ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Newcomer Psychologists and Organizational Socialization: Can a Content Model Capture the Experience?

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The purpose of this article is to evaluate how well Taormina's Multidomain, Continuous Process Model of Organizational Socialization (Taormina, 1997) applies to the data from qualitative interviews with new-comer psychologists, and to explore the interview content that does not correspond with the model. A total of 64 interviews with 22 recently graduated psychologists in Norway were subjected to deductive content analysis by use of the model. The interview content that did not fit with the model was then explored by inductive content analysis. Largely, the model covered the interview material. However, the model's categories are wide, and perhaps they too easily embraced the data. Moreover, the model did not embrace issues concerning the work/non-work interface and the participants' own health and well-being, and an extension of the model is therefore discussed. These issues may be relevant in other professional contexts as well, and not only to newly graduated employees. The findings suggest that organizational socialization researchers could benefit from expanding their view of newcomers' situation. To practitioners in the field of HR, the model may provide a framework for developing introductory programmes. In addition, attention to the newcomers' personal well-being and life situation in general is recommended.

Keywords: Organizational socialization; newcomers; psychologists; qualitative content analysis

The process of entering working life in general and organizations in particular is investigated within the research area of organizational entry and socialization. Organizational socialization has been defined as 'the process through which a new organizational employee adapts from outsider to integrated and effective insider' (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006, p. 492) or 'the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role' (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 211). Entering an unfamiliar organization is considered a demanding and stressful experience, and it may involve surprises, uncertainty, role ambiguity and even a reality shock (Ashford & Nurmohamed, 2012; Bravo, Peiro, Rodriguez, & Whitely, 2003; Louis, 1980). Organizational socialization (OS) is often conceptualized as a learning process (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). During this learning process, uncertainty and stress are gradually reduced as the newcomers become socially integrated and able to master their work role.

Whereas many researchers focus on *how* newcomers learn through their experiences in the organization, another branch of research focuses on the content of OS;

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what newcomers need to learn to become well-functioning members of the organization. The two above-mentioned aspects of OS are of course closely intertwined. Mastery of socialization content may mediate the relationship between socialization experiences and long-term socialization outcomes (Klein, Fan, & Preacher, 2006). Outcomes of socialization may include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, intentions to remain, and turnover (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). These are important factors in all organizations, and are among the reasons why it is important to study organizational socialization. Successful socialization will depend upon a number of factors that influence the adjustment process, among which newcomer proactive behaviour and organizational tactics are prominent in the research literature (Ashford & Nurmohamed, 2012).

Taormina (1997) underlines that OS is a two-way process, and includes a socio-psychological perspective in his definition: 'Organizational socialization is the process by which a person secures relevant job skills, acquires a functional level of organizational understanding, attains supportive social interactions with coworkers, and generally accepts the established ways of a particular organization' (p. 29). He presents a model intended to capture existing research on organizational socialization. This model is

OS Domain	Description
Training	Development of job related skills and abilities, acquisition of functional mastery of job tasks and skills.
Understanding	The extent to which one comprehends and can apply knowledge about one's job and work role, as well as the organization, people and culture. Serves as an overarching OS domain, underlying nearly all employee behaviour. May include factors like role clarity and definition, identity, reality shock, adjustment to norms and values, information acquisition, task, role, group and organization learning, and accepting organizational reality.
Coworker support	How well the employee relates to other members in the organization. Emotional, moral or instrumental support given by others in the organization to alleviate anxiety, fear and doubt.
Future prospects	The extent to which one anticipates having a rewarding career in the organization, perceptions about factors like the probability of remaining employed, current or potential salary, assignments, promotions and recognition.

Table 1: An outline of key concepts in Taormina's organizational socialization model (Taormina, 1997; Taormina, 2004).

called a multidomain, continuous process model, which means that organizational socialization has a continuous nature and involves several domains, or 'spheres of influence or activity' (Taormina, 1997, p. 30). My aim in this paper is to evaluate how well Taormina's model applies to the content of semi-structured interviews with newcomer psychologists in Norway, and to explore the interview content that does not correspond with the model.

Taormina's organizational socialization content model consists of four domains. The OS domains are to be understood as conceptual realms containing dimensions or factors from previous OS research (Taormina, 1997). The OS domains and their content are presented in **Table 1**. Taormina underlines that the OS domains contain both a content area and a process. The process will go on continuously, but at varying levels for different employees and at different time points. It is a process that takes time, but there is little agreement on time perspectives in the OS literature (Ashforth, 2012). How long a newcomer should be regarded as "new" will vary from situation to situation. To what extent people consider a colleague to be new may even differ according to the new colleague's relative tenure (Rollag, 2004), and it is thereby influenced by organizational growth and turnover. The first one or two years may however well be included in a study of organizational newcomers. Studies on the transition from school to work may include several years after graduation, see for instance Elfering, Semmer, Tschan, Kälin and Bucher (2007). It is impossible to capture the richness of organizational socialization at one point in time only. Over time the newcomers will encounter various tasks and situations that are relevant if one wants to understand their experience.

