

Developing a Measure of Perceived 'Sink or Swim' Socialization

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Abstract

Developing a Measure of Perceived 'Sink or Swim' Socialization

By: Maddy Blazer

Abstract: While 'sink or swim' training is a well-known concept to practitioners, it has not garnered much attention within an academic setting. 'Sink or swim' can be described as a form of training by default, where an individual must take steps to socialize themselves. This research aimed to operationalize 'sink or swim' as a 3-factor construct made of 'responsibility,' 'effectiveness,' and 'support,' and develop a measure to assess it. Study 1 leveraged the academic literature and data from an industry survey to generate an initial item pool and then used SMEs to run a content validation assessment. Study 2 used a 'shortitudinal' survey design to assess the factor structure, psychometric properties, and incremental and predictive validity of the scale. The 3-factor structure was confirmed through both an EFA and CFA and the refined scale indicated acceptable levels of construct validity and test-retest reliability. The predictive validity of the scale was supported through a series of mediation analyses across separate employment outcomes. However, the scale did not demonstrate incremental validity over that of an existing socialization tactics scale. Overall, the finalized 17-item scale for 'sink or swim' demonstrated sufficient psychometric support, but not did add incremental value over and above existing measures. Regardless, the full scale or the 'support' factor scale each represents a practical and simplified assessment of perception of 'sink or swim' within the workplace.

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Developing a Measure of Perceived 'Sink or Swim' Socialization

One of the most critical processes of any organization is the ongoing ability to integrate new hires, increasing their capacity to do the job while also assimilating them into a company's culture and social fabric. Organizational socialization is defined as the process by which individuals go from being perceived as outsiders to insiders (Bauer et al., 2007). Research has shown that employees' socialization plays an increasingly prominent role in an individual's adjustment to their job, work team, and overall organizational culture (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007). Adequate socialization has become even more essential as employees are considerably more mobile today, holding an average of 12.3 jobs throughout their lifetime (*Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 2019). Organizations are not blind to these benefits, as 66% of US businesses have some form of formal training programs, spending around \$135 billion each year (Bauer, 2013; Salas et al., 2012). These companies who integrated a strong onboarding program also see significant benefits, with an 82% improvement in new hire retention rates and a 70% improvement in productivity (*The True Cost of a Bad Hire*, 2015). Considering the competitiveness in recruiting top talent, it is unsurprising that organizations would like to make the most out of their new hires. Entering into a new organization can be stressful, and providing employees with orientation and training can help reduce this early uncertainty and anxiety, leaving a more productive and satisfied workforce.

While implementing a training program is vital, how you socialize your employees is equally as important. Due to the availability of resources or managerial preferences, training tactics can significantly differ across organizations, leading to multiple organizational outcomes. While some organizations implement a structured and

systematic approach to training, others incorporate informalized 'sink or swim' tactics, hoping that a new employee stumbles into the knowledge and relationships needed to succeed. The problem with the latter approach is that it is connected with higher role ambiguity, stress, and lower organizational attachment levels (Bauer et al., 2007; Chong et al., 2020; Saks et al., 2007). On the other hand, formalized socialization tactics can help reduce role ambiguity by instilling feelings of competence early on, providing social support in the form of mentors and role models, and providing necessary information regarding one's role (Chong et al., 2020). Also, organizations with a more formalized training program see six times greater profits than those who employ a 'sink or swim' approach to training (Bauer, 2013). Even newcomers tend to display a preference for a more formalized and structured approach to training (Gruman & Saks, 2011). As demonstrated, the training method employed by an organization can have important implications for both employees and their employers.

Unfortunately, many organizations across different industries and occupations continue to implement haphazard 'sink or swim' training tactics for a wide variety of reasons. Firstly, it can occur by accident as a by-product of a lack of structure and intention as an organization socializes its employees. Every organization develops its own unique culture – either formally or informally – which requires its own unique set of behaviours from its employees (Schermerhorn et al., 1994). Regardless of an organization's formal training tactics, all newcomers will go through a socialization process in which they will either conform, reject, or attempt to change the existing culture (Exum, 1998). A company may refrain from developing a structured training program and rely more heavily on these informal processes. This rationale is especially true for those organizations with limited financial resources. These organizations will often direct what

they have towards short-term goals and strategies with a more direct impact on their bottom line.

A 'sink or swim' approach to training may also occur more intentionally. For example, managers trained and assimilated into their organization based on 'sink or swim' tactics may continue to use them in perpetuity, as it may be all they know. Since they were 'thrown in the deep end' and survived, these managers may believe that so should everyone else. The result can be a destructive self-perpetuating cycle of the continuous use of inadequate and empirically unsupported training tactics (Poulston, 2008). This training ideology is also perpetuated and romanticized in popular culture, as phrases like 'sink or swim,' 'make it or break it,' 'thrown in the deep end,' or 'trial by fire' are widespread and often recycled within an organization's senior management. Considering informal training techniques require much less effort and resources, it is no surprise that managers may wish to justify its use in practice.

While 'sink or swim' training tactics are well-known among practitioners, surprisingly, there has been no attempt to define and measure it as a standalone construct within the academic literature. Within the training literature, it is primarily mentioned in association with individualized socialization, an approach to training that is characterized by the structure and formality that it lacks rather than as a standalone construct (e.g., Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; Korte, 2009; Kowtha, 2018). However, this construct focuses more specifically on the tactics of the organizations training and fails to evaluate the degree to which an employee perceives themselves to be on their own. There is also little understanding of the impact that an employee perception of being left to 'sink or swim' can have on workplace outcomes. While many employees

across industries and occupations have experienced being left to 'sink or swim,' there has been no way to measure and evaluate this phenomenon.

In this study I aim to fill this gap in the academic literature and shine a light on a widespread but under-researched area within the modern workplace. The goals of this study are threefold. Firstly, this study will aim to operationalize an employee's perception of being left to 'sink or swim' within an organization's training as a standalone construct. This study will also develop a scale to measure an employee's perception of being left to 'sink or swim' within their organization's training program. Finally, this study will leverage this scale to run a predictive validity analysis investigating the relationship between a perception of being left to 'sink or swim' and employee outcomes and whether these relationships are mediated by lower perceived organizational and supervisor support levels. These efforts will undoubtedly shed light on a commonly used training tactic and challenge a common misconception that an employee must 'sink or swim' to achieve proper socialization. It will also result in a practical and useful scale for practitioners to measure the effectiveness of their own training programs.

'Sink or Swim' Socialization

The idiom 'sink or swim' can refer to any situation where someone must succeed by their efforts or else fail completely (*Merriam-Webster*, n.d.). It is a colloquial phrase used in everyday life with multiple variations like 'trial by fire', 'make it or break it', or 'thrown in the deep end.' Within the training literature, it is primarily mentioned in association with individualized socialization, an approach to training that is characterized by limited structure and formality and higher levels of ambiguity (e.g., Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; Korte, 2009; Kowtha, 2018). It thus represents

training by default, where individuals must take steps to socialize themselves. A review of the literature found three main themes associated with a perception of 'sink or swim' socialization: [1] shifting of socialization responsibility to the employee (responsibility), [2] a lack of perceived effectiveness of an organizations training program (effectiveness), and [3] limited perceptions of support either from an organization or supervisor (support).

Employee-Shifted Responsibility

As organizations take an unstructured and apathetic approach to socialization, the locus of responsibility is naturally shifted to the employee rather than the organization. This idea is recognized in the literature, as Van Maanen and Schein (1977) described 'sink or swim' training tactics as one "by which individuals must learn how to perform the new role on their own" (p. 34). In their review of organizational socialization, Ashforth et al. (2007) described a 'sink or swim' training approach as one that "encourages- almost mandates that newcomers find their own way" (p. 14). Bauer and Erdogan (2010) described a 'sink or swim' approach as one where "new employees struggle to figure out what is expected of them" (p. 54). These perspectives view a 'sink or swim' approach to training as an unintended consequence resulting from a lack of formality and structure from individualized training tactics. Thus, employees are forced to assimilate themselves into their organization and workgroup and learn how to perform their job independently.

This shift of socialization responsibility may also occur intentionally on the part of an organization's senior leadership. For one, supporters of 'sink or swim' training tactics may see ambiguity in the early part of a role as an essential component of training, encouraging employees to be more innovative and creative in their position (Bauer &

Green, 1998; Jones, 1986). They postulate that ambiguity early in one's employment motivates individuals to take active steps to socialize themselves, engaging in more feedback and relationship-seeking behaviours (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). Within the global tech company Google, this practice is referred to as instigating an internal locus of control and embracing an entrepreneurial mindset (Johnson & Senges, 2010).

Additionally, a 'sink or swim' culture may develop to wean out poor performers and help to identify high performers (Guimaraes & Igarria, 1992). Consequently, the success or failure of an individual's ability to get adequately socialized is also imparted on the employee, as a failure to socialize is seen as an individual failure rather than an organizational failure.

Regardless of whether it is intentional or not, the research on having employees socialize themselves is inconclusive. While some employees may seek innovative solutions, those who display less proactive personality traits tend to benefit more greatly from structure and formality (Kim et al., 2005). Also, new graduates or those with more limited work experience tended to face increasingly negative employment outcomes when faced with ambiguous or informal training orientations (Kowtha, 2018). Finally, many employees will see a lack of an effective training program as a personal slight, signalling that the organization doesn't value their contributions. This slight can result in a decreased commitment and a lower perceived sense of obligation to the employer (Delobbe et al., 2016). Overall, organizations relying on 'sink or swim' approaches to training will fail to achieve the benefits of implementing formalized and effective training programs for their new employees.

Overall, employees who believe that they have been left to 'sink or swim' will recognize that the onus of responsibility of socialization is on them. This perception will

work in conjunction with the belief that their organization has shirked their responsibilities regarding training. Employees will thus be aware that a proactive approach to socialization where they take sole responsibility in socializing themselves into their role is the only way to succeed.

Perceived Training Effectiveness

Employees who have been left to 'sink or swim' will also perceive that their company's training program has left them ill-prepared for their roles. This can be the result of going through a training program that they might perceive as limited or ineffective. The phrase 'sink or swim' is consistently mentioned in the literature as a by-product of individualized socialization (Jones, 1986). These models view a 'sink or swim' approach as simply the consequence of informality and limited structure within training. Informal training programs have been shown to be less effective than their formal counterparts. They provide limited clarity into training content, an unclear time frame or order of events, and less access to social connections to acquire information, resulting in increased uncertainty (Perrot et al., 2014). This lack of structure in a training program has been connected with lower role clarity and higher role ambiguity and stress (Saks et al., 2007). Overall, ineffective and informal approaches to training and their effects on role clarity and ambiguity will lead employees to feel a lack of preparedness for their role.

Organizations may also not have any form of a training program, having employees start their roles almost immediately and forcing them to learn on the job (Schnepf et al., 2016). One study that surveyed hospitality staff in New Zealand found these training tactics to be highly ineffective and commonly misused (Poulston, 2008). 'Show as you go' methods or ineffective buddy systems were consistently used as cheap

substitutes to formal and systematic training systems. The authors described the respondent's experience of being 'thrown in the deep' as a stressful and frightening experience that "merely raise trainees above the surface, gasping for air with neither dignity nor grace" (Poulston, 2008, p. 421). Another study focused on the training experiences of early education teachers saw themes of being "thrown into the classroom" so that they could "figure out how to swim on their own" (Nicholson & Reifel, 2011, p. 13). Many of these teachers were offered little or no training and thus had a limited understanding of how to carry out their roles (Nicholson & Reifel, 2011). Being thrown directly into one's work with little or no training is not unique to one industry or occupation and will likely result in employees viewing their organizations socialization program as ineffective.

As a result, employees who believe that they have been left to 'sink or swim' will perceive their organizations training program to be ineffective leaving them ill-prepared for their position. Some employees may be offered a limited but ineffective training program that does not provide sufficient guidance, structure, or clarity necessary to get properly socialized. Others may be 'thrown in the deep end' and expected to jump right into their work without any form of structured or systematic socialization experience. This lack of an effective training program will leave employees with an increasingly vague understanding of their roles and a feeling that their organization did little to bring them 'up-to speed.'

Limited Perception of Support

A key component of being left to 'sink or swim' is that an employee will feel as though they do not have the necessary social support - either from their supervisor or

organization - required to learn their roles. The literature consistently references 'sink or swim' training as an isolating experience with employees learning the information necessary for their role, mostly on their own. Van Maanen and Schein (1977) referenced a 'sink or swim' approach where individuals "are left to their own devices" (p. 63) to learn and adapt to their roles. Allen and Shanock (2013) described a 'sink or swim' environment as a "lack of such [structured] activities may leave newcomers with a sense that they are on their own" (p. 354). Finally, Kowtha (2018) described a 'sink or swim' approach characterized by "leaving the newcomer to learn and adapt on their own" (p. 88). This method of training implies that these employees lack the support needed to be properly socialized.

Being left to 'sink or swim' thus robs employees of the benefits of having an effective relationship with a supervisor. Supervisors are also essential to developing a positive transfer climate whereby employees may feel safe to employ skills they are learning in practice (Salas et al., 2012). Research has shown the more that employees perceive their post-training environment and supervisor to be supportive, the better their learned skills are practiced and maintained within the workplace (Rouiller & Goldstein, 1993). Moreover, new employees are always searching for cues of how to behave on the job. A supportive supervisor is essential for role modelling expected behaviours during this critical stage (D. G. Allen, 2006). Finally, a supportive supervisor is necessary as newcomers work towards developing social capital among other experienced organizational members. Engaging in social activities with an organization's leaders can result in additional opportunities to form social networks and acquire different mentors and colleagues (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013).

Also, employees may feel that they do not have the support of their organization. An effective and structured onboarding program is a decision that is at the discretion of the hiring organization. By not engaging employees in a socialization program, a hiring organization may be signalling to their new hires that they are unwilling to invest in them or that they do not value their contributions (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). Training investments have been shown to be positively related to perceived organizational support (POS), as it is seen as a signal to employees that they are worthy of such an investment (Johlke et al., 2002). Moreover, by not signalling to employees early that they are valued in the organization, employees may feel less psychologically secure in their roles and thus less willing to reach out to other organizational insiders (Perrot et al., 2014). Furthermore, new employees may be required to count on unreliable staff and organizational insiders due to limited access to the more dependable and high-performing staff (Poulston, 2008). This lack of support may perpetuate a situation where employees are either less willing to proactively seek out help from the right individuals or become forced to seek help from the wrong ones.

As a result, a perception of 'sink or swim' implies that employees believe that they were provided little or no support during the organization's socialization program. This lack of support may be targeted at either the organization, its leaders, or other organizational insiders, and will result in an employee feeling as if 'they are on their own.'

Theoretical Roots of 'Sink or Swim' Socialization

Organizational Socialization Tactics

Much of the literature surrounding 'sink or swim' socialization tactics has centred around the degree to which a training program is structured. The training structure is often deduced to six bipolar tactics conceived by Van Maanen and Schein (1977). Organizations can use these tactics to adopt structure into their training programs and facilitate employee adjustment to their roles. The six tactics include collective–individual, formal–informal, investiture–divestiture, serial–disjunctive, sequential–random, and fixed–variable. *Collective (vs. individual)* socialization tactics involve putting newcomers into a group and moving them through a standard set of onboarding activities, rather than leaving them on their own, ensuring each individual receives a unique onboarding experience. *Formal (vs. informal)* socialization tactics involve the process of separating new hires from existing employees for a specified period, rather than having no formal separation of new employees from existing employees for any period. *Sequential (vs. random)* tactics relate to the degree to which an organization sets a predetermined sequence of distinct training steps leading to realizing the role. In contrast, in random, the stages leading to role fulfillment are either unknown, ambiguous, or consistently changing. *Fixed (vs. variable)* socialization refers to the degree to which a timetable is associated with specific steps, with variable including no set timetable. *Serial (vs. disjunctive)* tactics are when new hires are assigned a mentor to groom them into a similar position. Disjunctive assigns no such mentors. Finally, *investiture (vs. divestiture)* seeks to confirm a new hire's identity and individual characteristics rather than deny and strip them away for assimilation purposes.

Jones (1986) later argued that these six socialization tactics tended to exist on a continuum between the two bipolar poles (see Table 1). On one side of the continuum is ‘institutionalized’ socialization tactics, consisting of collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture. This collection of tactics represents a formalized approach whereby an organization employs a structured training program for incoming employees (Jones, 1986). Research has suggested that institutionalized approaches to training help facilitate an employee’s adjustment to the organization and role (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). On the other side of the continuum is ‘individualized’ socialization tactics, made up of individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture. Alternatively, this is the ‘sink or swim’ style of training, as it is characterized by its informality and absence of structure (Jones, 1986). With an individualized approach, employees are expected to seek out the critical components of the job and social relationships on their own (Jones, 1986).

Table 1. *Classification of Socialization Tactics*

Institutionalized	Individualized
Collective	Individual
Formal	Informal
Sequential	Random
Fixed	Variable
Serial	Disjunctive
Investiture	Divestiture

Note. Developed by Jones (Jones, 1986) and based off of Van Maanen and Schein (1977)

Institutionalized training tactics are effective at helping employees adjust to their new roles and enhancing their organizational attachments. The structure and formality associated with institutionalized tactics have been connected with multiple distal

outcomes, including more favourable job attitudes and higher job satisfaction, perception of fit, and organizational attachment (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; King et al., 2005).

Additional distal outcomes include lower levels of anxiety, intention to quit, and organizational turnover (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Mignerey et al., 1995; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Multiple studies have also confirmed the mediating effects of specific proximal outcomes, including decreased role ambiguity and role conflict (Saks et al., 2007). It is predicted that much of the improved attitudes towards an organization are attributed to feelings of competency in the job stemming from enhanced training methods.

Institutionalized tactics also tend to instill feelings of being valued and respected, which is another potential source of improved organizational outcomes (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). Finally, institutionalized tactics can be especially beneficial for new graduates without any previous work experience considering their greater need for information, structure, and guidance (Saks et al., 2007). Given these benefits, it is no surprise that employees have demonstrated a general preference for institutionalized tactics compared to the alternative 'sink or swim' approach (Gruman & Saks, 2011).

Overall, research has shown that implementing an institutionalized training program leads to a workforce that is clearer in their role, more satisfied in their job, and better able to perform their responsibilities.

The relationship of individualized tactics with employee outcomes has proven to be significantly more complex, with positive and negative effects. For one, these tactics are shown to promote higher levels of role innovation and creativity (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Individuals left to socialize themselves often tend to find new and creative ways to perform their positions, leading to unique solutions that mirror their personality and values (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). Individualized tactics have

also been connected with higher self-appraised performance levels (Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). However, research has not connected it with self-managing behaviours (i.e., self-criticism and self-control); therefore, these appraisals may not be rooted in reality (Laker & Steffy, 1995; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Research has also demonstrated how individualized tactics may work more effectively in specific contexts. For example, proactive individuals tend to exhibit more positive employment outcomes when going through individualized training, as they benefit from increased autonomy (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). Individualized tactics may also be more suited to culturally diverse organizations as they can promote a heterogeneous environment for an organization with differing beliefs and values (McMillan-Capehart, 2005).

While some benefits do exist, individualized tactics have been more readily connected with adverse employee outcomes. For example, individualized tactics have consistently been linked with higher role ambiguity and role conflict, two constructs often associated with employee stress (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007; Saks & Gruman, 2011). As new hires enter an organization, the absence of the structure of an individualized approach can leave employees uncertain of their responsibilities and unaware of how to access this information. Individualized socialization is also less effective at driving organizational commitment, identification, attachment, and job satisfaction than its institutionalized counterpart (Saks & Gruman, 2011). A lack of clarity in the structure of a training program and limited access to formal and informal connections with employees and managers can lead to confusion, resulting in negative affectivity and apathy towards one's employer. Individualized tactics also lack signals to employees that communicate that their contributions are valued and important, thus providing a less supportive social environment (King et al., 2005). This lack of a

signal results in a training program that is less supportive of newcomers' general psychological needs (Chong et al., 2020). More specifically, new graduates and those with limited employment experience are particularly susceptible to the adverse consequences of individualized techniques based on an increased need for structure and guidance (Saks et al., 2007). Finally, a lack of structure can also provide existing employees more freedom to develop informal initiations, rituals, and loyalty tests not approved by management, resulting in hazing and bullying (Hart, 2012).

