often find that an insufficient level of information is provided during organisation entry. Established organisational members, such as organisational leaders and co-workers, may no longer understand what it's like to be a new entrant, and thus will neglect to provide information that would be helpful for adjustment. In response, newcomers engage in a variety of methods of information seeking including monitoring the environment, inquiry from various sources, and consulting written information sources (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Unlike role-based and interpersonal theories, the proactive perspective highlights the possibility that newcomers can learn without directly interacting with others. In short, a newcomer can "socialise" him or herself through activities like observation, independent information acquisition, or independently deciding which elements are important in his or her role. The definition offered for adaptation by Ashford and Taylor (1990) also highlights the instrumental nature of proactive behaviour. The outcome of adjustment from this perspective is achievement of desired goals. The goals of newcomers can be considered in terms of expectancy theory, by increasing the expectancy that performance can be achieved, and understanding the instrumentality of performance for achieving desired goals (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978). As goal directed entities, newcomers will balance out

the potential costs and benefits of information seeking (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison & Vancouver, 2000). Proactive research has made several contributions to our understanding of the socialisation process. First, it recognises the newcomer's active role in his or her own socialisation (Reichers, 1987). Second, it recognises that some newcomers are more active than others, and this difference in proaction is reflected in important socialisation outcomes (Ashford & Black, 1996; Morrison, 1993, Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Third, the emphasis on information seeking as a form of proaction helps us to understand the important role that information plays in socialisation (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Finally, the consideration of types, strategies, and sources of information seeking provides a starting point for a comprehensive consideration of the importance of both content and process and of both newcomers and insiders in socialisation. The outcome is that proactive behaviour will positively mediate the relation between personality traits and proximal adjustment outcome. Over the past two decades, the focus of organisational socialisation research has shifted, changing from a primary concern with the influence of organisational actions on newcomers' adjustment through to investigating the effects of individual newcomer actions and perceptions, and in particular newcomer information acquisition (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Morrison, 1993b; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Yet, as noted in recent reviews, there has been little research integrating these two approaches (Bauer et al, 1998; Chao, Kozlowski, Major, & Gardner, 1994; Fisher, 1986; Morrison, 1993a, b; Reichers, 1987; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a, b; Wanous & Colella, 1989). This study aims to contribute to re-addressing this shortcoming by examining the key issue of whether newcomer proactive behaviour

mediates the effect of personality traits on adjustment outcomes. As a contribution to the organisational socialisation literature, this study investigates whether this mediating effect is apparent at an early stage during the organisational socialisation influence.

### **2.3.3.1. Personality Traits and Proactive behaviour:**

Proactive behaviour conceptually is more closely related to the assertiveness component of extraversion and the achievement striving component of conscientiousness. Research has shown that an individual disposition towards proactive behaviour exists (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000). Individuals high in this trait are more confident, actively work to control their environment, and seek out information rather than waiting for information to arrive. Some research has shown that extraversion and openness to experience variables are associated with a higher level of proactive socialisation behaviour (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). This was extended by a more recent study by Tidwell & Sias (2005) which suggested a direct relationship between extraversion and covert relational information seeking as an element of proactive behaviour. The third trait which relates to proactive behaviour is conscientiousness.

Conscientiousness is sometimes described as the will to achieve (Smith, 1967). Those high in conscientiousness tend to show signs of dependability, thoroughness, and responsibility. However, recent classifications include more volitional characteristics (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1989) such as hard work, achievement orientation, and perseverance. As the sub traits indicate,

individuals possessing this trait tend to outperform those who do not (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Salgado, 1997), though there is some disagreement among scholars (Hurtz & Donovan, 2000). Considered in the context of information-seeking behaviour, many of these characteristics may require a commitment to communication. For example, those who have an achievement orientation would be communicatively involved with supervisors because they are driven to accomplish more. Without continuous feedback, there would be no way to ensure that they were working toward their goal. More important, consistent and timely feedback from employers improves employee performance (Klein, 1987). Conscientiousness has been tied to job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991) and individual performance has been tied to information seeking (Morrison, 1993b); thus, it follows that conscientious newcomers will seek information, to ensure they are high performers.

#### **2.3.3.2. Proactive behaviour and adjustment outcomes:**

Proactive behaviour has been shown to be an important predictor of a number of important work-related outcomes. A proactive behaviour is positively related to objective measures of real estate agent job performance (Crant, 1996), supervisor ratings of managers' charismatic leadership behaviours, (Crant & Bateman, 2000), more communication with co-workers, and greater participation in continuous improvement groups (Parker, 1998). Even more relevant to the study of newcomer adjustment is that information seeking has beneficial outcomes for adjustment (Morrison, 2002), for example it was confirmed that it supports a learning-dependent model of newcomer adjustment (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2005). A recent study by

Ashforth and Sluss & Saks (2007) found that institutionalised socialisation and proactive behaviour are each associated with newcomer learning. Kirby & Kirby (2006), suggested that proactivity and morningness (preference for morning activity over activity later in the day) accounted for significant portion of the variance in task performance. This relationship is partially mediated by the greater levels of knowledge regarding organisational politics, initiative to get ahead in one's career through personal development, and innovation on the job (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). Two studies have incorporated the proactive behaviour in the socialisation process. The first found that among new doctoral students, there was a positive relationship between proactivity and task mastery, role clarity, and social integration (Chan & Schmitt, 2000), while the second found that the proactivity was a consistent predictor of work outcomes, with a significant relationship with all outcomes except role clarity and turnover in white collar job workers (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). Whether these results generalise to the whole working population is an open question. The research described thus far suggests that proactive newcomers will work to improve their fit with the job and organisation

#### **2.3.4. The Moderating Effect of Socialisation Influence on Adjustment:**

Those who have conducted investigations in this area suggest that there is a need for more research exploring the joint effects of socialisation mechanisms initiated by both the newcomer as well as the organisation as a whole (Morrison, 1993a).

Table 2.2 in the next page summarise key socialisation tactics research and its important findings.



Table 2.2: Socialisation Tactics research

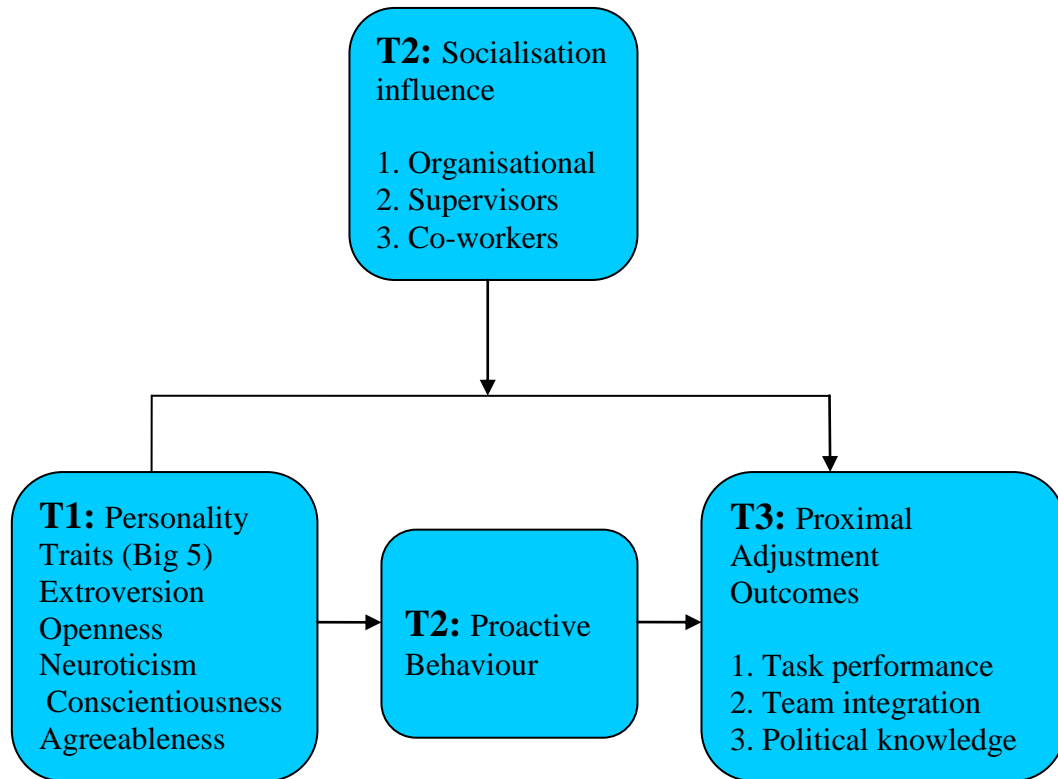
<b>Study</b>	<b>Sample/Design</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Important Findings</b>
Jones (1986)	Graduating MBA studies. n=102 Longitudinal T1: before graduation T2: 5 months	Developed for study – 30 item measure (6 scales with 5 items each).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics associated with an innovative role orientation for individuals high in self-efficacy</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with less role conflict and role ambiguity, greater job satisfaction, and lower turnover intentions.</li> </ul>
Allen & Meyer (1990)	MBA & business students. n=105 Longitudinal T1: 6 months T2: 12 months	Jones (1986)-30 item measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics associated with an innovative role orientation.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater organizational commitment.</li> </ul>
Baker & Feldman (1990)	Newcomers to 4 diverse orgs. n=534 Cross- sectional	Jones (1986)-30 items measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics associated with an innovative role orientation.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater job satisfaction</li> </ul>
Feldman & Weitz (1990)	Summer Interns. n=72 Longitudinal T1: before starting T2: after finishing	Jones (1986)-30 items measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investiture tactic associated with greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and providing opportunities for social interaction.</li> </ul>
Black (1992)	American Expatriates in Asia. n=220 cross- sectional	Jones (1986) -22 item modified scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective, variable, and random tactics associated with role innovation for expatriates.</li> </ul>
King & Sethi (1992)	New high-tech professionals n=160 cross- sectional	Jones (1986) -26 item modified measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics associated with an innovative role orientation.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater organizational commitment and role clarity</li> </ul>
Laker & Steffy (1995)	Graduating students. n=91 Longitudinal T1 : before graduation T2 : 6 months	Jones (1986) – 25 item measure (no collective items). Tactics combined into one scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics with greater goal behavior.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater organizational commitment.</li> </ul>

Study	Sample/Design	Measure	Important Findings
Teboul (1995)	Misc. New hires recruited by students. n=201 Cross – sectional	Jones (1986)-18 item modified scale. Tactics combined into one scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics associate with a greater perceived social cost of seeking information.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater social support.</li> <li>• Socialisation tactics not associated with either overt or covert information seeking.</li> </ul>
Ashforth & Saks (1996)	Graduating business students. n=222 Longitudinal T1 : 4 months T2 : 10 months	Jones (1986) – 30 item measure, plus a new 5 – item investiture measure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized tactics (except divestiture) associated with actual /attempted role innovation</li> <li>• Divestiture and collective tactics associated with greater person change.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with less role ambiguity and role conflict, fewer stress symptoms, lower turnover intentions</li> <li>• Individualized tactics (except divestiture) and investiture associated with higher performance.</li> </ul>
Saks & Ashforth (1997)	New accountants in 10 large/medium – sized firms. n=154 Cross – sectional	Jones (1986) – 6 item Modified scale. Tactics combined into a single scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional tactics associated with greater frequency of feedback and observation.</li> <li>• Institutionalized tactics associated with greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and task mastery, and with lower anxiety and turnover</li> <li>• Individualized tactics associated with an innovative role orientation.</li> <li>• Information acquisition partially mediated the relationship between tactics and outcomes.</li> </ul>

Few studies have attempted to incorporate multiple sources of socialising influence, but initial research shows that amalgamating sources of information into a general socialisation construct would be misleading. Bauer and Green (1998) found that newcomer information seeking was related to indicators of adjustment, but not when supervisor clarifying and supporting behaviours were taken into account. Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) found no sources of information were significant univariate predictors of work attitudes, but multivariate results showed that information from supervisors was related to higher levels of satisfaction, commitment, and adjustment. In part, the use of influence measures as a moderator in this study is an attempt to match interpersonal and sensemaking theories of adjustment. The symbolic interactionist (Reichers, 1987; Stryker & Satham, 1985), social information processing (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Zalesny & Ford, 1990), and social learning (Bandura, 1999) perspectives all suggest that due to reciprocal influences between individuals and their environments, observed behaviour is the result of both the actions of the person and the situation. The impact of a source of influence on a newcomer therefore reflects both the efforts of this source as well as the newcomers' willingness to learn from this source. Thus, rather than trying to separate how much newcomers directly acted to learn and contrasting this with how much the environment tried to socialise them, the construct of social influence is proposed as an emergent construct that only exists at the person-by-situation level of analysis which can be contrasted with a disposition towards proactive behaviour. So, matching with interpersonal socialisation & sense making theories, newcomers will also encounter multiple messages coming from the organisation, leaders, and co-workers.

### CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

As informed by the adjustment theories and empirical findings discussed in Chapter two, the proposed study variables can be summarised on the following conceptual model as a theoretical framework of the current research:



**T1:** First round data collected within a month of respondents' hire date.

**T2:** Second round data, collected three months after time 1

**T3:** Third round data, collected three months after time 2.

*Figure 1: Theoretical framework of adjustment process*

Similarly, based on this theoretical model the following hypotheses were developed to be tested as follows;

### **3.1. Personality Traits as Antecedents of Adjustment:**

Jones (1986) found that whereas organisational pressures to conform are effective on the whole in encouraging newcomers to accept the job role as it is presented, those who are higher in self-efficacy and have a strong sense of what they want from a job are less likely to succumb to these pressures. Evidence that applicants try to find organisations that match their dispositions in the recruiting process further supports this point of view (Judge & Cable, 1997). The following section focused and summarized the key theoretical and empirical relation between personality traits and adjustment outcomes and concluded with the proposed hypotheses.

#### **3.1.1 Conscientiousness and Adjustment Outcomes:**

Conscientious individuals are generally hard working and reliable. When taken to an extreme, they may also be compulsive in their behaviour. People with a low level of conscientiousness are not necessarily lazy or immoral, but tend to be more laid back, less goal oriented, and less driven by success (Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1989).

Research has shown that conscientiousness directly influences contextual performance (Miller et al, 1999), some other research has shown that conscientiousness is positively related to interviewee success (Caldwell & Burger, 1998), job performance (Barrick, & Mount 1991; Tracey et al, 2007), career self-

efficacy (Hartman & Betz, 2007), overall job proficiency (Barrick & Mount, 1993) and performance motivation (Judge et al, 2002).

In adolescence research, conscientiousness was closely related to adolescence adjustment during developmental transition (Graziano & Ward, 1992). Moreover, in cross cultural research, conscientiousness was related to job satisfaction (Judge et al, 2000), adjustment in overseas assignments (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1999), and was the most valid predictor among the Big Five of job performance (Schmidt & Ryan, 1993).

In a recent research study Barrick (2009), found that organisations can increase performance by basing their hiring decision on a set of predictors which include conscientiousness. Therefore, and matching with the Big Five personality model, it is hypothesised that conscientiousness will be a valid predictor of task performance as an adjustment outcome as conscientiousness is related to job performance because it assesses personal characteristics such as persistence, planning, carefulness, responsibility, and that of a hard worker, which are important attributes for accomplishing work tasks in all jobs.

*Hypothesis 1a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to conscientiousness*

Moreover, Hochwarter et al (2000) found that perceptions of organisational politics moderated the relationship between conscientiousness and job performance, signifying that moderating relationships may exist. Individuals high on conscientiousness were more involved in knowledge acquisition activities than individuals low on conscientiousness (Gupta, 2008) .Other recent research found that significant

correlations between the conscientiousness and knowledge sharing existed within teams of an engineering company (Matzler, et al, 2007). Whether this relation is valid and generalisable to the political knowledge of organisations as an adjustment indicator or not remains a valid question. While comprehensive theory linking personality traits to political behaviour is being actively developed (Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Mondak et al., 2010), scholars in political science have consistently argued that traits related to personal control and a willingness to engage in social interaction are likely to influence political participation (Carmines 1980, Carlson& Hyde, 1980; Guyton 1988; Milbrath & Goel, 1977; Cohen, Vigoda & Samorly, 2001; Mondak &Halperin, 2008; Blais & Labbe-St-Vincent, 2010 ; Gerber et al. 2008, Gerber et al., 2009; Mondak et al., 2010; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009). Competence theory postulates that personal control promotes political participation (Carmines, 1980). Recent work has also demonstrated an empirical link between self-efficacy, a trait strongly related to personal control (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen, 2002), and political participation. Individuals with high personal control will be motivated to become involved in the political process because their actions will be rewarded with a desired outcome. Because Conscientiousness is associated with adherence to social norms we reasoned that this trait would be associated with greater levels of informal network of power, and interpersonal relationship, i.e., organisational political knowledge.

*Hypothesis 1b:- Newcomer political knowledge will be positively related to conscientiousness.*

Barrick et al. (2000) found that hiring applicants who are high in conscientiousness will result in employees who are predisposed to exert greater effort at work, who persist at work for a longer period of time, are able to more effectively cope with stress, and are more committed to work. These employees are also likely to be responsible and helpful to others at work, and are less likely to engage in counterproductive behaviours. In depth research of the team personality-team performance relationship showed that team level dissimilarity in conscientiousness indirectly affected both types of satisfaction negatively as it impeded early agreement about the temporal aspects of task execution, which, in turn, hindered coordinated action in later stages of team task execution (Josette & Evers, 2009). Newcomers with high conscientiousness will seek to gain control over the environment by establishing an identity and seeking to understand inter group relationships within the organisation (Nicholson, 1984)

Based on these researches the following hypothesis will be tested:

*Hypothesis 1c:- Newcomer group integration will be positively related to conscientiousness.*

### **3.1.2. Openness to Experience and Adjustment Outcome:**

Some research has positively linked openness to experience with overall job proficiency and job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991 & 1993), career self-efficacy (Hartman & Betz, 2007), salary level (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001) and cross culture adjustment (e.g., Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978). Judge, Thoresen and Bono (2000) showed that intellect-openness predicted ratings for transformational leadership, which in turn predicted effectiveness, at  $r = 0.20$ . Recent



research on cross cultural adjustment found that showed that a US expatriate's general living adjustment in Taiwan is positively related to his or her degree of extraversion and openness to experience (Huanget al, 2005). Moreover, Moy and Lam (2004) found that openness was selected from among five major hiring attributes for effective performance.

However, no research has specifically studied newcomers' openness to experience and task performance as an adjustment outcome, but according to the variables studied in the previously mentioned empirical research and matching with the Big Five personality model, people with high scores on openness to experience tend to have broad, different interests and open-minded people prefer novelty over familiarity and are neither conservative nor resistant to change (Costa & McCrae, 1992), therefore it could be argued that this dimension enhances the learning of new tasks and hence task performance.

*Hypothesis 2a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to openness to experience.*

Fowler, Baker & Dawes (2008) found that 60% of the variation in overall political participation could be attributed to genetic factors. Scholars studying the effect of personality on political participation and attitudes have argued that since personality traits are formed before political behaviours, and are known to be heritable (Bouchard & McGue, 2003) they most likely represent an intermediate link in the causal chain(Mondak et al., 2010).

Mondak et al. (2010) found a significant relationship between the Big Five personality trait openness to experience, and several acts of participation including

attending public meetings, working for a party or candidate, and contributing money to a party or candidate. Mondak et al., (2010) found that 40% of the relationship of openness to experience on political participation was mediated by political knowledge and efficacy. Vecchione & Caprara (2009) also showed openness to experience significantly predicted overall political participation.

We expected that people high on openness would be attracted to know the informal network of power within organisation, and thus would be more interested in and informed about organisational political matters more than people who are low in openness. Based on this the following hypothesis was offered:

*Hypothesis 2b: Newcomer political knowledge will be positively related to openness to experience*

### **3.1.3. Extraversion and Adjustment Outcomes:**

Research has shown that extraversion was related to socio-cultural adaptation (Ward, Chan-Hoong & Low, 2004), and is positively related to interviewee success in part through action taken well before the interviewing process begins and in part through the interviewers' influence of the applicant personality during the interview (Caldwell & Burger, 1998).

One reason we might expect that extraversion may influence newcomer task performance is the link between extraversion and task performance that was established in Neurophysiology research by Fink, Schrausser & Neubauer (2002). It was proven that during cognitive activity (task performance) that extraverts were more likely to produce central nervous system activation patterns suggesting a moderating influence

of extraversion on the relationship between IQ and cortical activation to enhance intelligence impact (Fink, Schrausser & Neubauer, 2002). Moreover, recent research by Chamorro-Premuzic et al., (2009) showed that there was a significant interactive effect on creative performance, with extraverts performing better in the presence of music than introverts.

Other research has highlighted the positive relation of extraversion to learning style and job performance (Furnham et al, 1999), training and job proficiency (Barrick & Mount, 1991), supervisor rated performance, and its negative relation to expatriates' desire to terminate their assignment (Caligiuri, 2000). In recent cross cultural adjustment, extraversion significantly affected general and/or interaction adjustment (Tsang, 2001) and were associated with all forms of adjustment and performance for expatriates, at least in terms of zero order correlation (Shaffer et al, 2006). The current research intended to examine if this apply also to newcomer adjustment in the following hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 3a:- Newcomer task performance is positively related to extraversion*

Since extroverts tend to be enthusiastic, action-oriented individuals who are likely to say "Yes!" or "Let's go!" to opportunities for excitement, and matching with sense making theory, researchers have found that teams higher in extraversion have more positively related team performance (Barrick, 1998). This also proposes that employees integrate well with groups. Moreover, extraversion was positively correlated with managerial level and group leaders (Moutafi et al, 2007). In a study involved 248

professional managers from executive MBA in 63 virtual team, extraversion were related to group interaction and performance (Balthazard, et al., 2004). Based on these empirical findings and since extraversion is defined as "a trait characterised by a keen interest in other people and external events, and venturing forth with confidence into the unknown" (Ewen, 1998, p. 289), and in accordance with Interactionist theory, this research suggests the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3b:- Newcomers' group integration is positively related to extraversion.*

#### **3.1.4. Agreeableness and Adjustment Outcomes:**

Agreeableness is an important predictor in cross culture adjustment (Black, 1990). Although in some studies agreeableness is positively related to supervisor rated performance and negatively related to expatriates' desire to terminate their assignment (Caligiuri, 2000), other studies showed that it was negatively related to career satisfaction and salary level (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). This research suggests that employees who score highly on agreeableness are connected to others in the organisation, and tend not to leave early although they might not be highly satisfied with their career progress. In cross cultural research agreeableness was associated with all forms of adjustment for expatriates, at least in terms of zero-order correlation (Shaffer et al, 2006). Neuman & Wright (1999) found that agreeableness predicted peer ratings of team member performance beyond measures of job-specific skills and general cognitive ability. Similarly, at the group level of analysis, agreeableness predicted supervisor ratings of work team performance, objective measures of work

team accuracy, and work completed. At both the individual and group levels, the trait of agreeableness predicted interpersonal skills, which are key to team integration. In general, people who are concerned about others also tend to cooperate with them, help them out, and trust them (Ewen, 1998). Cooperative individuals are ideal in group situations since they are capable of handling collaborative work where all the team members have to get along, have amicable meetings, interact, share information, be helpful and supportive and jointly arrive at decisions. Since agreeableness is linked with frequent interaction or cooperation with others, in accordance with interpersonal socialisation theory and the above mentioned findings, it is hypothesised in this research that agreeableness is positively related to team/group integration as an adjustment outcome.

*Hypothesis 4:- Newcomer group integration is positively related to Agreeableness*

In meta- analysis of 15 meta-analyses studies Barrick et al., (2001) found that agreeableness did not predict the overall work performance, it can predict success in specific occupations or relate to specific criteria. Moreover, Mondak and Halperin (2008) find some evidence those individuals high in agreeableness report being less attentive to politics (p.10). Gerber et al., (2009) hypothesized that the conflictual nature of politics may be off-putting to individuals high on agreeableness. While three of the four Agreeableness coefficients were negative, none are statistically significant and all are fairly small. Based on these researches, no specific hypotheses were given to examine the relationship between agreeableness and task performance or the relationship between agreeableness and political knowledge as adjustment outcomes.

### **3.1.5. Neuroticism and Adjustment Outcomes:**

According to the Big Five personality model, research found that employees with high neuroticism scores tend to respond more poorly to environmental stress, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult (Aamodt, 2005). Moreover, research showed that intercultural social self-efficacy and socio-cultural adaptation were negatively related to neuroticism (Mak & Tran, 2001); (Ward, Chan-Hoong & Low, 2004). Emotional stability was the dominant influence on withdrawal for expatriates (Shaffer et al, 2006). This is congruent with Caligiuri's (2000) findings that emotionally unstable expatriates reported being more likely to harbour intentions of leaving assignments prematurely. Other research showed that job satisfaction and job performance were negatively related to neuroticism (Judge et al, 2001); (Barrick&Mount,1991) & (Judge et al, 2002), and career self-efficacy (Hartman & Betz, 2007).As employees who exhibit neurotic characteristics, such as worry, nervousness, tension, and self-pity have those characteristics that might hinder successful performance more than emotionally stable employees, the same can be expected with task performance as an adjustment outcome.

*Hypothesis 5a:- Newcomer task performance is negatively related to neuroticism*

Existing literature suggests that emotional stability may affect the team's capability to continue working together. Heslin (1964) concluded that emotional stability is one of the best predictors of team performance, particularly of measures associated with team viability. In one of the studies that Heslin reviewed, Haythorn (1953) found that

emotional stability was positively related to team viability, as rated by outside observers ( $r = .48$ ). Barrick & Stewart (1998) indicated that emotional stability was associated with team viability through social cohesion.

Higher aggregate levels of emotional stability also should lead to a more relaxed atmosphere that should promote the capability to continue working cooperatively. In contrast, low emotional stability, what Watson and Tellegen (1985) referred to as negative affectivity, is likely to suppress or inhibit cooperation. As evidence of this supposition, George (1990) reported that teams with negative affective tones engaged in less social behaviour ( $r = -.57$ ). Thus, teams with a greater tendency toward anxiety or negative affectivity are likely to be less capable of continued positive interactions. Even inclusion of a single team member who is emotionally unstable may also create a negative affective tone that makes it difficult for the team to work together. Thus, the current research will propose the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 5b:- Newcomer group integration is negatively related to neuroticism*

### **3.2. Proactive behaviour as a Mediator of Adjustment:**

Interactions between the newcomer and the environment occur when newcomers seek information (Miller & Jablin, 1991), seek feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), and develop social relationships (Ashford & Taylor, 1990) to increase their own adjustment. Some research examined various forms of work motivation as predictor of proactive behaviour, and role breadth self-efficacy proved to be the most important predictor (Ohly & Fritz, 2007). Research has shown that there are dispositional tendencies for some individuals to be more proactive, meaning they

behave more confidently, actively work to control their environment, and seek out information (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000). In general, dispositional variables, such as extraversion, openness to experience have empirically demonstrated effects on the proactive behaviours newcomers enact to fit into their work environments (Chan & Schmitt, 2000). Moreover, extraversion and openness to experience, were associated with higher levels of proactive socialization behaviour such as feedback seeking and relationship building (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Conscientiousness concerns the way in which we control, regulate, and direct our impulses. Those who have higher desire for control seek more information, build networks, and negotiate job changes (Ashford & Black, 1996). These interactions, on one hand, demonstrate how individual dispositions can lead to behaviours that stimulate fit and adjustment. Individuals with high levels of openness to experience typically display imagination, intelligence, curiosity, originality, and open mindedness.

Consistent with the intellect and curiosity that is characteristic of these individuals (Costa & McCrae, 1992), it is likely that individuals with high openness will engage in higher levels of sensemaking (including both information seeking and feedback seeking) in new environments and during a socialization experience. Furthermore, supportive of a possible relationship between openness and positive framing, Watson and Hubbard (1996) showed that openness was associated with lower levels of behavioural disengagement and denial and higher levels of acceptance and positive interpretation and growth during times of stress.

On the other hand, proactive behaviour is positively related to a number of adjustment outcomes proposed on this study, for example, supervisor ratings of



managers, more communication with co-workers,(Parker, 1998), learning-dependent model of newcomer adjustment (Cooper-Thomas& Anderson, 2005). Kirby & Kirby (2006) accounted for significant portion of the variance in task performance to proactivity.

Research on proactivity emphasizes the active role that newcomers often play in learning about, and possibly altering, their work context (Crant, 2000). Proactivity-based theories describe how entrants to a social situation engage in self-Regulatory processes to explain the specifics of newcomer socialization processes in organizations (Bandura, 1999). This framework suggests that interactions with insiders in the setting may be an important influence. It can be argued that this will also depend on the rate at which newcomers negotiate the first (encounter) stage of the socialization process. For example, newcomer efforts to comprehend the new social setting, including information seeking (Miller & Jablin, 1991), feedback seeking (Ashford & Cummings, 1983).Since every aspect of newcomer adjustment could be facilitated by the efforts of newcomers, and based on the empirical findings mentioned above, it is argued that proactive behaviour will mediate the relationship between certain traits (i.e. extraversion, conscientiousness and openness) and adjustment outcomes. It was hypothesised that a proactive behaviour will be positively mediating all proximal adjustment outcomes.