The first domain in Taormina's model, *Training*, concerns the functional skills or abilities that are required to perform a particular job. The rationale for including training in the model is that mastery of necessary skills is an important part of socialization into our society in general. Further, without the skills needed for performing one's job, it is difficult to contribute to the organization and less likely that one will stay employed in it. The second OS domain is called *Understanding*, and it refers to how one understands and can apply various types of knowledge and information about the job and organization. Taormina

describes this OS domain as pervasive and extremely important, because it will underlie nearly all employee behaviour. Understanding is necessary for the employees to perform their jobs, and consequently a prerequisite for the organization to function. *Coworker support* is the third OS domain of Taormina's model. This OS domain is about developing relations and becoming socially accepted, and about the level of support received from other employees through interactions at work. The rationale for including *Coworker support* is that the need for social support is widely acknowledged in the OS literature, socialization expectedly occurs mainly through interactions with other people in the organization. The fourth OS domain, *Future prospects,* concerns perceptions about one's future in the organization, whether one expects having a rewarding career in the organization and how one perceives the different benefits, rewards and recognitions offered by the organization. According to Taormina, the employee must accept these prospects to adjust successfully to the organization. Moreover, he claims that perceptions about future prospects can help explain why people choose to leave an organization. Turnover is obviously considered a less successful outcome of the OS process.

An inventory based on the model (Organizational Socialization Inventory – OSI) has been tested in several countries (Claes, Hiel, Smets, & Luca, 2006; Taormina & Bauer, 2000), and in different professional contexts (Taormina, 2004; Taormina & Law, 2000). A competing OS content model was developed by Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner (1994). This model conceptualizes OS as consisting of six content dimensions: *Performance proficiency, People, Politics, Language, Organizational goals and values and History*. In a validation study comparing the OSI to Chao et al.'s inventory, Taormina (2004) found that both inventories had substantive predictive validity, and that all of the six dimensions of Chao's model correspond to three of the OSI domains. As such, Taormina's model includes a socialization domain (*Future prospects*), not included in Chao et al.'s model. Taormina's model may have been developed with blue-collar workers in mind, as the author often refers to the handling of machinery and hardware. However, the *Training* domain in Taormina's model refers to "the mastery of job skills" (Taormina, 1997, p. 31) and incorporates the "performance proficiency"

dimension of Chao's model (Chao et al., 1994). "Mastery of job skills" and "performance proficiency" are general terms that may apply to all types of work-related skills. The questions in Taormina's inventory (OSI) refers first and foremost to training received in the organization, and the inventory may as such be less suitable for professionally educated newcomers. In the present study, however, the *Training* domain refers to the rationale on which the inventory is based, as explicated by Taormina (1997), and it is understood to include all references to job skills and abilities, even those acquired before starting on the job – the newcomers' task mastery, that they are to develop in their new job.

Taormina's model was used as the theoretical framework for the present study because it is based on a review of the entire research field, and is intended to be generally applicable and useful across different settings (Taormina, 1997; Taormina, 2004). Although the model has been well established, it is important that it is continuously evaluated in light of new data and different contexts.

Context in the present study

The Norwegian psychologists participating in this study graduated from a five-year educational programme following a one-year introductory course. The last part of the programme includes several internship practices, the most comprehensive of which is the "main internship" towards the end of the study. After graduation, most of the psychologists in Norway enrol in the specialist education programme. This programme includes specialization courses, and by participating in the programme, a newcomer psychologist is entitled to receive supervision from an experienced psychologist during his/her first years of work. Internship experience, specialist education and supervision by an experienced practitioner may help support a newly graduated psychologist. However, the psychologists start working in organizational settings that may be complex and interdisciplinary. Clinical work often involves working alone with clients, and novice psychologists may feel left to their own devices when entering autonomous professional work (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 2003). In a study of novice workers, some psychologists reported feeling an overwhelming responsibility and moral quandaries due to conflicting interests, for instance between clients and employer or between work and private sphere (Solbrekke, 2008). Cushway and Tyler (1994, p. 38) found that psychologists with less experience reported higher stress levels, and that the greatest stressors among clinical psychologists were too much work, poor quality of management, too many different things to do, lack of resources, and conflicting roles and relationships with other staff.

Organizational socialization may be particularly challenging to newly graduated newcomers, who are unfamiliar with full-time employment and less experienced in their professional role. Bauer et al. (2007) claims that "organizational and occupational socialization are different types of adjustment. For example, learning to be a nurse is different from learning to work at a new hospital as a nurse". On the other hand, the occupational role of the newcomer is developed in interaction with an organizational setting, and these two types of socialization can hardly be separated after work entry. People do not start to work *in general*, they almost always start to work *in an organization*. An assumption underlying this study is that a close interplay goes on between organizational socialization and professional development.

The overarching purpose of the research was to explore how newly educated psychologists experience the transition from school to work and how they manage their first job as a psychologist. The main aim of the present paper is to evaluate how well Taormina's organizational socialization model applies to the content of semi-structured interviews with newcomer psychologists. Secondly, I wanted to explore the interview content that does not correspond with the model, and discuss whether this "non-corresponding" content is related to the context of newcomer psychologists or relevant to organizational socialization in general.