Social Exchange Theory

The relationship between 'sink or swim' socialization tactics and employee outcomes can also be rooted in the 'social exchange theory.' According to this theory, transactions can extend past the standard work-for-pay relationship to more abstract transactions that include an employee's perceptions of fairness within the organization's policies and procedures (Cropanzano et al., 2002). For example, if employees perceive that specific formal procedures developed and implemented by upper management are fair and just, they will 'repay' the organization via increased commitment and more positive attitudes directed at their employer (Cropanzano et al., 2002; DeConinck, 2010). Considering there is no actual reciprocation of tangible goods, there is a mutual perception of trust that must develop between the employee-employer (Lapointe et al., 2014). This mutual trust and equal exchange of conceptual 'goods' results in the formation of a 'psychological contract,' defined as "the individual's perception of the reciprocal obligations which underlie the exchange relationship between the employee and the employer" (Delobbe et al., 2016, p. 845). Organizational breaches of the perceived 'psychological contract' are common during a socialization period and can

result in a sense of betrayal and anger, and consequently a reduced sense of obligation to an employer (Tekleab et al., 2013). These breaches are easily remedied by implementing a structured and formal onboarding program, which can help employees feel supported and valued while simultaneously helping them create a more realistic 'psychological contract' (De Vos et al., 2003).

The socialization period is seen as a crucial component to shaping and stabilizing the terms of a 'psychological contract.' These first few months are the period where employees are assessing their initial perceived obligations toward their employer. High early obligations will cause employees to lean into their training programs even further and benefit from additional relationships with supervisors and other organizational insiders (Payne et al., 2008). Additionally, as a newcomer goes through an effective socialization program, they will develop perceptions of support and unity with the organization, leading to higher levels of organizational attachment (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). Newcomers perceive socialization tactics as a symbolic representation of an organization's commitment to them; therefore, proper training is considered as the fulfilment of the necessary obligations from the employer (Delobbe et al., 2016). It also is a viable demonstration that an employer values the newcomer and wishes to arm them with key intellectual and social capital needed for success (Korte, 2007). Organizations who fulfill these obligations and meet an employee's perception of the terms of the 'psychological contract' will thus be rewarded with higher levels of employee commitment and effort (Delobbe et al., 2016).

Building on this theory, a 'sink or swim' approach to training would thus violate the critical tenets of the 'psychological contract' between the employee and their employer. The assumption that it is the employee's sole responsibility to socialize

themselves overlooks the positive signal that an effective training program can communicate (Korte, 2007). This lack of communication and training comes at a critical stage in forming the 'psychological contract.' A failure to invest and meet the psychological needs of the newcomer will result in decreased confidence in the organization's political environment, motivating employees to offer less of their resources towards the organization (Delobbe et al., 2016).

Perceived Supervisor Support (PSS)

The supervisor plays a central role in the socialization process in helping provide the knowledge, skills, and feedback essential for employees to learn the responsibilities of one's job. Given their importance, employees continually assess the degree to which their supervisor values their contributions and cares about their well-being, a construct referred to in the literature as perceived supervisor support (PSS; Eisenberger et al., 2002). PSS has been found to have a significant effect on multiple individual and organizational outcomes. Those supervisors who act in an autonomy-supportive manner - by providing a meaningful rationale for work - will create higher job satisfaction and greater psychological health (Chong et al., 2020). Also, employees who rate their supervisors more positively tend to display stronger feelings of commitment to their organization and, in turn, have less intention to leave (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Rhoades et al., 2001).

The importance of PSS is rooted in two popular psychological theories. The first is the self-determination theory (SDT), which focuses on the degree to which individuals can satisfy their basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This theory posits three primary psychological needs: the need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). More recently, there has been a more direct focus in the SDT literature on

the importance of supervisor autonomy-supportive behaviours, which teach employees to engage in more intrinsic forms of motivation (Chong et al., 2020). Research has found that employee commitment and retention are increased when employees perceive that their supervisors are more autonomy-supportive (Deci & Ryan, 2000). PSS is also rooted in the social exchange theory, which focuses on the importance of trust and fairness in the social exchange process (DeConinck, 2010). This theory states that trust will develop when employees perceive that they have received a fair allocation of rewards (distributive), given say within evaluations (procedural), and perceive they have been treated fairly by their supervisors (interactional; DeConinck, 2010).

A key component of 'sink or swim' is a limited perception of support from an organization and its leadership. The existence of 'sink or swim' training tactics implies a form of leadership that values employee autonomy without the underlying support required. Therefore, while employees may be offered choice and autonomy in their socialization, these leaders would be failing to provide a meaningful rationale for the work. A supervisor thus expects an employee to be proactive in their work, rather than offering an employee a form of intrinsic motivation to do so. This lack of support would result in a failure to fulfill an employee's basic psychological need and thus additional adverse work outcomes.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Employees are also constantly assessing the degree to which they believe an organization is committed to them. This is referred to as perceived organizational support (POS), and is defined as the “global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Eisenberger et

al., 1986, p. 501). The concept of POS is also rooted within the social exchange relationship, where organizations offer up both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and are repaid in the form of increased commitment and effort from an employee (Johlke et al., 2002). Multiple factors contribute to POS, including across the board pay increases, consistent and sincere statements of praise and approval, job enrichment, and control and influence over organizational policies (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). If an employee sees their contributions as valued, it will signal to them that they are performing well, which can have many positive effects.

Within the literature, POS has been connected with multiple positive organizational outcomes. Firstly, it has been connected to positive work attitudes, including job satisfaction and affective commitment (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). The positive work attitudes are thought to result from fulfilling an employee's needs for esteem and approval, which make individuals more likely to embrace an organization as part of their social identity (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Also, the positive feelings are expected to result from increases in an individual's sense of competence in their role and thus their social worth (Eisenberger et al., 1997). POS has also been positively connected to effort-reward expectancies and objective measures of performance and negatively related to absenteeism and turnover intentions (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Finally, POS has resulted in a greater willingness of employees to engage in extra-role performances like providing unprompted aid to co-workers (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Overall, employees with a perception of POS are more satisfied in their work and increasingly motivated to support those around them.

Connections have also been made between POS and socialization tactics. For example, providing structured and common learning experiences fosters a desire for

social exchange (Allen & Shanock, 2013). Training expenditures are thus a signal to employees that their organization is willing to invest in their future and professional development, leading to increased feelings of reciprocal obligation. Also, POS acts as a form of remedy to the adverse effects associated with role ambiguity. This indicates that a sense of support is what employees fall back on in uncertain situations like when starting at a new company (Stamper & Johlke, 2003). Finally, POS was found to be a significant moderator between the level of institutionalized socialization and role innovation (Perrot et al., 2014). This finding demonstrates that the amount of support an employee feels can create an atmosphere where they are willing to take risks, mitigating one of the few downsides to an overly structured training program.

Perceptions of 'sink or swim' thus share some similarities with the construct POS. A perception of 'sink or swim' is also related to a perception that an organization values them; however, it is related to an employee's early experiences within an organization's training. Also, the lack of effectiveness associated with 'sink or swim' training can leave workers ill-prepared for their roles, which may also impact their sense of competence and social worth. This may also dampen their motivation to support those around them, further contributing to one's isolation and negative work attitudes. Overall, a lack of training activities designed to provide clarity into one's work situation can leave newcomers with a sense that they are on their own to 'sink or swim' (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). This can result in the perpetuation of a 'sink or swim' training culture, leading to an increasingly unsatisfied and uncommitted workforce.

Hypotheses Development

Factor Structure

Based on this review of the literature, the primary goal of this study is to create and validate a multidimensional measure of an employee's perception of 'sink or swim.' Overall, the literature presented on the construct of perceived 'sink or swim' training in the workplace suggests the existence of three distinct elements: [1] shift of responsibility, [2] limited training effectiveness, and [3] a lack of perceived support. The shift of responsibility factor can be more directly rooted within the social exchange theory whereby employees see training as a reciprocation of conceptual goods. This construct thus represents an organization's failure to take responsibility for training resulting in a perceived breach of an employee's 'psychological contract' (Tekleab et al., 2013). Additionally, 'effectiveness' can be closely connected to the informalized nature of an individualized approach to training. More specifically, 'effectiveness' can be linked to the bipolar tactics of collective-individual, formal-informal, sequential-random, and fixed-variable in that it reflects an employee's perception of the structure and quality of their companies training program (Jones, 1986). Finally, the support factors is connected with both POS and PSS within the academic literature. Moreover, the 'support' factor within this model reflects an employee's perception of support from both their organization and its leaders concerning its training program. Therefore, it is expected that the development of a measure will validate this 3-factor model of the perceptions of 'sink or swim' training tactics.

Hypothesis 1: A factor analysis will identify the three factors of perceived 'sink or swim' training as summarized as [1] shift of responsibility (responsibility), [2]

limited training effectiveness (effectiveness), and [3] a lack of perceived support (support).

Construct Validity

I also sought to determine if this scale has acceptable construct validity, which is an assessment of whether the scale measures what it intends to (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). This is accomplished through an analysis of both convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is whether the scale correlates with similar constructs and discriminant validity is whether the scale does not correlate with constructs it isn't intended to (Hinkin, 1998).

The first measure of convergent validity is whether a perception of 'sink or swim' will be related to individualized socialization tactics. Individualized socialization tactics are characterized by a lack of formality and structure within a training program, made up of the 6 bipolar tactics of individual, informal, variable, random, disjunctive, and divestiture' (Jones, 1986). Research on individualized training tactics highlights its connection with the three subfactors of 'sink or swim,' as outlined within this study. An individualized approach takes an employee-centric view of training, with the employee being expected to adopt innovative orientations to determine how to perform their tasks independently (Jones, 1986). Individualized tactics have also been connected with lower levels of perceived support from both one's organization and supervisor (Saks & Gruman, 2011). Finally, individualized tactics have been linked with higher role ambiguity and role conflict, two constructs that may result from a lack of an effective training program (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007; Saks & Gruman, 2011). Given these connections, it can be hypothesized that a perception of 'sink or

swim' will demonstrate convergent validity with a perception of individualized socialization tactics.

PSS and POS will also serve as measures of convergent validity with the 'sink or swim' scale. Within an organization, an employee continually assesses the degree to which either their supervisor or their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Research has also shown that the less support an employee feels by their supervisor or organization, the less attached they tend to feel towards their organization (Chong et al., 2020; Johlke et al., 2002; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). 'Sink or swim' is expected to measure similar conditions, capturing a lack of support more pointedly at the time of an employee's training. A 'sink or swim' strategy to training is thus a lonely approach where a newcomer is expected to learn and adapt on their own (Kowtha, 2018). Therefore, limited support offered during an organizations training program is expected to signal to an employee that their supervisor or organization does not value their contributions, leading to lower levels of PSS and POS.

Hypothesis 2a: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be negatively correlated with perceived institutionalized socialization tactics (or positively with perceived individualized socialization tactics).

Hypothesis 2b: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be negatively correlated with perceived supervisor support (PSS).

Hypothesis 2c: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be negatively correlated with perceived organizational support (POS).

Two variables expected to demonstrate discriminant validity with a perception of 'sink or swim' are measures of an individual's level of proactive personality and self-efficacy. A proactive personality is defined as a disposition towards proactivity or the degree to which a person takes control to influence their work environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). While it has been found that proactive individuals tend to benefit more from individualized training tactics, the two concepts have not been found to have a causal relationship (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). This is because the source of 'sink or swim' training is expected to operate from an organization and its training program, which is independent of an employee. While a proactive personality may help employees benefit from the ambiguity of a 'sink or swim' training environment, one's disposition is not expected to play a role in how a company operates their socialization program. Therefore, the factors of 'responsibility,' effectiveness,' and 'support' are expected to be an overall measure of how much that employee has been left to 'sink or swim' and not an assessment of their proactive disposition.

Self-efficacy is expected to operate in much the same way. Self-efficacy is defined as individual's belief in their own abilities to meet the demands of any given situation (Chen et al., 2001). A belief in oneself is crucial in the workplace as it allows an individual the confidence to take on new roles within a team and more proactively train themselves to meet the goals of the organization (Strauss et al., 2009). Similarly, while general self-efficacy may help deal with training

ambiguity, it is not expected to be a correlated concept. The incidence of 'sink or swim' training is expected to be an independent event, unaffected by the personal disposition of the individual or how much they believe in their own abilities. Accordingly, the factors of 'responsibility,' effectiveness,' and 'support' are expected to reflect the training tactics of a hiring organization rather than an employee's belief in their ability to do a job. Therefore, both an employee's level of proactivity and general self-efficacy are not expected to demonstrate correlation with a perception of 'sink or swim' training.

Hypothesis 3a: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will indicate a non-significant or small correlation with an employee's level of proactivity.

Hypothesis 3b: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will indicate a non-significant or small correlation with an employee's level of self-efficacy.

To further assess the psychometric qualities of the scale, this study aims to assess its test-retest reliability across two survey time points. Test-retest reliability is an effective way to review the reliability of a measure over a period of time (Guttman, 1945). Therefore, the temporal stability of the scale can be verified if respondents respond similarly at two separate times. Therefore, it is expected that the factors of the 'sink or swim' scale will demonstrate test-retest reliability.

Hypothesis 4: Each of the three factors of a perception of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will indicate test-retest reliability across time 1 and 2 data.

Predictive Validity

The literature has achieved a consensus on formal training systems in that institutionalized training is connected with better employee outcomes, including more positive organizational attitudes and less intention to leave (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; King et al., 2005). Based on these findings, this study predicts that perceptions of being left to 'sink or swim' within their organization's training program will result in similar outcomes related to job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit. Much of the negative attitudes that stem from ineffective training systems come from a lack of perceived competency in one's role (Saks et al., 2007). Those who have less clarity in their role will thus be less satisfied and committed to their organization, and also more likely to leave. Perceptions of 'sink or swim' may also be considered a breach of an employee's 'psychological contract,' further promoting adverse employee outcomes.

Hypothesis 5a: Each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be negatively related with affective commitment.

Hypothesis 5b: Each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be negatively related with job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5c: Each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' training (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) will be positively related with intention to quit.

It is also expected that employees who rate highly on perceptions of being left to 'sink or swim' will be associated with decreased levels of PSS among employees. A 'sink or swim' socialization program implies training where a leaders support towards newcomers is either limited or nonexistent. Research has found that merely meeting with employees before, during, and after a training program is enough to enhance training transfer by signalling interest and support (Lancaster et al., 2013). With the responsibility

of socialization shifted away from an organization's leadership, employees are unlikely to perceive their supervisors as supportive as they may feel isolated and 'on their own.' In addition, a perception of 'sink or swim' may mean that new hires have not received the necessary social feedback to help meet their needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness within the self-determination theory (Chong et al., 2020). As a result, it is expected that an employee who perceives that they have been left to 'sink or swim' early in their role will indicate that they have also received limited support from their supervisors. Furthermore, the literature has established a connection between PSS and adverse employee outcomes (Deconinck & Johnson, 2009; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). A perception of support from one's supervisor is thought to increase an employee's level of trust in their supervisor (DeConinck, 2010). An increased trust thus strengthens an employee's reciprocal obligation to fulfilling an organization's goals, which in turn increases their affective commitment and job satisfaction, and decreases their intention to leave (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Therefore, a perception of trust from a supervisor will partially account for the relationship between the three factors of 'sink or swim' and their relationships with adverse employee outcomes.

Hypothesis 6a: PSS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of employee affective commitment.

Hypothesis 6b: PSS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of employee job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6c: PSS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of an employee's intention to quit.

Overall, an employee's perception of 'sink or swim' is also expected to be connected to decreased POS. A higher perception of 'sink or swim' will thus operate as a signal to the employees that their organization is unwilling to invest in their professional development. This will lead an employee to feel as if they are on their own and that their organization does not value their contributions, leading to lower levels of POS.

Furthermore, the relationship between POS and adverse employee outcomes has also been well established within the literature (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). More specifically, POS is thought to fulfill an employees need for esteem and approval and increase their feelings of competence, thus leading to higher levels of satisfaction and attachment to an organization (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Additionally, POS also thought to strengthen an employee's reciprocal obligation to the employer, as both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are repaid in the form of increased commitment and effort from an employee (Johlke et al., 2002). Therefore, POS will act as a significant mediator to the relationship between the factors of 'sink or swim' and an employees' work attitudes.

Hypothesis 7a: POS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of employee affective commitment.

Hypothesis 7b: POS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of employee job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7c: POS will be a significant mediator on the relationship between each of the three factors of 'sink or swim' (responsibility, effectiveness, and support) and their prediction of prediction of an employee's intention to quit.

Incremental Validity

While the two constructs may be interrelated, it is expected that a 'sink or swim' scale will provide incremental value beyond that of the socialization tactics scale. This scale measures individualized (or institutionalized) socialization, and is made up of 6-factors that assess each of the bipolar socialization tactics. The focus of this scale is to assess the perceived level of structure and formality within a training program. However, this scale has a more exclusive focus on the tactical steps of ensuring learning transfer among new hires. When developing the scale, Jones (1986) was focused on how organizations relay information to new employees and the impact of different training tactics on adjustment outcomes.

A 'sink or swim' scale will aim to measure the degree to which an employee perceives that they have been left on their own to socialize themselves, as outlined within the proposed 3-factor model. This model of training has a broader scope and focuses on an employee's perception around the quality of their organizations training program, through their impressions of 'responsibility,' 'effectiveness,' and 'support.' Additionally, while the socialization tactics scale focuses on the formality of a training program, the 'sink or swim' scale intends to collectively measure an employee's perception of being left 'on their own.' Therefore, it is expected an employee's perception of being left to 'sink or swim' will represent a separate and independent construct to training formality. As a result, it should be

expected that the proposed 'sink or swim' scale should demonstrate incremental validity over the socialization tactics scale.

Hypothesis 8: The proposed 'sink or swim' scale will demonstrate incremental predictive validity over the socialization tactics scale (Jones, 1986) when measuring job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit.

Study 1: Item Generation and Content Validation

Methods

Participants

To generate an initial pool of items, this study leveraged both survey and open-ended-question data from an industry survey completed through a joint partnership between Digital Nova Scotia (DNS) and Saint Mary's University (SMU). This project surveyed 57 employees and 29 managers within technology firms across Nova Scotia, with some participation from a US company. The respondents were 43.0% ($n = 37$) female and 48.8% ($n = 42$) male. The average age of the respondents was 37.3 years old, with participants spending an average of 2.9 years at their current organization. Participants were recruited by email via convenience sample by leveraging an existing relationship with the technology association Digital Nova Scotia (DNS). Members and non-members of DNS were recruited through emails sent directly to HR contacts. Managers and employees each received a separate link with a unique survey. Each survey was composed of separate scales and open-ended questions specific to their level of employment (staff vs. manager).

Item Generation

An initial pool of 36 items were created at the start of the item generation process. This is consistent with Hinkin's (1998) recommendation to generate twice the number of required items and of having at least 4 – 6 items per domain. Three separate strategies were used to generate the initial item pool.