*Hypothesis 6:- The relationships between newcomers' proximal adjustment and the personality dimensions of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness are mediated by proactive behaviour.*

### **3.3. Socialisation Effort as a Moderator of Adjustment:**

Trait activation theory is a recent theory that focuses on the person-situation interaction to explain behaviour on the basis of responses to trait-relevant cues found in situations (Tett & Guterman, 2000). These observable responses serve as the basis for behavioural ratings on dimensions used in a variety of assessments, such as performance appraisal, interviews, or assessment centres (Tett & Burnett, 2003). The emphasis in trait activation theory is on the importance of situation trait relevance in order to understand in which situations a personality trait is likely to manifest in behaviour. A situation is considered relevant to a trait if it provides cues for the expression of trait-relevant behaviour (Tett & Guterman, 2000), an idea that has roots in Murray's (1938) notion of "situational press." For example, it would generally not be productive to assess individuals on the trait of aggression during a religious service because there are few cues likely to elicit aggressive behaviour (Lievens et al, 2006). Also relevant from the trait activation perspective is the role of situation strength. Strong situations involve unambiguous behavioural demands where the outcomes of behaviour are clearly understood and widely shared (Mischel, 1973). Relatively uniform expectations result in few differences in how individuals respond to the situation, obscuring individual differences on underlying personality traits even where relevant. Conversely, weak situations are characterized by more ambiguous expectations, enabling much more variability in behavioural responses to be observed. A related concept involves what has been referred to as the competency demand hypothesis (e.g., Mischel & Shoda, 1995), where research has shown that individual

differences are obviated when situations have demanding behavioural requirements in terms of ability, skills, or personality traits.

Trait relevance and strength therefore represent distinct characteristics of situations that figure into the concept of trait activation potential (TAP; Tett & Burnett, 2003). On the one hand, situation trait relevance is a qualitative feature of situations that is essentially trait specific; it is informative with regard to which cues are present to elicit behaviour for a given latent trait. The traits considered are typically cast in the Big Five framework because the Big Five traits consist of clearly understood behavioural domains and represent the natural categories that individuals use to describe and evaluate social behaviour (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1992; Haaland & Christiansen, 2002; Lievens, De Fruyt, & Van Dam, 2001). Hence, they facilitate classification of adjustment outcomes with similar situational demands. On the other hand, situation strength is more of a continuum that refers to how much clarity there is with regard to how the situation is perceived. Very strong situations are therefore likely to negate almost all individual differences in behaviour without regard to any specific personality trait. The analogy used by Tett and Burnett (2003) to distinguish between the two concepts is that trait relevance is akin to which channel a radio is tuned to whereas situation strength is more similar to volume; relevance determines what is playing and strength (inversely) whether it will be heard.

These concepts are relevant to newcomer adjustment because the proximal outcomes allowed a broad range of behaviour to be observed across the adjustment

period and to be demanding enough that differences in candidates' adjustment can be observed. Because of this, they will necessarily differ in the cues present with regard to various Big Five traits. For example, it would be expected that a co-worker influence would provide ample opportunity to observe differences in behaviour relevant to the trait of Agreeableness. Organisations, supervisors, and co-workers therefore represent situations that differ in terms of their TAP. The more likely it is that behaviour can be observed within the adjustment process that is relevant to a particular Big Five trait, the higher the activation potential would be for that. The opportunity to observe differences in trait-relevant behaviour within a situation depends upon both the relevance and strength of the situation and has relevance to both the convergent and discriminant validity of dimension ratings.

Following extensive literature review in the previous chapter (chapter 2), the current study conceptualise the main effect of the person dispositional variables (i.e. personality traits) were proposed to be moderated by situational variables like the influence of the organization, supervisors, and co-worker. It also adapted longitudinal design, and the choice of control variables like education, work experience, organization size, and salary were a careful attempt for controlling the relative strengths and weaknesses of a situation. For example, larger organisations tend to be more complex (Cullen, Anderson, & Baker, 1986), and difficulties in the socialisation process may be interpreted through the lens of past experiences (Adkins, 1995; Louis, 1980). Moreover, multi-sample analysis was conducted across organisations, and occupations in appreciation of situational variables like organizational policies and procedures

### **3.3.1 Organisational Efforts:**

Many organisations attempt to assist new employees in their adjustment to new work roles. The U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, for example, estimates that 73% of firms with over 50 employees provide some sort of orientation training (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2005). Organisations may be especially influential because they have time as a resource - they provide the first information that newcomers receive. These effects may be especially prominent predictors of influence over non-cognitive, affective appraisals of the organisation (McGuire, 1985; Petty & Wegener, 1998). An orientation programme explains how the organisation works and what is valued, which should reduce role conflict and improve commitment (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Wanous, 1992), orientation and training is positively associated with organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to remain with the organisation (Louis, Posner, & Powell, 1983). In a recent study by Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg (2003) socialisation influence by an organisation was shown to enhance role clarity and task mastery. Although organisations may structure orientation sessions to include social interactions with co-workers, integration arising through these interactions will be more likely attributed to co-workers than organisation influence (Moreland & Levine, 2001). Orientation sessions will not provide information regarding the political mechanisms in the organisation, as politics are often defined as informal elements of the power and decision making process that violate organisational rules (Kacmar & Baron, 1999). As such, high levels of organisational influence are likely to relate primarily to the formal aspects of one's work responsibilities and expectations for

work goals. So it is suggested that the outcome will be only related to task performance, but how different newcomers may interact with organisational effort due to his/her personality traits remains an open question.

Although there is little specialised literature, the results of the laboratory experiment showed that introverts with anonymity generated a lot of ideas which boost their task learning and performance (Mukahi & Ui, 1998). This research suggests that introverts might prefer to discuss task with a co-worker or a supervisor rather than during formal orientation and training programmes, so he/she might not get the same benefits as an extravert from formal organisation efforts especially when they is directed towards a large number of newcomers. As extraversion marked by pronounced engagement with the external world, extraverts enjoy being with people, are full of energy, and often experience positive emotions. So we may expect extraversion has the strongest positive relation with task performance when organisation socialisation effort is high.

Therefore, and matching with TAP, it will be hypothesised in this research that organisational socialisation efforts will moderate the relationship between extraversion and task performance as an adjustment outcome.

*Hypothesis 7: Organisational socialisation efforts and extraversion will interact to affect newcomers' task performance adjustment outcome, with the result that extraversion has the strongest positive relation with task performance when organisation socialisation effort is high.*

### **3.3.2. Leaders:**

Because of their intimate knowledge of work roles and direct observation of newcomers, these individuals are in an especially good position to provide guidance and information on work role expectations. This makes supervisors the most expert source of information related to performance expectations, as exemplified by supervisor clarifying behaviours (Bauer & Green, 1998). In another study, compared to orientation programs and co-workers, experienced members of the organisation such as supervisors and mentors were the most important socialising influences on new employees (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999). Supervisor support is also highly predictive of newcomer adjustment outcomes including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and reduced intention to leave the employing organisation (Bauer & Green, 1998; Fisher, 1985). Other research showed an especially strong link between manager clarification of job and task information and the outcome variables of role adjustment and performance efficacy (Bauer & Green, 1998). Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) found that newcomers who collected more information from supervisors reported higher subsequent levels of satisfaction, commitment, and adjustment. Since conscientiousness is related to a general willingness to work hard, which is reflected in information seeking, we expect a newcomer who scores high on conscientiousness to collect more information from supervisors than one who scores low and benefit from that on performing their tasks. For example, research showed that conscientious students were willing to use effort - time, money and hard work - in order to obtain relevant information from their teachers (Heinström, 2003), conscientiousness was

positively related to career information seeking from supervisors (Reed et al, 2004) and overt task and performance information-seeking frequency (Tidwell & Sias, 2005). Based on the above, and matching with TAP the following hypothesis is conditionally offered;

*Hypothesis 8a: leaders' socialisation efforts and conscientiousness will interact to affect newcomers' task performance adjustment outcome, with the result that conscientiousness has the strongest positive relation with task performance when leader socialisation effort is high.*

Besides socialisation provided by organisationally sanctioned programmes, those in influential positions may exert a unique influence on role adjustment and personal integration. Unlike the organisation as a whole, leaders can establish more personalised relationships, which is a critical resource for interpersonal influence. Research shows that effective managers differ from less effective ones in describing themselves as more agreeable and more conscientious (Silverthorne, 2001). As with orientation, while leaders may facilitate social communication with co-workers, social integration arising through these interactions will be more likely attributed to the leaders. Since employees who score high in conscientiousness are likely to be responsible and helpful to others at work, and are less likely to engage in counterproductive behaviours than less conscientiousness employees, and matching with interpersonal socialisation theory, it is therefore proposed that the outcomes from the interaction between leader socialisation influence and conscientious newcomers will be better integration of newcomers into the group.



*H8b: leaders' socialisation efforts and conscientiousness will interact to affect newcomers' group integration adjustment outcome, with the result that conscientiousness has the strongest positive relation with group integration when leader socialisation effort is high.*

Individuals who are in mentoring relationships have also been demonstrated to have higher levels of values congruence with the organisation (Chatman, 1991), are more knowledgeable about organisational issues and practices (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993), and have more knowledge in goals/values, politics, and people domains of socialisation (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992) than unmonitored individuals. Moreover, leader influence stood out as a predictor of newcomer adjustment outcome (Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg, 2003). Some research showed significant correlations between conscientiousness and knowledge sharing (Matzler, et al, 2007), indicating that more conscientiousness newcomers might seek and share political knowledge from leaders than less conscientiousness newcomers.

Thus, matching with TAP, it is proposed that the outcome from the interaction between leader socialisation influence and conscientiousness newcomers will be higher political knowledge of the organisation.

*Hypothesis 8c: leaders' socialisation efforts and conscientiousness will interact to affect newcomers' political knowledge adjustment outcome, with the result that conscientiousness has the strongest positive relation with political knowledge when leader socialisation effort is high.*

### **3.3.3. Co-workers:**

The small group socialisation perspective of Moreland and Levine (2001) de-emphasises the organisation and focuses on how individuals learn from those occupying similar roles. Interactions between members of a work group are important in the development of shared meaning and attitudes, as newcomers interpret their environment through the lens of interactions with others (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Co-workers are an important part of the entry process, as many individuals spend more time with co-workers than in formal organisational training and orientation programmes or with leaders.

Some research has also examined the influence of co-workers on more specific outcomes. Feldman (1989) has suggested that co-workers also play an important role in transmitting important information about task completion by providing feedback for processes that could not have been picked up in prior training or education. Co-workers will be motivated to assist newcomers to learn their new jobs to reduce their own workload. Results to date have been less than straightforward, however, with information seeking from co-workers either not related to task knowledge (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) or negatively related to task mastery (Morrison, 1993a) suggesting that those who are least familiar with the job spend more time seeking information from co-workers.

Since people who are concerned about others also tend to cooperate with them, help them out, and trust them (Ewen, 1998), and in accordance with interpersonal socialisation, agreeableness is linked with frequent interaction or cooperation with

others, we might expect that people who score highly in agreeableness will respond better to co-workers' influence. On the social side, research has shown that those who see co-workers as more helpful in the socialisation process are more satisfied, more committed, and report greater intentions to remain (Louis, Posner, & Powell, 1983). As one might expect, co-workers have been shown to be one of the most significant sources of information regarding knowledge of the work group (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Morrison (1993b) also found that newcomers are more likely to seek social information from peers than from supervisors. The proposition that co-workers can improve group integration seems fairly straightforward based on the research above. As such, the following hypothesis is conditionally offered:

*Hypothesis 9a: Co-workers' socialisation efforts and agreeableness will interact to affect newcomers' group integration adjustment outcome, with the result that agreeableness has the strongest positive relation with group integration when co-worker socialisation effort is high.*

Research on selecting individuals in a team setting (co-workers) suggests the importance of personality characteristics. For example, research examined extraversion, teamwork knowledge and contextual performance (Morgeson et al, 2005). The results indicate that extraversion is bivariately related to contextual performance in a team setting, with social skills, conscientiousness, extraversion, and teamwork knowledge incrementally predicting contextual performance (with a multiple correlation of .48). Matching with interpersonal socialisation theory, established employees have resource control over the flow and interpretation of information between the organisation and the newcomer, the most critical socialisation may occur within work

groups (Moreland & Levine, 2001). Thus, we may expect that extraversion was associated with greater task performance when co-worker socialisation is also high. Based on these, and matching with TAP the following hypothesis is conditionally offered;

*Hypothesis 9b:- Co-workers' socialisation efforts and extraversion will interact to affect newcomers' task performance adjustment outcome, with the result that extraversion has the strongest positive relation with task performance when co-worker socialisation effort is high.*

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Research Discipline and Paradigm:**

The following two sections briefly discuss the current research discipline and paradigm prior to the detailed discussion of the pilot study and the main study methodology.

#### **4.1.1 Research Discipline:**

Organisational Psychology has been identified as a research discipline for this study: the research is an attempt to extend the description and explanation of organisational processes which have been shifted from an earlier emphasis on the traditional concept of individual psychology and interpersonal relationships. The interdependent behaviour of many people in their supportive and complementary actions takes on a form or structure which needs to be conceptualised at a more appropriate stage. Hence the effort has been directed at the utilization of an open system point of view for the study of large scale organisation. Societies and organisations consist of patterned behaviours, and the behaviour of each individual is determined to a considerable extent by the requirements of the larger pattern. Even social psychology, however, has neglected the organisational and institutional level, and textbooks of social psychology typically conclude with some treatment of small face-to-face groups. This research is an attempt to extend such discussions by beginning where many left off-with the behaviour of people in organisations. Attempts to develop a comprehensive framework for predicting their adaptation and effectiveness in terms which specify the types of behaviour required for organisational effectiveness, the different personality traits which can evoke such behaviour, and the organisational

conditions which elicit these motive patterns.

#### **4.1.2 Research Paradigm:**

The type of the study is “finding out”, it is based on “positive science” in which some hypotheses were tested using a sample and a conclusion of accepting or rejecting those hypotheses were drawn. The ontology (belief about the nature of the world) of this study assumes that reality is real and apprehensible, i.e., able to be comprehended, and that the epistemology (the type of knowledge generated) is objectivist, i.e. findings are true. These three concepts together make up a general philosophical world view or paradigm which is positivism, the methodology flows from the objective of hypothesis testing, so survey (quantitative) methods were mainly used. This paradigm is characterised by looking at the reality as objectively measurable, knowable and separate from those looking at it. Also the status of language - the study was adopted to consider describing reality as it is, but is independent of what it describes.

It might be agreed that a positivist paradigm match the focus of explanation and creating general law, but since the effect of socialisation tactics on newcomers with different personality traits is a relatively new area of research, it could be also argued that a theory generating approach would have been more appropriate than a hypothesis testing (i.e. a constructivist paradigm). In the constructivist paradigm the focus would have been on description and understanding of the interaction between different personality traits and organisational socialisation tactics rather than an explanation or prediction that this relation exists. Thus a constructivist paradigm would have served to obtain knowledge of multiple types and bodies, collaboratively constructed, and context

specific rather than a singular body of knowledge. In this case the ontology would have been situation based reality, the epistemology to create findings, and the methodology to be used would have been hermeneutic (the study of interpretation theory), especially if we apply this paradigm in a “rigorous” manner.

However, it is claimed that the positivist paradigm would still be a better choice for two reasons: first, because the knowledge created using this paradigm is more generalisable (Yap and Walsham, 1986) and second, it is very important to first identify and measure the relationship between personality traits and newcomer adjustment before it could be further explored.

In summary, a positivist paradigm matches the focus of explanation and creating the general law required in this study; however, since the effect of socialisation influence on newcomers with different personality traits in order to have a well-adjusted newcomer is a relatively new area of research, it was recommended to include a qualitative element to enhance the internal validity, which also enhanced the understanding of the interaction between different personality traits and organisations’ socialisation influence. Therefore, an interview was arranged with a sample of respondents to supplement survey data. Edmondson & McManus (2007) have added a framework for promoting methodological fit in field research, with a particular emphasis on the conditions under which hybrid designs that mix qualitative and quantitative data are most helpful in field research. They argued that research in which the level of prior work is intermediate suggested the hybrid methodological approach as the most effective approach (Edmondson & McManus, 2007).

#### **4.2. Ethical Considerations:**

The study had an equitable selection of participants in terms of gender, race, ethnicity (all 439 newly hired employees were included), a clear explanation of the purpose and expected duration were provided, and respondents were informed that participation in the study is voluntary, including a detailed description of procedures and benefits. It was also proposed that replies from an ethnic minority member participant or an individual requested to participate in the study by his/her organisation (thus not given a choice) would be accepted. Generally, it can be safely said that risks are acceptable in relation to the potential benefits. The anticipated risk in this type of study was mainly the anonymity of respondents, since in a longitudinal study such as this one the researcher might have to go back to the same respondents which means that his records will not be anonymous as he has to identify the respondent and follow up on his/her response at each time for the sake of analysis. Therefore, participants were informed of this and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and that it will remain anonymous when published.

A final precaution was that the researcher kept the records of employees who left the organisation during or after the research period, so additional safeguards were provided by the researcher for this vulnerable population in order to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the records, even if the company asked the researcher for this data specifically in order to reduce future turnover. For all participating organisations, a clear description of the organisation benefits were provided before the study and collective reports were provided by the researcher at the end of the study.



Finally, the names of the participant organisations were protected by remaining anonymous.

### 4.3. Overview of Study Methodology:

There are three different approaches to research; Quantitative, Qualitative and mixed approach. Table 4.1 below shows the difference between the main two approaches in terms of knowledge claim, strategy of inquiry and methods.

Table 4.1: Quantitative versus Qualitative approach

<i>Elements of Qualitative Research Tend Forward</i>	<i>Process of Research</i>	<i>Elements of Quantitative Research Tend Forward</i>
- Understand meaning that individuals give to a phenomenon inductively	<b>Intent of the research</b>	-Test a theory deductively to support or refuse it
-Minor role -Justifies problem	<b>How literature is used</b>	-Major role -Justifies problem -Identifies questions and hypotheses
-Ask open ended questions -Understand the complexity of a single idea for a phenomenon	<b>How intent is focused</b>	-Ask closed questions -Test specific variables that form hypotheses or questions
-Words and images -From few participants at a few research sites -Studying participants at their location	<b>How data are collected</b>	-Numbers -From many participants at many research sites -Sending or administering instruments to participants
-Text or image analysis -Themes -Larger patterns or generalization	<b>How data are analysed</b>	-Numerical statistical analysis -Rejecting hypotheses or determining effect size
-Identifies personal stance -Reports bias	<b>Role of the researcher</b>	- Remains in background -Takes steps to remove bias
-Using validity procedures that rely on the participants, the researcher, or the reader	<b>How data are validated</b>	-Using validity procedures based on external standards, such as judges, past research, statistics

Source: Creswell, 2003

The following section will evaluate and compare quantitative versus qualitative research designs followed by the selection of the method that best suits the current research problem.

Table 4.2: Qualitative versus Quantitative methods

<b>Quantitative method</b>	<b>Qualitative method</b>
<b>Assumptions</b> Social facts have an objective reality Primacy of method Variables can be identified and relationships measured Etic (outside point of view)	<b>Assumptions</b> Reality is socially constructed Primacy of subject matter Variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure Emic (insider point of view)
<b>Purpose</b> Generalisation Prediction Causal explanation	<b>Purpose</b> Contextualisation Interpretation Understanding actors' perspective
<b>Approach</b> "Begins with hypotheses and theories Manipulation and control Uses formal instruments Experimentation Deductive Component analysis Seeks consensus, the norm Reduces data to numerical indices Abstract language in write-up	<b>Approach</b> Ends with hypothesis and grounded theory Emergence and portrayal Researcher as instrument Naturalistic Inductive Searches for patterns Seeks pluralism, complexity Makes minor use of numerical indices Descriptive write-up
<b>Researcher role</b> Detachment and impartiality Objective portrayal	<b>Researcher role</b> Personal involvement and partiality Empathic understanding

Source: Siegle (2000)

Siegle (2000) illustrated the two methods in Table 4.2. Patton (1990), Reichard and Cook (1979) (cited in Siegle, 2000) believed that skilled researchers can successfully combine these two approaches since they are supplementary and not dominant.

The validity in qualitative research might be of some concern, however, Peräkylä (1997) argued that the aim of conversation analysis is to investigate the interaction that happens in talking, which is alive and acts not as a screen onto which other processes are projected but as a phenomenon in its own right. This commitment to a naturalistic description of the interaction order and the social action taking place within that order gives a distinctive shape to the issues of validation in conversation analysis. These include the transparency of analytic claims, deviant case analysis, questions about the institutional character of interaction, and finally, the generaliseability of conversation analytic findings (Peräkylä, 1997). Qualitative research can be categorised in various ways, with field research and open-ended interviewing techniques being the two broad categories. From Ryan's (1995) point of view, qualitative research can fully utilise inductive and functional approaches by reason of the interactive process between researcher and the subject.

Given the theoretical approach in this study, which is to examine the effects of newcomers' personality traits on the outcome of newcomer adjustment, and considering the positivist paradigm adopted in the study, then we can say that the quantitative methodology naturally follows as a main methodology rather than a qualitative one for the following reasons; *first*, since the problem is to understand the best predictor (personality traits) of outcome (adjustment) this would constitute a best match between the problem and a quantitative approach. Unlike a qualitative approach which suits more a concept or a phenomenon that needs to be understood where the researcher doesn't know the important variables to examine, then the exploratory nature of the qualitative approach was more helpful.

*Second*, the choice of method depends on whether the intent is to specify the type of information to be collected in advance which supported a quantitative approach or to allow it to emerge from participants in the study which would support a qualitative approach. In this study the information required can be specified in advance as follows; 1) Newcomer personality traits (independent variable) is defined by the Big Five traits; extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and intellect or imagination. 2) Newcomer adjustment outcomes (dependent variables) defined as task performance, work group integration and political knowledge. This means that a quantitative method should be adopted.

*Third*, the type of data here would be numeric information gathered on a scale of instruments which is more suitable for a quantitative approach rather than 'text information' recorded and reported through the voices of participants which would have merited a qualitative approach. For example, the scales used were as follows; the Big-Five inventory scale by John & Srivastava, (1999) was used to measure the Big Five personality traits, and adjustment outcomes like task performance was assessed by four items from Morrison (1993) and three items from Chao et al (1994). Group integration was measured with a combination of four items from Morrison (1993) and three items from Chao et al (1994). Political knowledge was assessed with five items from Chao et al (1994).

*Fourth*, the study aims to generalise the findings of personality traits and organisational socialisation tactics effect on newcomer adaptation in order to contribute to both academic and practical knowledge, and this was best achieved by a quantitative methodology. If the study aims at developing a detailed view of the meaning of

newcomer adaptation or socialisation tactics for a certain organisation(s), then a qualitative method would have been more appropriate. Finally, after considering all the above, secondary factors like the researcher's own personal training and experience as an individual trained in statistics and familiar with quantitative journals rather than experience in literary forms of writing or in conducting open ended interviews and observations favoured the choice of a quantitative methodology .

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have their own advantages. Ryan (1995) pointed out that “qualitative research is concerned with the subjective component of research. The comments of respondents and the in-depth interview can produce a richness of information. Qualitative research can be a source of ideas, insights and new perspectives upon a problem; quantitative research however, brings other advantages notably some reassurance about the validity and reliability of findings but most practitioners perceive both [quantitative and qualitative] as valid, both complementing each other” (p.68). The qualitative approach, as Riley (1996) argued, is “always full of human interest and originality” (p.31).The data is often collected through observing people's behaviour, joining in their conversations, or by asking them open ended questions. Peräkylä (1997) noted that tape recordings and transcripts based on these can provide for highly detailed and accessible representations of social interactions.

Methodological triangulation is the procedure of using multiple methodological approaches (qualitative and quantitative) to examine the same phenomenon and to establish the validity of the research (Davies 2003; Decrop, 1999). Oppermann (2000) described triangulation as a crossing bridge between the pre-eminent quantitative

studies and the growing number of qualitative studies. As per Riley (1996) the concept of 'triangulation' is stressed in qualitative research methods. Hybrid strategies allow researchers to test associations between variables with quantitative data and to explain and illuminate novel constructs and relationships with qualitative data (Yauch & Steudel, 2003).

Based on the above mentioned literature, and for the sake of reliability and validity, the researcher decided to employ mainly quantitative (Questionnaires). However, qualitative elements (interviews from a sample of respondents') were added subject to the concept of triangulation to pave the way for more credible and dependable information.

#### **4.4. Method for Pilot Study:**

##### **4.4.1. Research Context:**

Generally, the pilot study would serve as a model of the full research study, but on a smaller scale. In this research, the pilot study was run for a shorter time frame and on fewer subjects. The focus of the pilot study was on those aspects of the full study that are novel, untested, e.g. the relation between personality traits and newcomer adjustment. The pilot subjects were not planned to be included in the total sample, so this is a pilot study rather than an exploratory study. An exploratory study will typically try to generate hypotheses for further research. Unlike a pilot study, an exploratory study can stand on its own. Furthermore, an exploratory study needs some justification of the sample size. Since such a study does not have to prove any pre-specified

hypotheses, the sample size will be justified by showing that some of the estimates produced by the study have reasonable precision; however, the pilot study was placed in the context of the full study. In summary, the pilot study helped by providing data needed to plan the larger study, and it ensured that issues that arise during the pilot study can be dealt with before starting the full study

Pilot studies play an important role in social research, in providing information for the planning and justification of longitudinal controlled studies. According to Meriwether (2001) a pilot study can help with the following;

1. It permits preliminary testing of the hypotheses that leads to testing more precise hypotheses in the main study. It may lead to changing some hypotheses, dropping some, or developing new hypotheses.
2. It often provides the researcher with ideas, approaches, and clues that might not have been foreseen before conducting the pilot study. Such ideas and clues increase the chances of getting clearer findings in the main study.
3. It permits a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, giving a chance to evaluate their usefulness for the data. It is then possible needed alterations in the data collecting methods, and therefore, analyse data in the main study more efficiently.
4. It can greatly reduce the number of unanticipated problems because you have an opportunity to redesign parts of your study to overcome difficulties that the pilot study reveals.
5. It may save a lot of time and money. Unfortunately, many research ideas that seem to show great promise are unproductive when actually carried out. The

pilot study almost always provides enough data for the researcher to decide whether to go ahead with the main study.

6. In the pilot study, the researcher may try out a number of alternative measures and then select those that produce the clearest results for the main study.

The pilot study in this research checked the validity and reliability of the questionnaire used, calculated the required minimum sample size, confirmed the construct validity of the socialisation influence scale, and performed descriptive statistics, intra-class correlation, and study variables correlation as a primary analysis to confirm that the model incorporated the main primary antecedents and outcomes which were initially considered based on an extensive literature review and previous empirical results.

#### **4.4.2. Participants:**

A common way to achieve heterogeneity of samples with respect to organisation and occupation that has been used in studies for all antecedents of adjustment is sampling from a graduating university class (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998; Ashford & Black, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998; Feldman et al, 1998; Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1995; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). In this pilot study, a sample of 94 university students graduating from the business school were surveyed with a total of 85 usable questionnaires returned.

The initial pools of participants consist of 94 graduates from a global college of business in Bahrain, recently hired into thirteen organisations distributed across



Bahrain. The primary operational activities of these organisations include manufacturing, fast moving consumer goods, healthcare, banking, telecommunication, consulting and training. The occupational breakdown was as follows: 28.4% accounting/finance, 24.0% administration, 17.3% service, 14.1% sales and marketing, 6% assistant/trainer, and 10.2% other miscellaneous occupations. Most organisations studied had multiple locations and divisions, so the sample was geographically dispersed.

The average age of respondents was 23.3 years (SD 0.15), and the average number of years of professional work experience was 0.5 year (SD 0.44). Of the respondents, 59.3% were male, 84.8% were Bahraini.

Recent college graduates have often been the focus of socialisation research (e.g., Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998; Laker & Steffy, 1995; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Some researchers have expressed concern over the frequent use of such samples and have called for the use of other types of samples (e.g., blue collar workers, job changers, and so forth; Bauer et al, 1998). However, a student sample was chosen as the focus of the pilot study for several reasons. First, research of this type requires access to individuals in a variety of jobs and organisations. Because the model includes contextual influences on socialisation actions and outcomes, the sample needs to be one with sufficient variance on these attributes. Prior research conducted using recent college graduates indicates that participants entered a wide variety of occupations and industries (e.g., Laker & Steffy, 1995; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992),

even when the sample was limited to business school graduates (e.g., Ashforth & Saks, 1996).

Second, sampling from graduating students entering a diverse set of jobs, organisations, and professions increases the generalisability of findings. Although it may limit generalisability to organisational newcomers in their early stages of career development (Schein, 1978), findings may be reasonably generalised to the wide variety of entry-level jobs into which college graduates are typically recruited which represent a significant sector of the final study population. Additionally, using this sample facilitates comparison of findings with past research using similar samples. Finally, from a theoretical standpoint, understanding the socialisation of new career entrants is particularly interesting. Socialisation is especially intense for this group (Chao et al, 1994). Thus, recent college graduates were not simply considered an accessible and convenient sample for the pilot study, but a desirable sample from both a methodological and theoretical standpoint as understanding how this group adjusts provides a valuable point of comparison for understanding the potentially more subtle socialisation and adjustment of other populations (e.g., older, experienced newcomers, vertical or lateral job changers, and so forth). Moreover, as mentioned earlier, it makes a good representation for the population of interest, and it helps in achieving the pilot study objectives.

However, after a thorough investigation of literature, this sampling approach also has its own limitations, for example, firstly, graduates are entering their first job, so they are being simultaneously socialised into the world of work as well as into a

particular organisation. Furthermore, these are not fully random samples of the general working population, since many of these samples are drawn from a single degree program and are therefore not very occupationally diverse. These samples are also all college educated, so their results may not generalise to sample with lower levels of education, which is unfortunately a common problem in socialisation research (Bauer et al, 1998).

In conclusion, although this sampling strategy was good enough for the pilot study objectives, it was not adopted in the main study, as explained further in the participants' section of the main study (section 4.5.2).

#### **4.4.3. Timing:**

##### **Cross-Sectional Versus Longitudinal Studies:**

The following section explored the advantages and disadvantages of cross-sectionals and longitudinal studies with regard to the current pilot study. It informed the choice of cross-sectional design for the pilot study and longitudinal design for the main study. All of the participants in the cross-sectional study provide a “snapshot of a population at a particular point in time”. (Cohen et al, 2001, p175). In discussing the strengths and weaknesses of longitudinal and cross-sectionals studies, Cohen et al (2001) suggest that the representative sample of the longitudinal study is 'uniquely able to identify typical patterns of development and to reveal factors operating on those samples which elude other research designs. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are particularly appropriate when investigations attempt to establish causal relationships” (p178).

One of the greatest advantages attributed to longitudinal studies is the fact that time is readily available and is an inherent aspect of the research design (Cohen et al, 2001). However, the element of time so pivotal to the longitudinal study is also linked to the methodology's greatest disadvantage, that of "sample mortality" (Cohen et al, 2001, p 176). Sample mortality occurs when participants drop out of the research project. This was of particular concern within the pilot study as the sample size was limited (85 participants).

The use of a cross-sectional design in the pilot study was also an attempt to lessen the effect of sample mortality from the point of view of Cohen et al (2001) who suggest the idea of "topping up" as a way to reduce the effect of sample mortality. That is, to introduce new participants at each time frame from the same population. This idea of topping up was the basis for my cross-sectional study.

Cohen et al (2001) summarise the strengths and weaknesses of longitudinal and cross-sectional studies. Their lists seem to suggest that the weaknesses of the one are the strengths of the other. Thus by combining the two types of study, using cross-sectional for the pilot study and longitudinal for the main study, I have attempted to make my research methodology more robust and hence more reliable.

According to Takeuchi, Wang, & Marinova (2005), cross section data collection was used in the pilot study since the main objective was not to critically evaluate the significance or even analyse the result using hypothesis testing rather than evaluating the selection of most appropriate primary outcome measures, and to decide which personality dimensions are critical to assess. However, the longitudinal approach will be adopted for the main study for two reasons, firstly, this procedure allows for the

measurement of antecedents of adjustment, in a manner commensurate with the proposed time structure. Second, the separation of each stage of the structural model over time helps to minimise concerns about common method bias in prediction.

#### **4.4.4. Measures:**

Scales will be obtained from published sources where possible to ensure comparability with previous research. Control Variables are ethnicity, gender, work experience, salary, organisation size, tenure, self-presentation, education.

**Personality Traits:** The 44-item BFI was developed to represent the prototype definitions developed through expert ratings and subsequent factor analytic verification in observer personality ratings

**Proactive Behaviour:** were assessed via Ashford and Black's (1996) scale, each of which has 3–4 items. The response scale ranged from 1 (to no extent) to 5 (to a very great extent). The reliability for this scale was  $\alpha=0.91$ .

**Socialising Influences Scale:** Three factor models of socialising influences from Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) with 21 items loading will be used. Item score internal consistency reliability was  $\alpha=0.94$  for organisational influence,  $\alpha=0.93$  for leader influence, and  $\alpha=0.92$  for co-worker influence.

**Adjustment Outcomes:** Task performance will be assessed by four items from Morrison (1993) and three items from Chao et al (1994).

Team/group integration will be measured with a combination of four items from Morrison (1993) and three items from Chao et al (1994).

Organisational political knowledge will be assessed with 5 items from Chao et al (1994).

#### **4.4.5. Analysis:**

The analysis of any type of pilot study should be mainly descriptive (Bunn et al 1998; Carfoot et al, 2002) or should focus on confidence interval estimation (Burrows et al, 2001), depending upon the objectives of the study. It is also planned to conduct a primary testing for the existing relations between the study variables. An external pilot (like the current pilot study) is treated as a stand-alone study, and there is a question as to whether it should be analysed using hypothesis testing (Stevinson & Ernst 2000). Such an approach should be taken with extreme caution since it would not be appropriate to place undue significance on the results from hypothesis tests, as no formal power calculations have been carried out. With such small numbers there is likely to be an imbalance in pre-randomization covariates, which would need adjustment in the analysis. Moreover, the confidence interval is likely to be imprecise even when there are significant differences. Results from hypothesis testing should therefore be treated as preliminary and interpreted with caution, therefore the main analysis will be run in descriptive statistics, with the application of some inferential statistics without bearing significance.

#### **4.5. Main longitudinal Study:**

##### **4.5.1. Research Context:**

The main study aimed at valid and reliable data, in order to contribute to the theory, it also has to suggest power analysis. Although the main study used the same

measures used in the pilot study after confirming its validity and reliability, the design of the main study was different from the pilot study in terms of participants, timing, and analysis as follows;

#### **4.5.2. Participants:**

The issues regarding participants in this study pertain primarily to a) how homogeneous the samples are with respect to organisation and occupation, and b) to what extent sample selection issues, such as restriction of range, are problematic. The former question pertains to external validity, whereas both questions pertain to internal validity. Both types of validity are threatened by differential attrition, since restriction of range biases estimated relationships and means results may not generalise to the types of people who left the study (Heckman, 1979; Sackett & Yang, 2000). Newcomer adjustment research sometimes uses samples that are homogenous with respect to organisation but heterogenous with respect to occupation. Pre-entry knowledge research following this tradition has generally used a continuous, self-reported index of either how much newcomers knew about their jobs prior to being hired. In socialisation research, this strategy is seldom used but has been occasionally employed to study orientation programmes (e.g., Klein & Weaver, 2000). While organisational homogeneity holds organisational policies and practices constant to the extent that policies are applied (uniformly), it also introduces the possibility that variance in occupational characteristics is the real reason for differences in observed results rather than the proposed antecedents of adjustment. As an example, it may be that relationships between adequacy of pre-entry knowledge and work attitude might be the

result of occupational differences in educational preparation or job difficulty. The solution could be statistical control of occupation (if possible)

*An alternative approach* is to aim for heterogeneity in both organisation and occupation. This is closest to the classical survey sampling perspective directed towards maximising generalisation (e.g., Kish, 1965). One study used unemployed workers who had recently found jobs to achieve greater occupational and organisational heterogeneity (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), an approach that also increased variance in occupational level and work experience. A more common way to achieve such heterogeneity that has been used in studies for all antecedents of adjustment is sampling from a graduating university class (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998; Ashford & Black, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998; Feldman et al, 1998; Irving & Meyer, 1994, 1995; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) as with the pilot study of this research. As noted earlier, a few problems exist with this method as well. Firstly, graduates are entering their first job, so they are being simultaneously socialised into the world of work as well as into a particular organisation. Furthermore, these are not fully random samples of the general working population, since many of these samples are drawn from a single major or degree program and are therefore not very occupationally diverse. These samples are also all college educated, so their results may not generalise to samples with lower levels of education, which is unfortunately a common problem in socialisation research (Bauer et al, 1998).

*Another approach* under this heading is the use of a sample of individuals from several organisations with heterogeneity in specific job titles (Buchanan, 1974). This



data collection strategy occupies a middle ground between approaches, but may offer opportunities to hold differences between organisations statistically constant. This approach will be adopted in this study. Given the competing problems of internal and external validity, a strong sampling strategy is to study newcomers who are entering a limited number of organisations in a somewhat constrained set of jobs so that the organisation and occupation can be held statistically constant while maintaining heterogeneity. Ideally, there will be variability in these newcomers' experience levels. More importantly, all newcomers will be newly hired to avoid the sample selection problem.

The initial pools of participants consist of 439 exempt employees recently hired into seven organisations distributed across Bahrain. The primary operational activities of these organisations include manufacturing, airline, healthcare, military, telecommunication, banking/consulting and education. The seven organisations are considered the leaders in their fields in Bahrain. The majority of their work forces are Bahraini, where it ranges from 100% Bahraini in the military organisation to 74% Bahraini in the manufacturing organisation. The organisation sizes are as follows; manufacturing (3,000), airline (5,000), construction (4600), military healthcare provider (4,000), telecommunication (1,500), banking& consulting (761) and education (1,080).

The occupational breakdown was as follows: 19.0% administration, 9.6% staff and faculty members, 19.4% accounting or research, 14.3% service, 10.5% engineering, 10.1% sales and marketing, 12.1% information technology, and 5.0% other miscellaneous occupations. The breakdown in representation by organisation is as

follows: 17.8% of respondents were from Organisation 1 in the manufacturing technology industry, 16.4% were from Organisation 2 in aviation, 16.7 % were from Organisation 3 in construction, 11.1% were from Organisation 4, a health care provider, 13.3% were from Organisation 5 in telecommunications, 12.4% were from Organisation 6 in education, and 12.2% were from Organisation 7, in banking and consulting. Most organisations studied had multiple locations and divisions, so the sample was geographically dispersed.

The average age of respondents was 27.3 years (SD 0.2), and the average number of years of professional work experience was 2.6 years (SD 1.58). Of the respondents, 42.2% indicated they had 1 or fewer years of professional experience, whereas 18.9% indicated that they had 5 or more years of professional experience. This suggests that the sample does not consist exclusively of individuals entering their first professional jobs, unlike much of the literature on adjustment. Of the respondents, 49.4% were female, 77.8% were Bahraini.

The data was collected longitudinally, with new surveys to be distributed every three months (see section 5.2. Timing) where time1 was within a month of respondents' hire date, time2 was 3 months after time1, and time 3 was three months after time 2. Organisations provided initial lists of respondents who were interested in participating in the study. For the majority of respondents, email addresses were provided. These individuals were assigned an identification code and given an internet address where they can complete the survey by entering their specific code. Respondents were assured that their responses are confidential, and the internet address will be clearly identified with the university rather than employers to reduce concerns about social desirability

due to the sensitive questions regarding work attitudes and behaviours (Tourangeau et al, 2000). Non-respondents received reminder emails as well as word-processor formatted copies of the survey which they can print out and complete if they do not want to fill out the survey online. For those who were not provided with email addresses, paper versions of the survey were mailed along with self-addressed pre-paid reply envelopes. At time 1, I received 272 usable surveys completed, for a response rate of 62%. At time 2, I got 223 usable surveys completed and finally at time 3, the total numbers of usable surveys completed were 180. This represents an overall response rate of 41% .The overall retention rate is consistent with other longitudinal studies of socialisation (Bauer et al, 1998).

#### **4.5.3. Timing:**

The review of survey timing issues suggested that there is currently little guidance for research. The selection of appropriate spacing between data collection procedures is not well established and research is needed to definitively answer when adjustment can be considered to stabilise. Noting these limitations, three or four month intervals are commonly used, and some research does suggest that these intervals are at least close enough together to capture meaningful changes (Bauer et al, 1998). The proposed study will collect data across multiple time waves for two primary reasons: first, this procedure allows for the measurements of antecedents of adjustment, in a manner commensurate with the proposed time structure. Second, the separation of each stage of the structural model over time helps to minimize concerns about common method bias in prediction. All structural parameters involved predictors that were

measured at a separate time from outcomes. Data will be collected at an average of three month intervals, which is towards the interval duration of previous research.

First round data will be collected within a month of respondents' hire date. In this first round, questions related to occupation, demographics and personality traits will be asked. In the second round, three months after time 1, questions regarding the influence of socialising agents will be asked. At time 3, three months after time 2, adjustment outcomes will be measured during this phase, including task performance, team/group integration, and organisational political knowledge.

#### **4.5.4. Measures:**

Reflecting the aforementioned difficulties in the measurement of newcomer adjustment constructs, scales will be obtained from published sources where possible to ensure comparability with previous research. The following summarise the control variables, and published measures used in this research;

#### **Control Variables:**

Because differences in structure might be correlated with perceptions of organisational socialisation efforts, fixed effect dummy codes were used as a control for the organisation and occupation. Respondents reported the number of hours worked in a typical week. It was necessary to control for additional variables that could cause spurious correlations among the variables in the model (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) as follows:

1. Ethnicity: dichotomized as 1=local, 2=expatriate was used to control potential differences in the availability of social information for individuals who are members of minority cultural groups.

2. Gender: Gender was included because it has been linked to work adjustment, career preferences and patterns, and socialisation experiences (Banks et al, 1992; Kaldenberg, Becker, & Zvonkovic, 1995). Gender has been used as a control variable in prior socialisation research (e.g., Bauer & Green, 1998; Ashforth & Saks, 1995). Gender was coded as 0 = female; 1 = male.

3. Work experience: Events in the socialisation process may be interpreted through the lens of past experiences (Adkins, 1995; Louis, 1980). Therefore, it is important to control for past work experience, and thus past socialisation experiences when studying socialisation. Years of work experience has been used as a control variable in prior socialisation studies (e.g., Bauer & Green, 1998; Ashforth & Saks, 1994). Two measures of work experience were included as control variables in this study: (a) years of part time work experience, and (b) years of full-time work experience. Part-time workers may not be subjected to the same quality or quantity of socialisation as full-time workers (Feldman & Doeringhaus, 1992). Furthermore, the correlation between part- and full-time work experience was not significant ( $r = -.09$ ; n.s.). Therefore, the measures of part- and full-time work experience were not combined into a single measure of work experience.

4. Salary: Salary was included as a control variable because pay levels send signals to applicants and newcomers concerning their value and worth to the organisation (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1992). Pay level affects the adjustment of new entrants

(Wanous, Stumpf, & Bedrosian, 1979), and it may act as a source of motivation for proaction. Salary has been included as a control variable in prior socialisation research (e.g., Bauer & Green, 1998). Respondents were asked to report their monthly salary in Bahraini Dinars (BHD) within 200BHD increments, ranging from less than 200BHD (1) to greater than 1,000 BHD(6).

5. Organisation size: Organisational size was included as a control variable for two reasons. First, larger organisations have a greater need for and can make better use of formal socialisation programmes, and research has shown that organisation size is related to the use of institutionalised socialisation tactics (Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998). Second, larger organisations tend to be more complex (Cullen, Anderson, & Baker, 1986), with more relationships and more information to be mastered. Therefore, organisation size may also impact proaction and knowledge. Organisational size was operationalised as number of employees. Respondents were asked to indicate the branch organisational size using one of five categories: fewer than 25 (1); 26-50 (2); 51-100 (3); 101-200 (4); and more than 200(5).

6. Tenure: As a check on the accuracy of the timing of surveys and to control for differences in timing which might be due to either (a) incorrectly reported or changed starting dates (i.e., from the T1 survey), or (b) mailing or other problems in contacting the respondents, respondents were asked to report their start date and the date they completed the T2 survey. From this information, the total number of days since starting the job was computed. Tenure has been used as a control variable in prior socialisation research (e.g., Bauer & Green, 1998).

7. Education: The number of years of education and professional experience held by newcomers were held constant to distinguish between socialisation into the organisation and socialisation into the world of work as a whole. Education was reported in categories ranging from 1=high school or less to 5=graduate degree.

### **Personality Traits:**

The 44-item BFI was developed to represent the prototype definitions developed through expert ratings and subsequent factor analytic verification in observer personality ratings. The goal was to create a brief inventory that would allow efficient and flexible assessment of the five dimensions when there is no need for more differentiated measurement of individual facets. There is much to be said in favour of brevity; as Burisch (1984) observed, “Short scales not only save testing time, but also avoid subject boredom and fatigue . . . there are subjects . . . from whom you won’t get any response if the test looks too long” (p. 219).

The BFI does not use single adjectives as items because such items are answered less consistently than when they are accompanied by definitions or elaborations (Goldberg & Kilkowski, 1985). Instead, the BFI uses short phrases based on the trait adjectives known to be prototypical markers of the Big Five (John, 1989, 1990). One or two prototypical trait adjectives served as the item core to which elaborative, clarifying, or contextual information was added. For example, the openness adjective original became the BFI item “Is original, comes up with new ideas” and the conscientiousness adjective persevering served as the basis for the item “Perseveres until the task is finished. “Thus the BFI items (which are reprinted here in table 4.3)

retain the advantages of adjectival items (brevity and simplicity) while avoiding some of their pitfalls (ambiguous or multiple meanings and salient desirability).

Although the BFI scales include only eight to ten items, they do not sacrifice either content coverage or good psychometric properties. For example, the 9-item Agreeableness scale includes items related to at least five of the six facets postulated by Costa and McCrae (1992)-namely, trust (forgiving; trusting), altruism (helpful and unselfish), compliance (not quarrelsome), modesty (not fault finding with others), and tender-mindedness (considerate and kind). In U.S. and Canadian samples, the alpha reliabilities of the BFI scales typically range from .75 to .90 and average above .80; three-month test-retest reliabilities range from .80 to .90, with a mean of .85. Validity evidence includes substantial convergent and divergent relations with other Big Five instruments as well as with peer ratings.

Table 4.3: BFI scale used to measure personality traits

I see myself as someone who...







Aston University

Illustration removed for copyright restrictions



Source: John & Srivastava, 1999

**Proactive behaviour:**

the current study utilized Ashford and Black's (1996) typology of proactive behaviours: information seeking, feedback seeking, job-change negotiating (i.e., trying to modify one's tasks and others' expectations), positive framing (i.e., attempting to see things in an optimistic way), general socializing (i.e., participating in social events), building a relationship with one's boss, and networking. The seven proactive behaviours were assessed via Ashford and Black's (1996) scale, each of which has 3–4 items. The response scale ranged from 1 (to no extent) to 5 (to a very great extent).

Example items include, "To what extent have you sought feedback on your performance after assignment" and "To what extent have you tried to look at the bright side of the things". The correlations between the seven subscales range from .25 to .53 (mean = .36), and the reliability for this scale was  $\alpha=0.91$ .

Table 4.4: Proactive behaviour scale

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Source: Ashford and Black (1996)

**Socialising Influences Scale:**

The socialising influences were assessed using a 21 items scale from Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003). An example item stems from describing

socialising influences (e.g. “To what extent have each of the following influenced how you have learned the ropes as you’ve entered your new work environment?”) and then lists the sources of socialisation (“orientation, training and other organisational efforts” or “supervisors and others higher up in the organisation,” or “other co-worker(s)” .

Table 4.5: Socialisation influence scale





Source: Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003)

**Adjustment Outcomes:**

**Task performance** was assessed by four items from Morrison (1993a) and three items from Chao et al (1994). An example item is: “I am confident about the adequacy of my skills and abilities to perform my job within this organisation.”

Table 4.6: Task performance scale

---

I am confident about the adequacy of my skills and abilities to perform my job within this organisation.

I feel competent conducting my job assignments/work within this organisation.

It seems to take me longer to complete my job assignments or work than it takes others.

I rarely make mistakes when conducting my job assignments or work within this organisation.

I have learned how to successfully perform my current job in an efficient manner.

I have mastered the tasks required of my current job.

I have fully developed the appropriate skills and abilities to complete my current job.

Source: Morrison (1993a), Chao et al (1994).

**Team/group integration:** was measured with a combination of four items from Morrison (1993a) and three items from Chao et al (1994). Sample items include, “My co-workers seem to accept me as one of them,” and “within my work group, I would easily be identified as ‘one of the gang’.”

Table 4.7: Team/Group integration scale

---



Source: Chao et al (1994).

**Organisational political knowledge:** was assessed with 5 items from Chao et al (1994). Items include, “I do not have a good understanding of the politics in my organisation,” and “I know who the most influential people are in my organisation.” Responses for all adjustment outcomes will be on a five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

Table 4.8: Political knowledge scale

---



Source: Chao et al (1994).

Reliability for the scales were  $\alpha=0.84$  for task performance,  $\alpha =0.9$  for group integration, and  $\alpha =0.67$  for politics.

#### **4.5.5. Analysis:**

Because adjustment is potentially variable across organisational and occupational contexts, data will be collected from newcomers employed by seven distinct organisations in a variety of jobs. The final sample size (those who responded to all of the 3 waves) for the current investigation is 180 which would allow for statistical analysis more closely aligned with the central theories of organisational adjustment than the analysis possible with the relatively small sample sizes often employed in adjustment research.

Measurement error is a well-known as a source of potential bias in statistical hypothesis testing (Hakstian, Schroeder, & Rogers, 1998; Muchinsky, 1996). As reviewed by Kammeyer-Mueller and Steel (2002), measurement error is especially problematic when there are differences in the level of error across constructs. For example, given two equally predictive constructs, if one construct is measured with an unreliable scale it will appear to be a weaker predictor than the construct with a more reliable measure. More troublesome is the fact that when the predictive power of unreliable variables is reduced, other predictors will effectively “steal” this variance as the unreliable variable becomes like a quasi-omitted variable. Fortunately, the treatment of internal inconstancy is readily resolved through the use of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), which automatically corrects relationships between latent constructs for internal consistency unreliability.

Non-normal distributions are another problem for statistical conclusion validity. Such violations of normality attenuate relationships, invalidate traditional hypothesis tests, and create serious problems for structural equation model estimation. Several

solutions to this problem exist as well. The first is the use of methods that explicitly incorporate different distributions such as logistic regression, count data models, or event-history models (Greene, 2000). An alternative solution is to use transformed or standardised variables, which are useful for scaled latent variables that have arbitrary values. Transformations also help remove the problem of incommensurate comparisons between variables with differing levels of non-normality, similar to the use of corrections for unreliability described earlier. Given the problems of measurement error and non-normality, SEM with transformed variables is the preferred analytical method.

Structural equation modelling, is a very general, chiefly linear, chiefly cross-sectional statistical modelling technique. Factor analysis, path analysis and regression all represent special cases of SEM. It is planned to use SEM to confirm the suitability of the model, and for testing H6 in this research for the following reasons:

1) SEM is a technique for analysing data that is designed to assess relationships among both manifest (i.e., directly measured or observed) and latent (i.e., the underlying theoretical construct) variables. When using statistical techniques such as multiple regression or analysis of variance (ANOVA), it will only conduct the analysis on variables that are directly measured, which can be somewhat limiting when the individual is interested in testing underlying theoretical constructs. This study aims to test the underlying theoretical construct of personality traits and adjustment, so using SEM could explicitly model the latent construct of adjustment rather than relying on three variables as a proxy for the construct. SEM also provides advantages over other



data analytic techniques in that complex theoretical model can be examined in one analysis.

2) SEM is a largely confirmatory, rather than exploratory, technique in accordance with this study objective to determine whether the proposed adjustment model is valid, rather than to "find" a suitable model. Moreover, SEM analyses often involve a certain exploratory element which also will be useful in this study when exploring the relation between personality traits variables and proximal outcomes.

3) In SEM, interest usually focuses on latent constructs abstract psychological variables, like "adjustment" in current study, rather than on the manifest variables used to measure these constructs. In these situations, measurement is recognised as difficult and error-prone. By explicitly modelling measurement error, SEM will help to derive unbiased estimates for the relations between latent constructs. To this end, SEM allows multiple measures to be associated with a single latent construct.

4) A structural equation model implies a structure of the covariance matrix of the measures. Once the model's parameters have been estimated, the resulting model-implied covariance matrix can then be compared to an empirical or data-based covariance matrix. If the two matrices are consistent with one another, then the structural equation model can be considered a plausible explanation for relations between the measures, this will improve the creditability of this study.

**Direct Relationship:**

To test the proposed direct effect of the traits on specific adjustment indicators (Hypothesis 1:5) hierarchical regression analysis will be performed. This method is also known as incremental variance partitioning (Pedhazur, 1982). The hierarchical regression has a number of definite advantages over stepwise regression, for example, this approach allow us to focus on the variables forming the hypotheses, and at the same time sieve out the influence of the control variables that might have a moderating effect on adjustment. Also this method allows the researcher to control the order of the variables entered into the regression model, allowing us to assess the incremental predicative ability of any variable of interest (McQuarrie, 1998).

**Mediating Relationship:** As noted earlier, using SEM, Hypothesis 6 of proactive behaviour mediation was assessed based on the difference between reduced form coefficients  $\gamma_{rf}$  (direct effects from antecedents of adjustment to proximal outcomes without proactivity included) and structural coefficients  $\gamma_{fm}$  (direct effects from antecedents of adjustment to proximal outcomes with proactivity included) as suggested by Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger (1998). This is essentially the same as the traditional two-step regression procedure for assessing mediation except in a structural equation modelling framework. The percent mediated represents the percent by which the reduced form coefficient decreases when the mediating proximal outcomes will be calculated, according to the following formula presented by Alwin and Hauser (1975).

$$\text{percent mediated} = 100 \times (1 - \gamma_{fm} / \gamma_{rf})$$

The use of the proportion mediated serves as a more direct quantification of the extent to which a reduced form effect mediates a distal outcome than the traditional change in significance criterion.

#### **Moderating Relationship:**

To test the extent to which socialisation influence moderates the relationship between personality traits and newcomer adjustment (Hypotheses 7, 8, 9), moderated hierarchical multiple regression analyses will be performed. Socialisation influence will be entered first into the regression, followed by personality traits, and then the interaction term between socialisation influence and personality traits. According to Evans (1991), “hierarchical multiple regression is the most appropriate method for testing interactions and for analyses involving composite variables that are constructed by multiplying two or more variables together” (p. 7).

#### **4.2.5. Respondents’ Comments**

It was suggested to have a follow up qualitative study which would look at people’s experiences of socialisation in Bahrain, which is a very different culture to the predominantly Western cultures that feature in the research literature. These comments to be drawn from four focus group sessions involving a limited number of participants. The narrative comments should not be taken as the results from a thorough application of qualitative research methodology. Rather, they illustrate some of the most salient points from the analyses.

#### **4.6. Summary**

This chapter explored the paradigm, ethical consideration, methodology of the study and outlined the research design for this study. It included the descriptions of the survey population, the method of data collection, the survey measurements and the statistical methods that were employed to analyse the data. Special attention was given to justify the design of the pilot study versus the main study.

In the following chapter (Chapter 5) preliminary data analysis and findings will be reviewed and the implications of the pilot study findings on the main study will be explored, that include; development of questions and questionnaires testing, calculation of the sample size, revision of the evaluation measures, establishment of the procedures for analysing quantitative data, suggestion on the appropriateness of the analysis, and development of more focussed hypotheses for the main longitudinal study. Then, preliminary analyses of the main study data will be presented at the end of the chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS/ FINDINGS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter consists of two main parts. First, the cross section pilot study data are examined and analysed, and the main findings which influenced the main study design discussed. Second, the preliminary analysis for the main longitudinal study data, which included the results of confirmatory factor analysis and the evaluation of the structural model fit, is carried out in order to set the stage for the main study and the hypotheses testing results presented in Chapter6.

As pilot studies may lead to changes in study design, a clear list of aims and objectives is therefore very important to add methodological rigour (Lancaster et al, 2004). The current pilot study was designed to pre-test some aspects of the methodology and analysis for the main study. It looked specifically at several aspects of the methodology intended to support the larger study, including:

- Integrity of study protocol, recruitment and consent (Discussed in detail under participants and timing for the pilot study in the previous chapter)
- Developing questions and testing of data collection forms or questionnaires
- Calculating sample size
- Devising evaluation measures
- Establishing procedures for analysing quantitative data, and suggesting the appropriateness of the analysis

- Developing more focused hypotheses for the main longitudinal study, that included;
- Deciding on personality dimensions that are critical to be assessed
- Selecting the most appropriate primary outcome measures

## **5.2. Pilot Study Data:**

As noted earlier the data from pilot study was carefully examined and analysed for the following objectives;

### **5.2.1. Developing questions and testing of questionnaires:**

As per Converse & Presser (1986) qualitative methods can be used to assess the acceptability of a questionnaire, so I asked the subjects included in the pilot study to write their comments about the questionnaire on a separate sheet. Moreover, I asked some of them over the telephone how they found answering the questionnaire during the validity testing, and asked all participants in the pilot study how long it took them to complete the questionnaire.

Generally the respondents agreed that the questionnaire was clear and understandable, they understood all the questions, and they were able, and willing to respond. However, two respondents indicated that they were not sure of the meaning of the words “quarrels” and “aesthetic”.

Based on this I decided to include a brief English translation for these two words from the Oxford dictionary after confirming with the respondents as a footnote on the main survey:

Quarrels=an angry argument or disagreement

Aesthetic= concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty

I also included the information I got about the approximate time for survey completion (20 minutes) in the cover letter that I used to accompany the questionnaire in the main survey.

### **Testing the validity of the questionnaire**

The items included in the questionnaire were taken from published measures with a pretested alpha; however the pilot study questionnaire was a good opportunity to examine several aspects of validity. A questionnaire can be said to be 'valid' if it examines the full scope of the research question in a balanced way, i.e. it measures what it aims to measure. There are several aspects of validity that need to be tested. The factual validity of a questionnaire was assessed by comparing opinion responses with information recorded from the general notes. The face validity of a questionnaire was examined by interviewing people, either face-to-face or over the telephone, after they have completed the questionnaire to find out whether the responses they have given in the questionnaire agreed with their real opinions. When testing face validity, the questions were worded differently in the interview from those in the questionnaire

otherwise this would have been testing the reliability of the questions instead of their validity.

For example, the fifth question item on the task performance scale was “I have learned how to successfully perform my current job in efficient manner” where the respondents were asked to tick a box of a Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. When some of the respondents were contacted over the phone the question was phrased as “To what extent have you learned to perform your job in an efficient matter? and the results were similar to those on the scale.

### **Testing the reliability of the questionnaire:**

Reliability is defined as an assessment of the reproducibility and consistency of an instrument. For self-completed questionnaires, two aspects of reliability were examined. First, test–retest reliability was assessed by asking people to complete the questionnaire on two separate occasions, approximately two to three weeks apart, assuming that their circumstances will not have changed in the interim. The two sets of responses have been compared statistically using weighted Kappa. Second, the internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed by asking a question or questions in more than one way during the questionnaire. The responses given were compared as before.

Weighted Kappa allows to count disagreements differently, Cohen(1968), and is especially useful when codes are ordered, Bakeman & Gottman (1997). Three matrices are involved, the matrix of observed scores, the matrix of expected scores based on chance agreement, and the weight matrix. Weight matrix cells located on the diagonal



(upper-left to bottom-right) represent agreement and thus weighted zeros. Off-diagonal cells contain weights indicating the seriousness of that disagreement. Often, cells one off the diagonal are weighted 1, those two off 2, etc.