The first approach followed a deductive strategy, whereby the researcher completed a literature review to create items that are theoretically relevant to the predicted three-factor model. An extensive review of the literature from various databases was completed to seek out mentions of the phrase 'sink or swim' in relation to organizational socialization. Items were generated based on the specific phrasing and language regarding the 'sink or swim' construct, resulting in the creation of 13 items. The second strategy leveraged a pilot 2-item 'sink or swim' scale among the employee sample to seek relevant items from a similar scale (see Table 2). Intercorrelations were run between the 'sink or swim' scale and each of the individual items with the individualized socialization tactics scale. Seven items from the individualized tactics scale were reworded and included as they demonstrated strong correlations with the pilot 'sink or swim' scale. The third strategy included a content analysis of open-ended question response data from the DNS industry survey (see Table 3), which focused on multiple topics relating to organizational training (termed 'onboarding'). The open-ended questions focused on the important components of being onboarded, improvements their organizations could make, and their level of preparedness within their role following their training. The manager survey had similarly worded items but included additional questions regarding areas of improvement in their training program and steps their companies are taking to retain existing employees. Based on recommendations from

Hinkin (1995), the qualitative data was reviewed and assigned into one of the three sub-groups of ‘sink or swim’ (effectiveness, responsibility, and support). Relevant comments or words were then rewritten into items, resulting in the contribution of 16-items. The initial pool of items and where they were sourced can be seen in Table 4.

Table 2. 'Sink or Swim' Pilot Scale

'Sink or swim' pilot scale:
 Responses measured on 7-point scales ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

1. I did not receive formal training to prepare me for the position when entering the organization.
2. I have been forced to learn how to survive in my job mostly on my own.

Table 3. Manager and Employee Open-Ended Questions with DNS Survey

Survey Audience	Questions
Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What would you consider the most important aspect of getting onboarded into a company? 2. In your companies onboarding program, what did they do right? 3. What are some things your organization could do to improve its onboarding program? 4. How prepared for your position did you feel following your companies onboarding program? 5. Please use this form to include any outstanding feedback or insights you have.
Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What would you consider the most important aspect of getting onboarded into a company? 2. Within your organization’s onboarding program, what is your organization doing right? 3. If you had more time, what would you ideally be doing for your onboarding program? 4. What are you currently doing to retain those employees that have gone through the onboarding process? 5. Please use this form to include any other feedback or insights you have.

Content Validity Assessment

Consistent with the procedures outlined by Hinkin (1998), the initial item pool was run through a content validation assessment to ensure conceptual consistency with the sub-factors. A total of 18 graduate level psychology students were recruited to act as subject matter experts (SMEs) for an item matching task. This is consistent with the recommendation from Schriesheim (1993) that college students are appropriate for tasks involving matching item content to theoretically-defined categories. These SMEs were

provided a document with the definitions of the three constructs and a list of the initial pool of 36 items (see Appendix A). Each SME was asked to sort the items into their respective constructs or label it as undefined. SMEs were also asked to provide additional feedback on the survey after completing the activity. Items with an agreement index above the minimum threshold of 75% on the correct construct were retained. Any item that fell below the 75% agreement index threshold were either reworded based on feedback and retained or removed entirely.

Results

Seven items were automatically removed as they fell well below the 75% agreement index threshold as recommended by Hinkin (1998). Two items were moved into a separate subcategory following content validation after achieving a 75% agreement index on an unintended construct. Another two items close to the 75% threshold were reworded based on SME feedback and retained. SME feedback also highlighted 6 items that demonstrated redundancy, so these were removed. At the conclusion of the content validation phase, 23 total items were retained for participation in the next stage. Each of the subcategories ‘support’ and ‘responsibility’ were represented by 8 items with the ‘effectiveness’ subcategory being represented by 7 items. Finally, the ‘effectiveness’ factor was changed from the initial ‘preparedness’ title following a review of the SME feedback. A complete summary of the item generation and content validation stages can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. *Initial Item Pool with Content Validation Results*

Source	Item	Agreement Index		
		R	E	S
C	1. Much of my job knowledge has been gained on a trial-and-error basis	27.8%	50.0%	5.6%

C	2. My organization has not made an effort to build up my competency in this role	11.1 %	50.0 %	33.3 %
OE	3. When assigned a task, I am expected to figure it out on my own	50.0 %	11.1 %	33.3 %
OE	4. My organization believes in "throwing employees to the fire" during their training	66.7 %	11.1 %	11.1 %
LR	5. I have had to be proactive to learn the responsibilities of my role	88.9 %	0.0 %	11.1 %
LR	6. It is expected that I find my own way within my organization's training	83.3 %	5.6 %	11.1 %
LR	7. This organization believes that it is the responsibility of a new hire to learn how to fit in	83.3 %	0.0 %	5.6 %
C	8. Leaders in this organization do not see training new hires as one of their core responsibilities*	66.7 %	0.0 %	16.7 %
OE	9. My organization uses a learn-on-your-own approach to training	88.9 %	0.0 %	5.6 %
LR	1 Senior members of this organization want new hires to rely on themselves in their training	88.9 %	0.0 %	5.6 %
OE	1 I was expected to learn the responsibilities of my job on my own ^{RF}	88.9 %	0.0 %	5.6% %
LR	1 I have mostly trained myself in this organization	61.1 %	11.1 %	0.0% %
LR	1 My organization relies on a 'sink or swim' approach to teaching new hires how things work**	83.3 %	5.6 %	11.1 %
C	1 I did not go through an organized training program when I started in my role	5.6 %	88.9 %	5.6 %
OE	1 I wasn't provided the tools I needed to do my job	0.0 %	72.2 %	16.7 %
LR	1 There was no training roadmap to help prepare me for my position	5.6 %	88.9 %	0.0 %
LR	1 My organization's training has not facilitated my adjustment to the job	0.0 %	88.9 %	11.1 %
OE	1 It was unclear what was expected of me after going through training for my role*	5.6 %	72.2 %	11.1 %
OE	1 My organization had little structure in its training program	5.6 %	94.4 %	0.0 %
LR	2 I started my work immediately upon entering this organization	33.3 %	50.0 %	0.0% %
C	2 I was not put through a set of training experiences designed to prepare me for my position ^{RF}	11.1 %	88.9 %	0.0% %
OE	2 My organization did not do a great job of preparing me for my role ^{RF}	5.6 %	94.4 %	0.0% %
OE	2 I was thrown right into my work without adequate training	11.1 %	88.9 %	0.0 %
C	2 My organization did not provide insight into how long each stage of the training process should take	0.0 %	77.8 %	11.1 %
C	2 Members of this organization have held me at a distance until I learn the job	5.6 %	5.6 %	88.9 %
LR	2 My work team didn't help me get up-to-speed in my role	0.0 %	0.0 %	94.4 %
OE	2 Nobody checked in on me during my first few months of employment	11.1 %	0.0 %	88.9 %
OE	2 I wasn't formally introduced to members of the organization when I started	5.6 %	5.6 %	77.8 %
OE	2 My co-workers didn't have time for me when I started my role	0.0 %	5.6 %	94.4 %

LR	3	My supervisors were not available to help when I had a problem	0.0	0.0	94.4
	0.	during training	%	%	%
OE	3	I received limited support in my role when I started at this	0.0	0.0	100.
	1.	organization	%	%	0%
OE	3	I didn't know who to talk to when faced with a problem during	0.0	5.6	94.4
	2.	training	%	%	%
LR	3	Sink or swim' training is used as a way to screen out poor	77.8	5.6	0.0
	3.	performers at this organization**	%	%	%
LR	3	I received limited support from senior members during my companies	0.0	11.1	83.3
	4.	training ^{RF}	%	%	%
OE	3	Other employees were not available to me when I had questions during	0.0	5.6	88.9
	5.	training ^{RF}	%	%	%
OE	3	I was not provided support in my training anytime I was stuck ^{RF}	0.0	0.0	100.
	6.		%	%	0%

Note. R = Responsibility, E = Effectiveness, S = Support, LR = Sourced from literature review, C = Intercorrelations of existing items with pilot scale, OE = Open-ended question data. *Retained following adjustments based on SME feedback. **Retained and transferred to new sub-category based on SME agreement index. ^{RF}Items represent those that were removed based on suggestions from SME feedback.

Discussion

An initial item pool of 36 was derived from three main sources: deductively through a literature review, intercorrelations with existing measures, and a content analysis of open-ended question data. Following, a collection of graduate students in an applied psychology program (from both industrial-organizational and forensic psychology streams) acted as SMEs for content validation. These SMEs both engaged in a category matching activity and provided additional written feedback based on the representativeness of the scale and the quality of the items. Following this content validation, 7 items were removed after failing to meet the minimum 75% agreement index threshold. An additional 6 items were highlighted within the SME feedback as redundant and were subsequently removed. No identifiable patterns of incorrect loading were found within the error agreement indices across each of the factors. This demonstrates that no two factors illustrated significant similarities over others. Additionally, the original title ‘preparedness’ was changed to the current title ‘effectiveness’ based on SME feedback. While the definition remained the same, SMEs suggested that the new title was more

reflective of its intended construct and provided additional clarity. Finally, a total of 23 items were retained for participation in the next stage of the study. Each of the subcategories 'support' and 'responsibility' were represented by 8 items with the 'effectiveness' subcategory being represented by 7 items. While content validity cannot be guaranteed, these steps are expected to provide "content adequacy" as described by Schriesheim (1993). Therefore, these items are expected to represent a reasonable measure of the 'sink or swim' construct as represented by the three hypothesized subcategories (responsibility, effectiveness, and support).

Study 2: Factor Analyses, Psychometric Assessment, and Predictive and Incremental Validity

Methods

Procedure

The purpose of study 2 was to examine the factor structure, construct validity, predictive validity, and incremental value of the 'sink or swim' scale. This was accomplished by implementing a repeated measures 'shortitudinal' online study to control for common method variance and endogeneity issues. Qualtrics was used for survey development and data collection and Prolific for participant recruitment across two separate times points. Each participant was compensated £1.88 for their participation in each of the individual survey time points, resulting in compensation of £3.76 for full participation. For consent purposes, no participants under the age of 18 were included in this study. Participants were required to either be part-time or full-time workers and could not be self-employed. Also, participants needed to have been hired within their current organization in the last 2 years. Initially, participants were required to have been hired

within the last year; however, this qualifier was extended to 2 years after participant responses failed to reach a sufficient sample. Participants were recruited on Prolific over a period of one month from May to June 2021. The consent form and feedback letter included within this study can be seen in Appendix B and C respectively.

Included in the survey within time point 1 was the reduced 23-item 'sink or swim' scale for purposes of an initial Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). This time point also included the proactive personality scale (Crant, 1995) and the self-efficacy scale (Chen et al., 2001) for purposes of discriminant validity. It also included scales for PSS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), POS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), job satisfaction (as cited by Eisenberger et al., 1997), affective commitment (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990), and intention to quit (Kelloway et al., 1999) for the predictive validity analysis. This survey followed a 'shortitudinal' survey design, as all participants included within time 1 survey were invited back to complete a similar survey at time 2 survey after a period of one week (Dormann & Griffin, 2015). The average time elapsed between the first and second time point was 12.19 days ($SD = 5.10$). A lag of one week was considered appropriate as an employee's training should have a direct impact on their working experience, and thus a quick effect on how they perceive their overall working conditions. The second time point included the refined 'sink or swim' scale for purposes of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and test-retest reliability and the socialization tactics scale (Jones, 1986) for an assessment of incremental validity. Scales for PSS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), POS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), job satisfaction (as cited by Eisenberger et al., 1997), affective commitment (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990), and intention to quit (Kelloway et al., 1999) were also included in the second time point for the predictive validity analysis. The scales

for PSS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), POS (Eisenberger et al., 1997), and socialization tactics (Jones, 1986) will also be used to test convergent validity.

Participants

An *a-priori* power analysis was conducted in R using version 4.0.1 with the package *semPower* in order to determine the required sample size. With an alpha of $\alpha = .05$, RMSEA = .08, $df = 100$, and desired power of $\beta = .80$, the suggested minimum sample size was $N = 164$. Also, Hinkin (1998) recommends at least a 1:10 ratio of items to participants for an accurate EFA and CFA, thus requiring a minimum sample of 230. To account for the potential removal of participants with poor or incomplete data and possible drop-out on the second survey, this study oversampled and recruited 278 participants.

The 278 participants included within the first time point were recruited on Prolific across a period of three weeks. Only two participants were removed as they failed at least 2 of the 3 attention check questions – which was the criteria used to remove careless participants. The sample demonstrated a fairly equal gender split, with 156 female (56.1%) and 115 male (41.4%) participants, and an average age of 32.7. The majority of the sample was Caucasian ($n = 243$, 87.4%), had an undergraduate degree ($n = 126$, 45.3%), and had over 10 years of working experience ($n = 135$, 48.6%). Also, 169 (60.8%) of the participants had been at their current organizations for under a year with the remaining 109 (39.2%) being between 1 and 2 years with most workers being employed in large organizations (over 250 people; $n = 128$, 46.0%). Workers came from a wide variety of industries, with most employees working in either education ($n = 40$, 14.4%), information technology ($n = 32$, 11.5%), healthcare ($n = 28$, 10.1%), or public

services ($n = 22$, 7.9%). Workers indicated that their whole training process was fairly short, as most were either 1 – 7 days ($n = 73$, 26.3%) or 1 – 4 weeks ($n = 70$, 25.2%) long. Finally, most of the workers specified that they were trained in-person ($n = 121$, 43.5%), which was a surprising finding considering the studies timeline coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. This is possibly a reflection of the samples specified industries as healthcare and education workers often require in-person training. Additionally, it is also possible that a large number of participants were trained prior to the incidence of the pandemic, due to the inclusion of a sample of individuals trained within the last two years.

Following the one-week lag, 200 participants (71.9%) returned to complete the second survey at time 2. No participants failed more than 2 attention check questions, thus no responses were removed from this data set. The returning sample had a similar gender split with 110 females (55.0%) and 84 (42.0%) males, and an average age of 32.98 years old ($SD = 8.62$). The majority of the returning sample was Caucasian ($n = 175$, 87.5%), had an undergraduate degree ($n = 93$, 46.5%), and had over 10 years of working experience ($n = 96$, 48.0%). The majority of the returning participants similarly specified that they were trained primarily in-person ($n = 87$, 43.5%) and that the whole training process took either 1 – 7 days ($n = 55$, 27.5%) or 1 – 4 weeks ($n = 51$, 25.5%). Finally, most of the returning sample also worked in either education ($n = 27$, 13.5%), information technology ($n = 25$, 12.5%), healthcare ($n = 23$, 11.5%), or public services ($n = 14$, 7.0%). A full breakdown of the demographics for time 1 and time 2 data can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Demographic Information from Time 1 and Time 2 Samples

Variable	Time 1	Time 2
Age	32.72	32.98
Sex		
Male (Female)	41.4(56.1)	42.0(55.0)

Other	2.6	3.0
Ethnicity		
White/Caucasian	87.4	87.5
Black	2.2	3.0
Asian	4.7	4.0
Hispanic	4.3	3.5
Other	1.5	2.0
Education		
High school graduate	11.5	11.0
Trade/college degree	14.0	12.5
Undergraduate degree	45.3	46.5
Master’s degree	24.1	24.5
Doctoral degree	4.7	5.5
Employment status		
Full-time	76.6	76.5
Part-time	23.4	23.5
Work experience		
6 months to 1 year	1.8	2.0
1 to 5 years	25.9	26.5
5 – 10 years	23.4	23.5
Over 10 years	48.6	48.0
Company size		
Less than 10	7.2	7.0
10 – 49	18.7	19.0
50 – 250	25.9	26.0
More than 250	46.0	46.5
Training method		
Virtual	27.0	24.5
In-person	43.5	43.5
Mix	26.6	29.5
Training length		
1 day	9.0	6.5
1 – 7 days	26.3	27.5
1 – 4 weeks	25.2	25.5
1 - 3 months	14.7	14.0
3 – 6 months	3.6	4.0
6 months to 1 year	5.0	5.0
Over 1 year	9.7	11.0
Didn’t get trained	5.4	5.5
Industry		
Education	14.4	13.5
Information technology	11.5	12.5
Healthcare	10.1	11.5
Public services	7.9	7.0
Retail	5.8	7.0
Accounting, banking, or finance	5.4	5.5
Engineering or manufacturing	5.4	5.5

Note. Time 1 $N = 278$, Time 2 $N = 200$. Statistics reported in percentages except age. All statistics reported in percentages except age.

Measures

Survey respondents in time 1 completed the demographic questions, and the scales for POS, PSS, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to quit, proactive personality, and self-efficacy. The changes made to the 2nd time point survey included the removal of the scales for proactive personality and self-efficacy and the addition of the socialization tactics scale. Most scales were included at each time point following with the recommendations outlined by Tarris, Kessler, and Kelloway (*in press*) in the value of including measurements at both waves of a time-separated design. However, the scales related to convergent and discriminant validity were included only at a single time point for the sole purpose of reducing survey fatigue. All measures had participants indicate their agreement level with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). A full outline of the demographic questions and the scales and their items included at each time point can be seen in Appendix D.

Demographics. A series of demographic-related questions were included to both describe the sample and ensure they met the requirements of the study. Questions focused on age, ethnicity, gender, and a series of training and occupation-related questions.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS). POS is defined as the extent to which employees perceive that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This construct was measured by the Survey for Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) as developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). The scale has 8 items and holds an acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .92 and .93 for time 1 and time 2 respectively.

Perceived Supervisor Support (PSS). PSS is defined as the level to which individual employees perceive that their supervisor values their contribution and cares

about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2002). The Survey for Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) was adapted in the same manner as Eisenberger et al. (2002) or Rhoades et al. (2001) to assess the level of PSS. The adaptation was completed by replacing the word organization with supervisor across the eight items. The scale has 8 items and holds an acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .93 and .94 for time 1 and time 2 data respectively.

Job Satisfaction. This study used four items from Quinn and Sheppard's job satisfaction index to assess the employee's overall satisfaction with their job (as cited by Eisenberger et al., 1997). This scale showed a good internal consistency score, reporting a Cronbach's alpha of .92 for both time 1 and 2 data.

Affective commitment. The measure of commitment to one's organization in this study will be restricted to their affective commitment. This construct is based on the three-component model of commitment, which integrates affective, normative, and continuance commitment to an organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This antecedent was chosen as it represents the emotional attachment that one has towards an organization, which is the target construct of this study. The employee's level of affective commitment to their respective organization was measured using an 8-item scale created by Allen & Meyer (1990). The scale demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .92 and .91 from time 1 and 2 respectively.

Intention to quit. A 3-item scale developed by Kelloway, Gottlieb, and Barham (1999) and used by Leiter and Maslach (2009) was used to measure individual employees' turnover intentions. The three items include "I plan on leaving my job within the next year," "I have been actively looking for other jobs," and "I want to remain in my job."

This scale indicates good internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 for time 1 and 2 respectively.

Socialization Tactics. Jones' (1986) 30-item measure was used to assess the employees' perception of socialization tactics within their organization. The socialization tactics scale measures each of the six socialization tactic categories (collective/individual, formal/informal, investiture/divestiture, sequential/random, serial/disjunctive, and fixed/variable), with five items assigned to each. Scores are combined so that a high score indicates increased levels of perceived institutionalized socialization and a low score indicates increased levels of perceived individualized socialization. The associated alphas of each of the 6 tactics are as follows: collective-individual ($\alpha = .64$), formal-informal ($\alpha = .36$), investiture-divestiture ($\alpha = .77$), sequential-random ($\alpha = .80$), serial-disjunctive ($\alpha = .77$), and fixed-variable ($\alpha = .74$).

Proactive Personality. Bateman and Crant's (1993) 10-item proactive personality scale was used to measure the employee's proactivity. This measure is intended to assess a disposition towards proactivity or the degree to which a person takes control to influence their work environment. Development of the scale indicated uni-dimensionality of the construct, with good internal scale reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90.

Self-Efficacy. The 8-item general self-efficacy scale (Chen et al., 2001) was used to measure self-efficacy among the participants. This scale is intended to measure an individual's belief in their own abilities to meet the demands of any given situation. This scale demonstrated a good internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94.

Analyses

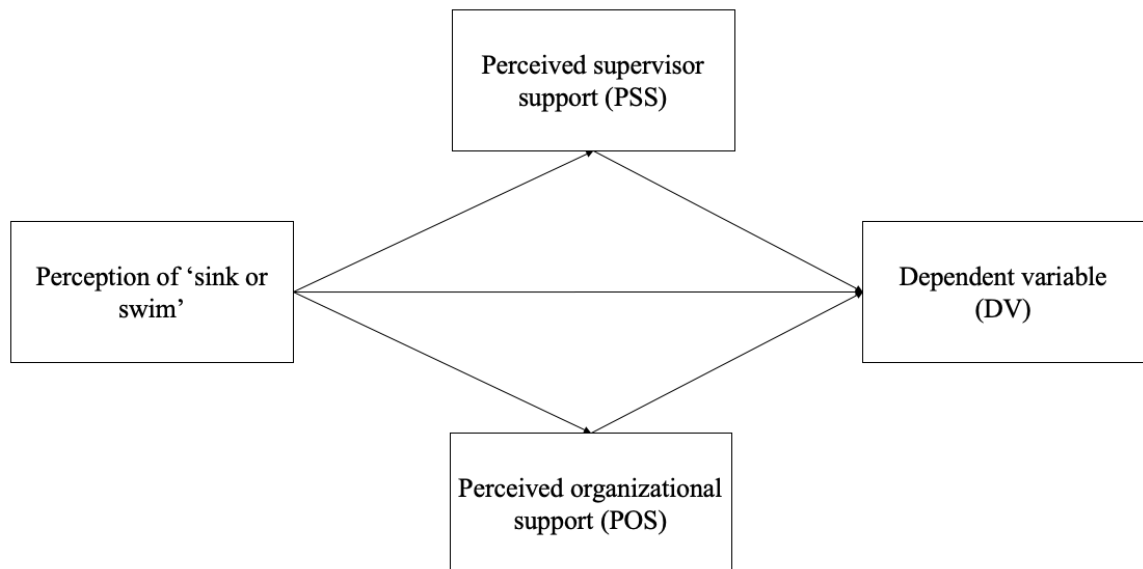
Survey response data was collected and analyzed using statistical analysis software SPSS and JAMOVI. The data was analyzed to find and remove participants with failed responses to attention check questions. Univariate and multivariate outliers were checked using z-scores and cooks distance calculations. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov was also run to assess the assumption of normality. A Pearson test was run to evaluate the multicollinearity of variables included within the analysis. Finally, a review of demographic data using descriptives was employed to understand the characteristics of the sample.

Hypothesis 1 was evaluated using both an EFA at time point 1 and a CFA of the refined scale at time point 2. The initial EFA was used to test the factor structure and highlight items that needed to be removed to ensure parsimony of the final scale. Items were considered for retainment based on high factor loadings (higher than 0.4), cross-loadings, and theoretical relevance and distinctness (Hinkin, 1998). Items that loaded significantly on two factors needed to demonstrate factor loading of twice as strong on the appropriate factor than any other factor (Hinkin, 1998). A follow-up CFA was run on the refined 'sink or swim' scale using the time 2 data to further quantify the goodness of fit of the measurement model as predicted in hypothesis 1.

Pearson correlations were used to assess both the convergent and discriminant validity with the relevant scales. The variables and scales that were expected to represent convergent reliability with the 'sink or swim' construct are the socialization tactics scale, PSS scale, and POS scale, as predicted in hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c. The scales representing discriminant validity (hypothesis 3a and 3b) were those relating to individual self-efficacy (Chen et al., 2001) and proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 were assessed with mediation models using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2017). These analyses aimed to determine if both POS and PSS are significant mediating variables on the relationship between perceived ‘sink or swim’ on affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit independently (see Figure 1). Finally, in order to assess hypothesis 8, a hierarchical regression was run to determine whether the ‘sink or swim’ scale adds significant incremental predictive validity over the socialization tactics scale when predicting job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit. A relative weights analysis (RWA) was also used to assess the relative importance of the predictors considering the high levels of correlation between the socialization tactics and ‘sink or swim’ scales (Tonidandel et al., 2009a).

Figure 1. Hypothesized Mediated Model across All Outcome Variables



Note. DV = Represented by affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit.

Results

Data Preparation and Assumption Testing

Intercorrelations between all variables with means and standard deviations for survey time point 1 and 2 can be seen in Table 6 and Table 7 respectively. Prior to the

analyses, the data set was reviewed and cleaned to ensure the quality of responses. It also was put through a series of assumption checks relevant to all analyses within hypothesis testing. First, univariate outliers were reviewed by using standardized scores on both time 1 and time 2 measures. Three potential outliers were found on the self-efficacy variable (< 3.29 SD), however, a visual inspection of the data indicated that they were reasonable the responses to the items while also falling within the bounds of the Likert response range and were considered reasonable responses to the items, so the cases were retained. All of the analyses that included 2 or more independent or dependent variables were also assessed for multivariate outliers using Cook's distance. Across all relevant analyses, no values over 1 were found, indicating that no single case had undue influence over the associated analysis. A significant Kolmogorov-Smirnov test did demonstrate non-normal data across 10 of the time 1 and 2 variables. This finding is unalarming for three main reasons. First, a visual inspection of the normal Q-Q plot found that 9 of the 10 variables plotted data followed a diagonal straight line, indicating normality; self-efficacy demonstrating some level of deviation. Regardless, the sample is also sufficiently large (< 30) enough to fulfill the central limit theorem principle indicating that the parameter estimates of a population will approach normality as sample size increases regardless of the shape of the population (Fields, 2018). Finally, considering the rarity of some of the behaviours measured, it can be expected that the data may demonstrate a non-normal appearance. For example, most employees were expected to demonstrate relatively low responses on the 'support' items as they indicate uncommon and extreme work behaviours.

Finally, a series of paired samples t-tests were run to assess if there were any significant differences between the scores of participants found at time 1 and 2 for the

relevant variables (job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to quit, PSS, and POS). No statistically significant difference was found for four out of the five variables. However, a statistically significant difference was found between the means for job satisfaction for time 1 ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.44$) and 2 ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.47$), $t(199) = 2.25$, $p = .015$, indicating a small yet surprising difference between the two time points.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Time 1 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
1. Age	32.73	8.50	-													
2. Employed	3.47	1.49	.05	-												
3. Gender	1.63	.60	.03	-.01	-											
4. Work Experience	4.2	.89	.61**	.03	.13*	-										
5. Training Method	1.94	.81	.02	.10	.01	-.02	-									
6. Responsibility	3.65	1.47	.02	.00	-.02	.01	.09	-								
7. Effectiveness	3.73	1.71	.08	-.01	.00	.09	.17**	.67**	-							
8. Support	2.94	1.41	.07	-.03	-.04	-.06	-.13*	.74**	.60**	-						
9. Job Satisfaction	5.09	1.44	-.05	-.01	-.00	.06	.10	-.32	-.20	-.46	-					
10. Affective Commitment	3.76	1.38	-.05	-.00	.00	.07	.16**	-.31**	.26**	-.41	.68**	-				
11. Intention to quit	3.20	1.89	-.03	.11	.03	-.02	-.02	.20**	.15*	.23**	-.46**	.44**	-			
12. Proactivity	4.89	.93	-.14*	.16**	.05	.08	-.03	.12*	-.02	-.01	.23**	-.28	-.01	-		
13. Self-Efficacy	5.45	.93	-.04	-.14*	.06	.16**	-.02	-.03	-.06	-.18**	.36**	.28**	-.14*	.68**	-	
14. POS	4.62	1.25	-.02	-.04	-.04	.07	.07	.40**	.28**	-.52**	.62**	.67**	-.36**	.29**	.39**	-
15. PSS	5.06	1.23	-.03	.04	.02	.08	.09	.44**	.27**	.611**	.62**	.56**	-.31**	.14*	.32**	.77**

Note. **Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.001$ level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level (2-tailed). POS = Perceived organizational support, PSS = Perceived supervisor support.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Time 2 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
1. Age	32.98	8.62													
2. Employed	3.58	1.51	0.03												
3. Gender	1.63	0.64	0.03	-0.06											
4. Work Experience	4.18	0.89	.63**	0.07	0.12										
5. Training Method	2.00	0.80	0.06	0.03	-0.06	-0.03									
6. Responsibility	3.83	1.49	-0.05	-0.00	-0.05	-0.01	-0.04								
7. Effectiveness	3.96	1.63	-0.03	0.05	-0.02	0.03	-.15*	.68**							
8. Support	3.12	1.42	-0.06	-0.00	0.03	-0.10	-0.07	.78**	.68**						
9. Job Satisfaction	4.92	1.47	-0.01	0.08	-0.07	0.02	0.12	-	-	-					
10. Affective Commitment	3.73	1.37	-0.04	0.02	-0.03	0.03	0.01	.37**	.38**	.56**					
11. Intention to Quit	3.32	1.90	-0.00	0.02	0.02	-0.04	-0.02	.39**	.36**	.58**	.72**				
12. Institutionalized Socialization	4.10	0.81	-0.03	-0.01	-0.03	-0.06	0.13	-	-	-	-	-			
13. POS	4.50	1.24	0.01	-0.03	-0.10	0.05	-0.02	.61**	.72**	.70**	.48**	.56**	.25**		
14. PSS	4.97	1.22	0.04	0.12	0.02	0.10	0.06	.46**	.36**	.60**	.65**	.69**	.36**	.58**	
								.52**	.37**	.66**	.70**	.63**	.39**	.53**	.79**

Note. **Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.001$ level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level (2-tailed), POS = Perceived organizational support, PSS = Perceived supervisor support.

Factor Structure

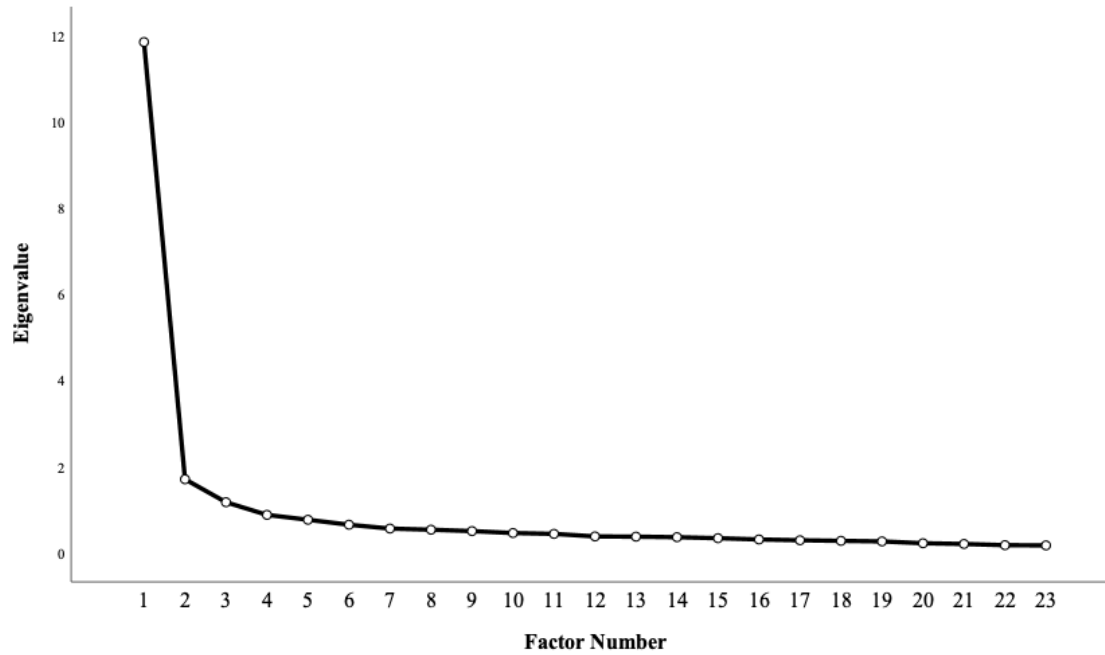
Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

To test the factor structure and refine the scale, an EFA with a principal axis oblique factor rotation (Promax) was conducted on the initial 24-item 'sink or swim' scale. An oblique (Promax) factor rotation was chosen as factors indicated acceptable levels of correlation (< 0.3) based on recommendations as outlined by Meyers et al., (2017). This analysis was conducted on the 'sink or swim' data from the time 1 sample. Before running this analysis, the researcher completed an initial scan of the inter-item correlations and found that all items correlated reasonably well with each other and that none of the coefficients were excessively large ($< .90$); therefore, no items were removed at this stage. In addition, the Bartlett's test of sphericity was found to be significant ($p < .001$), indicating sufficient correlation required to move forward with the analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure also verified that the sample from time 1 was adequate for the analysis, $KMO = 0.96$. Cases were removed listwise in this analysis, leading to 18 cases with partial or withheld responses being removed from the analysis. Regardless, due to the large sample size ($N = 260$), the variables to cases ratio was deemed sufficient for an effective EFA analysis based on the 1:10 item to participant recommendations as outlined by Hinkin (1998).

Following an initial EFA, a total of 3 factors were found to have eigenvalues of greater than one. These three factors accounted for 64.1% of the total variance. Further inspection of the inflections of the scree plot (see Figure 2) indicated the possibility of either a 2 or 3 factor solution within the 'sink or swim' scale. These three factors fell in line with the theoretical organization of the 'sink or swim' construct as

predicted in hypothesis 1 and confirmed in study 1. The factor loadings after the oblique factor rotation (Promax) of the original 23-item 'sink or swim' scale can be seen in Table 8. All items intended to represent the 'support' (factor 1) sub-factor demonstrated medium to strong factor coefficients from 0.54 to 0.92. The factor coefficients that loaded onto the hypothesized 'effectiveness' (factor 2) and 'responsibility' (factor 3) sub-factors also demonstrated medium to strong coefficients, ranging from .36 to .88. Within the hypothesized 'effectiveness' subfactor, only items 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 demonstrated factor loadings above 0.4 with no significant cross-loadings, so these items were retained. Items 3 and 4 did not demonstrate a high enough loading on to the 'effectiveness' factor over and above the loading on the 'support' factor; therefore, these items were removed. Within the hypothesized 'responsibility' sub-factor, items 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 demonstrated loading coefficients on the appropriate factor. Item 3 indicated inappropriate cross-loadings and item 6 indicated loadings onto an incorrect factor; therefore, these items were removed. Overall, this initial EFA confirmed the existence of a 3-factor solution within the 'sink or swim' scale as outlined in hypothesis 1. However, the inflections seen within the scree plot hinted at the possibility of a two-factor model.

Figure 2. Scree Plot Showing Eigenvalues for Factor Extraction for First EFA (Time 1 Data)



Note. $N = 260$.

Table 8. Factor Loadings of First EFA on Initial 23-Item Pool (Time 1 Data)

Item code	Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Support	Effectiveness	Responsibility
Supp 1*	Members of this organization have held me at a distance until I learn the job.	2.74	1.72	.67	-.30	.27
Supp 2*	My work team didn't help me get up-to-speed in my role.	2.80	1.55	.80	.03	-.04
Supp 3*	Nobody checked in on me during my first few months of employment.	2.68	1.80	.66	.05	.07
Supp 4*	I wasn't formally introduced to members of the organization when I started.	3.02	2.00	.56	.04	.11

Supp 5*	My co-workers didn't have time for me when I started my role.	2.92	1.73	.92	-.11	-.07
Supp 6*	My supervisors were not available to help when I had a problem during training.	2.85	1.69	.57	.19	-.00
Supp 7*	I received limited support in my role when I started at this organization.	3.35	1.92	.54	.26	.10
Supp 8*	I didn't know who to talk to when faced with a problem during training.	2.82	1.72	.64	.17	.01
Eff 1*	I did not go through an organized training program when I started in my role.	3.52	2.10	-.20	.83	.05
Eff 2*	There was no training roadmap to help prepare me for my position.	3.82	2.00	.02	.88	-.06
Eff 3	My organization's training has not facilitated my adjustment to the job.	3.17	1.72	.31	.61	-.04
Eff 4	It was unclear what was expected of me after going through training for my role.	3.23	1.80	.31	.56	-.12
Eff 5*	My organization had little structure in its training program.	3.77	1.94	-.12	.86	.05
Eff 6*	I was thrown right into my work without adequate training.	3.50	1.97	.28	.46	.18
Eff 7*	My organization did not provide insight into how long each stage of the training process should take.	3.88	1.90	.02	.71	.02
Resp 1*	'Sink or swim' training is used as a way to screen out poor performers at this organization.	3.17	1.80	.27	-.24	.65
Resp 2*	My organization relies on a 'sink or swim' approach to teaching new hires how things work.	3.33	1.87	.24	.05	.58
Resp 3	I have had to be proactive to learn the responsibilities of my role.	5.12	1.67	-.10	.39	.36
Resp 4*	It is expected that I find my own way within my organization's training.	4.00	1.77	-.04	.29	.62
Resp 5*	This organization believes that it is the responsibility of a new hire to learn how to fit in.	3.82	1.79	.06	.02	.73
Resp 6	Leaders in this organization do not see training new hires as one of their core responsibilities.	3.41	1.86	.38	.34	.11
Resp 7*	My organization uses a learn-on-your-own approach to training.	3.88	1.78	-.09	.28	.67
Resp 8*	Senior members of this organization want new hires to rely on themselves in their training.	3.75	1.76	.02	.10	.70
Eigenvalues ^a				9.46	9.47	9.06

Note. Listwise $N = 260$. PAF = Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation method = Promax with Kaiser normalization. Rotation converged in 8 iterations. *items retained for use in second EFA analysis. Supp = Support, Eff = Effectiveness, Resp = Responsibility. Factor loadings of greater than 0.3 are bolded. ^aFollowing rotation, as the rotation sums of squared loadings.

To further clarify the factor structure, a second EFA was run using the surviving items from the first EFA; therefore, ‘effectiveness’ items 3 and 4 and ‘responsibility’ items 3 and 6 were removed. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was found to be significant ($p < .001$), indicating sufficient correlation required to move forward with a second EFA. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure also verified that the sample was adequate for the analysis, $KMO = 0.95$. This second EFA also demonstrated 3 factors with eigenvalues of 1 or more, confirming the findings in the first EFA. The three factors together accounted for 66.5% of the variance. The factor loadings after this second oblique factor rotation (Promax) of the adapted 19-item ‘sink or swim’ scale can be seen in Table 9. ‘Support’ item number 1 and ‘effectiveness’ item 6 indicated cross-loadings on incorrect factors and were thus removed from the scale. A third EFA with the removal of ‘support’ item 1 and ‘effectiveness’ item 6 indicated that the remaining items had adequate loading coefficients (< 0.4) and no demonstration of inappropriate cross-loading, while mapping well onto the three factor ‘sink or swim’ solution. Therefore, the three-factor model as predicted in hypothesis 1 was supported following three separate EFA analyses. Overall, six total items were removed from the scale within the EFA stage.

Table 9. Factor Loadings of First EFA on Reduced 19-Item Pool (Time 1 Data)

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Supp 1	2.74	1.72	.60	-.27	.30
Supp 2*	2.80	1.55	.79	-.05	.00
Supp 3*	2.68	1.80	.68	.07	.03
Supp 4*	3.02	2.00	.57	.07	.08
Supp 5*	2.92	1.73	.92	-.10	-.07
Supp 6*	2.85	1.69	.60	.21	-.03
Supp 7*	3.35	1.92	.56	.24	.09
Supp 8*	2.82	1.72	.66	.15	.02
Eff 1*	3.52	2.10	-.12	.84	-.01

Eff 2*	3.82	2.00	.10	.85	-.08
Eff 5*	3.77	1.94	-.07	.87	.03
Eff 6	3.50	1.97	.30	.34	.26
Eff 7*	3.88	1.90	.07	.68	.02
Resp 1*	3.17	1.80	.18	-.24	.71
Resp 2*	3.33	1.87	.19	.05	.63
Resp 4*	4.00	1.77	-.02	.25	.63
Resp 5*	3.82	1.79	.03	.03	.74
Resp 7*	3.88	1.78	.11	.25	.72
Resp 8*	3.75	1.76	-.01	.09	.72
Eigenvalue ^a			7.99	7.27	8.04

Note. Listwise $N = 260$. PAF = Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation method = Promax with Kaiser normalization. Rotation converged in 8 iterations. *items retained for use in CFA analysis on time 2 data. Supp = Support, Eff = Effectiveness, Resp = Responsibility. Factor loadings of greater than 0.3 are bolded. ^aFollowing rotation, as the rotation sums of squared loadings.