The equation for weighted Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) is:

$$\kappa = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k \sum_{j=1}^k w_{ij} x_{ij}}{\sum_{i=1}^k \sum_{j=1}^k w_{ij} m_{ij}}$$

Where  $k$ =number of codes and  $w_{ij}$ ,  $x_{ij}$ , and  $m_{ij}$  are elements in the weight, observed, and expected matrices, respectively. When diagonal cells contain weights of zero and all off-diagonal cells weights of 1. Statistical analyses were performed using MedCalc for Windows software, version 11.3.8 (MedCalc Software, Mariakerke, Belgium).

Table 5.1 below showed the values for weighted kappa for the respondents at two different times (T1 and T2), separated by two weeks to the five scales on the pilot study questionnaire.

Table 5.1: Intertime-rater agreement (kappa)

	Time 1					
Time 2	1	2	3	4	5	
1	5	0	0	0	0	5 (4.7%)
2	1	14	0	1	0	16 (14.9%)
3	1	2	31	2	1	37 (34.6%)
4	0	0	7	24	0	31 (29%)
5	0	0	1	2	15	18 (16.8%)
	7 (6.5%)	16 (15%)	39 (36.4%)	29 (27.1%)	16 (15%)	107

*Weighted Kappa*      0.83  
*Standard error*      0.04  
*95% CI*                0.74 to 0.92

In this table, the 5 cases that respondents have placed in category 1 in time 1, respondents have placed them again in category 1 in time 2, this represent 100% agreement in 4.7% of the sample, from 16 cases that respondents have placed them in category 2 in time 2, respondents have placed 1 in category 1, 14 in category 2, and 1 in category 4 in time 1, this represent 87.5% agreement in 14.9% of the sample, and so on for a total of 107 response items. After entering the data, and clicking on the test button, the program displayed the values for kappa with its standard error and 95% confidence interval (Fleiss et al., 2003).

As noted from the table above, the weighted Kappa was 0.83 and 95% C.I. (0.74: 0.92). Landis and Koch (1977), who is characterized values  $< 0$  as indicating no agreement and 0–.20 as slight, .21–.40 as fair, .41–.60 as moderate, .61–.80 as substantial, and .81–1 as almost perfect agreement. Since the weighted kappa was 0.83, this confirmed the reproducibility and consistency of the instrument used.

### **5.2.2. Sample size calculation:**

Sample size determination is a major reason for pilot data collection. Cochran (1977) stated that “One method of determining sample size is to specify margins of error for the items that are regarded as most vital to the survey. An estimation of the sample size needed is first made separately for each of these important items” (p. 81). When these calculations are completed, researchers will have a range of numbers, usually ranging from smaller numbers for scaled, continuous variables, to larger numbers for dichotomous or categorical variables.

The researcher should make sampling decisions based on these data. If the numbers for the variables of interest are relatively close, the researcher can simply use the largest numbers as the sample size and be confident that the sample size will provide the desired results, Cochran (1977).

The current research used a five-point scale to measure continuous variables, e.g., socialisation influence, proactive behaviour, and adjustment outcomes.

Analysis of variance were conducted for the pilot data results to check if the respondents differ by certain categorical variables, e.g., gender, tenure, educational level, etc. Analysis of variance, using newcomer adjustment as a criterion variable and the battery of background characteristics, such as gender, ethnic background, organisation and occupation were performed. The variation of newcomer adjustment across the groups was not statistically significant. Table 5.2 presents the F ratio as the one-way, between-subjects analysis of variance which failed to reveal a reliable effect of gender, ethnic background, tenure, educational level, occupation, and organisation on adjustment at  $\alpha = .05$ .

Table 5.2 One way analysis of variance: categorical variables by adjustment

Category Variable	Within Groups Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	.22	2.24	.14
Ethnic groups	.23	1.42	.24
Tenure	.21	1.23	.25
Education level	.23	1.35	.26
Occupation	.22	1.46	.23
Organisation	.20	2.06	.06

*Note: N = 85, \* significant at  $\alpha = .05$  level*

Based on the above, the key variables used as the basis for sample size calculation were the continuous data e.g. personality traits, socialisation influence, proactive behaviour, and adjustment outcomes scales.

### **Error Estimation**

Cochran's (1977) formula uses two key factors: (1) the risk the researcher is willing to accept in the study, commonly called the margin of error, or the error the researcher is willing to accept, and (2) the alpha level, the level of acceptable risk the researcher is willing to accept that the true margin of error exceeds the acceptable margin of error; i.e., the probability that differences revealed by statistical analyses really do not exist; also known as Type I error.

### **Alpha Level**

The alpha level used in determining sample size in most educational research studies is either .05 or .01 (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). In Cochran's formula, the alpha level is incorporated into the formula by utilising the t-value for the alpha level selected (e.g., t-value for alpha level of .05 is 1.96 for population above 120). In general, an alpha level of .05 is acceptable for most research (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996) which was adopted in the current research for determining the sample size.

### **Acceptable Margin of Error**

The general rule relative to acceptable margins of error in educational and social research is as follows: for categorical data, 5% margin of error is acceptable, and for continuous data, 3% margin of error is acceptable (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). In the current research, a 3% margin of error used resulted in the researcher being confident

that the true mean of a five point scale is within  $\pm 1.5$  (.03 times five points on the scale) of the mean calculated from the research sample.

### **Variance Estimation**

As noted above, a critical component of sample size formulas is the estimation of variance in the primary variables of interest in the study. The researcher does not have direct control over variance and must incorporate variance estimates into research design. Cochran (1977) listed the uses of pilot study results estimating population variances for sample size determinations on a five-point scale to measure continuous variables, e.g., socialisation influence, proactive behaviour, and adjustment outcomes.

### **Sample Size Determination**

Since continuous data played a primary role in data analysis as discussed above, the sample size formulas for continuous data described by Cochran (1977) was used;

$$N = \frac{(t)^2 * (s)^2}{(d)^2}$$

Where t = value for selected alpha level of .025 in each tail = 1.96

Where s = standard deviation in the population

Where d = acceptable margin of error for mean being estimated

Cochran's (1977) correction formula should be used to calculate the final sample size.

These calculations are as follows:

$$n_1 = \frac{n_0}{(1 + n_0 / \text{Population})}$$

Where  $n_0$  = required return sample size according to Cochran's formula

Where  $n_1$  = required return sample size because sample > 5% of population.

Researcher has set the alpha level a priori at .05, used a five point scale, and has set the level of acceptable error at 3% as noted above, and has used the highest standard deviation = 0.97 (Adjustment performance scale ) as per descriptive statistics presented in table 5.7.

Cochran's sample size formula;

$$N = \frac{(t)^2 * (s)^2}{(d)^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.97)^2}{(5*.03)^2} = 161$$

Where t = value for selected alpha level of .025 in each tail = 1.96

Where s = standard deviation in the population = .97

Where d = acceptable margin of error for mean being estimated = .15 (number of points on primary scale acceptable margin of error; points on primary scale = 5; acceptable margin of error = .03 [error researcher is willing to accept]).

Often we may not know the exact population size but this is not a problem. The mathematics of probability proves the size of the population is irrelevant unless the size of the sample exceeds a few percent of the total population you are examining which is set as 5% by Cochran (1997). This means that a sample of 500 people is equally useful in examining the opinions of a state of 15,000,000 as it would a city of 100,000. For this reason, The Survey System ignores the population size when it is "large" or unknown.

As per data extracted from files submitted by General Organisation for Social Insurance (GOSI), the newly registered workers include moved workers are 4,276 per month which represent the newcomer population for the current research. Therefore, for a population of a minimum of 4,276, the required sample size is 161. Since this sample size does not exceed 5% of the population (4,276\*.05=213), we can safely say

that there is no need to apply Cochran's (1977) correction formula to calculate the final reduced sample size.

Finally, since many educational and social research studies often use data collection methods such as surveys and other voluntary participation methods, the response rates are typically well below 100%. Salkind (1997) recommended oversampling when he stated that "If you are mailing out surveys or questionnaires, count on increasing your sample size by 40%-50% to account for lost mail and uncooperative subjects" (p. 107). Fink (1995) stated that "Oversampling can add costs to the survey but is often necessary" (p. 36). Cochran (1977) stated that "A second consequence is, of course, that the variances of estimates are increased because the sample actually obtained is smaller than the target sample. "This factor can be allowed for, at least approximately, in selecting the size of the sample" (p. 396). Hence it was decided to use oversampling.

Since the pilot study used a cross section methodology, the response rate from the pilot study cannot be used to estimate the response rate for the main longitudinal study, and so, the researcher used response rates from previous studies of the same or similar population to determine the anticipated response rate. The overall retention rates in longitudinal studies of socialisation tend to average about 40% (Bauer and Green, 1998). Therefore, in the current research, it was anticipated that a response rate of 40% would be achieved based on prior research experience. Given a required minimum sample size of 161, the following calculations were used to determine the drawn sample size required to produce the minimum sample size:

Where anticipated return rate = 40%.  
Where  $n_2$  = sample size adjusted for response rate.  
Where minimum sample size = 161.  
Therefore,  $n_2 = 161/.40 = 403$ .

As noted in the main study methodology in the “participants “section the researcher targeted 439 respondents and got 180 completed questionnaires after 3 waves of the longitudinal study which was above the required minimum sample size of 161.

### **5.2.3. Devising evaluation measures:**

Brown (1996) uses the label *construct validity* to describe the extent to which empirical constructs and their relationship to one another is reflective of the theoretical entities the researcher wished to investigate. The operationalisation and measurement of constructs in newcomer adjustment research has been under-researched, raising considerable concerns about construct validity in this area.

Researchers interested in organisational socialisation have argued that current measurement has proceeded somewhat haphazardly, and encourage the development of psychometrically sound instruments (Bauer, Morrison & Callister, 1998). Because comparison of organisations, leaders, and co-workers as agents of socialisation is important for this study, the development of measures of the influences of these information sources is a necessary prerequisite. Much of the existing literature confounds what is learned with who is providing the learning. These concerns are especially worth noting in the research on socialising agents, where little work has been done in the area of scale development. The previous measures of socialising influences can be grouped into



three basic classes, as described below.

The first approach is the pure measurement of efforts by the organisation. Jones (1986) widely used measure of socialisation tactics as an example of this strategy. Questions on this scale primarily relate to the actual activities the organisation puts newcomers through, such as “during my training for this job I was normally physically apart from regular organisational members,” or “the way in which my progress through this organisation will follow a fixed timetable of events has been clearly communicated to me.” These items do not differentiate from whom socialisation is acquired, and instead focus on the tactics used to enhance socialisation. The dimensions of institutionalised and individualized socialisation that emerge from these very highly correlated scales are more reflective of the presence or absence of socialisation, respectively, than any cluster of tactics (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). These measures are also contaminated with job design and organisational structure.

A second strategy is the measurement of newcomer information seeking. Several scales measure newcomer proactive solicitation of information from various sources (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Morrison, 1993a), but these studies only capture how these sources might influence the newcomer due to newcomer proactivity. This is an appropriate measurement strategy if one is exclusively interested in demonstrating that newcomer perceptions of their own proactive information seeking are related to workplace adjustment. However, this strategy does not acknowledge the active efforts of members of the organisation to socialise the newcomer. Because proactive behaviour is partially seen as an alternative to socialisation in this study, this approach is not useful.

A third measurement strategy is to combine the measurement of what is learned

with which socialising agent is providing the learning content (e.g., Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Respondents indicate how much information regarding a given dimension (such as work tasks or social relationships) is acquired from a given source (such as organisational orientation or co-workers). In other words, for each of  $g$  dimensions of information  $I$ , respondents are asked how much information each of  $p$  sources  $S$  provided, resulting in a  $g$  by  $p$  matrix of responses with elements  $[z_{gp}]$ . The result is two summary scales, one summarising the level of information  $I_g$  on any dimension equal to  $I_g = \sum_o^p z_{gp}$ , and one summarising the level of information from any source equal to  $S_p = \sum_o^g z_{gp}$ . Note that  $I_g$  and  $S_p$  are completely co-determinate, and changes in  $I_j$  will affect even the zero-order relationship between  $I_k$  and  $S_p$ . In other words, variations in how much respondents learned about work tasks from co-workers will change the correlation between learning about social relationships and amount learned from co-workers and this makes models based on these aggregated scales difficult to interpret.

Following from this overview of socialisation scales, two primary conclusions are possible. (1) To meaningfully compare across categories, the questions about all sources of information should be measured in the same way, (2) but this should be in a manner that separates sources from what is learned. An ideal scale is domain free, meaning that it covers the entire content of socialisation rather than hitting sub-dimensions differentially. That is why the initial scale developed by Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg (2003) based on the literature on adaptation and socialisation (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Fisher, 1986) to measure the socialisation influence was adapted to be tested during the pilot study.

The current version of the survey attempts to minimise this possibility by

presenting the item stems describing socialising influences (e.g., “To what extent have each of the following influenced how you have ‘learned the ropes’ as you have entered your new work environment?”) and then lists the sources of socialisation (“Orientation, training and other organisational efforts,” “Supervisors and others higher up in the organisation,” and “Other co-workers”). This presentation obscures the direct purpose of the scale slightly, which might also reduce response sets.

The initial item pool of socialisation influence scale was examined using a common exploratory factor analysis with promax rotation. This choice of an oblique rotation follows the interactionist hypothesis that there are reciprocal relationships between socialising influences. In other words, individuals who receive greater socialisation influence from one source will also receive additional socialisation influence from other sources. This proposition would be supported by positive correlations between factors. One could alternatively hypothesise a substitutability hypothesis, with greater information from one source reducing the need for information from other sources (e.g., Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). This proposition would be supported by negative correlations between factors. The final possibility is that sources of information are completely independent, which is a special case of the oblique rotation in which correlations between factors would be zero.

A five-factor model was specified a priori, to allow for the possibility that items represented the three latent factors that the scale attempted to measure as well as residual factors. As shown in Table 5.3, the first three factors account for about half of the observed variance. The remaining two are not easily interpretable and appear to represent random error. Thus, following from these initial results, all subsequent analyses were

based on a three-factor model.

Table 5.3: Factors in Pilot Data Using the Full Survey

Factor number	Unrotated sum of squared factor loadings	Proportion of variance explained by initial extraction	Rotated sum of squared factor loadings*
1	11.20	24.89%	9.11
2	6.79	15.14%	7.13
3	4.22	9.40%	5.13
4	1.29	2.87%	1.76
5	1.08	2.41%	1.68

*Note: n=85, \*When components are correlated, some of squared loading cannot be added to obtain a total variance*

Based on the rotated factor solution, factors for the a priori dimensions of organisation, leaders, and co-workers appeared. In all cases for the initial factor analysis, the loadings on the intended factors were high with low cross loadings. In fact, all loadings on intended factors were greater than 0.30, while no cross-loadings exceeded 0.30.

While the initial results were promising, due to space limitations on the survey to be distributed, the scale was further trimmed. To shorten the scale, items were removed which had the weakest factor loadings. Items were also removed if they had low variance in their answers, since low variance items are not informative. For example, few respondents indicated that the organisation’s training and development efforts influenced how they “figured out how most people in your new work environment feel about their jobs, co-workers, and organisation,” while a large proportion of respondents reported that their co-workers influenced them on this dimension of socialisation. Deletion of items that measure socialisation those are less relevant to certain sources helps to ensure comparability across sources. The end result was a twenty-one item scale as seven

questions across three agents (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). As shown in Table 5.4, there again appear to be three main factors.

Table 5.4: Factors in Pilot Data Using the Retained Items

Factor number	Unrotated sum of squared factor loadings	Proportion of variance explained by initial extraction
F1	2.47	11.74%
F2	5.64	26.91%
F3	2.89	13.80%
F4	1.26	6.01%
F5	0.52	2.55%

*Note: n=85*

Factors for the a priori dimensions of organisation, leaders, and co-workers appeared. The correlations between factors obtained from the reduced set are presented in Table 5.5. Disattenuated correlations between factors were all below  $r=0.40$  suggesting three reasonably distinct, but related constructs.

Table 5.5: Correlation Matrix for Factors in Pilot Data Using Retained Items

	Factor 1: Supervisors	Factor2 Co-workers	Factor3 Organisation
Factor1: Supervisors	86		
Factor2: Co-workers	32**	86	
Factor3: Organisation	33**	12	91

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, coefficient alpha on diagonals. N=85*

Results in Table 5.6 show a strong factor structure consistent with the proposed model. The loadings on intended factors are greater than 0.4, while no cross-loadings exceed 0.20. For ease of interpretation, factors loading on their representative dimensions are highlighted in bold text. The detailed items text was presented in table 4.5.

Table 5.6: Validation Sample Factor Loadings

Item	Factor 1:	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4
	Organisation	Leaders	Co-workers	Communality
Organisational influence 1	<b>92</b>	14	07	82
Organisational influence 2	<b>85</b>	05	05	72
Organisational influence 3	<b>83</b>	00	01	68
Organisational influence 4	<b>82</b>	-02	01	67
Organisational influence 5	<b>79</b>	-05	-03	65
Organisational influence 6	<b>76</b>	-06	-05	58
Organisational influence 7	<b>70</b>	-06	-06	57
Leader influence 1	17	<b>80</b>	13	74
Leader influence 2	05	<b>78</b>	02	61
Leader influence 3	05	<b>75</b>	01	55
Leader influence 4	03	<b>66</b>	00	43
Leader influence 5	-01	<b>66</b>	-02	43
Leader influence 6	-09	<b>51</b>	-05	32
Leader influence 7	-13	<b>49</b>	-08	24
Co-worker influence 1	14	11	<b>85</b>	70
Co-worker influence 2	05	08	<b>78</b>	63
Co-worker influence 3	03	03	<b>75</b>	55
Co-worker influence 4	-02	00	<b>72</b>	47
Co-worker influence 5	-04	-03	<b>62</b>	44
Co-worker influence 6	-04	-03	<b>61</b>	43
Co-worker influence 7	-06	-14	<b>44</b>	22
Sum of squared factor loadings	5.218	4.252	3.926	

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=85*

The above results of factor loading of the pilot study data confirmed the operationalisation and measurement of constructs in the current research. Having demonstrated a strong factor structure for the initial pool of items in the exploratory phase, the next phase of scale validation was the administration of the socialising influences scale to the full field sample of organisational newcomers. This cross-validation strategy attempted to confirm the hypothesis of three distinct factors in the data

with no common socialisation factor, as indicated in the preliminary stages of analysis. To test these hypotheses, confirmatory factor analysis was performed. Additionally, several alternative interpretations of the data were tested.

#### **5.2.4. Establishing procedures for analysing quantitative data, and suggest appropriateness of the analysis:**

In this section descriptive statistics of the pilot study are presented, including the scale means, standard deviations, higher order moments (skewness and kurtosis), intra-class correlations, and Pearson correlations. Second, the results related to the measurement model for the study are presented, including a comparison with alternative measurement models and the standardised path coefficients linking latent variables to their manifest indicators. Third, the hypothesised structural model is presented along with a discussion of mediating relationships.

##### **Descriptive statistics**

The raw scale means and standard deviations are presented in Table 5.7 for the 85 individuals who responded to the pilot surveys. Scale computation involved summing the responses to all items the respondent completed and then dividing by the number of items the respondent completed. As such, the possible scale values correspond to the response option range. Values of skewness below zero indicate the scale was left skewed, with a large proportion of responses to the high end of the scale, while values above zero indicate the scale was right skewed with a large proportion of responses near the low end of the scale. Values of kurtosis above three indicate the scale distribution has thicker tails than in a normal distribution, while values below three indicate that the scale distribution

has thinner tails than a normal distribution. Tests for significant skewness and kurtosis were derived by D'Agostino, Batanger, and D'Agostino, Jr. (1990).

Table 5.7: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Extraversion	85	3.15	0.04	0.56	-0.17	0.14
Agreeableness	85	3.89	0.04	0.56	-0.81	2.30
Conscientiousness	85	3.67	0.04	0.63	-0.10	-0.93
Neuroticism	85	2.75	0.06	0.74	0.24	-0.31
Openness	85	3.49	0.04	0.53	-0.02	-0.18
Socialisation: Organisation	85	2.89	0.06	0.86	-0.32	-0.11
Socialisation: Supervisor	85	3.54	0.06	0.88	-0.62	0.23
Socialisation: Co- workers	85	3.35	0.05	0.75	-0.21	-0.79
Proactive behaviour	85	4.06	0.04	0.55	-1.63	4.43
Adjust: Performance	85	3.92	0.07	0.97	3.54	26.13
Adjust: Integration	85	3.92	0.05	0.67	-0.79	0.46
Adjust: Political Knowledge	85	3.15	0.02	0.39	0.01	-0.27
Valid N (listwise)	85					

With the exception of Neuroticism, task performance, and political knowledge all other scales were left skewed while proactive behaviour and task performance scales had a thicker tail than in normal distribution.



### **Intraclass Correlations:**

This is a descriptive statistic that can be used when quantitative measurements are made on units that are organised into groups. It describes how strongly units in the same group resemble each other. While it is viewed as a type of correlation, unlike most other correlation measures it operates on data structured as groups, rather than data structured as paired observations.

Because the data used in the pilot study comes from 13 different organisations and are occupationally clustered, within-organisation and within-occupation intraclass correlations were computed for all variables as well (Bliese, 2000) to check for homogeneity between and within groups. Intraclass correlations measured as ICC(1)[One-way random single measures] are the ratio of between group variance to the sum of within-group variance plus between-group variance. Because ICC (1) is a ratio of variances, its lower boundary is zero. The ICC (1) data are presented in Table 5.8.

A low interclass correlation indicates relatively small between organisations or between occupations variation. In other words, organisations tend to perform at a comparable level on the study scales, and also respondents from clustered occupation tend to perform at a comparable level on the study scales. This is revealed by the comparatively low values of the ICC( 1) statistics, which were all below 0.20, and by the fact that all 95% confidence intervals included zero.

Table 5.8: Intraclass correlations- pilot data

	Org. ICC	Org.ICC 95% C. I.	Occ. ICC	Occ.ICC 95% C. I.
Extraversion	14	[ 00 - 31 ]	15	[ 00 - 30 ]
Agreeableness	04	[ 00 - 09 ]	02	[ 00 - 05 ]
Conscientiousness	05	[ 00 - 09 ]	08	[ 00 - 19 ]
Neuroticism	08	[ 00 - 19 ]	04	[ 00 - 10 ]
Openness	06	[ 00 - 16 ]	05	[ 00 - 11 ]
Socialisation: Organisation	02	[ 00 - 06 ]	01	[ 00 - 03 ]
Socialisation: Supervisor	04	[ 00 - 09 ]	04	[ 00 - 09 ]
Socialisation: Co-workers	02	[ 00 - 06 ]	01	[ 00 - 05 ]
Proactive behaviour	01	[ 00 - 03 ]	01	[ 00 - 04 ]
Adjust: Performance	01	[ 00 - 04 ]	03	[ 00 - 06 ]
Adjust: Integration	20	[ 00 - 40 ]	05	[ 00 - 15 ]
Adjust: Political Knowledge	02	[ 00 - 05 ]	02	[ 00 - 07 ]

*Note: n=85, Org. ICC refers to within-organisation and Occ. ICC refers to the within- occupation*

This ICC(1) values below 0.20 also means that there was substantial heterogeneity within organisations and occupations for most scales. This finding suggested the sampling strategy used, as organisations with low ICC required a sample design that focuses more on the within-organisation component, a sample design that samples fewer organisations but more newcomers. As ICC increases, the focus shifts to sampling more organisations, and perhaps fewer newcomers within the organisations. Hence, the main study used fewer organisations (seven organisations) and more newcomers at each one.

Correlations in table 5.9 below the diagonal are partial correlations between study variables and are corrected for non- normality. These sub-diagonal correlations have organisation, occupation, hours worked, years of professional experience, ethnicity, gender, and education controlled.

Table 5.9: Pilot study variables correlation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Extraversion	1.00											
2.Agreeableness	0.32*											
3.Conscientiousness	0.56**	0.45**										
4.Neuroticism	-0.24*	-0.40**	-0.40**									
5.Openness	0.49**	0.30**	0.58**	-0.13								
6.Socialisation: Organisation	-0.01	-0.14	-0.03	0.07	0.01							
7.Socialisation: Supervisor	0.14	0.07	0.25*	-0.08	0.18	0.56**						
8.Socialisation: Co-workers	0.08	0.03	0.09	-0.04	0.04	0.22*	0.50**					
9. Proactive behaviour	0.18	0.14	0.21*	-0.13	0.28**	0.13	0.08	-0.11				
10.Adjust: Performance	0.08	0.15	0.34**	-0.19	0.20	-0.10	0.07	-0.12	0.23*			
11.Adjust: Integration	0.43**	0.21*	0.40**	-0.23*	0.25*	0.13	0.29**	0.23*	0.21*	0.01		
12.Adjust: Political Knowledge	-0.00	0.06	0.15	-0.18	0.15	0.01	0.08	-0.11	0.23*	0.27*	0.04	1.00

Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=85, \* P < .05; \*\* p < .01; \*\*\* p < .001

Both conscientiousness and openness were significantly correlated to proactive behaviour which in turn was correlated to all adjustment outcomes. Moreover all traits have significant correlation with some or all adjustment outcomes, and finally supervisor socialisation, co-worker socialisation have a significant correlation with group integration as adjustment outcomes. The results was promising as it suggested that the variables in the study are related and that the personality dimensions mentioned above are critical to assess, and that the study have selected appropriate primary outcomes.

#### **5.2.5. Develop more focus hypotheses for the longitudinal study:**

The above mentioned items were considered for the model based on an extensive literature review and previous empirical results, although, a primary analysis was considered to make sure that the model incorporated the main primary outcomes and decide on which personalities are critical to be assessed. The standardised coefficients relating to each personality variable to proactive behaviour are shown in Table 5.10, while the standardised coefficients showing the direct effects of each personality variable, and proactive behaviour, on adjustment, are shown in Table 5.11. To the extent that proactive behaviour serves as a mediator, the following pattern of relationships will be found:

1. Proactive behaviour will be significantly related to adjustment
2. Personality variables will be related significantly to proactive behaviour
3. Personality variables will have a significant indirect effect on adjustment

If proactive behaviour serves as a strong mediator, then the direct pathways from a personality dimension to adjustment will not be significant, because the relationship between the personality dimension and adjustment is entirely mediated by proactive behaviour. Consistent with the mediational hypothesis, proactive behaviour is significantly related to adjustment, and openness is related significantly to proactive behaviour. However, conscientiousness is not related to proactive behaviour, and has significant direct effects on adjustment, indicating that the effects of this personality dimension are not mediated by proactive behaviour. Extraversion is not related significantly with proactive behaviour, and has no significant direct effects on adjustment. Cumulatively, this pattern of findings provides partial support for the mediational hypothesis. The effects of openness on adjustment appear to be at least partially mediated by proactive behaviour. However, conscientiousness was not mediated by proactive behaviour.

Table 5.10: Standardized Coefficients Relating Personality to Proactive behaviour

Predictor	Beta
Extraversion	.05
Conscientiousness	.06
Openness	.25*

Note. \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 5.11: Standardized Coefficients Relating Proactive behaviour and the Direct (Unmediated) Effects of Personality to Adjustment

Predictor	Beta
Extraversion	-.18
Conscientiousness	.54 ***
Openness	.38 **
Proactive behaviour	.23 *

Note. \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The major change suggested by the modification indices was a direct path from extraversion to integration. This path would imply that some of the unique variance in integration (that is not shared with the other indicators of adjustment) is predicted by extraversion. This path might represent the specific effect that sociability has on social integration. Hypothesis 6 proposed that the relationships between adjustment and the personality dimensions extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness are mediated by proactive behaviour.

Although the pilot study results showed some partial significance for hypothesis 6, as noted earlier, this should be treated with cautious due to the sample size and procedure used, although the results were encouraging enough to proceed with the main longitudinal study and confirm this significance.

### **5.3. Main Longitudinal Study Data:**

Respondents to all three surveys were compared with those who only responded at Time 1. Logistic regression was used to model the probability of non-response using predictors from the Time 1 survey, with odds ratios (ORs) used as a measure of effect size. Responses at Time 3 were more likely among those who worked in administration (OR=1.95,  $z=2.32$ ,  $p = .04$ ), who were Bahraini (OR=1.82,  $z =2.83$ ,  $p =.02$ ).

To assess whether nonresponse affected results, models were run using the sample selection procedure described by Heckman (1979). In this procedure, the probability of sample dropout is specifically included in the model as a function of respondent characteristics, meaning a control for non-random dropout is introduced in a manner similar to a multivariate correction for non-random range restriction. Results

from this procedure can be compared with results of an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression equation to determine if the difference is statistically significant (Hausman,1978). If there are no significant differences between the coefficients between models, then dropout did not significantly affect parameter estimates. Results of the Hausman (1978) test showed very minor and statistically insignificant differences between OLS and the sample selection models, suggesting differential attrition is not a serious concern for these data.

The preliminary analysis for the main study, described below, focused on socialisation influence scale factor analysis to confirm the scale validity data presumed on the pilot study data.

### **Structural Equation Modelling:**

Hypothesis6 will be tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) via Amos 7. One of the advantages of using SEM that SEM allows for the specification and simultaneous estimation of relationships among multiple observed and latent variables and allows alternative models to be compared to a theoretically-derived model in determining the fit of the data to the model (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). The measurement and structural model were assessed simultaneously. To minimise the ratio of parameters to observations in estimating the model, scale values for each variable were calculated. The covariance matrix of scale scores were used as input to Amos 7 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993). The path from the latent variable to the indicator ( $\lambda_X$  and  $\lambda_Y$ ) will be set equal to one in order to scale the latent variables (Bollen, 1989). To adjust for measurement error in the scale values, the error variance ( $\theta$

delta and theta epsilon) will be set equal to the variance of the scale value multiplied by 1.0 minus the reliability (Hayduk, 1987; Williams & Hazer, 1986). The correlations among the exogenous latent constructs (phi matrix) were allowed to be estimated, as is recommended practice (Hayduk, 1987). Finally, one set of correlations among the endogenous latent constructs' error terms (psi matrix) was allowed to be estimated: the correlations among the error terms for the three adjustment dimensions. Error terms of the endogenous latent constructs should be correlated if there is believed to be another construct, not represented in the model, that influences the endogenous constructs (Hayduk, 1987). Since the three adjustment facets may be equally influenced by personality factors (McEvoy & Parker, 1995) it is proposed to allow their error terms to correlate.