These 17-items were then passed through reliability analysis to ensure the internal consistency of the items for each of the three subfactors. Each of the sub-factors for ‘support,’ ‘effectiveness,’ and ‘responsibility’ demonstrated excellent reliability with a Cronbach’s α of .90, .88, and .90 respectively. In conclusion, 17 items were retained from the original ‘sink or swim’ scale following three EFA analyses and a reliability analysis. The ‘support,’ ‘effectiveness,’ and ‘responsibility’ sub-factors each retained 7, 4, and 6 remaining items respectively. The inter-factor correlations can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10. Inter-Factor Correlations of EFA while using 17 Retained Items (Time 1 Data)

Item code	1.	2.	3.
1. Factor 1 (Support)	-		
2. Factor 2 (Effectiveness)	.61**	-	
3. Factor 3 (Responsibility)	.74**	.71**	-

Note. Listwise $N = 260$. PAF = Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation method = Promax with Kaiser normalization. **Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

A follow-up CFA was then conducted on JAMOVI using the time 2 data ($N = 200$) to further assess the goodness of fit of the measurement model and compare it across

alternative models. Across all 17-items, none of the factor loadings fell below the 0.40 threshold (Hinkin, 1998), thus confirming the appropriateness of the factor loadings as found within the initial EFA (see Table 11). Five main model fit indices were then used to assess the overall fit of the factor structure: the model chi-square, standard root-mean-square residual (SRMR), the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). As noted in the study by Hu and Bentler (1999), an SRMR value of below or close to .08 and RMSEA values below .06 indicates a good fit. Hu and Bentler (1999) also indicated that scores approaching 1 and closer 0.95 for the CFI and TLI indicate a close fit. Finally, a chi-square of two or three times the value of df has been suggested as an indication of an acceptable model fit. In the ‘sink or swim’ scale, fit indices for the 3-factor model indicated a statistically significant chi-square test with a value of, $\chi^2 (116, N = 200) = 280, p < .001$, and an SRMR value of .047. The indicators CFI (.937), TLI (.926), and RMSEA (.084) taken together indicate an adequate to good fit of the measurement model (Hu & Bentler, 1999). While the .084 RMSEA score was beyond the .06 threshold, the CFI, TLI, and SRMR scores all indicated either close to or below their recommended thresholds based on the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999). Taken together, these indices demonstrated that the 3-factor structure represented an adequate fit to the model, thus confirming hypothesis 1.

Table 11. Factor Loadings from CFA on 17-Item Scale (Time 2 Data)

Factor	Item	Estimate	SE	Z	Std. Est
Support	Supp 2	1.26	0.10	12.34	0.76**
	Supp 3	1.34	0.11	12.59	0.77**
	Supp 4	1.15	0.13	8.91	0.59**

	Supp 5	1.42	0.11	13.20	0.79**
	Supp 6	1.39	0.10	14.22	0.83**
	Supp 7	1.53	0.11	13.86	0.82**
	Supp 8	1.31	0.11	12.43	0.76**
Effectiveness	Eff 1	1.55	0.12	13.19	0.79**
	Eff 2	1.67	0.11	15.19	0.87**
	Eff 5	1.61	0.10	15.89	0.90**
	Eff 7	1.37	0.10	13.59	0.81**
Responsibility	Resp 1	1.21	0.11	11.17	0.71**
	Resp 2	1.56	0.11	14.42	0.84**
	Resp 4	1.44	0.10	13.98	0.82**
	Resp 5	1.53	0.11	14.65	0.85**
	Resp 7	1.43	0.10	14.30	0.84**
	Resp 8	1.40	0.10	13.91	0.82**

Note. **Significant at the $p < .001$ level. Full Information Maximum Likelihood $N = 200$. Supp = Support, Eff = Effectiveness, Resp = Responsibility.

An additional CFA was completed to compare the 3-factor model fit to that of a 2-factor model with the sub-factors ‘responsibility’ and ‘support’ combined. This was completed as those two factors indicated the highest correlations at both the EFA ($r = .74$, $p < .001$) and CFA ($r = .85$, $p < .001$) stages of analysis. Fit indices for the 2-factor model indicated a statistically significant chi-square test with a value of, $\chi^2 (118, N = 200) = 393$, $p < .001$ and an SRMR value of .056. These values, taken with the indicators CFI (.894), TLI (.878), and RMSEA (.108) indicate a poorer fit than the hypothesized 3-factor model.

Finally, a third CFA was completed to compare the 3-factor model fit to that of a unidimensional model. Fit indices for this unidimensional model indicated a statistically significant chi-square test with a value of, $\chi^2 (119, N = 200) = 575$, $p < .001$ and an

SRMR value of .068. These values, taken with the indicators CFI (.824), TLI (.799), and RMSEA (.138) indicate a poorer fit than either the 2-factor model or the hypothesized 3-factor model. The model fit indices across the 1, 2 and 3-factor models can be seen in Table 12. Chi-square difference tests were also run to determine which of the three models demonstrated the best fit. These results showed that the hypothesized 3-factor model provided a significantly better fit than the 1-factor, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}(3)} = 295, p < .001$, and 2-factor models, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}(2)} = 113, p < .001$.

Overall, the results of both the EFA and CFA stages indicated that the 17-item ‘sink or swim’ scale was best fit by the hypothesized 3-factor model. Albeit, it is important to note that the CFA results indicated that the three-factor solution demonstrated only an adequate fit to the model based on cut-off scores outlined by Hu and Bentler (1999). Regardless, the 3-factor model outlined in hypothesis 1 was sufficiently supported through the CFA process. The final 17-item scale can be seen in Appendix E.

Table 12. Fit Indices for 1 – 3 Factor Models in CFA (Time 2 Data)

	χ^2	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA	90% CI	
							Lower	Upper
1 – Factor	575	4.83	.824	.799	.068	.138	.127	.150
2 – Factor	393	3.33	.894	.878	.056	.108	.096	.120
3 – Factor	280	2.41	.937	.926	.047	.084	.072	.097

Note. $N = 200$. CI = Confidence Interval. 2-factor model includes combined responsibility and support items.

Psychometric Properties

To confirm the psychometric properties of the 17-item ‘sink or swim’ scale, it was reviewed for convergent and discriminant validity. This follows with best practices

outlined by Hinkin (1998), in that to obtain further construct validity, one must examine the extent that the scale correlates with other similar measures (convergent validity) and does not correlate with dissimilar measures (discriminant validity). In addition, test-retest reliability was assessed by correlating the results from participants across time 1 and time 2. Test-retest reliability is an effective way to assess the reliability of a measure over time (Guttman, 1945).

Construct Validity.

The construct validity of the 'sink or swim' scales was assessed using bivariate correlations with the scales that were expected to demonstrate either convergent or discriminant validity. The measures that were expected to hold convergent validity with the 'sink or swim' measure were the socialization tactics, POS, and PSS scale. Correlations were run on the variables from the time 2 survey, as the socialization tactics scale was only included in this wave of data collection. The bi-variate correlations demonstrated that the three sub-factors of 'sink or swim' (effectiveness, responsibility, and support) had significant negative correlations with each of the variables of socialization tactics, POS, and PSS (see Table 13). These results demonstrate that a lower perception of 'sink or swim' was connected with higher levels of institutionalized socialization (lower levels of individualized socialization), confirming hypothesis 2a. The 'effectiveness' sub-factor was found to have the strongest connection with institutionalized socialization, $r = -.72$. In addition, the more an employee perceived that they had been left to 'sink or swim,' the less they perceived support from either their supervisor (PSS) or organization (POS), confirming hypothesis 2b and 2c. The 'support'

factor was found to be most strongly connected with both POS and PSS, with coefficients of $r = -.60$ and $r = -.66$ respectively.

Table 13. Bivariate Correlations with Variables for Convergent Validity (Time 2 Data)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Effectiveness	3.96	1.63	-				
2. Responsibility	3.83	1.49	.68**	-			
3. Support	3.12	1.42	.68**	.78**	-		
4. Institutionalized Socialization	4.10	0.81	-.72**	-.61**	-.70**	-	
5. POS	4.50	1.24	-.36**	-.46**	-.60**	.58**	-
6. PSS	4.96	1.22	-.37**	-.52**	-.66**	.53**	.79**

Note. $N = 200$. **Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.001$ level (2-tailed).

The scales that were expected to hold discriminant validity with the ‘sink or swim’ scale were the proactive personality scale and the self-efficacy scale. Both of these measures were expected to hold little to no significant correlation with an individual’s level of perceived ‘sink or swim.’ Bivariate correlations for discriminant validity were run on the variables from time 1 data, as the proactivity and self-efficacy scales were included exclusively in this time point. Bivariate correlations between each of the 3 subfactors of ‘sink or swim’ and proactivity and self-efficacy indicated that the ‘responsibility’ sub-factor had a small significant positive correlation ($r = .12, p = .05$) with a worker’s proactivity. Also, the ‘support’ sub-factor indicated a small significant negative correlation with an employee’s self-efficacy ($r = -.18, p < .001$). The remaining correlations indicated no additional significant correlations (see Table 14). Considering that 4 of the 6 correlations between the three ‘sink or swim’ variables and proactivity and self-efficacy resulted in no significant effect and that the two existing correlations were a small effect, hypothesis 3a and 3b were found to be supported.

Table 14. Bivariate Correlations with Variables for Discriminant Validity (Time 1 Data)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
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1. Effectiveness	3.73	1.71	-				
2. Responsibility	3.65	1.47	.67**	-			
3. Support	2.94	1.41	.60**	.74**	-		
4. Proactivity	4.88	0.93	-0.02	.12*	-0.01	-	
5. Self-efficacy	5.45	0.93	-0.06	-0.03	-.18**	.68**	-

Note. *N* = 278. **Correlation is significant at the *p* < 0.001 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the *p* < 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Test-Retest Reliability

This study also aimed to assess the test-retest reliability of the ‘sink or swim’ construct across the two survey time points. The time separation of one-week has been specified as a reasonable time to adequately assess a scales test-retest reliability (Marx et al., 2003). This was completed to review the stability and precision of the ‘sink or swim’ construct over time. A bivariate correlation indicated a significant strong positive correlation between each of the three subfactors across time 1 and 2 (see Table 15) as no correlation coefficient fell below $r = .77, p < .001$. Also, the two survey time points were assessed using an intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC). The ICC also indicated a significant strong positive correlation of $r = .85, p < .001$ for the total ‘sink or swim’ scale across time 1 and 2 data. Taken together, these findings indicate that the ‘sink or swim’ scale indicates strong test-retest reliability across the two time points, thus providing support for hypothesis 4.

Table 15. Bivariate Correlations for Test-Retest Reliability across Time 1 and Time 2 Data

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. T1 Eff	3.73	1.71					
2. T1 Resp	3.65	1.46	.65**				
3. T1 Supp	2.94	1.41	.60**	.76**			
4. T2 Eff	3.96	1.63	.77**	.61**	.60**		
5. T2 Resp	3.83	1.49	.52**	.82**	.69**	.68**	
6. T2 Supp	3.12	1.42	.53**	.70**	.83**	.68**	.78**

Note. *N* = 200. **Correlation is significant at the *p* < 0.001 level (2-tailed). T1 = Time 1, T2 = Time 2.

Predictive Validity

In order to assess the predictive validity of the scale, a series of nine mediation analyses were run using the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2017). These mediation analyses were used to determine if PSS and POS were significant mediators on the relationships between the three factors of perceived 'sink or swim' (effectiveness, responsibility, and support) and the three employee outcome variables (affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit). The mediation analyses included each of the three sub-factors of 'sink or swim' due to the confirmation of the 3-factor model from the EFA and CFA stages of analysis. Within these analyses, the independent variable (IV) data ('sink or swim') was drawn from time point 1 and the mediator variable data (PSS and POS) and dependent variable (DV) data (affective commitment, intention to quit, and job satisfaction) were drawn from time point 2. This was done to include some level of control for common method variance by measuring the predictor and outcome at different points time. A series of three additional supplementary mediation analyses were completed with a combined 'sink or swim' latent construct as the IV and affective commitment, intention to quit, and job satisfaction as the DVs. These three analyses also assessed a mediation model with both PSS and POS as potential mediators. The results of these analyses can be seen in Appendix F. While assumptions related to normality and both univariate and multivariate outliers were already checked, the assumption of linearity was additionally required for this analysis. A visual inspection of a scatterplot of standardized residuals and standardized predicted values across each of the nine mediation models indicated linearity. All the assumptions were thus met, allowing for the mediation analyses to go forward. A summary of the standardized path

coefficients and variance contributions across each of the nine mediated models can be seen in Table 16, while Figure 3 provides an outline of relevant path labels.

Affective Commitment.

The first three models included an assessment of whether PSS and POS significantly mediated the relationship between the three 'sink or swim' factors and affective commitment. These results indicate that 'effectiveness,' 'responsibility,' and 'support' account for 9.7%, 16.6%, and 21.5% of the variance of affective commitment respectively when POS and PSS are not in the model. 'Effectiveness,' $b = -.50$, $\beta = -.31$, 95% CI [-.72, -.28], $t = -4.49$, $p < .001$, 'responsibility,' $b = -.52$, $\beta = -.41$, 95% CI [-.68, -.35], $t = -6.15$, $p < .001$, and 'support,' $b = -.53$, $\beta = -.46$, 95% CI [-.67, -.38], $t = -7.13$, $p < .001$ were each found to be significant negative predictors of affective commitment, thus confirming hypothesis 5a. Indirect effects were deemed to be significant if they had bootstrapped 95% CI that did not contain a value of 0. Based on these criteria, PSS was not found to have a significant indirect effect across any of the three mediation models for 'sink or swim' and affective commitment, thus providing a lack of support for hypothesis 6a. However, POS was found to have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between each of the three 'sink or swim' sub-factors and affective commitment, confirming hypothesis 7a. POS had the strongest mediating effect on the relationship between 'support' and affective commitment, with a standardized effect of $\beta = -.29$. However, a significant direct effect between the IV and affective commitment was only found to be significant in model 1 ('effectiveness'). This indicates that the relationships between the 'sink or swim' sub-factors and affective commitment are either completely or almost completely mediated by the variables PSS and POS.

Job Satisfaction.

Models 4 - 6 included an assessment of whether PSS and POS significantly mediated the relationship between the three 'sink or swim' factors and job satisfaction. These results indicate that 'effectiveness,' 'responsibility,' and 'support' account for 9.0%, 16.4%, and 31.9% of the variance of job satisfaction respectively when POS and PSS are not in the model. 'Effectiveness,' $b = -.26$, $\beta = -.30$, 95% CI [-.37, -.14], $t = -4.31$, $p < .001$, 'responsibility,' $b = -.28$, $\beta = -.41$, 95% CI [-.37, -.19], $t = -6.11$, $p < .001$, and 'support,' $b = -.35$, $\beta = -.57$, 95% CI [-.42, -.28], $t = -9.37$, $p < .001$ were each found to be significant negative predictors of job satisfaction, thus confirming hypothesis 5b. A significant indirect effect was found for both PSS and POS across each of the three 'sink or swim' sub-factors. Therefore, both PSS and POS were significant mediators on the relationship between 'effectiveness,' 'responsibility,' and 'support' and job satisfaction, providing support for hypothesis 6b and hypothesis 7b. Both PSS and POS had the strongest mediating effect on the relationship between 'support' and job satisfaction, with a standardized effect of $\beta = -.25$ and $\beta = -.13$ respectively. However, a significant direct effect between the IV and job satisfaction was only found to be significant in model 6 ('support'). This indicates that the relationships between the 'sink or swim' sub-factor and job satisfaction are either completely or almost completely mediated by the variables PSS and POS.

Intention to Quit.

Models 7 - 9 included an assessment of whether PSS and POS significantly mediated the relationship between the three 'sink or swim' factors and an intention to quit. These results indicate that 'effectiveness,' 'responsibility,' and 'support' account for

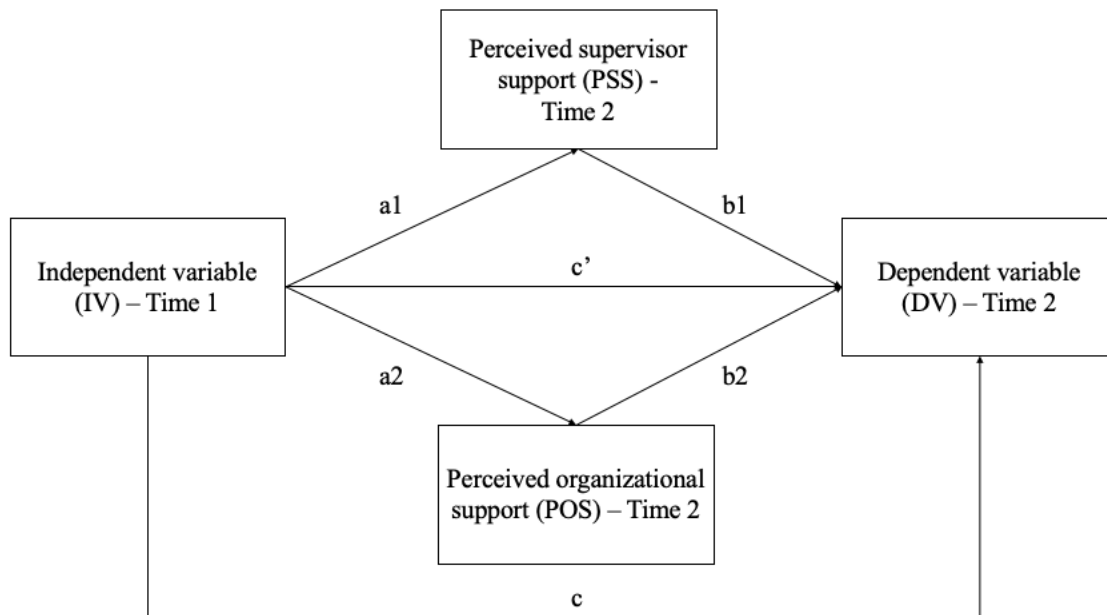
6.3%, 12.2%, and 20.6% of the variance of intention to quit respectively when POS and PSS are not in the model. 'Effectiveness,' $b = .21$, $\beta = .25$, 95% CI [.09, .33], $t = 3.55$, $p < .001$, 'responsibility,' $b = .23$, $\beta = .35$, 95% CI [.14, .32], $t = 5.14$, $p < .001$, and 'support,' $b = .27$, $\beta = .45$, 95% CI [.19, .34], $t = 6.94$, $p < .001$ were each found to be significant positive predictors of intention to quit, thus confirming hypothesis 5c. PSS was not found to have a significant indirect effect across any of the three mediation models for 'sink or swim' and intention to quit, thus providing a lack of support for hypothesis 6c. However, POS was found to have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between all three of the 'sink or swim' factors and intention to quit, thus providing support for hypothesis 7c. POS had the strongest mediating effect on the relationship between 'support' and 'intention to quit,' with a bootstrapped standardized effect of $\beta = .19$. However, when the mediators were included in the model, no significant direct effect was found between any of the IVs and intention to quit. This indicates that the relationships between the 'sink or swim' sub-factors and intention to quit are completely mediated by the variables PSS and POS.

Table 16. Mediation Analysis of PSS and POS on Relationship of ‘Sink or Swim’ Factors with Employee Outcome Variables (Affective Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Intention to Quit) using Time 1 and 2 Data.