The adequacy of the structural model was assessed by comparing the “goodness of fit” of the hypothesised model with two additional nested models. Model 1, the hypothesised model, allowed for direct effects from antecedents of adjustment to proximal adjustment outcomes. Model 2, which has more parameters than the hypothesised model, constrained paths from antecedents of adjustment to the proactive behaviour to zero but left all other parameters free. The use of this minimally constrained model allows for an investigation of whether the hypothesised model is too simple to capture the details of the relationships between constructs. Model 3, eliminated the non-significant paths from Model 1. This model was used to investigate whether a simpler data structure can be used to capture the details of the relationships between constructs. Parameter estimates and discussion are presented in section 6.5. Structural model comparison in the next chapter (Chapter 6).



### **Evaluating Model Fit:**

Prior to measure the significance of the results, the structural model fit was evaluated. Three main categories of indicators are available to assess the overall fit of the data to the covariance structure model using the software Amos 7: measures of absolute fit, measures of incremental fit, and measures of parsimonious fit (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1992, Hu & Bentler, 1995). It has been recommended that researchers evaluate multiple criteria within each category when determining the fit of structural equation models and CFAs (Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994). Measures of absolute fit assess the degree to which the overall model predicts the observed covariance matrix. The most fundamental measures are chi-square which statistically tests the fit between the specified model and the unrestricted sample data, the standardised root mean square residual (RMSR) is a measure of the average of the standardised residual variances and covariance, and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), which assesses the fit of the squared residuals from the predicted model compared to the actual data. The GFI is independent of sample size and robust against non-normality (Bollen, 1989). The second class of fit statistics, incremental fit measures, compare the proposed model to the null model (a model in which all structural parameters are equal to zero). Two such measures are the comparative fit index (CFI) and normal fit index (NFI). The CFI is a preferred fit index because it avoids the underestimation of fit in small samples or when assumptions are violated (Bentler, 1990).

Finally, two parsimonious fit measures are the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) and the normed chi-square, with the objective being to diagnose whether model

fit has been achieved by “overfitting” the data with too many coefficients (Hair et al, 1992).

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis:**

The first step in structural equation modelling analysis will be to examine the measurement model, or the discriminant validity of the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Before testing the hypotheses, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted with the socialisation influence scale in order to provide further evidence of the construct validity of the three dimensional scales. This validation strategy attempted to confirm the hypothesis of three distinct factors in the data with no common socialisation factor.

An advantage of CFA over exploratory factor analysis is that the “goodness-of-fit” of the hypothesised three-factor model can be compared to one-factor and two-factor models in order to ascertain discriminated validity among the three factors (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi & Phillips, 1991; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). If the measures of the dimensions do not have adequate discriminated validity, the chi-square statistic of the single-factor model or the two-factor model will not be significantly worse than the fit of the hypothesised three-factor model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Five alternative specifications were examined to ensure this general model fit the data adequately and as comparisons with alternative explanations for responses.

1. A single factor model: one general socialisation factor with all 21 items loading on one factor.

2. An item factor model: item-specific loadings, meaning that responses to the first item stem was constrained to load on one factor, responses to the second item stem was constrained to load on the next factor, and so on for each of the seven item stems. This results in a seven-factor model.
3. A two-factor model: one organisational socialisation factor and a second factor combining co-worker and supervisors.
4. A three-factor model: three factors as hypothesised for organisation influence, leader influence, and co-worker influence.
5. A four-factor model: the three hypothesised factors for sources of influence plus a general socialisation factor that all items load on, but which is uncorrelated with the three specific sources of socialisation.

Values of the standardised RMSR range from zero to one, and values less than .08 indicate an acceptable model fit. The GFI, CFI, and AGFI range from zero to one, with values around .90 generally viewed as acceptable, and each can be compared across models (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1995). The normed chi-square is considered to be acceptable at values between 1.0 and 3.0 (Bollen, 1989). Expected cross validation index ECVI which assess the likelihood that the model cross validate across similar sized samples, can take any value, the lower the better the model, especially when it is compared with ECVI value for both saturated and independence models. In order to assess the fit of the CFAs and hypothesised model in this study, chi-square, RMSR, GFI, CFI, NFI, AGFI, and normed chi-square were measured as follow; the ECVI for the saturated model was 0.570 and the ECVI for the independence model was 17.58 (table

5.12). For this table, and all subsequent tables, the leading zeros and decimals are omitted for the Parsimony Ratio, CFI, SRMSR, and RMSEA.

Table 5.12: Fit for Alternative Models of Socialising Influences

	<i>df</i>	Parsimony Ratio	$X^2$	$X^2/df$	CFI	SRMSR	RMSEA 90% C.I.	ECVI 90% C.I.
Single factor	189	90	8174	43.3	433	278	[32-33]	[20.1-21.1]
Item factor	168	81	7479	44.5	480	195	[31-32]	[16.3-17.2]
Two factors	188	90	4321	23.0	703	151	[22-23]	[9.38-10.1]
Three factors	186	89	1056	5.68	941	032	[08-09]	[1.46-1.73]
Four factors	165	79	689	4.18	963	026	[06-07]	[0.93-1.14]

*Note: n=180*

The single factor model, representing one general component to socialisation without variations across sources, fit very poorly according to all fit indices. This suggests that an aggregated socialisation factor does not explain this data very well. The model specifying one factor per item stem was not substantially better than the one general factor model. The very poor fit of the item stem model demonstrates that respondents were making a stronger distinction between sources of socialising information and were not making much of a distinction between the item stems, which suggests that the items were in fact representing fairly neutral socialisation content. The model specifying two sources of information factors was significantly superior to either of the previous models, especially considering the fact that only one more degree of freedom was used in estimating the model. However, the overall model fit was poor and suggests separating out organisational influence from leader and co-worker influence is still not capturing the underlying structure of the data well.

The hypothesised three sources of information factor model performed

considerably better than the prior models. The factor loadings for each factor are presented in table 5.13 below, representing the path coefficient from the latent construct to its manifest indicator, and  $t$  representing the associated  $t$ -statistic for the path coefficient. Only the depicted coefficients were estimated, all other paths were constrained to zero values. The correlations between latent variables are presented in Table 5.14. All of the factors loadings are highly statistically significant, as are the correlations between latent variables. This supports the interactionist hypothesis that individuals who acquire more information from one source also gather more information from other sources. However, the magnitude of the correlations between sources of socialising influence are not especially large considering the similarities in item stems and the fact that the scale was administered at a single point in time.

Table 5.13: Factor Loadings for the Hypothesised Model of Socialising Influences

	Factor 1: Organisation		Factor 2: Leaders		Factor 3: Co-workers	
	$\lambda$	t	$\lambda$	t	$\lambda$	t
Organisational influence 1	857	21.17				
Organisational influence 2	913	28.62				
Organisational influence 3	951	29.33				
Organisational influence 4	932	30.91				
Organisational influence 5	898	30.63				
Organisational influence 6	936	31.20				
Organisational influence 7	879	29.00				
Leader influence 1			864	25.97		
Leader influence 2			799	25.94		
Leader influence 3			820	27.70		
Leader influence 4			902	28.82		
Leader influence 5			865	28.32		
Leader influence 6			915	31.05		
Leader influence 7			943	29.42		
Co-worker influence 1					700	23.19
Co-worker influence 2					821	27.09
Co-worker influence 3					759	26.22
Co-worker influence 4					826	26.99
Co-worker influence 5					803	28.72
Co-worker influence 6					891	30.25
Co-worker influence 7					882	29.59

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180*

Table 5.14: Factor Correlations (ID matrix) for Hypothesised Model

	Leader influence	Co-worker influence
Leader influence	373	
Co-worker influence	362	301

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180.*

Although the overall fit for the hypothesised model was close to the criteria specified by Hu and Bentler (1999), the fit for the four factor model was considerably better. The upper bound of the 90% confidence intervals of the four factor model for both the RMSEA and ECVI were lower than the lower bound of these confidence intervals for

the three factor model. This might suggest that excluding an overall perception of socialising influences leaves the model underspecified. However, the estimated loadings from this model, presented in table 5.15, are much closer representing an order effect, as respondents changed their mode of responding slightly as more questions were asked (Tourangeau et al, 2000). The ordering appears to be the most reasonable explanation since earlier items load negatively on the general factor and later items load positively on the general factor, with little apparent pattern based on item content. Thus, the superior fit of the four factor model was probably due to an artefact of survey administration rather than a substantive component of the socialisation constructs. The loadings on this fourth factor are usually less than one-quarter the size of the loadings on the primary factors.

Table 5.15: Factor Loadings for the Four Factor Model of Socialising Influences

	Factor 1: Organisation		Factor 2: Leaders		Factor 3: Co-workers		Factor 4: Order effect	
	$\lambda$	t	$\lambda$	t	$\lambda$	t	$\lambda$	t
Organisational influence 1	859	27.18					-167	-3.16
Organisational influence 2	913	28.63					-76	-1.4
Organisational influence 3	950	29.29					-71	-1.26
Organisational influence 4	932	30.91					-79	-1.48
Organisational influence 5	898	30.63					44	0.86
Organisational influence 6	938	21.3					99	1.86
Organisational influence 7	884	29.15					159	3.05
Leader influence 1			880	26.48			-124	-2.12
Leader influence 2			802	26.07			-2	-0.05
Leader influence 3			835	28.33			-93	-1.73
Leader influence 4			910	29.17			-35	-0.61
Leader influence 5			855	27.67			126	2.27
Leader influence 6			901	29.7			235	4.2
Leader influence 7			927	27.7			321	5.45
Co-worker influence 1					708	23.25	-170	-3.35
Co-worker influence 2					824	27.23	-56	-1.02
Co-worker influence 3					769	26.51	-157	-3.04
Co-worker influence 4					835	27.19	-135	-2.43
Co-worker influence 5					798	28.49	53	1.03
Co-worker influence 6					891	29.52	233	4.14
Co-worker influence 7					880	28.87	229	4.07

Note: Leading decimals omitted,  $n=180$

In conclusion, socialising influences scale from Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) with 21 items loading in three- factor model showed good fit. Item score internal consistency reliability was  $\alpha=0.94$  for organisational influence,  $\alpha=0.93$  for leader influence,  $\alpha=0.92$  for co-worker influence



#### **5.4. Summary**

This first part of this chapter examined the pilot data. It checked the validity and reliability of the questionnaire used, calculated the required minimum sample size, confirmed the construct validity of the socialisation influence scale, and performed descriptive statistics, intra-class correlation, and study variables correlation as a primary analysis. The analysis confirmed that the model incorporated the main primary antecedents and outcomes which were initially considered based on an extensive literature review and previous empirical results. Moreover, the analysis supported hypothesis 6 partially.

The second part of the chapter focused on the preliminary analysis of the main longitudinal study. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the fit of the measurement model for each construct, and reliability and validity for each construct were examined. The model fit was evaluated and the structural model was examined to specify the relationships among constructs. Having examined the scale validity and reliability, in addition to the evaluation of the model fit, detailed discussions of the results and hypothesis testing using the main study data will be included in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: RESULTS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the main study. The hypothesised theoretical model and proposed direct relation hypotheses (H1 through to H5) were tested using multiple hierarchical regression, followed by structural equation modelling to test the mediation hypothesis (H6), and finally moderation hypotheses (H7 through to H9) were tested using moderated regression.

The results for the study are grouped into five sections. First, the descriptive statistics are presented, including the scale means, standard deviations, higher order moments (skewness and kurtosis), intra-class correlations, and Pearson correlations. Second, the results related to the measurement model for the study are presented, including a comparison with alternative measurement models and the standardised path coefficients linking latent variables to their manifest indicators. Third, the results of hierarchical regression model testing of the hypotheses H1:H5, and fourth, the hypothesised structural model are presented along with a discussion of mediating relationships for H6, and lastly, the moderated regression model results for H7:H9 were presented. A detailed discussion is provided for each hypothesis testing.

### **6.2. Descriptive Statistics**

The raw scale means and standard deviations are presented in Table 6.1 for the 180 individuals who responded to all three surveys. Scale computation involved summing the responses to all items the respondent completed and then dividing by the number of those items so that the possible scale values correspond to the response option range.

Values of skewness below zero indicate the scale was left skewed, with a large proportion of responses to the high end of the scale, while values above zero indicate the scale was right skewed with a large proportion of responses near the low end of the scale. Values of kurtosis above three indicate the scale distribution has thicker tails than in a normal distribution, while values below three indicate that the scale distribution has thinner tails than a normal distribution. Tests for significant skewness and kurtosis were derived by D'Agostino, Batanger, and D'Agostino, Jr. (1990). The consistent departures from normality in the data have implications for structural equation modelling estimation and suggest the data should be transformed prior to SEM analysis.

A notable descriptive finding regarding scale means is that mean values of co-worker influence were similar to the values for leader influence  $d=0.11$ , 95% C.I. = (0.02-0.2), but significantly higher than organisational influence  $d=0.44$ , 95% C.I.=(0.33-0.55), and values for leader influence were significantly higher than values for organisational influence  $d=0.55$ , 95% C.I.=(0.42- 0.68). This ordering is consistent with the literature which suggests co-workers and Leaders provide more socialisation influence than organisations, and in particular, is consistent with the proposition that perceived influence decreases as role similarity decreases (Moreland &Levine, 2001; Petty & Wegener, 1998).

Table 6.1: Scale means, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis:

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Extraversion	180	3.27	0.04	0.56	-0.18	0.13
Agreeableness	180	3.92	0.04	0.56	-0.87	2.26
Conscientiousness	180	3.75	0.04	0.64	-0.11	-0.92
Neuroticism	180	2.74	0.05	0.75	0.23	-0.32
Openness	180	3.55	0.04	0.53	-0.02	-0.19
Socialisation: Organisation	180	2.92	0.06	0.86	-0.31	-0.10
Socialisation: Supervisor	180	3.47	0.06	0.88	-0.62	0.21
Socialisation: Co-workers	180	3.36	0.05	0.75	-0.19	-0.83
Proactive behaviour	180	4.07	0.04	0.55	-1.58	4.76
Adjust: Performance	180	3.91	0.07	0.97	3.65	25.45
Adjust: Integration	180	3.92	0.05	0.67	-0.78	0.48
Adjust: Political Knowledge	180	3.15	0.02	0.38	0.01	-0.26
Valid N (listwise)	180					

### Intra-class Correlations:

Because the data used in this study comes from seven different organisations and are occupationally clustered, within-organisation and within-occupation intraclass correlations were computed for all variables as well (Bliese, 2000) to check for homogeneity between and within groups. Intra-class correlations measured as ICC(1)[One-way random single measures] are the ratio of between group variance to the sum of within-group variance plus between-group variance. Because ICC (1) is a ratio of variances, its lower bound is zero. The ICC (1) data are presented in Table 6.2.

A low interclass correlation indicates a relatively small between-organisations or between-occupations variation. In other words, organisations and also respondents from clustered occupations tend to perform at a comparable level on the study scales. The results of ICC(1) are commensurate with the pilot data results and this was revealed by the comparatively low values of the ICC( 1) statistics, which were all below 0.15, and by the fact that all 95% confidence intervals included zero.

Table 6.2: Intra-class correlations:

	Org. ICC	Org.ICC 95% C. I.	Occ. ICC	Occ.ICC 95% C. I.
Extraversion	12	[ 00 - 29 ]	13	[ 00 - 26 ]
Agreeableness	03	[ 00 - 08 ]	01	[ 00 - 04 ]
Conscientiousness	03	[ 00 - 07 ]	08	[ 00 - 17 ]
Neuroticism	08	[ 00 - 19 ]	03	[ 00 - 08 ]
Openness	05	[ 00 - 14 ]	05	[ 00 - 11 ]
Socialisation: Organisation	02	[ 00 - 05 ]	01	[ 00 - 03 ]
Socialisation: Supervisor	03	[ 00 - 07 ]	03	[ 00 - 08 ]
Socialisation: Co-workers	02	[ 00 - 06 ]	01	[ 00 - 05 ]
Proactive behaviour	00	[ 00 - 02 ]	01	[ 00 - 03 ]
Adjust: Performance	01	[ 00 - 02 ]	02	[ 00 - 05 ]
Adjust: Integration	14	[ 00 - 32 ]	05	[ 00 - 12 ]
Adjust: Political Knowledge	01	[ 00 - 05 ]	03	[ 00 - 08 ]

*Note: n=180, Org. ICC refers to within-organisation and Occ. ICC refers to the within-occupation*

This ICC(1) values below 0.25 also means that there was substantial heterogeneity within organisations and occupations for most scales. Because of this relatively low interdependence across these clusters of observations, data can be modelled at the individual level (Bliese, 2000).

Although these ICC(1) values are low, organisational and occupational fixed effects were controlled for of the covariance matrix prior to analysis using dichotomous indicators (which reduces all ICC(1) values to zero) to control for fixed effects and

minimise problems due to violations of data independence.

Correlations above the diagonal for Table 6.3 are for raw summary scale scores. Correlations below the diagonal are partial correlations between latent constructs from the Amos7 measurement model and are corrected for measurement error and non-normality.

These sub-diagonal correlations have organisation, occupation, hours worked, years of professional experience, ethnicity, gender, and education controlled. Coefficient alphas are in bold italics on the diagonal. T1 indicates variable collected at Time 1, T2 indicates variable collected at Time 2, T3 indicates variable collected at Time 3. For this data, correlations greater than 0.13 are significant at  $p < 0.05$ , and correlations greater than 0.17 are significant at  $p < 0.01$  and correlations greater than 0.25 are significant at  $p < 0.001$

Table 6.3: Scale correlation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Extraversion(T1)	<b>1.00</b>	0.26***	0.54	-0.20**	0.48	-0.04	0.09	0.12	0.19**	0.12	0.37***	0.02
2.Agreeableness(T1)	0.25	<b>1.00</b>	0.39	-0.40	0.34	0.01	0.19**	0.18**	0.12	0.16*	0.37***	0.15*
3.Conscientiousness(T1)	0.52	0.39	<b>1.00</b>	-0.33	0.64	-0.01	0.20**	0.15*	0.24***	0.41	0.35***	0.24**
4.Neuroticism(T1)	-0.20**	-0.47	-0.35	<b>1.00</b>	-0.12	0.00	-0.06	-0.06	-0.17*	-0.13*	-0.21**	-0.18*
5.Openness(T1)	0.47	0.31	0.59	-0.13*	<b>1.00</b>	-0.02	0.18**	0.17**	0.30***	0.20*	0.33***	0.30***
6.Socialisation: Organisation(T2)	-0.01	-0.04	0.03	0.04	0.05	<b>1.00</b>	0.56	0.22**	0.08	-0.11	0.12	-0.02
7.Socialisation: Supervisor(T2)	0.12	0.18*	0.31	-0.08	0.22**	0.59	<b>1.00</b>	0.52	0.09	0.07	0.25***	0.11
8.Socialisation: Co-workers(T2)	0.10	0.14*	0.10	-0.07	0.10	0.24**	0.55	<b>1.00</b>	-0.05	-0.05	0.27***	0.03
9.Proactive behaviour(T2)	0.18*	0.12	0.20**	-0.11	0.27***	0.13	0.09	-0.07	<b>1.00</b>	0.27***	0.12*	0.15*
10.Adjust: Performance(T3)	0.10	0.15	0.37***	-0.19*	0.26***	-0.12	0.06	-0.10	0.19**	<b>1.00</b>	0.05	0.29***
11.Adjust: Integration(T3)	0.38***	0.34***	0.35***	-0.28***	0.29***	0.13	0.27***	0.25***	0.17*	0.10	<b>1.00</b>	0.25**
12.Adjust: Political Knowledge(T3)	0.04	0.16*	0.27***	-0.18	0.33***	-0.01	0.09	-0.01	0.14*	0.34	0.23	<b>1.00</b>

Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180, \* P < .05; \*\* p < .01; \*\*\* p < .001

### **6.3. Measurement Model**

The first step in structural equation modelling analysis was to examine the measurement model, or the discriminant validity of the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). To demonstrate discriminant validity, the hypothesised measurement model was contrasted against several competing measurement models. The hypothesised alternative models all had fewer constructs than the hypothesised model. The question answered by these between model comparisons is whether a simpler structure can be used to capture the major theoretical constructs involved in newcomer adjustment, given the measures used in this study.

The specifications of latent variables in these models are presented in Table 6.4. The model name is used to describe the underlying structure of the constructs. For the categories of antecedents of adjustment, and proximal outcomes, the constructs listed under each heading represent the latent variables used to capture the domain. For the single factor model there was only one latent factor that all indicators were loaded on, so there are no individual entries under antecedents of adjustment, and proximal outcomes.

To reduce the number of antecedents of adjustment the possibility of aggregating all sources of socialisation influence into a single socialisation construct was investigated by having the indicators for organisation, leader, and co-worker influence load on a single “socialisation” factor. To reduce the number of proximal outcomes the indicators of all three proximal outcomes constructs were loaded on a single “all proximal outcomes” factor.



Table 6.4: Description of Latent Variables for Test of Measurement Models

Model Name	Antecedents of Adjustment	Proximal Outcomes
Single factor	<u>All indicators on a single latent variable</u>	<u>All indicators on a single latent variable</u>
Fully aggregated measures (3 factors)	1. Proactive behaviour 2. Socialisation	3. All proximal outcomes
Aggregated socialisation (5 factors)	1. Proactive behaviour 2. Socialisation	3. Task Performance 4. Group integration 5. Political knowledge
Aggregated proximal (5 factors)	1. Proactive behaviour 2. Organisation influence 3. Leader influence 4. Co-worker influence	5. All proximal outcomes
Hypothesised measures (7 factors)	1. Proactive behaviour 2. Organisation influence 3. Leader influence 4. Co-worker influences	5. Task Performance 6. Group integration 7. Political knowledge

Table 6.5 presents the fit indices for these measurement models. The aggregated models demonstrate a poor fit with the data. As noted earlier, for this covariance matrix the fully saturated ECVI is 2.125, and the independence ECVI is 19.707. Based on criteria from Hu and Bentler (1999) and the significant difference between the hypothesised model's ECVI and the saturated model ECVI, the hypothesised measurement model was the only measurement model to show an acceptable fit.

Table 6.5: Fit Statistics for Alternative Measurement Models

	PR	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup> /df	CFI	SRMS R	RMSEA 90% C.I.	ECVI 90% C.I.
Single factor	0.94	8496	15.46	261	137	[165-171]	[164-175]
Fully aggregated measures	0.91	4324	8.29	648	096	[114-120]	[818-893]
Aggregated socialisation	0.87	3090	6.17	760	082	[092-098]	[557-618]
Aggregated proximal	0.88	2033	4.29	859	063	[074-080]	[412-463]
Hypothesised measures	0.83	774	1.69	974	033	[027-035]	[164-189]

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180*

The results suggested that the measurement model used demonstrated superior discriminant validity over other competing measurement models.

#### **6.4. Hierarchical Regression Model (H1:H5):**

This section examines the direct relations between personality traits and proximal, i.e., immediate adjustment outcomes. It is important to empirically test this relation before moving to the hypothesised mediation and moderation models in the next sections. Applying Hierarchical linear modelling (HLM) to test the direct relationships is necessary whenever there is non-independence between observations of dependent variables which are the adjustment outcomes in the current study. Multilevel modeling allows one to readily estimate Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC), which can substantially alter error terms in analyses and thereby create false positives. A common rule of thumb is to use multilevel modeling when ICC(1) is greater than 0.05 (Luke, 2004). In the current study the ICC(1) highest value was 0.13 and the 95% C.I. values were (0.00:0.32), hence there is some significant variation by organisations, and

occupations even if the ICC (1) values are low (and often values can be as low as 0.05), therefore, HLM is not only appropriate but important to use.

Moreover, since the purposes of these hypotheses are to estimate the contributions of individual trait to the adjustment process, hierarchical regression model was considered to test the hypotheses (H1:H5) because the separate effects of each trait are not contaminated by any collinearity of other independent variables.

### **Conscientiousness as a predictor of adjustment outcomes**

The results predicting the three adjustment outcomes studied are provided in the following tables 6.6, 6.7, 6.8. The hierarchical linear model was specified as using the conscientiousness variables (individual differences) to predict task performance, political knowledge, and group integration respectively.

The researcher controlled for gender, ethnicity, organisation size, last job starting date, professional experience, highest educational qualification achieved and salary range per month as a predictor of the effect of conscientiousness on adjustment outcomes to ensure that possible differences in those variables are not confounded with possible relation as per the theoretical model.

In hypothesis 1a, it was postulated that a high conscientiousness newcomer would have a better task performance adjustment than a low conscientiousness newcomer. As shown in Table 6.6, hypothesis 1a was supported, as conscientiousness positively predicted the intercept of task performance ( $\beta = .40, p < .01$ ), meaning that

newcomers who have a more conscientiousness -biased personality had more egalitarian task performance.

Table 6.6: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting task performance versus conscientiousness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.40	0.16		0.16	3.90	0.00
B01, Conscientiousness	0.52	0.27	0.40**	0.11	25.17	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

Moreover, conscientiousness positively predicted the intercept of political knowledge ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and group integration ( $\beta = .39$ ,  $p < .01$ ), (Table 6.7, and Table 6.8) meaning that more conscientiousness biased newcomers will be more egalitarian on the other remaining adjustment outcome variables, supporting hypothesis 1b and 1c.

Table 6.7: Hierarchical linear modelling predicting political knowledge versus conscientiousness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, last job starting date, Professional Experience, highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.22	0.05		0.16	1.12	0.35
B01, Conscientiousness	0.35	0.12	0.31**	0.11	12.99	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

Table 6.8: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting group integration versus conscientiousness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.37	40.1		0.14	3.27	0.00
B01, Conscientiousness	0.49	0.24	0.39**	0.11	22.89	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

### Openness to experience as a predictor of adjustment outcomes:

In hypothesis 2a, it was proposed that there is a positive relationship between openness to experience and task performance. This hypothesis was supported. After controlling for gender, ethnicity, organisation size, last job starting date, professional experience, highest educational qualification achieved and salary range per month as a predictor of the effect of openness on adjustment outcomes. It was found that there was a significant relationship ( $\beta=.27$ ,  $p<.01$ ) between openness to experience and task performance (Table 6.9). As a result newcomers who score high on the personality trait “openness to experience” display more positive task performance adjustment than low scoring newcomers.

Table 6.9: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting task performance versus openness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.40	0.16		0.16	3.90	0.00
B01,Openness	0.47	0.22	0.27**	0.06	12.28	0.00

$\beta$ = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

In hypothesis 2b, it was proposed that there is a positive relationship between openness to experience and political knowledge of the organisation. It was found that there was a significant relationship ( $\beta=.34, p<.01$ ) between openness to experience and political knowledge after controlling for gender, ethnicity, organisation size, last job starting date, professional experience, highest educational qualification achieved and salary range per month (Table 6.10). As a result newcomers who score high on the personality trait “openness to experience” display more positive political knowledge adjustment than low scoring newcomers.

Table 6.10: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting political knowledge versus openness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.33	0.11		0.11	2.45	0.00
B01,Openness	0.45	0.20	0.34**	0.09	18.61	0.00

$\beta =$  standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

### **Extraversion as a predictor of adjustment outcomes:**

Hypothesis 3a suggested that newcomers’ task performance is positively related to extraversion. The empirical testing (Table 6.11) does not support this hypothesis

( $\beta=.1$ ,  $p=ns$ ). In other word, high extravert newcomers do not display more task performance adjustment than low extravert newcomers.

Table 6.11: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting task performance versus extraversion

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	$p$
Intercept, B0	0.40	0.16		0.16	3.90	0.00
Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month						
B01, Extraversion	0.41	0.17	0.10	0.01	1.79	0.18

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

Hypothesis 3b suggested that newcomers' group integration is positively related to extraversion. By regressing task performance and group integration separately on extraversion after controlling of study control variables ( table 6.12) we found out that H3a was not supported, while H3b is fully supported with statistical significance ( $B = .37$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This result suggests that extravert newcomers would find it easier to integrate into groups and adjust in the new organisation than introvert newcomers.



Table 6.12: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting group integration versus extraversion

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.37	0.13		0.14	3.27	0.00
B01, Extraversion	0.51	0.26	0.37**	0.13	27.94	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient. \**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

**Agreeableness as a predictor of adjustment outcomes:**

Hypothesis 4 postulated that newcomer group integration is positively related to agreeableness, in other words, agreeable newcomers will integrate into groups within the organisation and become more adjusted than less agreeable newcomers. This hypothesis was supported ( $\beta = .34, p < 0.01$ ) by the following positive correlation:

Table 6.13: Hierarchical linear modelling results predicting group integration versus agreeableness

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.37	40.1		40.1		0.00
B01, Agreeableness	0.49	0.24	0.34**	0.10	21.41	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

This finding is also consistent with findings of prior researchers in cross cultural research as agreeableness was associated with all forms of adjustment for expatriates (Shaffer et al, 2006).

### **Neuroticism as a predictor of adjustment outcomes**

Hypothesis 5a proposed that task performance is negatively related to neuroticism. The correlation was negative and the hypothesis was supported ( $\beta=-.06$ , *p*=.05). This result suggested newcomers who experience high neuroticism will find it more difficult to adjust and perform new tasks than those who experience low neuroticism. This is especially true when other background variables like ethnicity, gender, number of employees, last job starting date, professional experience, highest educational qualification achieved, and salary range per month are controlled. For example, the simple correlation without controlling for background was not significant

( $\beta = -.10$ ,  $p = ns$ ) and attains significance only after controlling the above mentioned variables.

Table 6.14: Hierarchical linear modelling results task performance versus neuroticism

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	$p$
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.40	0.16		0.16	3.90	0.00
B01, Neuroticism	0.45	0.24	-0.06*	0.78	2.86	0.05

$\beta =$  standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

Hypothesis 5b proposed that newcomer group integration is negatively related to neuroticism. Results in table 6.15 showed that the correlation was negative and the hypothesis was supported ( $\beta = -.19$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This result suggested newcomers who experience high neuroticism will find it more difficult to integrate in groups than those who experience low neuroticism.

Table 6.15: Hierarchical linear modelling results group integration versus neuroticism

Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
Intercept, B0 Ethnicity, Gender, No. of Employees, Last job starting date, Professional Experience, Highest educational qualification achieved, Salary range per month	0.50	0.25		0.25	6.61	0.00
B01, Neuroticism	0.53	0.28	-0.19**	0.03	7.00	0.00

$\beta$  = standardised hierarchical linear modelling coefficient.

\**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

Other relationships which might have some logical reasons to be proposed but were not hypothesised due to lack of theoretical or empirical evidence were examined for statistical significance. With one exception, none of these relationships were significant, for example, the relationship between agreeableness and political knowledge was insignificant ( $\beta = -.03$ ,  $p = .67$ ). Similarly, the relationships between the traits extraversion, neuroticism and adjustment outcome political knowledge were insignificant ( $\beta = .04$ ,  $p = .54$ ) and ( $\beta = -.16$ ,  $p = .14$ ) respectively. The only exception was the relationship between openness to experience and work group integration. It was found to be significant ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Moreover, in all the relationships, which were

analysed above, the significance level remain the same when the relations of each of the Big Five was examined having controlled for the effects of the other four.

### **6.5. Structural Model (H6):**

Having established the empirical relationship between the newcomer personality traits and adjustment outcome in the previous section, this relationship was further examined to find out if it existed through other variables i.e. mediators like pro-activity. In hypothesis 6 it was postulated that the relationships between newcomers' proximal adjustment and the personality dimensions of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness are mediated by proactive behaviour. The pilot study results have suggested partial mediation, i.e. the effects of openness on adjustment appear to be at least partially mediated by proactive behaviour.

Although the pilot study results showed some partial significance, as noted earlier, this should be treated with cautious due to the sample size and procedure used, that is why the researcher decided to test the mediation on the main longitudinal study on larger sample to confirm the results. The first step was to evaluate the model fit followed by testing the mediation model proposed in H6.

#### **Model comparisons**

Following this support for the measurement model, three structural models were estimated using the hypothesised structure of constructs. Model 1, the hypothesised model, allowed for direct effects from traits, proactive behaviour, and socialisation influence as antecedents of adjustment on proximal adjustment outcomes, constrained un-hypothesised paths from antecedents to the proximal outcomes to zero for a total of

19 structural coefficients. Model 2, which has more parameters than the hypothesised model, Model 2, which has more parameters than the hypothesised model, constrained paths from antecedents of adjustment to the proactive behaviour to zero but left all other parameters free for a total of 27 structural coefficients. The use of this minimally constrained model allows for an investigation of whether the hypothesised model is too simple to capture the details of the relationships between constructs. Model 3 eliminated the non-significant paths from Model 1 for a total of 13 structural coefficients. This model is used to investigate whether a simpler data structure can be used to capture the details of the relationships between constructs. The fit indices and coefficient estimates were very similar across models. As the hypothesised model fit as well as the alternatives and is matched to an a priori theoretical structure, it is described below.

Table 6.16: Fit statistics for alternative structural model

	PR	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	SRMSR	ECVI
Model 1	0.85	809	1.72	972	39	1.80
Model 2	0.84	797	1.72	972	36	1.81
Model 3	0.87	844	1.71	970	46	1.81

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180*

To assess generalisability of the estimated parameter values, a multi-sample analysis was conducted using the three organisations with over 30 participants. The structural models were estimated with all parameters constrained so as to be equal for all organisations, and then contrasted with models in which structural coefficients were free to vary across organisations. If the fit is significantly worse when parameters are constrained to be equal, the generalisability of the coefficient estimates is questionable, whereas if the fit is not worse when parameters are constrained to be equal, the

coefficient estimates are not significantly different from group to group (Joreskog & Sörbom., 1996).

Table 6.17: Fit statistics for organisation as a moderator

	PR	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup> /df	CFI	RMSEA 90% C.I.	ECVI 90% C.I.
Model 1 Constrained	0.98	2366	1.35	927	[035-046]	[5.11-5.62]
Model 1 Unconstrained	0.91	2188	1.35	932	[034-046]	[5.31-5.81]
Model 2 Constrained	0.99	2376	1.35	927	[036-046]	[5.11-5.63]
Model 2 Unconstrained	0.92	2214	1.35	931	[034-046]	[5.27-5.77]
Model 3 Constrained	0.99	2418	1.36	923	[037-048]	[5.14-5.67]
Model 3 Unconstrained	0.94	2290	1.36	928	[036-047]	[5.24-5.75]

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180*

Patterns of adjustment may be different for organisational newcomers who have comparatively little experience in the world of work compared to newcomers with more experience, as a potential alternative explanation for differences in coefficients between those with high vs. low levels of tenure (e.g., Buchanan, 1974; Vandenberg & Scarpello, 1990). To investigate this possibility, the sample was split with those above the average level of work experience in one group and those below the average level of work experience in the other. A multi-group analysis was performed using these two groups similar to the grouping by organisation, first with structural coefficients constrained to be equal across groups, and then with structural coefficients free to vary.

Table 6.18: Fit statistics for experience as a moderator

	PR	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup> /df	CFI	RMSEA 90% C.I.	ECVI 90% C.I.
Model 1 Constrained	0.94	1622	1.45	954	[032-040]	[2.92-3.28]
Model 1 Unconstrained	0.89	1518	1.44	957	[032-040]	[3.00-3.34]
Model 2 Constrained	0.95	1635	1.45	953	[032-040]	[2.97-3.33]
Model 2 Unconstrained	0.90	1536	1.44	957	[032-040]	[3.03-3.37]
Model 3 Constrained	0.96	1669	1.46	952	[032-040]	[2.96-3.32]
Model 3 Unconstrained	0.92	1587	1.45	955	[032-040]	[3.02-3.37]

*Note: Leading decimals omitted, n=180*

Results for both moderator analysis showed remarkably little change in fit indices when constraints on the estimated coefficient are relaxed. As such, it appears that the hypothesised structural relationship has at least some generalisability although further research is clearly needed in this area.

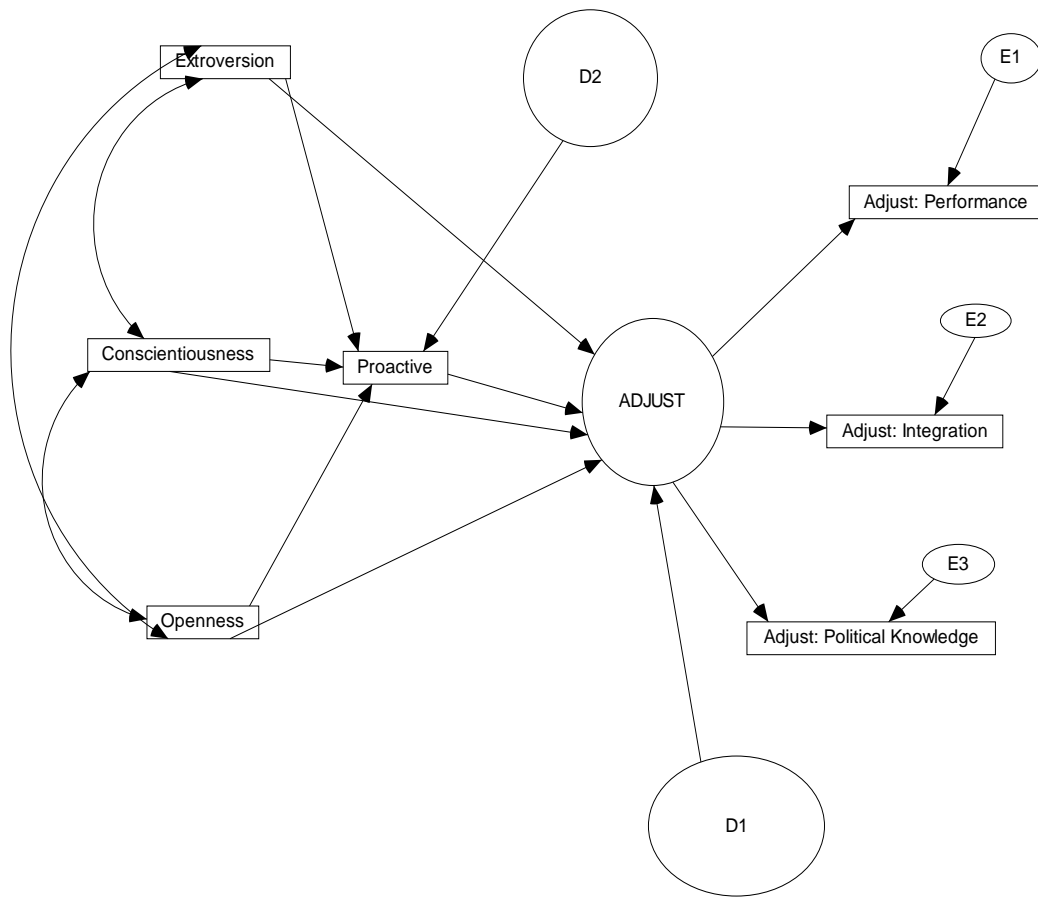
### **Mediating relationships**

As per pilot study data, only partial mediation was found, but, due to the sample size and cross section methodology adopted, and the analytical method used, the researcher decided to re-run full hypothesis testing on the main longitudinal study data using structure equation modelling. Hypothesis 6 states that the effects of conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness on adjustment are mediated by proactive behaviour. To test Hypothesis 6, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed. For the purposes of this investigation, SEM offered a number of distinct advantages over multiple regression. First, the dependent variable, adjustment, could be modelled as a latent variable that was measured by three manifest indicators (i.e., performance, integration, and political knowledge). By modelling adjustment as a latent variable, SEM enables the investigator to estimate the effects of personality variables and



proactive behaviour after adjusting for errors in measuring the dependent variable. Second, the SEM model provides an overview of the pathways relating personality, proactive behaviour, and adjustment, and tests the significance of the coefficients relating these constructs. Third, unlike regression, SEM provides indices of the goodness of fit of the mediational model, and alternative models, to the observed data.

The mediational model is shown in Figure 2. This model contains both direct (unmediated) paths from each of the personality variables to adjustment, as well as indirect paths that are mediated by proactive behaviour. The first step in evaluating this model is to consider how well it fits the observed pattern of covariances between variables in the data. According to criteria proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999), this model provides adequate fit, even by stringent standards. Specifically, the Goodness of Fit index (GFI) was .945, and Corrected Fit Index was .0970. The GFI, CFI, and AGFI range from zero to one, with values above .90 generally viewed as acceptable, and each can be compared across models (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1995) and the root mean square residual (RMSR) was .04. Values of the standardised RMSR range from zero to one, and values less than .08 indicate an acceptable model fit.



**Figure 2: Meditational Model of personality, proactive behaviour, and adjustment**

The model appears to have provided an accurate estimate of adaptation. The standardised path coefficients from the latent variable adaptation to performance (beta = .54), integration (beta = .36), and political knowledge (beta = .42) suggested that these manifest indicators assessed a common underlying dimension. The model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in the mediating variable of proactive behaviour as well as the dependent variable of adjustment. Having established that the model has adequate fit, the critical information for evaluating mediation lies in the pattern of the coefficients relating personality, proactive behaviour, and adjustment. The standardised coefficients relating each personality

variable to proactive behaviour are shown in Table 6.19, while the standardised coefficients showing the direct effects of each personality variable, and proactive behaviour, on adjustment, are shown in Table 6.20. To the extent that proactive behaviour serves as a mediator, the following pattern of relationships should be found:

1. Proactive behaviour will be significantly related to adjustment
2. Personality variables will be related significantly to proactive behaviour
3. Personality variables will have a significant indirect effect on adjustment

If proactive behaviour serves as a strong mediator, then the direct pathways from a personality dimension to adjustment will not be significant, because the relationship between the personality dimension and adjustment is entirely mediated by proactive behaviour. Consistent with the mediational hypothesis, proactive behaviour is significantly related to adjustment, and openness is related significantly with proactive behaviour. However, conscientiousness is not related to proactive behaviour, and has significant direct effects on adjustment, indicating that the effects of this personality dimension are not mediated by proactive behaviour. Extraversion is not related significantly with proactive behaviour, and has no significant direct effects on adjustment. Cumulatively, this pattern of findings provides partial support for the mediational hypothesis. The effects of openness on adjustment appear to be at least partially mediated by proactive behaviour. However, conscientiousness relationship with adjustment was not mediated by proactivity.

Table 6.19: Standardised Coefficients relating personality to proactive behaviour

Predictor	Beta
Extraversion	.04
Conscientiousness	.08
Openness	.23*

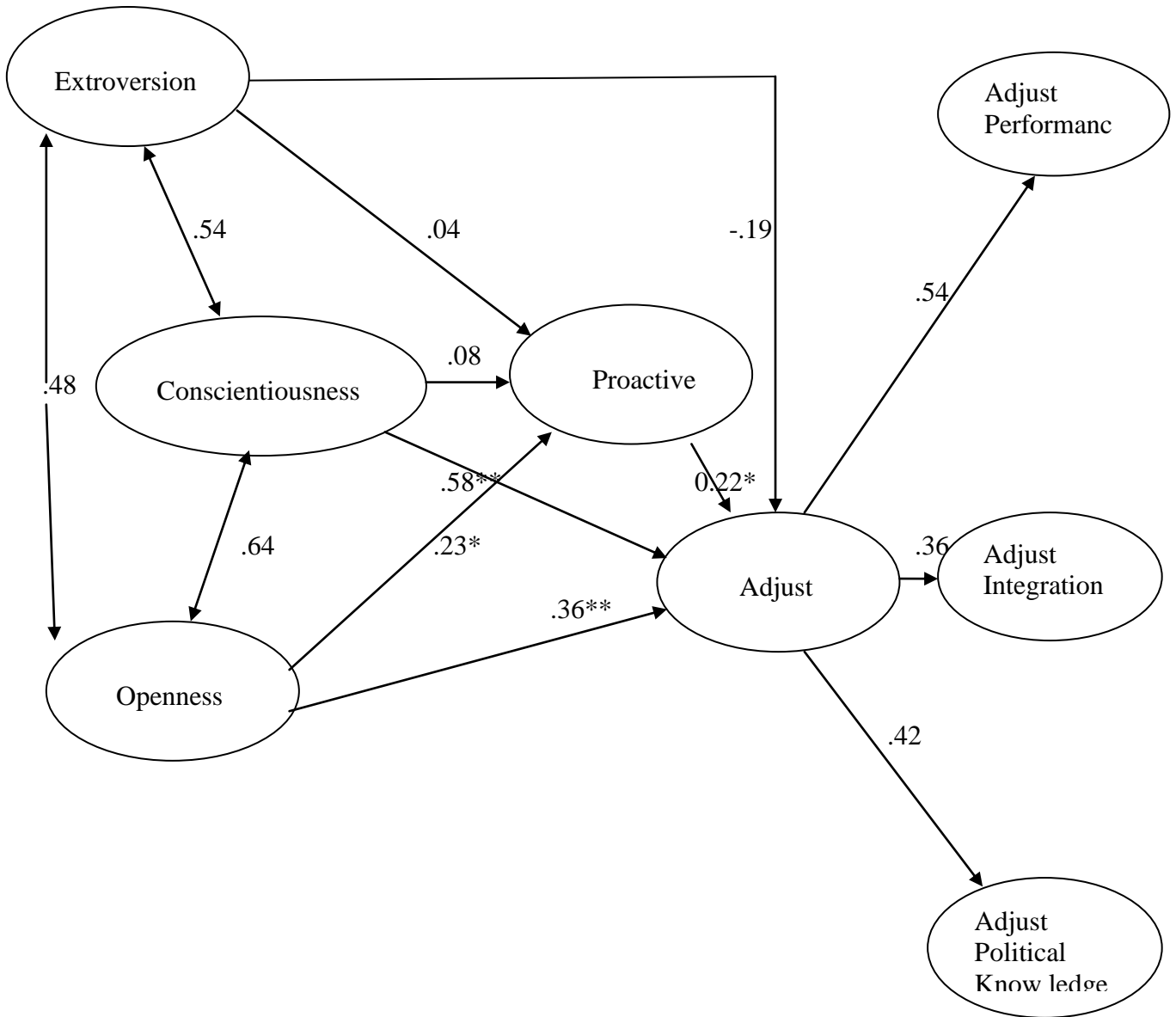
Note. \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 6.20: Standardised Coefficients relating proactive behaviour and the Direct (Unmediated) Effects of personality to adjustment

Predictor	Beta
Extraversion	-.19
Conscientiousness	.58 ***
Openness	.36 **
Proactive behaviour	.22*

Note. \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The major change suggested by the modification indices was a direct path from extraversion to integration. This path would imply that some of the unique variance in integration that is not shared with the other indicators of adjustment is predicted by extraversion. This path might represent the specific effect that sociability has on social integration.



Note. \*  $P < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Figure 3: Model showing standardised Estimate**

The software we are using to carry out the Structural Equation Modelling is Amos 7, which provides an estimate of indirect effects. Hypothesis 6 proposed that the relationships between adjustment and the personality dimensions extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness are mediated by proactive behaviour.

The following is the table of indirect effects (Table 6.21). The indirect effect of extraversion on adjustment is only .009. The indirect effects of conscientiousness on adjustment is only .014, and the indirect effect of openness on adjustment is 0 .151. These findings indicate that while proactive behaviour is related significantly to adjustment, and openness is related significantly to proactive behaviour, the indirect effect of openness on adjustment through proactive behaviour is not very high (15.1 % of the variance in adjustment is explained by these indirect effects).

Table 6.21: The indirect effect of selected traits on adjustment

Predictor	Openness	Conscientiousness	Extraversion	Proactive behaviour	Adjustment
Proactive behaviour	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Adjustment	.15*	.01	.00	.00	.00
Political Knowledge	.12	.14	-.05	.06	.00
Group Integration	.19	.22	-.08	.10	.00
Task Performance	.39	.48	-.17	.21	.00

Note: Note. \*  $P < .05$

This means that hypothesis 6 only receives support in the instance of openness (since extraversion and conscientiousness are not related to proactive behaviour). Therefore, it was concluded that a newcomer who is more open to experience is more likely to be well adjusted in his or her new work setting as measured by performing new tasks, integrating in the work group, and gaining the political knowledge of the organisation. This effect would be direct, and it is also seen in an indirect way through newcomer proactive behaviour.

### 6.6. Moderated Regression Model (H7:H9):

In this section the hypothesised moderating effect of socialisation efforts by the organisation, supervisor, and co-worker on personality traits as they relate to

adjustment outcomes were tested for H7:H9. This is the first study to examine such interaction, aiming to confirm that newcomers interact and are influenced differently by the different sources of socialisation based on their personality traits.

Recalling Hypothesis 7, extraversion has the strongest positive relation with task performance when organisation socialisation effort is high.

The researcher applied regression analysis to the interaction of the *standardised* extraversion and organisation socialisation to find out that this hypothesis was not supported: the two-way interaction between organisational socialisation and extraversion in the following regression is insignificant as per the following table.

Table 6.22: Moderated regression results: task performance

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	β	ΔF	p
1	Group Extraversion Organisation Socialisation	Task performance	0.15	.02	.02	.11 -.11	2.29	.10
2	Extraversion x Organisation Socialisation		0.16	0.02	.00	.03	.17	.67

*N* = 180 \**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

In other words, there is no statistically significant difference in the level of task performance for extravert newcomers when exposed to a high (rather than low) organisational socialisation effort.

Hypothesis 8 stated that conscientiousness has the strongest positive relation with task performance (H8a), group integration (H8b), and political knowledge (H8c), when leader socialisation effort is high.

This hypothesis was partially supported, since leaders' socialisation efforts will moderate conscientiousness as it relates, political knowledge (H8c), and group integration (H8b) ( $\beta=.15$ ,  $p=.05$ ,  $B= .18$ ,  $p=.01$ ) respectively, though it is not significant when it relates to task performance (H8a) ( $\beta=.07$ ,  $p=ns$ ).

Table 6.23 below represents the unsupported H8a. The results indicated that there was no significant interaction between conscientiousness and leader socialisation on task performance. In other words, the relationship between newcomer conscientiousness and the task performance adjustment outcome is independent and irrespective of leader socialisation influence, as the relationship exists whether the leader socialisation influence is low or high.

Table 6.23: Moderated regression results: task performance

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
1	Group Conscientiousness Leaders Socialisation	Task performance	0.41	.17	.17	.41** -.20	18.24	.00
2	Conscientiousness x Leaders Socialisation		0.41	0.17	.00	.07	1.01	.31

*N=180*, \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$



Table 6.24 indicated that there was significant interaction between conscientiousness and leader socialisation on group integration

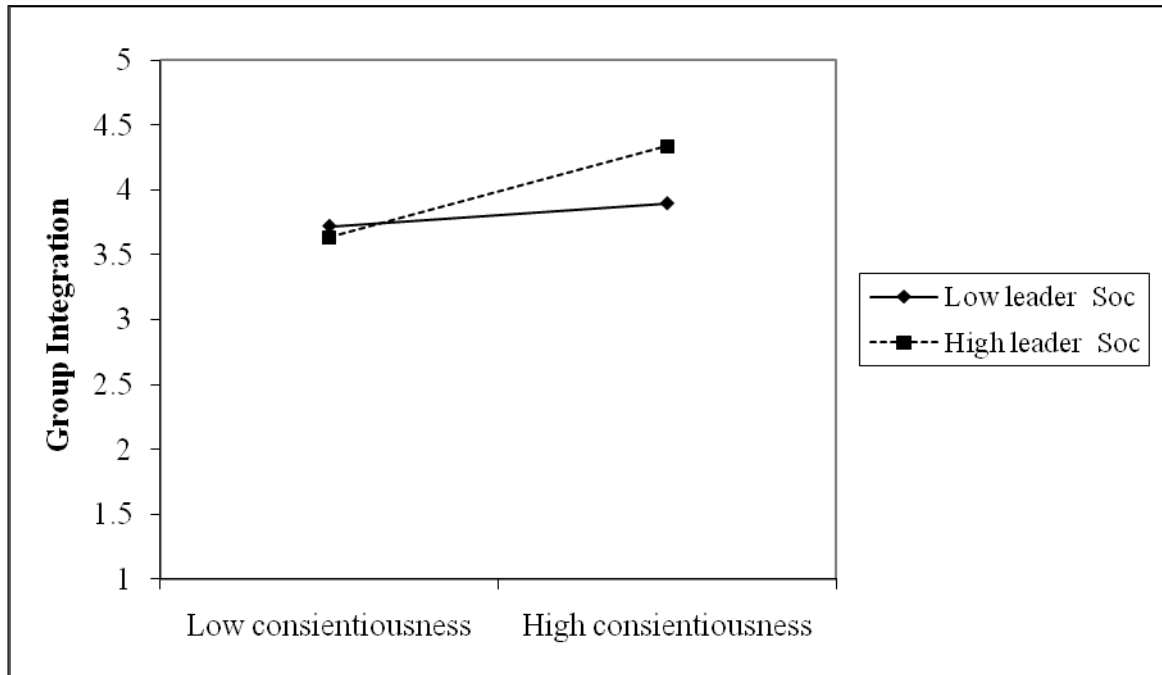
Table 6.24: Moderated regression results: Group integration

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	β	ΔF	<i>p</i>
1	Group Conscientiousness Leaders Socialisation	Group integration	0.40	.16	.16	.31** .19**	16.86	.00
2	Conscientiousness x Leaders Socialisation		0.43	0.19	.03	.18*	6.60	.01

*N* = 180 \**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

Post-hoc analyses were conducted and plotted and Figure 4 represents the plot of the interaction using the Jeremy Dawson website:

([www.Jeremydawson.co.uk/slopes.htm](http://www.Jeremydawson.co.uk/slopes.htm)).



**Figure 4: Two way interaction effect for the standardised variable.**

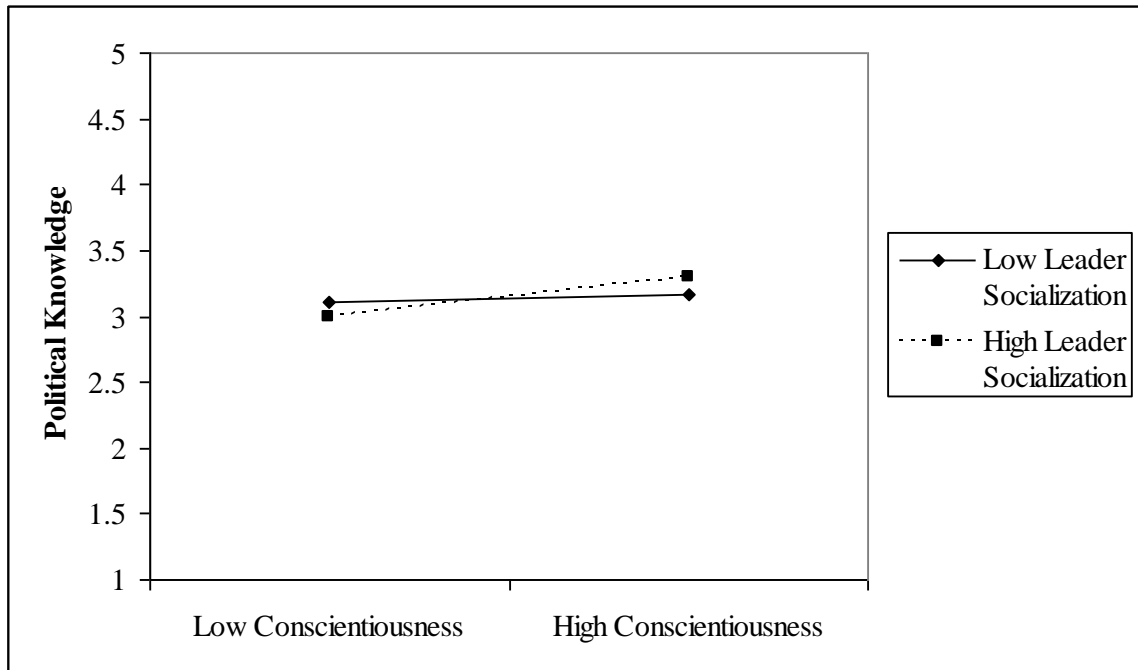
Results indicated that conscientiousness was associated with greater group integration when leader socialisation is also high.

**Table 6.25: Moderated regression results: Political knowledge**

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	β	ΔF	p
1	Group Conscientiousness Leaders Socialisation	Political knowledge	0.25	.06	.06	.23** .06	5.91	.00
2	Conscientiousness x Leaders Socialisation		0.29	.08	.02	.15*	4.09	.04

*N=180, \*p < .05 \*\*p < .01*

Figure 5 represents the post-hoc analysis plot of the interaction. The dependent variable is political knowledge. Conscientiousness was associated with greater Political Knowledge when Leader Socialisation is also high



**Figure 5: Two way interaction effect for the standardised variable**

Although both of these moderated relations (H8b, c) were statistically significant, the steeper interaction in Figure 4 compared to Figure 5 might suggest that the effect of leader socialisation was more influential on conscientiousness newcomer group integration than political knowledge of the organisation.

Hypothesis 9a stated that agreeableness has the strongest positive relation with group integration when Co-worker socialisation effort is high.

An examination of the nature of the interaction effects of co-worker on the relationship between agreeableness and group integration indicated that agreeableness had a

significant positive effect ( $\beta=.32, p=.00$ ) on group integration (Table 6.26). As shown in the same table, Co- worker socialisation influence also had a significant positive effect on group integration ( $\beta=.21, p=.00$ ), which indicated that the more co-worker socialization support employees receive, the more group integration they experience. However, the interaction between co-worker and agreeableness did not add to the prediction of group integration ( $\beta=.01, p=ns$ ).Co- worker socialisation influence did not moderate the relationship between agreeableness and group integration. Therefore, hypothesis 9a was not supported.

Table 6.26: Moderated regression results: group integration

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$	$\Delta F$	<i>p</i>
1	Group Agreeableness Co-worker Socialisation	Group integration	0.42	.18	.18	.32** .21**	19.51	.00
2	Agreeableness x Co-worker Socialisation		0.42	0.18	.00	.01	.018	.89

*N* = 180, \**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

H9b postulated that extraversion has the strongest positive relation with task performance when Co-worker socialisation effort is high.