Model	Independent Variable (time 1) (X)	Mediating variable (time 2) (M)	Dependent variable (time 2) (Y)	Effect of X on M (a1/a2) β	Effect of M on Y (b1/b2) β	Indirect effect (a1 x b1) or (a2 x b2)			Direct effect (c') β	Total effect (c)	
						β	SE	95% CI		R	R ²
Model 1									-.11*	.31**	.097**
	Effectiveness	PSS	Affective commitment	-.29**	.20*	-.06	.04	[-.13, .01]			
	Effectiveness	POS	Affective commitment	-.29**	.50**	-.15	.05	[-.26, -.06]			
Model 2									-.08	.41**	.166**
	Responsibility	PSS	Affective commitment	-.51**	.18*	-.09	.06	[-.20, .03]			
	Responsibility	POS	Affective commitment	-.47**	.51**	-.24	.06	[-.38, -.13]			
Model 3									-.07	.46**	.215**
	Support	PSS	Affective commitment	-.64**	.17	-.11	.07	[-.25, .03]			
	Support	POS	Affective commitment	-.57**	.51**	-.29	.07	[-.45, -.16]			
Model 4									-.09	-.30**	.090**
	Effectiveness	PSS	Job satisfaction	-.29**	.47**	-.14	.04	[-.23, -.06]			
	Effectiveness	POS	Job satisfaction	-.30**	.23*	-.07	.03	[-.15, -.01]			
Model 5									.04	.41**	.164**
	Responsibility	PSS	Job satisfaction	-.50**	.47**	-.24	.05	[-.34, -.13]			
	Responsibility	POS	Job satisfaction	-.47**	.24*	-.11	.05	[-.22, -.03]			
Model 6									-.12*	.57**	.319**
	Support	PSS	Job satisfaction	-.64**	.40**	-.25	.06	[-.37, -.12]			
	Support	POS	Job satisfaction	-.57**	.22*	-.13	.06	[-.25, -.02]			

Model 7	Effectiveness	PSS	Intention to quit	-.31**	-.23*	.07	.04	[-.00, .16]	.07	.25**	.063**
	Effectiveness	POS	Intention to quit	-.31**	-.35**	.11	.05	[.04, .21]			
Model 8	Responsibility	PSS	Intention to quit	-.51**	-.22*	.11	.06	[-.01, .23]	.07	.35**	.122**
	Responsibility	POS	Intention to quit	-.47**	-.35**	.16	.06	[.06, .29]			
Model 9	Support	PSS	Intention to quit	-.64**	-.17	.11	.08	[-.05, .25]	.15	.45**	.206**
	Support	POS	Intention to quit	-.58**	-.33**	.19	.06	[.06, .34]			

Note. **Significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. *Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. POS = Perceived organizational support, PSS = Perceived supervisor support. CI – Confidence Interval. Indirect effect is significant if CI does not contain a value of 0. Legend of path labels can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Path Legend for Mediation Models 1 – 9 with both Time 1 and Time 2 Data***Incremental Validity***

This study also aimed to assess the incremental validity of the ‘sink or swim’ scale over that of the existing socialization tactics scale (Jones, 1986). To do so, a hierarchical regression analysis was completed in SPSS using the ‘sink or swim,’ socialization tactics, and outcome variable data (job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit) from the time 2 survey. The time 2 data was used due to the socialization tactics scale only being included within this particular time point. The socialization tactics scale is made up of 30-items, so it was included in only one time point to reduce the potential for survey fatigue for participants.

Three separate hierarchical linear regression analysis were run across the three outcome variables of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit. The six factors included within the socialization tactics scale were included in the first regression block with the three factors of the ‘sink or swim’ scale included within the second regression block. As demonstrated in Table 17, the ‘sink or swim’ scale did not

significantly add any incremental variance to each of the outcomes job satisfaction, $R^2 = .45$, adjusted $R^2 = .42$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F(3, 179) = 16.02$, $p = .128$, intention to quit, $R^2 = .57$, adjusted $R^2 = .33$, $\Delta R^2 = .008$, $F(3, 178) = 9.69$, $p = .574$, or affective commitment, $R^2 = .49$, adjusted $R^2 = .46$, $\Delta R^2 = .014$, $F(3, 178) = 18.79$, $p = .175$. Within these analysis, only ‘support’ was found to be a significant predictor of affective commitment within the regression model, $b = -.29$, $\beta = -.26$, $t = -2.09$, $p = .038$. However, considering that the full ‘sink or swim’ scale was unable to demonstrate significant incremental validity, these findings demonstrate a lack of support for hypothesis 8. Therefore, the ‘sink or swim’ scale did not provide additional information over and above the current socialization tactics scale.

A second hierarchical regression was then run for purposes of a redundancy analysis, to see if the ‘sink or swim’ scale can substitute for the socialization tactics scale. This was completed by entering the ‘sink or swim’ factors in block 1 and the socialization tactic factors in block 2. These results indicated that the socialization tactics added significant incremental variance over and above the ‘sink or swim’ scale, across each of affective commitment $R^2 = .49$, adjusted $R^2 = .46$, $\Delta R^2 = .13$, $F(6, 178) = 18.79$, $p < .001$, job satisfaction $R^2 = .45$, adjusted $R^2 = .42$, $\Delta R^2 = .13$, $F(6, 179) = 16.02$, $p < .001$, and intention to quit, $R^2 = .33$, adjusted $R^2 = .30$, $\Delta R^2 = .09$, $F(6, 178) = 9.69$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the socialization tactics scale did explain additional variance over and above the ‘sink or swim’ scale, and not the other way around.

Table 17. Hierarchical Regression of Socialization Tactics Scale (Block 1) and ‘Sink or Swim’ Scale (Block 2) for each of Affective Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Intention to Quit (Time 2 Data)

Outcome	Predictor	b (SE)	β	F	df1/df2	R^2	ΔR^2
Affective Commitment	Step 1			27.05	6/181	0.47	

		(Constant)	-1.68 (3.89)				
		Collective/individual	0.05 (.13)	0.02			
		Formal/informal	-0.39* (.17)	-0.15*			
		Investiture/divestiture	0.88 (.14)	0.43			
		Sequential/random	0.05 (.17)	0.03			
		Serial/disjunctive	0.29 (.15)	0.16			
		Fixed/variable	0.48* (.21)	0.24*			
	Step 2				18.79	3/178	0.49 0.01
		(Constant)	1.54 (7.88)				
		Collective/individual	0.09 (.13)	0.04			
		Formal/informal	-0.34* (.17)	-0.14*			
		Investiture/divestiture	0.70* (.17)	0.34*			
		Sequential/random	0.13 (.18)	0.07			
		Serial/disjunctive	0.30 (.17)	0.16			
		Fixed/variable	0.38 (.22)	0.19			
		Effectiveness	0.15 (.15)	0.09			
		Responsibility	0.16 (.11)	0.13			
		Support	-0.29* (.14)	-0.26*			
Job Satisfaction	Step 1				22.73	6/182	.43
		(Constant)	1.53 (2.17)				
		Collective/individual	0.07 (.07)	0.06			
		Formal/informal	-0.09 (.10)	-0.06			
		Investiture/divestiture	0.66* (.08)	0.59***			
		Sequential/random	0.04 (.10)	0.04			
		Serial/disjunctive	0.05 (.08)	0.05			
		Fixed/variable	0.03 (.12)	0.03			
	Step 2				16.02	3/179	.45 .02
		(Constant)	8.41 (4.34)				
		Collective/individual	0.06 (.07)	0.05			
		Formal/informal	-0.08 (.10)	-0.06			
		Investiture/divestiture	0.57** (.10)	0.51**			
		Sequential/random	0.04 (.10)	0.04			
		Serial/disjunctive	-0.01 (.09)	-0.01			
		Fixed/variable	-0.02 (.12)	-0.02			
		Effectiveness	-0.10 (.09)	-0.11			
		Responsibility	0.09 (.06)	0.13			
		Support	-0.13 (.08)	-0.22			
Intention to Quit	Step 1				14.29	6/181	.30
		(Constant)	22.91 (2.28)				

	Collective/individual	-0.10 (.08)	-0.04				
	Formal/informal	0.24* (.10)	0.18*				
	Investiture/divestiture	-0.43** (.08)	-0.40**				
	Sequential/random	0.05 (.10)	0.05				
	Serial/disjunctive	-0.08 (.09)	-0.08				
	Fixed/variable	-0.23 (.13)	-0.21				
Step 2				9.69	3/178	.30	.01
	(Constant)	20.24 (4.61)					
	Collective/individual	-0.11 (.08)	-0.10				
	Formal/informal	0.22* (.10)	0.17*				
	Investiture/divestiture	-0.35** (.10)	-0.33**				
	Sequential/random	0.02 (.10)	0.02				
	Serial/disjunctive	-0.07 (.10)	-0.07				
	Fixed/variable	-0.18 (.13)	-0.17				
	Effectiveness	-0.04 (.09)	-0.04				
	Responsibility	-0.05 (.07)	-0.08				
	Support	0.11 (.08)	0.20				

Note. $N = 200$. SE = Standard Error. **Significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. *Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

While running the hierarchical regression analysis, it was found that the subfactors across the ‘sink or swim’ and socialization tactics scales were strongly negatively correlated, with correlation coefficients reaching as high as $r = -.74, p < .001$.

Researchers have indicated that multiple regression analysis can be impacted when predictors demonstrate a high correlation (Tonidandel et al., 2009a). To combat this, a relative weights analysis (RWA) was also conducted to assess the sequential incremental influence of a perception of ‘sink or swim.’ RWA is a procedure used to assess the relative importance of correlated predictors within a regression and has been more regularly used within psychological research in recent years (Tonidandel et al., 2009b). RWA uses a process whereby it creates a new set of uncorrelated predictors resembling the original predictors to use within a regression analysis and then rescales them back to the original by combining them with standardized coefficients (Tonidandel et al., 2009b).

Therefore, what is left is an estimate of the relative importance of each predictor (Tonidandel et al., 2009b).

The RWA was run with an R-based online tool (RWA-WEB) created by Tonidandel and LeBreton (2015). The results from this analysis across each of the three outcome variables (job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention to quit) can be seen in Table 18. Based on the recommendations by Tonidandel et al. (2009a), significant tests and confidence intervals were based on bootstrapping with 10,000 replications with 95% CI (alpha .05). The RWA indicated that the nine sub-factor variables within both the socialization tactics (6 factors) and 'sink or swim' scales (3 factors) explained 48.1%, 45.3%, and 33.3% of the variance of affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit respectively. It was determined that the variables investiture-divestiture (RW = .16), serial-disjunctive (RW = .07), fixed-variable (RW = .06), and 'sink or swim' support (RW = .09) demonstrated statistically significant relative contributions to the variance of affective commitment. Only the variables investiture-divestiture (RW = .21) and 'sink or swim' support (RW = .09) were found to demonstrate statistically significant contribution to job satisfaction. Additionally, the variable investiture-divestiture (RW = .11), serial-disjunctive (RW = .03), fixed-variable (RW = .04), and 'sink or swim' support (RW = .04) demonstrated statistically significant relative contributions to the variance of intention to quit.

These results slightly differ from the hierarchical regression analysis where 'support' was only found to be a significant incremental predictor for affective commitment. The RWA demonstrated the relative importance of 'support' in predicting all of affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit. However, the hierarchical regression still indicated that the overall 'sink or swim' scale demonstrated

no statistically significant incremental validity over the socialization tactics scale.

Overall, hypothesis 8 was not found to have sufficient support based on the lack of incremental value found within the hierarchical regression models. However, it is interesting to note that the ‘support’ variable was found to demonstrate relative importance across the 3 outcome variables.

Table 18. Relative Weights of the ‘Sink or Swim’ and Socialization Tactics Predictors of Affective Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Intention to Quit (Time 2 Data)

Predictor	RW	RS-RW	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Criterion = Affective commitment ($R^2 = .48$)				
Collective-individual	.01	2.12	-.03	.03
Formal-informal	.01	1.80	-.03	.02
Investiture-divestiture	.16	32.55	.10	.24
Sequential-random	.04	8.76	-.01	.07
Serial-disjunctive	.07	13.86	.01	.11
Fixed-variable	.06	11.92	.01	.09
Effectiveness	.02	4.26	-.02	.03
Responsibility	.03	5.90	-.01	.05
Support	.09	18.82	.04	.14
Criterion = Job satisfaction ($R^2 = .45$)				
Collective-individual	.01	1.79	-.03	.03
Formal-informal	.00	0.73	-.04	.01
Investiture-divestiture	.21	46.96	.14	.29
Sequential-random	.02	5.36	-.01	.05
Serial-disjunctive	.03	6.98	-.01	.06
Fixed-variable	.03	6.17	-.01	.05
Effectiveness	.03	6.39	-.02	.05
Responsibility	.03	5.84	-.02	.04
Support	.09	19.78	.04	.13
Criterion = Intention to quit ($R^2 = .33$)				
Collective-individual	0.02	4.68	-0.01	0.06
Formal-informal	0.01	4.23	-0.01	0.05
Investiture-divestiture	0.11	33.31	-0.05	0.18
Sequential-random	0.02	5.83	-0.00	0.05
Serial-disjunctive	0.03	9.56	0.00	0.07
Fixed-variable	0.04	11.61	0.01	0.07
Effectiveness	0.01	4.09	-0.02	0.03
Responsibility	0.02	5.61	-0.01	0.04
Support	0.07	21.08	0.03	0.12

Note. RW = Raw Relative Weight, can be interpreted as the proportion of variance in the DV that is appropriately attributed to each predictor variable. RS-RW, = Rescaled Relative Weight, can be interpreted as estimates of relative importance using the metric of percentage of predicted variance attributed to each variable. Bootstrapped 10,000, 95% CI. RWs are significant if CI does not contain a value of 0.

General Discussion

The primary goal of this research was to develop and validate a measure of a perception of being left to 'sink or swim' within an organization's training program. Much of the current research on training has focused on the various socialization tactics and their impact on employee outcomes. Instead, this study aimed to operationalize a form of training by default, or 'sink or swim,' and better our understanding of its unique role. Operationalizing a construct and developing a practical measure of 'sink or swim' provides both researchers and practitioners a necessary tool to gain a better understanding of a common and yet complicated phenomenon within the workplace. This research sought to complete this task across two separate studies. The first study generated an initial list of items and then assessed their parsimony and content validity. The second study leveraged a 'shortitudinal' survey design to further affirm the scale's parsimony, psychometric properties, and incremental importance over an existing measure.

Study 1 generated the initial set of items by leveraging both the quantitative and qualitative data of an industry survey. These items were run through an item matching exercise with SMEs, thus adding confidence to their belonging with their respective sub-factors. The goal of study 2 was to confirm the existence of a 3-factor structure of the 'sink or swim' scale and evaluate its psychometric properties through separate assessments of construct, incremental, and predictive validity. The EFA and CFA both provided support for the 3-factor solution while refining the measure to a more concise 17-item scale. The psychometric assessment was also successful, as the 'sink or swim' scale did indicate test-retest reliability and construct validity. However, a limiting finding was that the 'sink or swim' scale did not demonstrate incremental validity over that of the existing socialization tactics scale. Finally, the evaluation of the predictive validity of the

scale was mostly successful in that perceived 'sink or swim' was predictive of adverse employee outcomes. However, PSS and POS did not consistently mediate all of the relationships between the 'sink or swim' sub-factors and employment outcomes.

Content Validity and Factor Structure

The efforts taken in study 1 aimed to leverage a diversity of sources to generate generalizable and relevant items. It was important to rely on the language of both academics and practitioners to ensure the generalizability of the scale to both of these domains. In addition, with the help of SMEs, this study was able to provide an adequate level of "content adequacy" while using an item matching activity (Schriesheim et al., 1993). Items that were conceptually inconsistent were removed and the remaining items were deemed to appropriately capture their intended construct. Additionally, a review of the agreement indices did not reveal any identifiable pattern of SME error across the three sub-factors, as any mistaken overlap tended to be uniform across each of the factors. This indicated that there was no initial evidence of construct overlap between specific factors within the 3-factor model, as no two factors were more alike than others. Regardless, SME feedback was essential in formatting troublesome items to be more reflective of their intended category. This initial content validation was a crucial step in demonstrating the fit of the 3-factor model of the 'sink or swim' scale.

The results of both the EFA and CFA analyses provided additional support for the 3-factor 'sink or swim' model as hypothesized. A series of EFAs on the 'sink or swim' scale highlighted factor loadings of items that represented the categories of 'responsibility,' 'effectiveness,' and 'support.' The CFA further confirmed that a 3-factor solution was a significantly better fit for the model than either a 2-factor or 1-factor

solution. While this study is the first to hypothesize a conceptual model of 'sink or swim,' this result is conducive to descriptions of the 'sink or swim' concept within the broader literature. For example, Ashforth et al. (2007) described a 'sink or swim' training approach as one that almost requires that employees find their own way, indicating employee-shifted responsibility. Saks et al. (2007) described a 'sink or swim' approach as resulting from a training program that lacked structure and was highly ineffective, indicating perceived training effectiveness. Finally, Van Maanen and Schein (1977) referenced a 'sink or swim' approach where individuals "are left to their own devices" (p. 63), indicating either a lack of support from an organization or its leaders.

However, these findings must be taken with a degree of caution. First, while the 3-factor solution did demonstrate the best fit, the model fit indices still indicated only an adequate fit to the model overall; therefore, alternative factor structures may demonstrate a better fit to this model. Additionally, the 'support' items tended to illustrate the healthiest factor loadings. Correspondingly, over half of the items that make up the 'support' factor were pulled directly from employees within the open-ended question data. This demonstrated that employees more often considered 'support' when interpreting problems within their organization's training program. Taken together, these findings hint that perhaps a perception of 'sink or swim' is more readily connected to feelings of 'support' (or lack of support) from an organization's employees. This trend can also be seen within the socialization tactics literature, as the 'social' tactics of serial-disjunctive or investiture-divestiture are often most highly connected with positive adjustment outcomes (Saks et al., 2007). Researchers have argued that social tactics help provide the social cues and assistance necessary during the learning transfer process, thus they are the most essential (Jones, 1986). Therefore, while a 3-factor solution to 'sink or

swim' was confirmed, the items included within the 'support' sub-factor may act as a standalone construct.

Psychometric Properties

Construct Validity

Convergent Validity. Study 2 also aimed to evaluate the construct validity of the 'sink or swim' scale through an assessment of both convergent and discriminant validity. The hypotheses centered around the convergent validity of the scale were fully supported, as each of the 'sink or swim' subfactors demonstrated medium to strong correlations with each of individualized socialization, PSS, and POS. It is important to note that some of the strong correlations were quite substantial, indicating significant relationships between some of the constructs. The strong negative correlation between each of the 'sink or swim' factors and institutionalized socialization tactics was an expected result, as the informal and unstructured nature of an individualized approach to training is implied by the characteristics of the 3-factor model of 'sink or swim' training (Maanen & Schein, 1977). Furthermore, the 'effectiveness' factor indicated the strongest negative correlation with institutionalized socialization. This was also an expected result as training 'effectiveness' is focused on the structural components of a training program, which is a crucial characteristic of institutionalized training (Jones, 1986). 'Support' also demonstrated a very strong significant negative relationship with institutionalized socialization. This was unsurprising, as institutionalized socialization is also characterized by social tactics (serial and investiture) to support and facilitate employee learning (Jones, 1986).

Additionally, the factors of 'sink or swim' also demonstrated small to strong negative correlations with both PSS and POS, with the 'support' sub-factor predictably demonstrating the strongest correlations. Surprisingly, the 'effectiveness' factor demonstrated only small negative correlations with PSS and POS. Looking more closely, the 'effectiveness' factor holds more conceptual differences to PSS and POS than that of the 'support' factor given that it is more focused on the tangible qualities of a training program. For example, the 'effectiveness' item "my organization has little structure in its training program," focuses on the quality of the training program while the 'support' item "I received limited support in my role when I started at this organization" focuses more directly on support levels. For this reason, this result is not alarming. These findings indicate that being left to one's own devices in training is thus seen as a breach in the 'psychological contract,' where an ineffective training system leads to decreased feeling of reciprocal obligation to the employer (De Vos et al., 2003). Taken together, these results indicate a high degree of convergent validity of the 17-item 'sink or swim' scale.