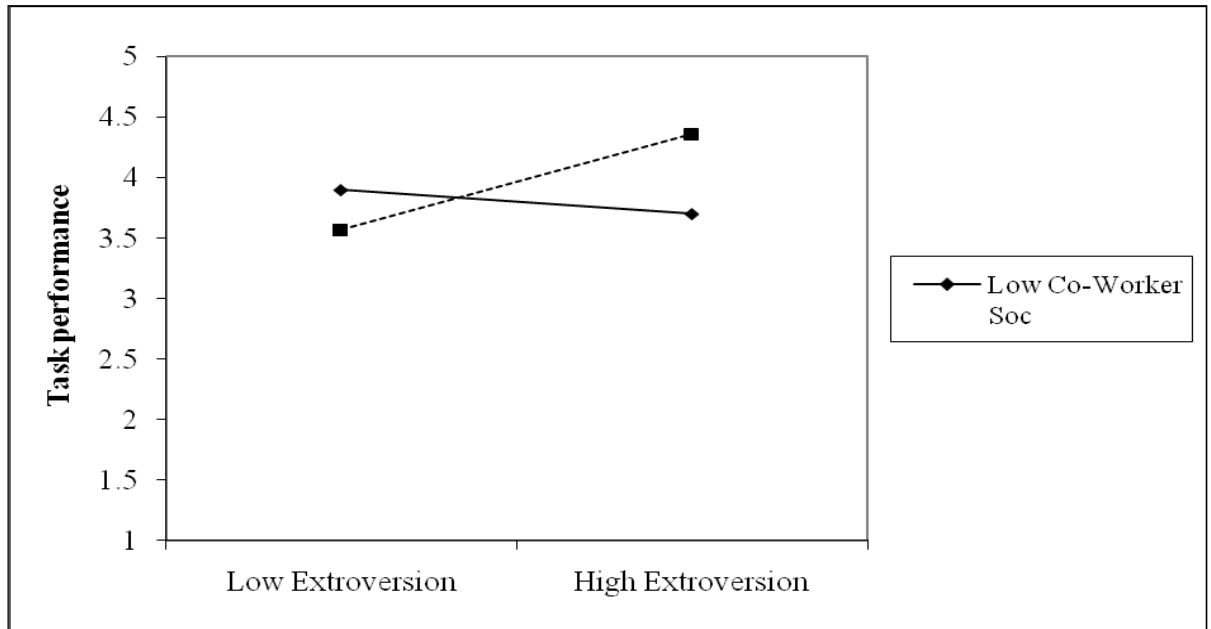
The results in Table 6.27 show that the interaction term between standardised extraversion and standardised co-worker socialisation explains significant amount of variance ( $\beta=.023, p<.05$ ), and so hypothesis 9b was supported. In other words, extraversion was associated with greater task performance when co-worker socialisation is also high.

Table 6.27: Moderated regression results: task performance

Block	Predictor	Outcome	R	R <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	β	ΔF	p
1	Group Extraversion Co-worker Socialisation	Task performance	0.13	.02	.02	.12 -.06	1.58	.20
2	Extraversion x Co-worker Socialisation		0.26	.07	.05	.23*	10.34	.00

*N* = 180, \**p* < .05 \*\**p* < .01

Unlike Hypothesis 7, where the interaction term between organisational socialisation and extraversion remain insignificant, the interaction term between extraversion and co-worker was significant in the current hypothesis (H9b). This indicates that extravert newcomer responded more favourably to co-worker socialisation influence than formal organisational socialisation influence as it relates to newcomer task performance.



**Figure 6:** Represents the plot of the two way interaction of the standardised variable.

The dependent variable is task performance. Extraversion was associated with greater task performance when co-worker socialisation is also high. Moreover, it is interesting that task performance might be affected negatively for high extrovert newcomer when he received a very low co-worker socialisation (Figure 6).

### 6.7. Respondent comments:

As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, a qualitative element represented by interviews of a sample of participants was added to the study design to augment and verify the quantitative results. The comments presented below were also drawn from four focus group sessions involving a limited number of participants. These narrative comments should not be taken as the results from a thorough application of qualitative research methodology rather; they illustrate some of the most salient points

from the analyses.

### **Comments regarding proactive behaviour**

Although comparatively few narrative comments regarding individual proactivity were mentioned in the surveys and focus groups, a small number of respondents did mention that they were primarily self-directed in their adjustment.

- “My experience has been that it is my responsibility to bring new things to the table rather than the employer to bring something to me. It could be my personality, but I am this way. My point of view that whatever organisation I am with, I feel loyalty to the customers, and maybe not so much the organisation as a whole.”

### **Comments regarding socialisation influence**

When organisational influence was present and positive, many respondents were positive about the organisation:

- “I think there have been some great activities this year organised by my colleagues that have made me feel part of the organisation. I felt immediately connected with this organisation”.

At the same time, and consistent with the theoretical predictions of the study, simply providing organisational socialisation did not necessarily translate into greater newcomer adjustment:

- “I know some departments take new people out and do things, but that identifies them to their department, not to the organisation. Even at orientation it’s one tiring day of filling out paperwork. I was made to feel that, “fill these forms out, and here’s some information about the policy, here’s your packet.”

It may be related to Bahraini culture, but one of the most consistent comments from newcomers related to the role their supervisor played in establishing a positive work environment:

- “Well, I know at my organisation that each department is its own entity, even every branch is different, and your experience is dependent on the leader of your department. My boss is very supportive and concerned that I knew who to talk to when I came here. I feel that I got a good orientation from him. So that was part of the expectations. There was little influence from the organisation, but he did set up appointments for me, who I should talk to, and that was very helpful. If that hadn’t happened I would have felt very frustrated.”
- “I have to say that my boss and my immediate workers have been phenomenal, in showing support and answering those questions when I truly needed it. I think what was so striking to me was that I came into a role that had been empty for many years. And I knew what needed to be done, and it didn’t take more than two weeks to successfully master my job tasks.”

However, there were also some highly negative comments about supervisors who did not fulfil the role newcomers expected them to fill in facilitating adjustment:

- “My manager did not have a clue what I should do, and did not even know what he was hiring me to do when I came in. I think the decision was mainly made by human resources department. What you need is a leader who knows the organisation and who has the knowledge to put you on track. And I think it’s not uncommon, a lot of people struggle that way. They come in with skills, and look forward for a good leader to show them which direction to go.”

The presence of co-workers who could assist newcomers with adjustment was frequently mentioned by respondents:

- “I was fortunate in that I had a colleague who was very supportive. So he was there with me every day for almost a month, which was a big help in figuring out who to call with a question about a particular topic. The key thing is to know who do you call and how to get things done in your new organisation. Organisation chart was there on the corner but you wouldn’t know these people if they were the right person to help you. No matter how well organisations try formally to plan an orientation for you, you have daily things that you deal with, that your staff expects you to have answers for, and you have no idea where to start. I think that my co-workers helped me a lot higher than the formal orientation program, and even more than my manager herself.”



- “I think I like my job because of the people that I’m working with in my assignment, and not because of my boss. We all work in the same area and understand each other’s needs and feed into each other very well, in fact, we are making an excellent team.”

### **Comments regarding outcomes of adjustment**

The separation of work and organisational domains has previously been treated in terms of theoretical constructs and survey results, but respondents also highlighted this distinction. Many respondents stated that their commitment was more task than organisation related:

- “Truly speaking, I did not focus on my supervisor or co-worker help, although they are fine. I love what I do. I love the challenges in what I do. And I work with this very committed group of individuals. As for me, the work is the work and that’s what I want to do. The organisation itself hasn’t had a lot to do with it.”
- “I think of myself as a professional, and the abilities, knowledge and skills I have are what I can bring to the organisation that I work for. I feel a sense of belonging to my organisation in that I’m responsible for developing software programs. But first are my background, training and professional experience, and then the organisation.”

On the other hand, some other respondents took the opposite position, and saw the organisation as a whole as their primary focus of commitment, their identification with their organisation can be noticed from their comments:

- “I identify with the employer because I do whatever it is needed for the organisation. I have my specific job that I’m producing few things, so I see more of a global goal and goal alignment than just what I do. So I think I work for a big multinational and that’s why I also think of my organisation in the big picture.”
- “I was everywhere as a freelancer for several years. Now that I actually work for a company, I can say, I work for this organisation. Now I actually identify myself proudly as a part of this organisation.”

## **6.8. Summary**

This chapter presented the results of the statistical analysis of the hypotheses. The relationship between personality traits and adjustment outcomes were tested using multiple hierarchical regression, the structural model was examined to specify the mediating relationships among constructs, and moderated regression was used to examine how the interaction between socialisation influence (co-worker, supervisor, organisation) and personality traits affect the newcomers' adjustment outcomes. Finally respondents' comments were presented.

The analysis supported ten hypotheses, nine fully and one partially. Detailed discussions of the hypothesis testing were included in this chapter. Table 6.28 presents a summary of the hypothesis testing results.

Table 6.28 Summary of Hypotheses Testing

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Results</b>
<i>H1a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to conscientiousness</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H1b:- Newcomer political knowledge will be positively related to conscientiousness.</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H1c:- Newcomer group integration will be positively related to conscientiousness.</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H2a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to openness to experience</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H2b:- Newcomer political knowledge will be positively related to openness to experience</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H3a:- Newcomer task performance is positively related to extraversion</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
<i>H3b:- Newcomers' group integration are positively related to extraversion</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H4:- Newcomer group integration is positively related to agreeableness</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H5a:-Newcomer task performance is negatively related to neuroticism</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H5b: Team group integration is negatively related to neuroticism</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H6:- The relationships between adjustment and the personality dimensions extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness are mediated by proactive behaviour</i>	<i>Partially Supported</i>
<i>H7: Organisational socialisation efforts will moderate the relationship between extraversion and task performance as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
<i>H8a: Leaders' socialisation efforts will moderate the relationship between conscientiousness and task performance as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
<i>H8b: Leaders' socialisation efforts will moderate the relationship between conscientiousness and group integration as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H8c: Leaders' socialisation efforts will moderate the relationship between conscientiousness and political knowledge as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Supported</i>
<i>H9a: Co-worker socialisation influence will moderate the relationship between agreeableness and group integration as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
<i>H9b:- Co-worker socialisation influence will moderate the relationship between extraversion and task performance as an adjustment outcome</i>	<i>Supported</i>

## CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Overview:

This study intended to add to the literature on adjustment and socialisation within organisations. Despite the number of studies that have been published on the topic of newcomers' adjustment, there are a number of limitations. First, adjustment research remains divided along a number of fronts. This seems to be a critical oversight of newcomer adjustment research because there is overlap in predictions involving these constructs, so relatively little is known about how the adjustment process work in tandem from studies which examine each component individually. This study extends previous research by examining these multiple antecedents as they relate to adjustment outcomes.

It is important to establish the antecedents and consequences of newcomer adjustment, in addition to the basic theoretical importance of understanding the factors that relate to individual differences and how these differences interact with socialisation influences. No published research has investigated the relationship between the Big Five Personality traits and socialisation influence on newcomers' adjustment outcomes. As such, this study was the first to inform this line of inquiry. Given the lack of research on these important questions, this study will contribute to adjustment research by examining how newcomer Big Five personality traits (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) interact with the different sources of socialisation influence (organisation formal programmes, supervisor, and co-workers) during the adjustment process.

Also, this study examined the Big Five Personality Traits as antecedents of proactive behaviour and the mediating role of proactive behaviour in the adjustment process were investigated in order to build on recent research findings. The methodology employed was a quantitative research method using SEM, hierarchical multiple and moderated regression. Using SEM, adjustment was modelled as a latent variable so, it have provided an overview of the pathways relating personality, proactive behaviour, and adjustment, and tested the significance of the coefficients relating these constructs. Moreover, it provided indices of the goodness of fit of the mediational model, and other alternative models to the observed data.

A hierarchical multiple regression design was applied because of the need to determine the amount of variance accounted for by each of the predictor variables (Creswell, 2003). This method was the most appropriate research method due to the need to analyse multiple factors, the use of well-defined variables, and also because statistical analyses using analysis of variance and regression were provided (Neuman, 2007). An explanatory nature was used in order to investigate the extent to which the variance of one variable would exert an influence on the other variables, for example as per H5, the correlation between neuroticism and task performance was negative, and attained significance when background variables were controlled. The use of a multiple regression design aided in the development of new knowledge, generating questions, and forming hypotheses that could be used to inform further research (Walker, 2005).

To summarise, the major findings were that relationships between adjustment indicators and the personality dimension openness are mediated by proactive behaviour. Conscientiousness was positively related to proximal adjustment indicator

(task performance, group integration, and apolitical knowledge). Openness to experience was related to task performance. Group integration was independently related to agreeableness and extraversion. Leader socialisation will moderate conscientiousness as it relates to political knowledge of the organisation and group integration, while co-worker moderate extraversion as it relates to task performance.

This chapter reviews the hypotheses for this study and provides a summary of the findings as described in Chapter 6. In addition, it discusses the implications of the results and conclusions of the research. Lastly it comments on the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.

## **7.2. Implication:**

The focus of this study was on organisational, not occupational socialisation. They are different types of adjustment, for example, learning to practise as an accountant is different from learning to work for a new auditing firm. Learning accountancy is a generic process in that everyone needs to acquire the same general body of knowledge, but working for a new firm involves adhering to new group norms, interacting effectively with peers, and supervisors in order to adjust to the new work place. The following sections examine the different implications of the results towards the antecedents, mediators, moderators, and adjustment outcomes.

### **7.2.1 Implication for the Antecedents of Adjustment:**

#### **Personality traits → adjustment (H1:H5):**

This research revealed evidence that the Big Five personality model can be applied to newcomer adjustment in organisations. Although previous studies have

typically focused on other relationships regarding the Big Five, this study has demonstrated that the Big Five personality traits can be empirically investigated in regard to the relationship that exists between these personality variables and newcomer adjustment in organisations. Therefore, the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and newcomer adjustment is worthy of future investigation.

Newcomer task performance was positively related to conscientiousness and openness to experience and negatively related to neuroticism. Conscientiousness has been described as the will to achieve (Smith, 1967). Those high in conscientiousness tend to show signs of dependability, thoroughness, and responsibility. These results provide support for these ideas regarding conscientiousness by showing that those high on this trait demonstrated high degrees of newcomer task performance. These results replicate research that has shown conscientiousness has a positive effect on job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991). However, the marginally significant impact of neuroticism on task performance required a careful explanation. Since meta-analysis of the relationship between neuroticism and job performance indicated mixed results based on occupation and criterion type (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Moreover, neuroticism was not linked to *willingness* to adapt to new environment as are the other personality dimensions of openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (McCrea & Costa, 1987).

One possible explanation of the relationship in the current study is that the trait of neuroticism accentuates stress or inhibits coping with it effectively (Nasurdin, Ramayah & Kumaresan, 2005) and new situations can be stressful. For example, in a

study of manipulated workload levels to test Eysenck's theory of neuroticism by examining individuals' differential responses to the stress individuals higher in neuroticism evidenced lower performance in the low-to-high workload condition than individual lower in neuroticism (Cox-Fenzalida et al, 2004).

The negative relationship between neuroticism and group integration seems more fairly straightforward as some of the items on the neuroticism scale are related to health, bodily concerns and social withdrawal (Baskin, 1995). This finding is also consistent with Barrick & Stewart (1998) previous findings that emotional stability was negatively associated with team viability through social cohesion.

Conscientiousness was also significantly related to other adjustment outcomes, namely political knowledge of the organisation and group integration. This finding extended the generalisability of a recent research found that significant correlations between the conscientiousness and knowledge sharing within teams of an engineering company (Matzler et al, 2007) to the political knowledge of the organisations. The current research finding that openness is associated with interest in political knowledge of organisation is consistent with recent work that shows openness is positively associated with participation in a variety of political activities, from contacting public officials to attending meetings (Gerber et al. 2010b; Mondak et al. 2010). Thus, it appears that the Big Five trait of openness is at least part of the reason why some people both (1) express an interest in and follow politics and (2) actively participate in politics in the organisation as well as general politics.



The significant relation of conscientiousness with group integration also matches with Barrick et al's (2000) findings that hiring applicants who are more conscientiousness will result in employees that are also likely to be responsible and helpful to others at work. Newcomer group integration was also significantly related to agreeableness and extraversion. These results provide support for research that has positively linked agreeableness with overall job proficiency and job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991 & 1993). In addition, these results provide support to those demonstrating a relationship between agreeableness and cross cultural adjustment (Abe & Wiseman, 1983). In general, people who are concerned about others also tend to cooperate with them, help them out, and trust them (Ewen, 1998). It seems that this trait allows individuals who are high on this personality dimension to integrate effectively and satisfactorily into new group settings on their jobs. The current results agree with findings demonstrating higher commitment among those with stronger friendship networks (Morrison, 2005). The relationship between openness to experience and group integration was significant, although it was not hypothesized. It could be argued that newcomers who score high in openness are more likely to be exposed to new experience including sharing other employees' interest and integrate with them. Moreover, this finding might be explained by the newcomers' Emotional Intelligence ability. Day & Carroll (2004) found that the correlations between the Emotional Intelligence (EI) subscales and the personality scales were low or non-significant, however, openness to experience was the only personality scale that was related to all four EI subscales (rs ranged from 0.13 to 0.23, all significant at  $p < 0.05$ ). Since EI predicted successful interpersonal interaction in some research, for example, group's

civic virtue and sportsmanship ( Day & Carroll, 2004), self-reports, peer nominations of interpersonal sensitivity, prosocial tendencies, the proportion of positive versus negative peer nominations, and reciprocal friendship nominations (Lopes et al., 2005), then, the relationship between openness to experience and group integration might be expected. It should be noted that the concept of an ability-based EI is promising, but more evidence for its validity is needed before any definitive conclusions regarding its merit can be drawn

Organisations may find that attempts to encourage cooperation and coordination within work groups will spill over into a greater desire to fit with the organisation as a whole. Although the moderating influence of co-workers was not statistically significant in H9a, however, the results support the idea that group integration is more positively related to co-worker influence than organisation or leader influence, so, efforts to improve integration should concentrate on allowing opportunities for experienced co-workers to interact with newcomers. This also will influence newcomer task performance as in H9b.

Training co-workers to be peer mentors may also be a useful method for improving social integration and task performance for newcomers. An interesting possibility related to these results is the fit of the work group with the organisation as a whole. In the case where a work group is seen as organisational outsiders, or who have a climate opposed to the organisation, it may be that increased group integration will decrease commitment.

Jones (1986) found that whereas organisational pressures to conform are effective on the whole in encouraging newcomers to accept the job role as it is presented, those who are higher in self-efficacy and have a strong sense of what they want from a job are less likely to succumb to these pressures. Evidence that applicants try to find organisations that match their dispositions in the recruiting process further supports this point of view (Judge & Cable, 1997). These interactions demonstrate how individual dispositions can lead to behaviours that stimulate fit and adjustment. Based on these empirical findings, it is recommended that research continue to delineate the specific personality characteristics that are related to certain job descriptions.

Organisations may find that the administration of personality surveys early during the selection process may be useful, either to select those who have higher levels of the above hypothesised traits (Conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness) to identify individuals who may need more assistance in adjustment because they are less proactive.

#### **Traits-→Proactive Behaviour→Adjustment (H6):**

Proactive behaviour was significantly related to adjustment outcomes and openness was significantly related to proactive behaviour. As hypothesized, proactive behaviour mediated the relationship between adjustment and openness. Over the past two decades, the focus of organisational socialisation research has shifted, changing from a primary concern with the influence of organisational actions on newcomers' adjustment through to investigating the effects of individual newcomer actions and perceptions, and in particular newcomer information acquisition ( Bauer, Morrison, &

Callister, 1998; Morrison, 1993b; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). This research demonstrates that proactive behaviour can be considered to have an influence on adjustment. However, there has been little research integrating these two approaches (Bauer et al, 1998) and these results suggests that research regarding this line of inquiry should continue to be investigated.

This is the first study to mainly demonstrate that an individual disposition to take action can be a useful resource for enhancing adjustment in work organisations, although results by Chan and Schmitt (2000) and Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg (2003) also point to this result. The results of the present study are consistent with results showing that proactive efforts by newcomers can enhance task knowledge and social relationships (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Wanberg & Kammeyer Mueller, 2000). The relationship between proactive behaviour and political knowledge further shows that proactive newcomers improve their career success through interpersonal means. Seibert & Kraimer, (2001) have demonstrated a similar relationship between proactive behaviour and political knowledge in a sample of more established workers. This study extends these findings by showing this relationship also holds for organisational newcomers.

It was hypothesised that conscientiousness individuals will be more likely to demonstrate proactive behaviour, because of the underlying tendency of these individuals to be responsible and achievement oriented. The results, however, showed no significant relation between conscientiousness and proactive behaviour. This is commensurate with the findings of the only study which examined the relation of conscientiousness and information seeking (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

The finding that those individuals who are high in conscientiousness did not demonstrate proactive behaviour is likely to be due to these individuals' concurrent tendency to be self-reliant, to be self-confident, and to expect success in the situations they are placed in (cf. Hough, 1992; Martocchio & Judge, 1997; Barrick & Mount, 1995). Given that the very limited number of studies examining the Big Five in relation to socialisation behaviours, further analysis of the role of conscientiousness would be interesting and informative, especially given that conscientiousness was directly related to all adjustment outcomes variables studied, and even those variables such as extraversion and conscientiousness that did not show significance in relation to proactive behaviour in this study may have other important roles in the socialisation experience of newcomers as a predictor of adjustment outcomes as proven in hypothesis 1 through hypothesis 5.

As noted earlier, organisations may find that the administration of surveys early during the selection process may be useful, either to select those who have higher levels of proactivity or to identify individuals who may need more assistance in adjustment because they are less proactive. However, other well-known personality traits might be diagnosed as well, for example, conscientiousness and agreeableness have both been described as indicators of conformity, socialised power orientation, and willingness to change to meet established norms (Hogan & Ones, 1997; Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997). As integrity includes both agreeableness and conscientiousness dimensions, newcomers who are high in integrity may imitate others and adopt existing norms to facilitate their own adjustment as an alternative to the more proactive orientation. Core self-evaluations could also reflect a tendency to actively respond to the process of

organisational entry (Erez & Judge, 2001; Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997), and might serve to produce a different pattern of role adjustment than the relatively conformist pattern predicted by integrity.

### **7.2.2. Implication for the Moderating Effect of Socialisation Influence:**

#### **Personality traits \* Socialisation influence → Adjustment (H7:H9):**

The sources of socialisation influence examined in this study were less consistently related to work outcomes than were the characteristics of newcomers, which was consistent with the goals and resources available to socialisation influences. The reduced form coefficients also suggest that socialising influences have a weaker effect on most outcomes than the characteristics of newcomers. This adds further to a controversial topic in the entry literature which sometimes finds newcomer characteristics are the dominant predictors of outcomes (e.g., Laker & Steffy, 1995) but at other times finds they have weak effects (Saks & Ashforth, 2000).

Previous research on the topic of organisational socialisation has suggested that those in leadership positions are likely to provide some of the most important socialisation outcomes (e.g., Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Bauer & Green, 1998; Morrison, 2005; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). This study showed that conscientiousness and political knowledge was moderated by leader socialisation. Those in influential positions may exert a unique influence on role adjustment and personal integration. Unlike the organisation as a whole, leaders can establish more personalised relationships, which is a critical resource for interpersonal influence. In

order to be an effective leader, research has shown that leaders need to embody certain characteristics that are amenable to leadership and one of these characteristics may be conscientiousness. In addition, in order to integrate within groups at a level that is influential, individuals must obtain a certain measure of political knowledge in order to be knowledgeable regarding the goals, values, and structures of a specific organisation (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992). Once this knowledge has been obtained, leader socialisation may occur more easily and effectively.

Co-worker influence was almost exclusively related to group integration however, the hypotheses regarding a moderating relationship between co-worker influence and agreeableness (H9a) were not supported. These results may appear to conflict with recent theories arguing that co-worker socialisation is critical (Moreland & Levine, 2001) and empirical studies showing newcomers proactively seek more information from co-workers than from any other source (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). However, the mean of co-worker socialisation in this sample were also much higher than mean levels of other socialisation influences. It should be borne in mind that the results suggest variability in co-worker influence levels may not be a significant predictor of several outcomes even though all respondents did agree that co-worker influence was important. This was also reinforced on the feedback of the focus group.

Moreover, co-worker socialisation influence moderated the relation between extraversion and task performance (H9b). An interesting finding is that that task performance might be negatively affected for high extrovert newcomers that receive a very low co-worker socialisation (figure 6). The current results agree with findings demonstrating that extraversion is bivariately related to contextual performance in a

team setting, with extraversion, and teamwork knowledge incrementally predicting contextual performance (Morgeson et al, 2005). These findings emphasise the importance of training co-workers to be peer mentors which may also be a useful method for improving adjustment and performance.

A possibility suggested by the heterogeneity within organisations regarding affluence of socialising agents is a more detailed examination of the specific socialisation activities taking place at the work group level of the organisation. Future studies should begin to examine the antecedents of socialisation influence. Theoretical grounding for the persuasion resources available to various sources of influence was derived from the literature on attitude change and persuasion (Wood, 2000) for this study, but there are many more implications regarding how influence might be developed or used that have yet to be explored. In this study, feedback from focus group highlighted the importance of leaders' and co-workers' ability to clarify role, answer newcomers' questions, and showing them support. However, research has done little to examine how leaders and members of the work group influence newcomers.

Within-person patterns of socialising influence could also reveal important relationships between newcomer goals, resources of work group members, and influence. Within-person research has already demonstrated that newcomers seek information based on their expectations for the cost and benefits of obtaining that information (Morrison & Vancouver, 2000), but it is not clear what characteristics of leaders and work group members influence newcomer perceptions of the costs and benefits. The use of other socialising influences might also be examined. For example, some previous research has explored the use of agents within the organisation as



opposed to outside of the organisation in the socialisation process (Settoon & Adkins,1997). Organisations may also be well that served by ensuring supervisors and co-workers, who are providing socialisation information, are well trained for this role. Peer and supervisory mentoring programs are one potential mechanism to leverage the existing patterns of socialisation to greater effect.

### **7.2.3 Implication for Adjustment Outcomes:**

#### **Group integration**

The current results agree with findings demonstrating higher commitment among those with greater knowledge regarding their work group's functioning (Ostroff & Kozlowski,1992) or stronger friendship networks (Morrison, 2002). Organisations may find that attempts to encourage cooperation and coordination within work groups will spill over into a greater desire to fit with the organisation as a whole. Because results support the hypothesis that group integration is more positively related to co-worker influence than organisation or leader influence, efforts to improve integration should concentrate on allowing opportunities for experienced co-workers to interact with newcomers. Training co-workers to be peer mentors may also be a useful method for improving social integration for newcomers. An interesting possibility related to these results is the fit of the work group with the organisation as a whole. In the case where a work group is seen as organisational outsiders, or who have a climate opposed to the organisation, it may be that increased group integration will decrease commitment.

### **Political knowledge**

Knowledge regarding the political domain of work was not related to organisational socialisation influence but mainly influenced by newcomer conscientiousness (H2b) and the moderating role of leader socialisation influence (H8c). Conscientiousness individuals are positively regarded by others as intelligent and reliable (Costa & McCrae, 1992), so supervisors and other senior colleagues might feel comfortable sharing sensitive political knowledge of the organization. Those who understand how informal decisions are made may not necessarily have a more positive view of organisational functioning and may not work any harder, but usually senior employees. However, political knowledge may be related to other positive outcomes for newcomers after longer periods of time in accord with Seibert & Kraimer, (2001) who found that political knowledge was positively related to salary progression and career satisfaction. Latent growth models exploring the relationship between political knowledge and the trajectory of salary over time would be informative in this regard.

### **Task performance:**

One of the findings of this study that newcomer who score high in neuroticism will have a low task performance. The relation was marginally significant ( $P=0.07$ ) but when it was checked after control variables were applied it became more significant ( $P=0.05$ ).

This finding is consistent with earlier research, for example where employees with high neuroticism scores tend to respond more poorly to environmental stress, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as

hopelessly difficult (Aamodt, 2005). Moreover, research showed that intercultural social self-efficacy and sociocultural adaptation were negatively related to neuroticism (Mak & Tran, 2001); (Ward, Chan-Hoong & Low, 2004). Emotional stability was the dominant influence on withdrawal for expatriates (Shaffer et al, 2006). This is congruent with Caligiuri's (2000) findings that emotionally unstable expatriates reported being more likely to harbour intentions of leaving assignments prematurely.

This study contributed to research on expatriate adjustment by extending the findings of cross cultural adjustment on a domestic work transition as part of the expatriates' adaptation process.

Overall effort intensity enhanced performance for highly anxious individuals more so than for individuals with low anxiety (Simille et al., 2006). The organisation which examines newcomers' traits upon hiring them needs to give special attention on newcomers who score high in neuroticism, may be by advising and training of their leaders on the best way to deal with them to promote their adjustment and task performance.

#### **7.2.4. Other Proximal Adjustment Outcomes:**

There are a number of potential alternative proximal outcomes that were not examined in this study. In particular, alternative newcomer goals should be taken into consideration. Because of the importance of uncertainty reduction in several theories (Ashforth & Saks, 1997a; Louis, 1980; Saks, 1996; Wanous, 1992), direct examination of newcomer stress levels as a proximal outcome seems especially relevant. Other research suggests that finding organisation that matches newcomer values is a desired

outcome, so learning how agreement with organisational values is shaped through socialisation processes should receive greater attention (Bauer et al, 1998; Cable & Parsons, 2001).

Research generally suggests that the values of adults are well established, and it is not likely that a brief orientation session or training experience will fundamentally change newcomer positions on what is valued (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978). Thus, it seems that organisations may succeed in obtaining values congruence by convincing newcomers that the organisation does represent values held in common by newcomers. In other words, orientation sessions may improve newcomer perceptions of values congruence by persuading the newcomers that the organisation represents values the newcomers already believe in, rather than persuading newcomers to accept values they do not currently accept. As noted previously, the inclusion of organisational trust and support might also help to explain how socialisation can improve newcomer adjustment.

Some research examined role clarity as an adjustment outcome, for example, role demand (Feldman, 1981), acquisition of appropriate role behaviour (Reichers, 1987) while this study looked at it as a “barrier to entry” rather than an outcome in today’s well defined organisational expectations, responsibilities, and priorities which would stop the wrong people from entering an organisation and save time, and effort expended during the acclimatisation process.