Discriminant Validity. The assessment of the discriminant validity of the 'sink or swim' scale was also supported. More specifically, while proactivity had no significant correlations with either of the factors 'effectiveness' and 'support', surprisingly, a small significant positive correlation with 'responsibility' was found. Considering proactive individuals tend to take more control over their early work environment, they may be more sensitive to violations in a 'psychological contract', and thus quicker to claim responsibility for their own early training experience (Ashford & Black, 1996). Therefore, proactive individuals may feel the employee-shifted responsibility of training more strongly. Interestingly, individual self-efficacy also had a small significant negative correlation with 'support.' Research has shown that individuals with low self-efficacy

tend to be more anxious about their work-related capabilities and thus more likely to seek information and support from their peers (Major & Kozlowski, 1997). Therefore, it is possible that these workers may be more sensitive to a toxic training environment and thus more likely to perceive a lack of support. It is important to emphasize that both of these significant correlations indicated only a small effect, thus not a complete challenge to the discriminant validity of the scale. Overall, considering these small effect sizes and the four non-significant correlations, the 'sink or swim' scale demonstrates a strong level of discriminant validity.

Test-retest reliability

An assessment of the test-retest reliability of the 'sink or swim' measure demonstrated strong correlations between time 1 and time 2 data. The results are also comparable to other relevant scales and their evaluations of test-retest reliability. For example, scales related to 'newcomer socialization experiences' and 'perceived promises from an employer' indicated similar test-retest reliability results (Haueter et al., 2003; K. Kim & Koo Moon, 2019). Therefore, this study suggests that the 'sink or swim' scale demonstrates a good degree of internal consistency and temporal stability over time.

Predictive Validity

The significant total effects of each of the three 'sink or swim' factors on affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit demonstrate the predictive validity of the measure. These results show that an employee's perception of 'sink or swim' is predictive of their self-reported commitment to their organization. Therefore, those who have been left on their own during their training feel less satisfied in their role, less emotionally attached to their organization, and more likely to leave. These results are

supported in the literature, as individualized socialization tactics are similarly connected to adverse employee outcomes (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007). These results suggest that leaving an employee to 'sink or swim' can have a deep and early impact on the formation of the 'psychological contract' (Korte, 2007). Therefore, 'sink or swim' can be seen as a failure to meet an employee's psychological needs, leading to decreased confidence in a company's culture, and little desire to offer one's resources towards an organization's goals (Delobbe et al., 2016).

The results of the predictive validity analysis indicated that POS and not PSS were more regularly found to have a significant mediating effect between the 'sink or swim' factor and employment outcomes. In fact, PSS was only found to have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between each of the 'sink or swim' sub-factors and job satisfaction. This was a surprising result, considering the close positive relationship of both PSS and POS (Deconinck & Johnson, 2009; Eisenberger et al., 2002). It was predicted that perception of 'sink or swim' would cause an employee to sense limited organizational and supervisory support, leading to adverse outcomes. However, findings connected with the organizational support theory may be more relevant, which states that PSS leads to POS (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Perhaps a more accurate mediation model would see PSS placed in front of POS within the nomological chain. Regardless, the results suggest that POS was found to be a consistent significant mediator of the relationship between 'sink or swim' and adverse employee outcomes, suggesting that the fallout of an ineffective training program can be explained by a perception of an unsupportive organizational environment.

Additionally, it is also possible that the variables for POS/PSS and 'sink or swim' may be separate predictors of workplace outcomes. Research has already established a

connection between institutionalized socialization tactics with higher levels of perceived support in an organization, however, it is possible that the causal connection may be reversed (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). For example, employees who experience 'sink or swim' training may simply be members of an organization that does not provide sufficient support, with a potentially unsupportive supervisor. It is likely that 'sink or swim' training is more common in low POS organizations, therefore it is possible that each variable could be contributing to the other. Overall, each of POS, PSS, and 'sink or swim' may be separate predictors contributing to workplace outcomes.

Finally, these results indicate that POS (and sometimes PSS) were either complete or almost complete mediators of the relationship between 'sink or swim' and employee outcomes. These findings suggest that POS (and sometimes PSS) plays a significant mediating role between a perception of being left to 'sink or swim' and a level of attachment to one's organization. This adds to the existing literature, which has highlighted the important role that both POS and PSS play on an employee's level of commitment to their organization (Eisenberger et al., 1997, 2002; Maertz et al., 2007). More specifically, this research has provided evidence confirming the location of POS within the conceptual model when looking at the relationship between socialization tactics and employee outcomes. Previous research has found that positive early training experiences can signal to employees that they are valued by their employer, leading to a reciprocal level of commitment (D. G. Allen & Shanock, 2013). This research adds more context to this relationship, demonstrating that leaving an employee to fend for themselves in their training can have detrimental effects to the formation of the 'psychological contract' resulting in a variety of adverse outcomes.

Incremental Validity

An unexpected limiting finding related to the 'sink or swim' scale was its inability to demonstrate incremental validity over that of the socialization tactics scale. The results of the hierarchical regression and the strong correlation suggest that the two constructs are highly similar, and thus account for a similar portion of the variance of affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit. While subtle differences do exist between the scales, they both tend to measure behavioural aspects of an employee's training environment. Additionally, these similarities are not completely unfounded as several items were adapted from the socialization tactics scale for use in the 'sink or swim' scale, indicating some overlap. Furthermore, an additional limiting finding was that the socialization tactics scale demonstrated additional variance over the 'sink or swim' scale and not the other way around. This is not an entirely surprising result, as the socialization tactics scale covers 6 total factors across a larger set of items (30-items), thus covering more ground. Therefore, this finding illustrates that the 6-factor socialization tactics scale was able to account for more of the variance of each of the three outcome variables than the 3-factor 'sink or swim' scale.

However, it is important to take these findings with a degree of caution. First, considering the high degree of correlation between the predictors, it is possible that multicollinearity of the variables played a role within this analysis. Research has shown the multicollinearity within a hierarchical regression at different levels can result in inflated variances of estimated coefficients, due to the increased levels of predictors and residuals (Yu et al., 2015). While a relative weights analysis was used to help remedy this concern, it still adds some level of uncertainty. Furthermore, it is also important to note that multiple regressions are a fairly conservative measure of incremental validity. This

conservative approach mixed with the high correlation of the predictors demonstrates some level of ambiguity when interpreting the results. Finally, some of the variance contributions within the hierarchical regression analyses were quite large. Considering common method variance is known to distort relationships among observed relationships, this indicates that this effect may have played a role (Spector & Brannick, 2010).

Finally, when looking at the results of the relative weights analysis, it was found that the 'support' factor did display some level of relative importance within the models for affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit. This was also evident in the successful performance of the items related to the 'support' factor within the initial EFA. Socialization research has long discussed the relative importance that 'social tactics' are known to have on the adjustment outcomes of newcomers, therefore these findings are consistent with the academic literature (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Saks et al., 2007). Overall, these results further indicate that items within the 'support' scale may represent a valuable standalone construct as a predictor of socialization outcomes.

Implications

This research was successful in developing a psychometrically valid and reliable measure of 'sink or swim,' allowing for future researchers to better evaluate the impact that this construct may play within an organizational setting. While the 'sink or swim' scale did not demonstrate incremental validity over that of the existing socialization tactics scale, it still represents a shorter and perhaps more practically useful measure than its counterpart. Multiple researchers that have used the socialization tactics scale have sought to shorten it from 30 items to something more manageable for use in an organizational setting (Saks et al., 2007; Saks & Ashforth, 1997b). This is unsurprising,

as the challenges associated with fitting a cumbersome 30-item scale within survey research was one that this study faced itself, based on the potential for participant survey fatigue. A more refined measure of a similar construct will provide both researchers and practitioners a simpler alternative to assessing socialization tactics within the workplace. Furthermore, the reliabilities of each of the facets of the socialization tactics scale were found to be fairly low, a phenomenon that has also been observed in the literature (Saks et al., 2007). In comparison, the 'sink or swim' scale demonstrated excellent reliability scores across each of its 3 factors. These results suggest that the 'sink or swim' scale is an acceptable alternative, providing a simplified and reliable measure of socialization tactics.

In line with previous research, the results of this study indicate that social support is the strongest predictor of employee adjustment to a new organization (Saks et al., 2007). Accordingly, this suggests that companies should emphasize the creation of interpersonal connections and a supportive learning climate within their training programs (Colquitt et al., 2000; Saks & Gruman, 2011). Providing newcomers with repeated opportunities to communicate with co-workers, leaders, or other organizational insiders will equip them with the social capital required to be successful in achieving proper socialization (Fang et al., 2011). Moreover, the strong performance of the 'support' factor of the 'sink or swim' scale signals its potential as a standalone measure and construct. This scale provides researchers a reliable method of measuring an increasingly important construct within socialization research. It may also give practitioners a practical and reliable measure of how supported their new hires feel, thus providing an opportunity for strategic improvement.

Finally, this study has provided additional insight into a highly contextual and complicated construct. It has been well established that how you train your employees

holds significant weight within an organization's ability to ensure a productive and satisfied workforce. However, some managers continue to employ haphazard 'sink or swim' techniques perpetuating a harmful misconception that this is the best way to learn. It does not help that this phenomenon has consistently been romanticized by an endless stream of idioms like 'sink or swim,' 'trial by fire,' 'make it or break it,' or 'thrown in the deep end.' In line with previous research, this study has illustrated the important role that interpersonal support and a structured training program have in driving positive adjustment outcomes (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer & Erdogan, 2010; Saks et al., 2007). Therefore, this research may allow organizations and their leaders to think more critically about this commonly used training tactic, perhaps opening their minds to alternative approaches to socialization.

Limitations

When reviewing the findings within this research, it is important to take into account the limitations of this study. First, this study relied solely on self-report data. Organizational psychology researchers have raised concerns about self-report data based on the common method variance (CMV), stating its potential to raise the magnitude of the relationships that exist between predictors and work outcomes (Muntz & Dormann, 2020). To account for this issue, a 'shortitudinal' design at two time points was used; however, CMV and endogeneity concerns may remain considering the relatively short time in between each wave of data. The researcher used IV data and DV data at separate time points where possible to provide some level of control for these concerns. However, this design opened an additional challenge as the significant difference in responses from time 1 to 2 for job satisfaction indicated at least a small discrepancy between each time

point. Additionally, a full time separation was not always possible as seen within the mediation analyses, as both the mediator and outcome variables were taken from time point 2. Therefore, while steps were taken to reduce the cross-sectional nature of these analyses, the effects of common method variance may have endured.

A second limitation was the relative homogeneity of the sample, impacting the potential generalizability of the research. Firstly, the vast majority of the participants were Caucasian. There is a broad coalition of research on the role of implicit bias and racial inequality within organizational research relating to (but not limited to) areas like recruitment and selection, negotiation tactics, compensation, and merit-based promotions (Castilla, 2005; Gilin et al., 2013; Landau, 1995; Sacco et al., 2003). Within the training literature, research has shown racial identity theory and ingroup identity play a significant role in a newcomers training experience and social network formation, with ethnic minorities relying less on cross-race support networks than Caucasians (Ashforth et al., 2008; Mollica et al., 2003). Therefore, these differing socialization experiences may not have been effectively captured within this research. Secondly, the majority of the sample stated that they had over 10 years of working experience. Research has found that previous work experience is a significant moderator between socialization tactics and adjustment outcomes, with more experienced workers relying less on a structured training program (Kowtha, 2018). As a result, younger and less experienced workers were perhaps less represented within the predictive validity analysis. While age did not demonstrate correlation with any of the three factors, it is possible that an older and more experienced workforce may have had a moderating impact on the relationship between 'sink or swim' and job outcomes. Considering the fact that older workers are less adversely impacted by

socialization tactics, it is possible the mediation analyses may have been more representative of an increasingly mature and resilient workforce.

A third limitation is centered around the decision to expand the screening criteria to employees who had entered their organization within the last two years. While this study intended to survey participants who had been hired in the previous year, an inability to reach a sufficient sample necessitated an adjustment. This means that a portion of the sample may not have experienced a training program for almost two years, meaning the participants in the sample may have significantly different memories of their socialization experience. Additionally, it is important to note that this study was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the majority of the sample still specified that they had some form of in-person training, their socialization experiences may still have been significantly different than that of previous years. For example, the various policies and protocols around social distancing prevalent within many organizations may have had a distinct impact on their ability to provide effective support to their new hires. Therefore, the unique challenges faced by workers during COVID-19 could have impacted the potential ecological validity of the study, as the responses of the sample may have been skewed to represent the distinct environment of training during a global pandemic. Following the relaxation of social distancing guidelines within organizations, a separate sample should be used to provide additional psychometric validation of this scale to ensure its generalizability to a pre-pandemic context.

Finally, this study leveraged a sample of participants at two separate time points to create and validate the 'sink or swim' scale. This meant that the same participants were used in both the EFA and CFA stages of analyses. Researchers have recommended that a CFA be completed on a secondary and independent sample to effectively confirm the fit

of a model (Hinkin, 1998). Methods like the split-half sampling strategy are often employed to run CFAs in survey development research (Pett et al., 2011). While the 'shortitudinal' design implemented in this study allowed for an estimate of the test-retest stability of the scale, an independent and separate sample may have been the preferred methodological strategy for a more effective CFA.

Future Research

Considering some of the methodological limitations of this study, future researchers should take efforts to further develop and validate the 'sink or swim' scale. Future research should replicate the results of this study while leveraging a longitudinal design. For example, researchers could look to evaluate the impact of 'sink or swim' training over time by measuring its effects directly after training and at additional time points within an employee's organizational lifecycle. Additionally, future research should seek out data from a wider variety of sources to reduce reliance on self-report measures. By leveraging data from external sources like managers, peers, or company documents, future studies could improve upon the internal validity of the study and provide additional insight into the pervasive impact of 'sink or swim' training techniques.

In addition, while the 3-factor model was deemed the best fit in this study, it still demonstrated only an adequate fit overall. Considering the results of this study, future research should look to investigate the psychometric potential for a standalone measure of training 'support.' Researchers could investigate whether this standalone measure of training 'support' provides incremental validity over that of the PSS and POS scales. Furthermore, it is also possible that a separate conceptual theoretical model of 'sink or swim' may indicate a better fit. Future research could look to leverage a qualitative

research design to investigate additional theoretical models. Additionally, these qualitative techniques could help uncover further contextual insight regarding the 'sink or swim' phenomenon. For example, organizations like Google have successfully implemented iterations of a 'sink or swim' design to help develop an increasingly entrepreneurial and proactive workforce (Johnson & Senges, 2010). Participant interviews or focus groups would help provide additional contextual insight and data describing environments where 'sink or swim' training techniques can either be beneficial or harmful.

This research also found that the two factors of 'sink or swim,' responsibility and support, both had a small positive and negative significant relationship with proactivity and general self-efficacy respectively. Consequently, individual personality was thus found to demonstrate a small relationship with an employee's perception of their training environment. While previous research has looked at the moderating impact of individual differences, future research should look more closely at the causal relationship between an individual's general disposition and their perception of an organization's socialization tactics (Ashford & Black, 1996; Jones, 1986). Additionally, previous research has found that work experience has a moderating impact on the relationship between socialization tactics and workplace outcomes (Kowtha, 2018). Future research should aim to replicate these findings with 'sink or swim' to better understand if more experienced workers are more resilient and resistant to the adverse effects of 'sink or swim.' Finally, future research should investigate alterations to the nomological network of workplace commitment variables and their relationships with 'sink or swim.' Other nomological models within the socialization literature have often placed PSS ahead of POS, in that perception of support from a supervisor may lead an individual to believe their

organization values their contributions and well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2002). By investigating the causal pathways associated with the construct of 'sink or swim,' researchers would gather additional insight into its relationships with other adjustment outcomes.

Conclusion

In closing, this study was able to operationalize a model of perceived 'sink or swim' within the workplace and develop a 17-item scale to measure it. While this scale did not demonstrate incremental validity over that of the socialization tactics scale, it still represents a short and practical 3-factor measure of 'sink or swim' within a workplace setting. Additionally, other psychometric assessments of the scale indicated its validity and reliability at measuring its intended construct. This included an assessment of predictive validity, which illustrated the relationship that perception of 'sink or swim' has with adverse outcomes, and the mediating role of POS (and sometimes PSS). The results of this study also demonstrated the strength of the 'support' factor, as future research should seek to evaluate its capacity to operate as a standalone construct.

'Sink or swim' is not a new concept. One would be hard-pressed to find an individual in most organizations who have not come in contact with it in some form over their career. However, researchers have yet to meaningfully evaluate the impact that it can have on workers. The results of this study aimed to shine a light on a well-known, but to this point, an under-researched area of organizational psychology. With the development of a practical measure of perceptions of 'sink or swim,' this study has created a tool that researchers and practitioners alike can use to better understand this phenomenon within organizational socialization.

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Appendix A - SME Content Validation Exercise**Development of a 'Sink or Swim' Scale**

By: Maddy Blazer

Instructions:

The purpose of this worksheet is to get your help in developing a measure of perceived 'sink or swim' training. The three sub-factors of 'sink or swim' training are: [1] shifting of socialization responsibility to the employee (responsibility), [2] a lack of preparedness resulting from either little or no training (preparedness), and [3] a lack of perceived support (support).

Your task is to read each of the items and match it to what sub-factor you believe it is intended to belong to, based on the descriptions included below. You may also rate an item as unclassified if you do not feel that the item matches any of the sub-factors. You may use abbreviations for each of the categories for simplicity: responsibility (R), preparedness (P), support (S), or unclassified (U). Please include any feedback – either on the survey or individual items – in the space included at the end of the sheet. Thank you for your help!

Construct Definitions:

Perceived 'sink or swim' training: The idiom 'sink or swim' can refer to any situation where someone must succeed by their efforts or else fail completely. In organizations, it is the by-product of a lack of structure or formality within a training program. Therefore, it is characterized as an apathetic form of training by default where individuals must take steps to socialize themselves within a new role.

- I. ***Shifting of socialization responsibility [Responsibility - R].*** As organizations take an unstructured and apathetic approach to socialization, the locus of responsibility is naturally shifted to the employee rather than the organization. This may also occur more intentionally, as senior leaders implement 'sink or swim' tactics to motivate employees to be more proactive in their training. Thus, a 'shifting of responsibility' is characterized by a shifting of training responsibility away from the organization with employees taking sole responsibility of learning the job on their own.
- II. ***Lack of preparedness [Preparedness - P].*** Employees who have been left to 'sink or swim' will also perceive that their company's training program has failed to prepare them for their roles. This may be the result of going through a training program that they perceive as limited, ineffective, or non-existent. Therefore, a 'lack of preparedness' is characterized as an employee perceiving that they have gone through an ineffective or non-existent training program, which did not effectively prepare them for their role.

III. *Lack of perceived support [Support - S].* A key component of being left to ‘sink or swim’ is that an employee will feel as though they do not have the necessary social support required to learn their roles. This lack of perceived support may be directed at either the organization, its leaders, or other organizational insiders. Therefore, a ‘lack of perceived support’ will result in a new employee being either unable to or unsure of how to receive assistance from their leaders, coworkers, or organization.

<i>“Please indicate your level of agreement with each item based upon your experience within your organization’s training program”</i>		
	Item	Sub-Factor
1.	‘Sink or swim’ training is used as a way to weed out poor performers at this organization	
	<i>[A randomized list of the items were presented here.]</i>	

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM

Developing a Measure of Perceived ‘Sink or Swim’ Socialization

SMU REB # 21-030 (SMU REB File Number)

Investigators: Maddy Blazer

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Debra Gilin

Department of Psychology

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Phone: (902) 420 - 5400; Fax: (902) 420 - 5151

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INTRODUCTION

You are being invited to participate in this research study as part of the requirements for a Master’s Thesis in industrial-organizational psychology at Saint Mary’s University (SMU). The faculty supervisor and student investigator of this study from the Department of Psychology at Saint Mary’s University aim to establish a measure of an employee’s perception of being left to ‘sink or swim’ in their organization’s training program and assess its impact on employee outcomes. The researchers are asking that participants complete two surveys, each conducted a week apart. Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential and you can withdraw at any time. Any personal information collected in this study will remain completely anonymous and your participation will have no bearing on your current or future employment status. The investigators have no financial interest in conducting this research study.

SURVEY COMPENSATION

This study is to be completed through two surveys occurring one week apart. Individuals who complete the first survey will be compensated £1.88 through Prolific. Participants who return to complete the second survey a week later will be compensated an additional £1.88. Therefore, compensation for full participation is £3.76. To be eligible for this compensation, participants must respond honestly and purposely, pass all attention check questions, and reach the end of the survey.

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

The purpose of this study is to develop a scale that measures an employee's perception of being left to 'sink or swim' within their organization's training program and assess its impact on employee outcomes. ‘Sink or swim’ tactics are a common style of training which is not unique to any one industry or occupation. This study will give researchers the ability to gain a deeper understanding of the implications that a ‘sink or swim’ style of training can have on individual workers.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE PART? (OR WHO IS BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?)

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are currently employed and have just recently entered your organization within the last 2 years. You must also be at least 18 years old and be fluent in English. If you have been at your current organization for longer than 2 years and have not been trained recently, you are ineligible to participate in this study. Also, self-employed workers are ineligible for this study.

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATING MEAN? (OR WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO?)

This study will be completed entirely online, with participants expected to complete two separate surveys that are one week apart. Both surveys are to be completed through the Prolific platform. Each of these surveys is expected to take between 10 and 15 minutes for a total of 30 minutes for full participation. The first survey to be completed will include demographic questions, and scales focused on perceptions of ‘sink or swim’ training, individual personality and self-efficacy, and attitudes towards your current organization. The second survey will include a modified perception of ‘sink or swim’ scale, a socialization tactics scale, and additional scales focused on attitudes towards your current organization. In these surveys, you will be presented with a series of statements and will be tasked with specifying how strongly you agree or disagree.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THIS RESEARCH?

This study will advance organizational socialization research in that it will provide a practical measure of a widespread but under-researched global training tactic and assess its impact on employee outcomes. A better understanding of the ‘sink or swim’ training phenomenon will allow researchers the ability to assess its impact on individual workers. A measure of ‘sink or swim’ training will also provide organizations a practical means of assessing the effectiveness of their training programs.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS FOR PARTICIPANTS?

Participants may feel undue stress if they believe that their company will have access to their survey responses. However, the survey will remain completely anonymous and participants can be assured their responses cannot be connected back to them. There is also a possibility of discomfort for employees when reflecting upon their work-life, especially during stressful times brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants are completely free to skip any questions that cause any discomfort or stress. They can also contact the researchers using the contact information provided above if they have any questions or concerns about the surveys.

WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH MY INFORMATION? (OR WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO IT?)

Your participation in this study is strictly confidential and anonymous. Only the research team listed above will have access to the information collected. The data will be collected and stored on a password-protected, encrypted website (Qualtrics.com). Qualtrics uses the same encryption type (SSL) that on-line banking sites use to transmit secure information. The data will be immediately stored on Qualtrics’ secure server which does not share data

with third parties, and will then be transferred onto a secure server with Saint Mary’s University. Data will also be temporarily stored on researchers’ individual computers for analysis, which will be password protected. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this study, the findings may be presented at academic conferences or published in scholarly journals. Any reports of the research findings will describe what the results reveal about the sample as a whole, not about individual participants.

HOW CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY?

You are free to withdraw from the research study at any time during your completion of the survey. To withdraw during your completion of the survey, you may close the browser at any time and leave the study. If you would like to withdraw and remain eligible for the individual compensation, please skip through all the questions to the end of the survey. To withdraw after the survey has been completed, please withdraw your submission directly on Prolific by following the directions as outlined in this [link](#). You may also withdraw by emailing one of the researchers using the contact information included above. You must reach out to investigators prior to July 1st, 2021 if you would like your responses omitted from final analysis. Participants who wish to withdraw from the study will have their data and responses permanently deleted. Following completion of the first survey, participants may also choose not to return to complete the second survey. In this case, respondents will be compensated for the first survey but not the second.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION? (OR HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS STUDY?)

If you are interested in receiving information regarding the results of this study or if you have any questions or concerns, you can email one of the researchers using the contact information included above. Results are expected to be available after August 31st, 2021.

Certification:

The Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board has reviewed this research. If you have any questions or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at ethics@smu.ca or +1 (902) 420-5728.

Signature of Agreement:

Developing a Measure of Perceived ‘Sink or Swim’ Socialization

I understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits, and that by consenting I agree to take part in this research study and do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can end my participation at any time.

I have had adequate time to think about the research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I consent

I do not consent – Please exit the webpage now

Appendix C

FEEDBACK LETTER

**Developing a Measure of Perceived 'Sink or Swim' Socialization
SMU REB # 21-030 (SMU REB File Number)**

Investigators: Maddy Blazer

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Debra Gilin

Department of Psychology

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Dear Participant:

We appreciate your participation in this survey and would like to thank you for spending the time helping us with our research.

The purpose of this study is to develop a scale to measure an employee's perception of being left to 'sink or swim' within their organization's training program and assess its impact on employee outcomes. 'Sink or swim' tactics are a common style of training implemented across different industries and occupations. This study will give researchers the ability to gain a deeper understanding of the implications that a 'sink or swim' style of training can have on individual workers.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual will be kept anonymous and confidential. Once all the data is collected and analyzed for this study, we plan on sharing the research findings through conferences and journal articles. However, any data shared with the public will be shared on a holistic basis, not at an individual level.

If you are interested in receiving information regarding the results of this study or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at the email addresses listed at the top of the page. Also, feel free to contact us if you are experiencing discomfort following your participation in this study.

As with all Saint Mary's University projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at 902-491-8653 or ethics@smu.ca.

We appreciate your participation and hope that this has been an interesting experience for you.

Appendix D – Time 1 and 2 Surveys with Items

Survey 1:

<p>Demographic questions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your age? 2. What gender do you identify as? 3. What is your ethnicity? 4. What is your highest level of education attained? 5. What is your current employment status? 6. How many years of total work experience do you have? 7. How long have you been employed in your current organization? 8. How many people are employed within your organization? 9. In what industry do you currently work?
<p>Training questions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By what method were you trained (virtual, in-person, mixed)? 2. How long did your whole training process take?
<p>‘Sink or swim’</p>	<p>Perception of ‘sink or swim’ scale: Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree). Support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of this organization have held me at a distance until I learn the job. 2. My work team didn't help me get up-to-speed in my role. 3. Nobody checked in on me during my first few months of employment. 4. I wasn't formally introduced to members of the organization when I started. 5. My co-workers didn't have time for me when I started my role. 6. My supervisors were not available to help when I had a problem during training. 7. I received limited support in my role when I started at this organization. 8. I didn't know who to talk to when faced with a problem during training. <p>Effectiveness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I did not go through an organized training program when I started in my role. 2. There was no training roadmap to help prepare me for my position. 3. My organization's training has not facilitated my adjustment to the job. 4. It was unclear what was expected of me after going through training for my role. 5. My organization had little structure in its training program. 6. I was thrown right into my work without adequate training.

	<p>7. My organization did not provide insight into how long each stage of the training process should take.</p> <p>Responsibility:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Sink or swim' training is used as a way to screen out poor performers at this organization. 2. My organization relies on a 'sink or swim' approach to teaching new hires how things work. 3. I have had to be proactive to learn the responsibilities of my role. 4. It is expected that I find my own way within my organization's training. 5. This organization believes that it is the responsibility of a new hire to learn how to fit in. 6. Leaders in this organization do not see training new hires as one of their core responsibilities. 7. My organization uses a learn-on-your-own approach to training. 8. Senior members of this organization want new hires to rely on themselves in their training.
<p>Proactivity</p>	<p>Proactive personality scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly agree, 7 = strongly disagree).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life. 2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change. 3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality. 4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it. 5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen. 6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition. 7. I excel at identifying opportunities. 8. I am always looking for better ways to do things. 9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen. 10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.
<p>Self-efficacy</p>	<p>General self-efficacy scale (Chen et al., 2001): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself. 2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me. 4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind. 5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges. 6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks. 7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well. 8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.
Job satisfaction	<p>Job satisfaction index (as cited by Eisenberger et al., 1997): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a good friend of mine told me that he/she was interested in working in a job like mine, I would strongly recommend it. 2. All in all, I am very satisfied with my current job. 3. In general, my job measures up to the sort of job I wanted when I took it. 4. Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide all over again whether to take my job, I would.
Affective Commitment	<p>Affective commitment scale (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree). (R) indicates reverse scoring.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization. 2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it. 3. I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own. 4. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one (R). 5. I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organization (R). 6. I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organization (R). 7. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me. 8. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (R).
Intention to quit	<p>Turnover intentions scale (Kelloway et al., 1999): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I plan on leaving my job within the next year. 2. I have been actively looking for other jobs. 3. I want to remain in my job (R).
Attention check questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select “neither agree nor disagree” for this question. 2. Please select “strongly disagree” for this question. 3. Please select “strongly agree” for this question.

Time 2:

<p>Institutionalized vs. individualized socialization (socialization tactics scale)</p>	<p>Scale measuring socialization tactics (Jones, 1986): Respondents indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (7 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree). (R) indicates reverse scoring.</p> <p><i>Collective versus individual:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In my training, I have been extensively involved with other new recruits in common, job-related training activities. 2. Other new hires have been instrumental in helping me to understand my job requirements. 3. This organization puts all new hires through the same set of learning experiences. 4. Most of my training has been carried out apart from other new hires. (R) 5. There is a sense of "being in the same boat" amongst new hires in this organization. <p><i>Formal versus informal:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have been through a set of training experiences which are specifically designed to give new hires a thorough knowledge of job related skills. 2. During my training for this job I was normally physically apart from regular organizational members. 3. I did not perform any of my normal job responsibilities until I was thoroughly familiar with departmental procedures and work methods. 4. Much of my job knowledge has been acquired informally on a trial and error basis. (R) 5. I have been very aware that I am seen as "learning the ropes" in this organization. <p><i>Investiture versus divestiture:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have been made to feel that my skills and abilities are very important in this organization. 2. Almost all of my colleagues have been supportive of me personally. 3. I have had to change my attitudes and values to be accepted in this organization. (R) 4. My colleagues have gone out of their way to help me adjust to this organization. 5. I feel that experienced organizational members have held me at a distance until I conform to their expectations. (R) <p><i>Sequential versus random:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a clear pattern in the way one role leads to another or one job assignment leads to another in this organization. 2. Each stage of the training process has, and will, expand and build upon the job knowledge gained during the preceding stages of the process.
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The movement from role to role and function to function to build up experience and a track record is very apparent in this organization. 4. This organization does not put new hires through an identifiable sequence of learning experiences. (R) 5. The steps in the career ladder are clearly specified in this organization. <p><i>Serial versus disjunctive:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experienced organizational members see advising or training new hires as one of their main job responsibilities in this organization. 2. I am gaining a clear understanding of my role in this organization from observing my senior colleagues. 3. I have received little guidance from experienced organizational members as to how I should perform my job. (R) 4. I have little or no access to people who have previously performed my role in this organization. (R) 5. I have been generally left alone to discover what my role should be in this organization. (R) <p><i>Fixed versus variable:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can predict my future career path in this organization by observing other people's experiences. 2. I have a good knowledge of the time it will take me to go through the various stages of the training process in this organization. 3. The way in which my progress through this organization will follow a fixed timetable of events has been clearly communicated to me. 4. I have little idea when to expect a new job assignment or training exercise in this organization. (R) 5. Most of my knowledge of what may happen to me in the future comes informally, through the grapevine, rather than through regular organizational channels. (R)
<p>Repeated scales in time 2</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Sink or swim' scale 2. POS scale 3. PSS scale 4. Job satisfaction scale 5. Affective commitment scale 6. Intention to quit scale

Appendix E - Final 17-Item ‘Sink or Swim’ Scale

Please indicate the extent of your agreement with each item based on your training experience in your current organization.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

Support:

1. My work team didn't help me get up-to-speed in my role.
2. Nobody checked in on me during my first few months of employment.
3. I wasn't formally introduced to members of the organization when I started.
4. My co-workers didn't have time for me when I started my role.
5. My supervisors were not available to help when I had a problem during training.
6. I received limited support in my role when I started at this organization.
7. I didn't know who to talk to when faced with a problem during training.

Effectiveness:

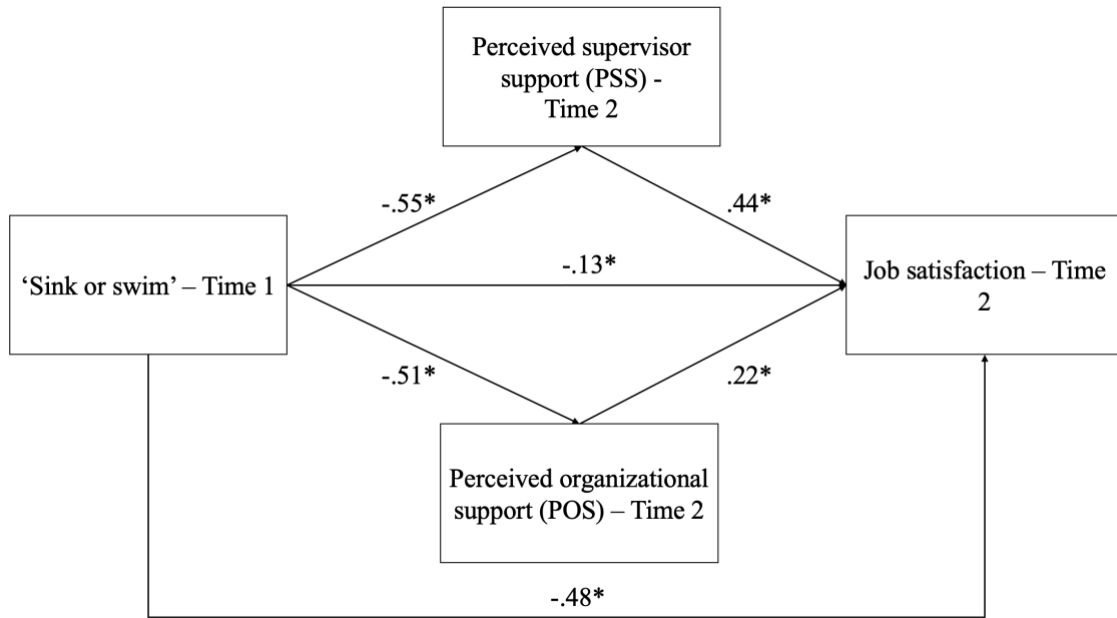
1. I did not go through an organized training program when I started in my role.
2. There was no training roadmap to help prepare me for my position.
3. My organization had little structure in its training program.
4. My organization did not provide insight into how long each stage of the training process should take.

Responsibility:

1. 'Sink or swim' training is used as a way to screen out poor performers at this organization.
2. My organization relies on a 'sink or swim' approach to teaching new hires how things work.
3. It is expected that I find my own way within my organization's training.
4. This organization believes that it is the responsibility of a new hire to learn how to fit in.
5. My organization uses a learn-on-your-own approach to training.
6. Senior members of this organization want new hires to rely on themselves in their training.

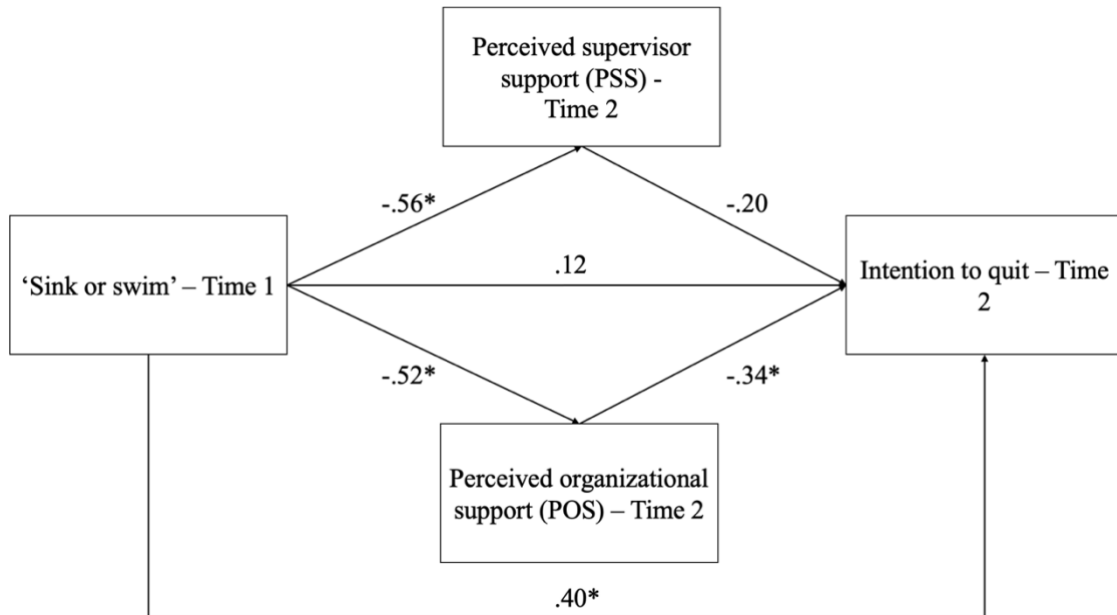
Appendix F – Mediation Models with 'Sink or Swim' Latent Construct

Dependent Variable – Job Satisfaction



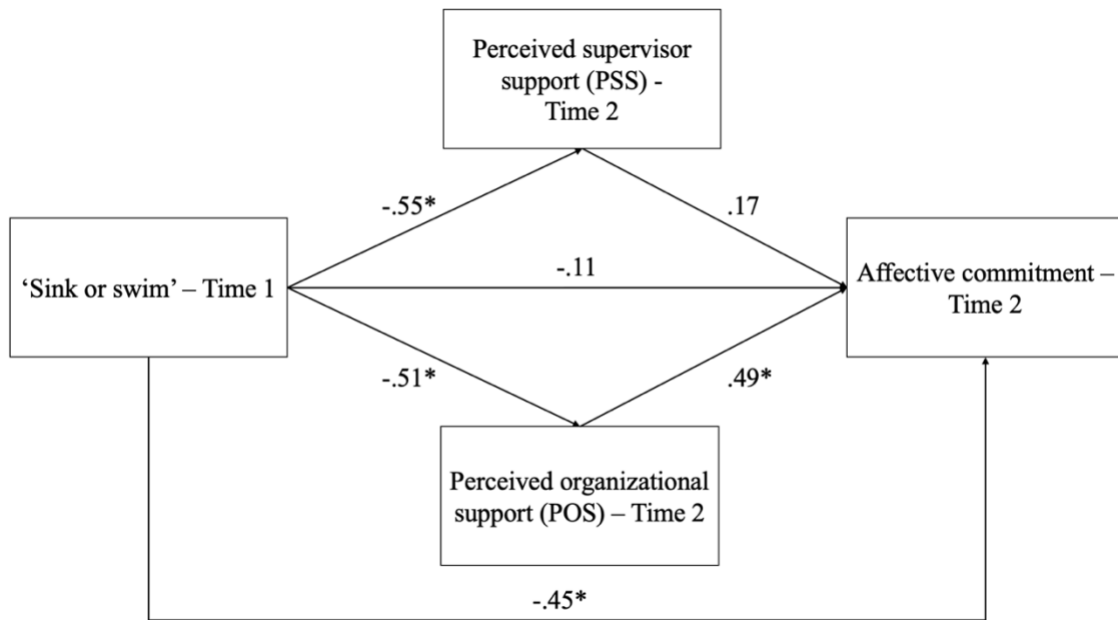
Note. *Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

Dependent Variable – Intention to Quit



Note. *Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

Dependent Variable – Affective Commitment



Note. *Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level