In general, there is the challenge of systematically identifying the antecedents, correlates and consequents of the different aspects of the intra-individual changes that occur in the newcomer adaptation process. In addition to the variables examined in the

present study, examples include antecedents of change such as problem solving styles, correlates of change, such as increase in job knowledge, changes in expectations about the job, social acceptance, and changes in peer or supervisor-subordinate relations and consequents of change including proximal adaptation outcomes such as subjective well-being and job attitudes and how these are affected if an individual moves to a different sub-unit in the hierarchy. Details of how the basic latent growth model can be extended to perform the multiple-group, multiple indicator, cross-domain, and mediation analyses are available (Muthen and Curran, 1997). Moreover, would a payoff from adjustment and continue (or a pay check in a job) count as part of newcomer acclimatisation to being a part of the organisation? For example, some employees might be negotiating with their potential employer “If I am completely successful in achieving your ideal for this position, what will that look like in a year?” That is technically outside the realm of "socialisation," but it is still relevant to newcomers. I think it does factor in, though, in that a newcomer will feel competent when he or she successfully earned a certain amount of whatever incentive there is to offer (self-efficacy).

#### **7.2.5. Theoretical Implications of this Study**

As noted in the introduction of this study, previous research investigated either the influence of newcomers' characteristics (Louis, 1980; Nicholson, 1984; Wanous, 1992), or newcomer proactivity (Jones, 1983; Miller & Jablin, 1991). Other researches emphasize organisations' use of formal socialisation tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1992). Still others suggest adjustment arises primarily through

interpersonal communications between newcomers and established members of the organisation such as leaders and co-workers (Moreland & Levine, 2001; Reichers, 1987; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). The conceptual model developed in the study emphasis the role of newcomer personality traits as an overlooked newcomer characteristics, it linked certain trait (i.e. openness) to newcomer proactive behaviour which in turn was related to all proximal adjustment outcomes, and incorporated and examined the interaction between the newcomer personality traits and different sources the socialization influence, i.e., by organization, supervisors, and co-workers. It is hoped that the current study enhanced our understanding of how the adjustment process works in tandem by linking previously separated lines of research on newcomer adjustment in the same conceptual model based on extensive theoretical & empirical review, and thus, built up on various adjustment theories.

Matching with trait theories of personality, the current study revealed that newcomer personality traits predict newcomers' adjustment. The current research findings build up on existing adjustment theories. For example, sense making theory which stipulates that individuals cognitively experience and react to socialising forces differently depending on individual attributes (e.g., Louis, 1980; Jones, 1983). Also, Interpersonal behaviour theory (interactive), which recognise that individuals differ in how they communicate with organisation members (Moreland & Levine, 2001). Moreover, it build up on the trait activation theory, for example, Tett and Burnett's (2003) trait activation theory clarifies the mechanisms through which personality is linked to job performance and explains why personality trait measures show situational

specificity in predictive validity (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991, Tett, et al., 1991; Hough, Ones, & Viswesvaran, 1998). Trait activation holds that personality traits are expressed in response to trait-relevant situational cues (Haaland & Christiansen, 2002; Tett & Guterman, 2000) operating at the task (e.g., day to-day tasks and duties), social (e.g., co-worker expectations, team functions, norms), and organisational (e.g., climate, culture) levels. Adjustment outcomes in the current study (i.e. task performance, group integration) are conceived as trait expression that meets work and social demands at each level. Workers gain intrinsic reward through trait expression per se, and extrinsic reward when trait expressions are valued positively by the organisation, and other members (i.e. supervisors & co-workers). Thus, newcomer adjustment is highest when the work situation (in terms of tasks, co-workers, and the organization as a whole) offers cues and influence for positively valued trait expression.

The study also revealed that proactive behaviour is linked to all proximal adjustment outcomes. This finding matches with proactivity theory that newcomers are proactive in bringing about their own socialisation (e.g., Morrison, 1993a, 1993b, Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Moreover, proactive behaviour mediated the relation between personality trait openness and all proximal adjustment outcomes, openness also predicted proactive behaviour. This finding might be interesting to proactive behaviour researcher as it added to research that examined various antecedents of proactive behaviour. For example, some research focused up on forms of work motivation as predictor of proactive behaviour, as role breadth self-efficacy, role

orientation (Ohly & Fritz, 2007). The current study suggested that also some personality trait can predict proactive behaviour.

In sum, the current study considered various theories e.g., traits theory of personality, trait activation theory, adjustment theories (i.e., sense making, interpersonal behaviour), and proactivity theory in addition to previous empirical findings to build and examine a unique model that treat newcomer as active part in the socialisation process, who have a specific traits that interact with other sources of influence to facilitate the newcomer adjustment process.

#### **7.2.6. Practical Implications of this Study**

From a practical perspective, this study provides a framework for organisations to increase understanding of the complexity of the newcomer adaptation process which in turn should help identify organisational practices and interventions that would facilitate newcomer adaptation. It also provides organisations with some indication about where to focus and what they should do in terms of providing the conducive environment and supportive members to achieve different outcomes. Implications for practice must be tempered with some considerations. The first consideration is that increased attention to individual dispositional characteristics may cause effects to be exaggerated or suppressed. The second consideration is the managers' ability to assess newcomer personality traits. The last consideration is the ethical implications of incorporating personality characteristics in hiring decisions. It is argued here that organisations should focus on utilising newcomers' trait information to better



anticipate and help the newcomer adjustment process through the design of specific programs using different sources of socialisation influences rather than basing hiring decisions on candidate personality traits. Organisations should be educated on the time-sensitive and multifaceted nature of newcomer proactivities and adaptation outcomes. Instead of asking undifferentiated questions on whether a newcomer is proactive or adapted, organisations should be sensitised to recognise the specific proactive behaviour or adaptation outcome in question and the associated intra-individual changes that occur over the transition period.

The adaptation of newcomers could be monitored during the transition process and compared to the relevant basic change trajectory that best describes most newcomers, for example, with respect to information of the technical type. The present results indicate that conscientiousness newcomers tend to maintain a relatively higher level of socialisation influence from supervisors, they tend to receive lower influence from co-workers over the transition period. Conscientiousness newcomers who continue to maintain a constant high level of influence from co-worker may be experiencing difficulties integrating in work groups (H8b,c). Unlike extravert newcomer who will be better adjusted in the new work setting and have a better task performance when receiving high socialisation influence from co-worker.

With respect to information of the referent type, managers need to make changes to newcomer's proactive behaviour; to make the referent, relational and appraisal information easily accessible. Organisations might provide the referent information on line. Appraisal information is provided by means of leader boards, ranking, etc. Relational information can be presented using tools like voting, thank you

points, comments, etc. These three classes of information could reduce uncertainty of newcomers about their role in the organisation; by providing clarity and social acceptance amongst peers.

Given the findings regarding the moderation role of supervisors and co-workers, it is recommended that these interaction opportunities be encouraged by employers through orientations, mentoring programs, social events, and other programmes that encourage interaction among employees. Future studies can build upon this research by expanding the measurement and examination of these constructs.

The present results indicate that proactive newcomers tend to demonstrate better task performance as an adjustment outcome. This is consistent with Katz's (1980) suggestion that, with increasing time in the organisation, newcomers become more concerned with performance evaluation. Thus, it is important for supervisors to be aware that it is a norm when a newcomer increases in the extent of proactive behaviour like information seeking (from supervisors) on performance expectations or evaluation and not to attribute this increase in referent information seeking to some adaptation difficulties experienced by the newcomer.

In addition to the knowledge about the basic nature of the intra-individual change, it is also important to be cognisant of the inter-individual differences that may exist for a given proactive behaviour or adaptation outcome. For example there is some evidence that individuals with lower rates of adjustment as indicated by task performance tend to be newcomers who are females, and those who have higher GPA scores. Knowing the profile of newcomers who are more likely to have a lower rate

of increase in a particular adaptation outcome could help organisations identify and select different target groups for different interventions to facilitate adaptation. Note that without knowledge about the specific newcomer proactivity and adaptation in question including the associated nature of the intra-individual changes and inter-individual differences in these changes, it is difficult, if not impossible for supervisors and more generally organisations to identify unusual difficulties experienced by individual newcomers and effective methods of problem resolution before the difficulties lead to poor adaptation outcomes.

### **7.3. Limitations and other Future Directions:**

There is a wealth of research examining organisational socialisation. Many factors and facets have been considered but this study was the first to extend this research into examining the Big Five personality variables in relation to various socialisation outcomes. Other researchers have begun to combine approaches in order to derive the most plausible explanation of factors that contribute to newcomer socialisation within organisations. For example, Thomas and Anderson (2002) combined approaches from information acquisition theories and organisational socialisation. In a similar manner to this study, they examined whether information acquisition would mediate the “effect of perceptions of organisational socialisation tactics on socialisation outcome measures of newcomer attitudes” (p. 423). To do so, they examined Army recruits during their initial weeks of training. The results from their analysis demonstrated support for their mediational hypothesis. Specifically, information acquisition was found to mediate the relationship between organisational

socialisation and newcomer attitudes (Thomas & Anderson, 2002). This study was comprised of a combined approach as well. It may be that the best way to explain newcomer adjustment is through investigations that allow for the examination of integrated theories.

This study had a number of methodological advantages over most of the previous studies in the area of organisational adjustment. While other studies have had elements of the research design employed here, the combination of a multi-wave, multi-organisation design with a sample of newcomers who were heterogeneous with respect to occupation and experience is a distinction between this study and previous research. However, a number of caveats are in order in interpreting these results;

1) Common method bias concerns; The data was self-reported in nature, given that the current research, like many other organisation research, concerns the perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of people in organisations. One problem with self-reported measures is that participants may be unable or unwilling to accurately assess the situation, to accurately report their attitude; and behaviours, and to answer thoughtfully and carefully enough to assess fine distinctions among constructs. Measures recommended as alternatives to self-reports are often nothing more than self-reports from other sources, such as senior managers, supervisors, peers, or subordinates (Edward, 2008). Such measures might help address concerns about common method variance, but they depend on the same psychological processes that influence self-reports obtained from the focal respondent (Edward, 2008). Furthermore, in this study, like other newcomer adjustment studies, the newcomer proactive behaviour variable, and personality variables require that a newcomer judges his or her behaviour generally

or over a specific period of time. In fact, many of the constructs we wish to measure reside in the mind of the focal respondent, and for such constructs, self-reports are arguably the best source of data (Spector, 1994). For instance, if we want to assess how a newcomer feels integrated with his/ her group, it is doubtful that anyone other than the respondent could give a legitimate response.

The simple presence of common method variance does not necessarily bias results (Doty & Glick, 1998). However, the common method bias was addressed in the current research by first, checking the design and validity of measures as explained in details in chapter five, and second, separating the measures in the study by three months in time over three time waves. This longitudinal design tends to decrease the bias of having a respondent answer questions at one point in time. Overtime, the bias from using the common method faded out. The time lag between the T1, T2, and T3 surveys should reduce any self-report bias associated with the relationships between the newcomer attributes and the other variables in the model. Third; the study used interviews as a qualitative method to support self-reported data. Whitman & Woszczyński (2004) recommended the use of interviews or focus groups to minimise common method bias as it shed light on how questions are interpreted and answers are generated.

2) The sample under consideration for this study consists of individuals who generally have moderate to high levels of work experience and education, and includes a large number of individuals working in highly technical positions which may not include many tasks that are explained through social processes, which may have attenuated any

possible relationship between social information and task performance. However, it may be that the content of the socialising influences questionnaire, which emphasises normative and adaptation influence may have reduced the potential relationship between sources of social information and task performance. Further exploration of the properties of this scale and comparisons with existing socialisation scales may facilitate inclusion of more task-oriented content in performance.

3) According to Creswell (2003), limitations examine the boundaries, reservations, exceptions, and qualifications in a given study. Whilst there was occupational diversity in this study which was carried out in Bahrain, the findings may not be representative of what takes place in other non-Arabic cultures and as such this limits the generalisability of the findings. Future research should endeavour to compare these results to samples from other countries that might have very different patterns of socialisation, and build on these findings by exploring reports from leaders and co-workers in the process of adjustment.

4) The effect sizes obtained for the outcomes of interest were comparatively small and the overall model  $R^2$  statistics for all of the outcomes were also not large. In part, the low effect sizes may be a reflection of the spacing between survey administrations and the relatively high heterogeneity in survey respondents. It may be possible to increase  $R^2$  through the inclusion of more predictors in the model, as suggested earlier, but this will decrease effect sizes for any single predictor if the predictors are correlated with one another. This will tend to also decrease the parsimony of the model and may make it more difficult to interpret and plan interventions. As such, while it is advisable to

improve model fit through the theoretically grounded addition of new constructs into the model, such an approach should be tempered with concern for keeping the model interpretable.

5) One potentially fruitful approach is to focus on the development of better scales, as the measurement of organisational entry constructs has long been hampered by poor attention to measurement issues (Bauer et al, 1998). While the socialising influences scale used in this study is one of the few measures of socialisation to undergo a thorough, cross-sample replication using confirmatory factor analysis, the other scales were largely taken from previous studies that used a less rigorous approach. The political knowledge scale showed only moderate internal consistency reliabilities.

6) Although the use of structural equation modelling does correct observed correlations between constructs for low internal consistency, it is generally agreed that a superior approach is to select items that are highly internally consistent. The univariate statistics for most of the measures also show that they are skewed to the left, which restricts the observed range of the scales. While normalising transformations partially corrects this problem, studies that utilise an item response theory approach to develop measures that provide better discrimination between individuals on the proximal socialisation outcomes may improve model fit (Zickar, 2002). Several of the measures also share considerable variance with one another, and steps to reduce this colinearity by increasing the discrimination between scales is also desirable as this approach should increase both effect sizes and  $R^2$  if the relationships are in fact substantive.

7) Despite the significant positive relationships between the three sources of influence, there were distinct outcomes for each. Based on the very poor fit of structural models that constrained all sources of socialisation influence to a single factor, future research should continue to include differential analysis of influence of socialising agents' dimensions. At the same time, correlations between socialisation influence measures suggests that excluding dimensions of influence of socialising agents could result in spurious results. Studies of organisational influence, for example, may be confounding the influence of organisations with the influence of co-workers and leaders and vice versa. A possibility suggested by the heterogeneity within organisations regarding the influence of socialising agents is a more detailed examination of the specific socialisation activities taking place at the work group level of the organisation.

The sources of socialisation influence examined in this study were less consistently related to work outcomes than were the characteristics of newcomers, which is logical based on the premise that different sources of influence have different levels of knowledge and different motivations for influencing newcomers in particular domains of work life.

8) Moreover, in this study, there were no specific hypotheses involving both mediation and moderation, (e.g. the link between personality and adjustment is mediated by proactive behaviour only when organisational socialisation effort is high), and therefore SEM was a perfectly credible method for testing most hypotheses. Based on the results from this study that confirmed that proactive behaviour mediates openness as it related



to adjustment outcomes, future research may investigate the mediation moderation hypothesis (e.g. the relationship between openness and adjustment outcomes is mediated by proactive behaviour only when supervisor socialisation influence is high), especially, in one study by Ohly, Sonnentag, & Pluntke (2006), supervisor support was positively related to proactive behaviour. Edwards and Lambert (2007) discussed the relationship between mediated moderation and moderated mediation. They also presented examples for each methodology which could be used for testing such new hypothesis. Moreover, having established the importance of newcomer personality traits in newcomer adjustment process in the current research, future research might also examine the interactive profile of the newcomers' traits. For example, Witt et al., (2002) found that the relationship between conscientiousness and job performance would be stronger for persons high in agreeableness than for those low in agreeableness.

#### **7.4. Conclusion**

The newcomer's first concern would be on how to adapt to his new work setting. First impressions are extremely important in determining the course of subsequent attitudes and behaviour. Newcomer adjustment in turn leads to important immediate outcomes such as task performance, group integration and political knowledge of the organisation. Newcomer adjustment, therefore, deserves researcher attention.

This study extended the previous one by examining multiple antecedents, including Big Five personality traits of new comer to the tandem process of newcomer adjustment as well as outcomes that immediate, to the process of newcomer adjustment.

Results of a three- wave longitudinal study of newcomers in seven organisations suggested that the relationship between adjustment outcomes and the personality dimensions openness is mediated by proactive behaviour. Conscientiousness was positively related to proximal adjustment outcomes (task performance, group integration, and apolitical knowledge). Openness to experience was related to task performance and group integration. Moreover, group integration was independently positively related to agreeableness and extraversion and negatively related to neuroticism. Leader socialisation moderated conscientiousness as it relates to political knowledge of the organisation and group integration, while co-worker moderated extraversion as it relates to task performance. Overall, the results suggested that individual differences have a role in newcomer adjustment as it facilitate the socialisation influence and Big Five was one of the key determinants of early entry newcomer adjustment

It is hoped that this study will provide a better understanding of how employees got adjusted in the new work setting, how personality traits affect employees' adjustment outcomes, and how the effect of socialisation influence may vary based on newcomer traits on predicting the proximal adjustment outcomes. The results of this study reveal that this interaction can positively enhance the adjustment outcomes depending on its source (supervisor, co-worker, and organisation) and the Big Five personality traits of the newcomer. Beyond this, it was hoped that this study could

make organisations aware of their new employees' traits contribution to the organisations' adjustment and performance.

This information will be extremely valuable in that it will help management and leaders within organisations to select individuals who may be the best fit for positions that are currently available. By doing so, this may increase the effectiveness and productivity of organisations as well as increasing the levels of satisfaction between both employees and supervisors.

Finally, this study has provided support for the further investigation of the relationship between the Big Five Personality traits and the socialisation influence of newcomers on adjustment outcomes. This was the first study to assess this relationship and although not all hypotheses were supported, there was evidence that some of the Big Five personality traits exert an influence on newcomer adjustment and socialisation. Research should continue to investigate this relationship in order to provide additional information that may be used to inform hiring and management practices.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: The Big Five and Dimensions of Similar Breadth in Questionnaires and in Models of Personality and Interpersonal Behaviour**

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Theorist	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness/Intellect
I	II	III	IV	V	

---

Bales	Dominant- Initiative	Social-Emotional Orientation	Task Orientation		
Block	Under control	Over control	Resiliency		
Buss & Plomin	Activity	Impulsivity	Emotionality		
Cattell	Exvia (vs. Invia)	Pathemia (vs. Cortertia)	Superego Strength	Adjustment (vs. Anxiety)	Independence
Comrey Scales (Noller et al)	Extraversion and activity	Femininity (vs. Masculinity)	Orderliness and Social Conformity	Emotional Stability*	Rebelliousness
Eysenck	Extraversion	Psychoticism*Neuroticism			
Gough					
CPI Vectors	Externality	Norm-Favouring	Self-Realisation*		

CPI Scales	Sociability	Feminity	Norm-favouring	Well-being	Achievement via Independence
Guilford	Social Activity	Paranoid-Disposition*	Thinking Introversion	Emotional Stability*	--
Hogan	Sociability	Likeability	Prudence	Adjustment* (vs. Impulsivity)	Intellectance
Jackson	Outgoing, Social Leadership	Self-Protective Orientation*	Work Orientation	Dependence	Aesthetic-Intellectual
MMPI Personality Disorder Scales	Histrionic	Paranoid*	Compulsive	Borderline	Schizotypal
Myers-Briggs	Extraversion (vs. Introversion)	Feeling (vs. Thinking)	Judging (vs. Perception)	--	Intuition (vs. Sensing)
Tellegen Agentive	Positive Emotionality Communal		Constraint	Negative Emotionality	Absorption
Wiggins5	Dominance	Nurturance	(Conscientiousness)	(Neuroticism)	(Openness)

Source: John, O.P. and Srivastava, S. (1999)

Note. Based on John (1990) and McCrae and John (1992).

\* Reverse-scored in the direction opposite to that of the Big Five label listed above.

1 This dimension contrasts a work-directed, emotionally neutral orientation with an erratic, emotionally expressive orientation (Bales & Cohen, 1979), and thus seems to combine elements of both Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism.

2 Resiliency seems to subsume aspects of both Openness and low Neuroticism, because an ego-resilient individual is considered both intellectually resourceful and effective in controlling anxiety (Block & Block, 1980). However, Robins, John, and Caspi (1994) found that in adolescents, ego-resiliency is related to all of the Big Five dimensions in the well-adjusted direction. Ego control was related to Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness, with Under control similar to Extraversion and Over control similar to Conscientiousness and Agreeableness.

3 High scores on the EPQ Psychoticism scale are associated with low scores on both Agreeableness and Conscientiousness (Goldberg & Rosolack, 1994; McCrae & Costa, 1985 c)

4The third vector scale on the CPI (Gough, 1987) measures levels of psychological integration and realization, and should reflect aspects of both low Neuroticism (e.g., Well-being) and high Openness (e.g., Achievement via Independence).

5 Wiggins (1979) originally focused on Dominance and Nurturance, which define the interpersonal circumplex. Trapnell and Wiggins (1990) added adjective scales for Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness (see also Wiggins, 1995).

## Appendix B: Survey Rounds

### Round 1 Survey: Big Five Personality Traits

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement:

Disagree strongly 1	Disagree a little 2	Neither agree nor disagree 3	Agree a little 4	Agree strongly 5
---------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------	------------------------

I see myself as someone who...

Is talkative	
Tends to find fault with others	
Does a thorough job	
Is depressed, blue	
Is original, comes up with new ideas	
Is reserved	
Is helpful and unselfish with others	
Can be somewhat careless	
Is relaxed, handles stress well	
Is curious about many different things	
Is full of energy	
Starts quarrels <sup>1</sup> with others	
Is a reliable worker	
Can be tense	
Is ingenious, a deep thinker	
Generates a lot of enthusiasm	
Has a forgiving nature	
Tends to be disorganised	
Worries a lot	
Has an active imagination	
Tends to be quiet	
Is generally trusting	
Tends to be lazy	





Organisation Branch Size	less than 25	25:50	51:100	101: 200	>200
(number of employees):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education (highest degree achieved):	High School	Diploma	Bachelor	Masters	Doctorate
.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Salary range per month	200:400BHD	400:600	600:800	800:1000	>1000
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Experience:

1. How many years/ months of professional work experience do you have (in any occupation)?

Full Time: .....months/years    Part Time.....months/years

2. How many hours do you work in a typical week? .....

3. Occupation: .....

4. Organisation Name:.....

**Thank you!**

**Round 2 Survey: 1. Socialisation influences**

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very great extent
1. To what extent have each of the following influences how you have “learned the ropes” as you’ve entered your new work environment?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
2. To what extent have each of the following affected your ideas about appropriate behaviours for your job, work group, and organisation?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
3. To what extent have each of the following influenced how much you have learned about the way your organisation works?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
4. To what extent have each of the following influenced what you see as most important to learn?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0

5. To what extent have each of the following influenced how you have adapted to your work environment?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very great extent
6. To what extent have each of the following influenced your ideas about appropriate attitudes and norms for your job, work group, and organisation?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
7. To what extent have each of the following influenced how you have figured out how to act in your work environment?					
Orientation, training, and other organisational efforts.	0	0	0	0	0
Supervisors or others higher up in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Other co-workers	0	0	0	0	0

## 2. Mediator of adjustment: Proactive behaviour

	To no extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very great extent
To what extent have you					
1. Sought feedback on your performance after assignment?	0	0	0	0	0
2. Solicited critiques from your boss?	0	0	0	0	0
3. Sought out feedback on your performance during assignment?	0	0	0	0	0

4. Asked for your boss's opinion at work?	0	0	0	0	0
5. Negotiated with others (including your supervisor and/or co-workers) about desirable job changes?	0	0	0	0	0
6. Negotiated with others (including your supervisor and/or co-workers) about your task assignment?	0	0	0	0	0
7. Negotiated with others (including your supervisor and/or co-workers) about demands placed on you?	0	0	0	0	0
8. Negotiated with others (including your supervisor and/or co-workers) about their expectations of you?	0	0	0	0	0
9. Try to see your situation as an opportunity rather than a threat?	0	0	0	0	0
10. Tried to look at the bright side of the things?	0	0	0	0	0
11. Tried to see your situation as a challenge rather than a problem?	0	0	0	0	0
12. Participated in social office events to meet people (Teams, clubs, lunches)?	0	0	0	0	0
13. Attended company social gatherings?	0	0	0	0	0
14. Attended office parties?	0	0	0	0	0
15. Tried to spend as much time as you could with your boss?	0	0	0	0	0
16. Tried to form a good relationship with your boss?	0	0	0	0	0
17. Worked hard to get to know your boss?	0	0	0	0	0
18. Started conversations with people from different segments of the company?	0	0	0	0	0
19. Tried to socialize with people who are not in your department?	0	0	0	0	0
20. Tried to get to know as many people as possible on other section of the company on personal basis?	0	0	0	0	0
21. Tried to learn the (official) organisation structure?	0	0	0	0	0
22. Tried to learn the important policies and procedures in the organisation?	0	0	0	0	0
23. Tried to learn the politics in the organization?	0	0	0	0	0
24. Tried to learn the (unofficial) structure?	0	0	0	0	0

### Round 3 Survey: Adjustment outcomes

#### A. Task Performance

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as they pertain to your current job. Try to emphasize the job as it is considered in your current organisation rather than the tasks that are general to other organisations with the same job title.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
I am confident about the adequacy of my skills and abilities to perform my job within this organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
I feel competent conducting my job assignments/work within this organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
It seems to take me longer to complete my job assignments or work than it takes others.	0	0	0	0	0
I rarely make mistakes when conducting my job assignments or work within this organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
I have learned how to successfully perform my current job in an efficient manner.	0	0	0	0	0
I have mastered the tasks required of my current job.	0	0	0	0	0
I have fully developed the appropriate skills and abilities to complete my current job.	0	0	0	0	0

**B. Team / Group integration**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as they pertain to your current job.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
The people I work with respect me.	0	0	0	0	0
My co-workers seem to accept me as one of them.	0	0	0	0	0
I get along with the people I work with very well.	0	0	0	0	0
I feel comfortable around my co-workers	0	0	0	0	0
I am usually excluded in social get together given by other people in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
Within my work group, I would be easily identified as “one of the gang”	0	0	0	0	0
I am usually excluded in informal networks or gatherings of people within this organisation.	0	0	0	0	0

### C. Political knowledge of organisation

Please indicate how much you would agree with each of the following statements with respect to your organisation and the people in it

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
I agree who the most influential people are in my organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
I do not have a good understanding of the politics in my organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
I am not always sure what needs to be done in order to get the most desirable work assignments in my area	0	0	0	0	0
I have a good understanding of the motives behind the actions of other people in the organisation.	0	0	0	0	0
I can identify the people in this organisation who are most important in getting the work done.	0	0	0	0	0



**Appendix C: Institutional Ethical Approval**



**Aston Business School**



**Aston University**

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## **Appendix D: List of Thesis Related Publications**

### **1. Conference Papers:**

*Newcomers' personality traits: influence on adjustment.* Business & Economics Society International (B&ESI) 2010 Winter Conference; January 5-9,2010; Nassau, Bahamas

*The moderating role of Socialisation influence on newcomers' adjustment.* Business & Economics Society International (B&ESI) 2010 Winter Conference; January 5-9, 2010; Nassau, Bahamas

*Personality Traits: Influence on Proactivity towards Newcomers' Adjustment.* International Academy of Management and Business, IAMB, January 25, 2010; Las Vegas, USA.

*The Interaction between Traits and Socialisation Efforts in Newcomer Adjustment.* International Academy of Management and Business, IAMB, January 25, 2010; Las Vegas, USA.

### **2. Publications :**

Swid, A. (2010). Newcomers' personality traits: influence on adjustment. International Journal of Behavioural and Healthcare Research (IJBHR)ISSN (Online): 1755-3547 - ISSN (Print): 1755-3539, Vol. 2, No. 2

Swid, A. (in Press).The moderating role of Socialisation effort on newcomers' adjustment. International Journal of Economics and Business Research (IJEBR) ISSN (Online): 1756-9869 - ISSN (Print): 1756-9850

### **3. Publication being prepared:**

Woods, S.A., & Swid, A. How traits influence newcomer adjustment; a mediation model.



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Aston University

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**Astron University**

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**Publications :**

Swid, A. (2010). Newcomers' personality traits: influence on adjustment. *International Journal of Behavioural and Healthcare Research (IJBHR)* ISSN (Online): 1755-3547 - ISSN (Print): 1755-3539, Vol. 2, No. 2

Swid, A. (in Press). The moderating role of Socialisation effort on newcomers' adjustment. *International Journal of Economics and Business Research (IJEER)* ISSN (Online): 1756-9869 - ISSN (Print): 1756-9850

**Publication being prepared:**

Woods, S.A., & Swid, A., (2011) How traits influence newcomer adjustment; a mediation model.

**Guest Lecture:**

*Interviewing Techniques*, Bahrain University, 2009.



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## **Appendix F: Summary of Hypotheses**

- H1a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to Conscientiousness*
- H1b:- Newcomers political knowledge group integration will be positively related to Conscientiousness*
- H1c:- Newcomers political knowledge group integration will be positively related to Conscientiousness*
- H2a:- Newcomer task performance will be positively related to Openness to experience*
- H2b:- Newcomer political knowledge will be positively related to Openness to experience*
- H3a:- Newcomer task performance is positively related to extraversion*
- H3b:- Newcomers' group integration are positively related to extraversion*
- H4:- Newcomer group integration is positively related to Agreeableness*
- H5a:- Newcomer task performance is negatively related to Neuroticism*
- H5b:- Newcomer group integration is negatively related to Neuroticism*
- H6:- The relationships between Adjustment and the personality dimensions Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness are mediated by Proactive behaviour*
- H7: Organisational socialisation effort will moderate the relationship between extraversion and task performance as adjustment outcome*
- H8a: Leaders socialisation effort will moderate the relationship between Conscientiousness and task performance as adjustment outcome*
- H8b: Leaders socialisation effort will moderate the relationship between Conscientiousness and group integration as adjustment outcome*
- H8c: Leaders socialisation effort will moderate the relationship between Conscientiousness and political knowledge as adjustment outcome*
- H9a: Co-worker socialisation influence will moderate the relationship between Agreeableness and group integration as adjustment outcome*
- H9b:- Co-worker socialisation influence will moderate the relation between extraversion and task performance as adjustment outcome*