Method

This study is based on an analysis of data material from 64 interviews with newly graduated psychologists, conducted during the first two years after their graduation.

Participants

Letters were sent towards the end of two successive semesters to psychologists graduating from two Norwegian universities, asking them to participate in a longitudinal interview study regarding their transition from school to work. Attached was a letter of recommendation from the Norwegian Psychological Association, encouraging people to participate in the study. The great majority of participants were recruited from the larger of the two universities, where graduates from two successive semesters received letters. Only two participants volunteered from the other university, where graduate students received participation letters only after the second semester. Approximately one hundred students received the letter. Twenty-four graduates who were willing to participate returned informed consent forms with contact information. Interview appointments were then made via email or phone. One of the respondents refrained from participation before arrangements were made, and one was excluded due to residing abroad. The 22 remaining participants were interviewed up to four times each. The first interview round (T0), was conducted before the participants entered their first job. Many of the participants had already started work by the time of recruitment for the study, and they were therefore not interviewed during this round. The second interview round was conducted about one month after the participants entered work (T1), and the third after approximately six months (T2). The last wave of interviews (T3) was conducted either one year after having commenced work or two years after graduation. This differed based on pragmatic decisions. (See **Table 2** for distribution of interviews.)

The participants in this study were between 25 and 44 years of age at the start of the study, with an average age of 29 years. There are 16 female and six male participants. There is obviously an overrepresentation of female participants

T0	T1	T2	T3	Total
10	19	17	18	64

Table 2: Number of interviews conducted in each round.

in this study. The sample is, however, fairly representative of the gender distribution among authorized psychologists in Norway. In 2007, when this study started, 28.8 percent of those who received their authorization were male, and the male ratio has decreased since, to 23.9 percent in 2015 (The Norwegian Psychological Association, personal communication, January 5, 2016). The following work areas are represented: Research and Treatment Centre, Psychiatric Emergency Department, The Norwegian Work and Welfare Administration, Child Welfare Service, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, Psychiatric out-patient Clinic for Children and Young People, The Ministries, District Psychiatric Centre (both out-patient clinic and ward are represented), Family Counselling Office, School Psychology Services and Somatic Hospital.

The participants were recruited due to their accessibility, as they were graduating at the time of the study and volunteered to participate. As such, this is a convenience sample. However, the sample represents different work areas that graduates typically start their careers in, and therefore it could also be regarded as a purposive or theoretical sample (Silverman, 2005). This group of participants captures variation and contains several cases 'with similar and contrasting characteristics' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 31). It should be noted that psychologists in Norway often start their work life in a setting similar to those that are represented here, whereas those with a master's degree often start to work in business, research or other areas.

Procedure
Interviews
The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) were notified about the study, and their approval was received before the interviews were conducted. I conducted all of the interviews. Some of the interviews were conducted at the university from which most of the participants graduated, otherwise the interviews were conducted at the participant's workplace. However, as several of the participants worked far from my location, a few of the interviews were conducted by phone. The interview schedule was semi-structured, containing some specific questions about the participant's job position, work area, and organizational context, and then some more general questions about previous work experience and expectations, as well as organizational entry experiences. The main part of the interview was a SWOT-structured sequence with four open questions. SWOT refers to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The SWOT-structure was chosen because this type of interviewing has been demonstrated to obtain rich data in organizational settings (Hoff, Straumsheim, Bjørkli, & Bjørklund, 2009). The interview structure does not presuppose any particular theoretical dimensions, and as such it makes the data suitable for comparing or evaluating existing models. The SWOT-format was chosen

to structure the interviews, in attempt to capture people's reflections about their mastery of a given situation and what they think may support or impede mastery of the situation in the future. It was considered to be a fruitful way of exploring the newcomer situation broadly and qualitatively without confining the interview structure to one particular model or perspective. As this structure is «theory neutral», it can be used in a variety of areas concerning people or organizations. If the data were reflected well by the model, this would mean that the model is useful in this setting. If there were data that the model fell short of explaining, this would perhaps imply that the model has its shortcomings.

The participants were asked to consider their overall work situation, including their position, work role, workplace, managers, colleagues, the organization itself, and their surroundings when answering the following questions: 'What about your work situation do you handle well?' (strengths), 'what about your work situation do you handle less well?' (usually weaknesses, but called challenges in this analysis), 'what opportunities do you see regarding the mastery of your work situation for the time period ahead; what may facilitate the mastery of your work?' (opportunities), 'what threats do you see regarding the mastery of your work situation for the time period ahead; what could be a barrier to your mastery of work?' (threats). Expectations were requested in the pre-entry interviews and actual experience was requested in the post-entry interviews. All of the interviews were concluded by asking whether there was anything more the participants would like to relate about their expectations and experiences so far. Follow-up questions were posed to expand on topics introduced by the participant or for clarification purposes. Pauses or probes encouraged the participant to continue talking. An informal atmosphere was sought. The interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, approximately. Those who participated throughout the study received a bookshop gift card after their last interview was completed.

The present study includes interviews at different points in time, to get rich information about the OS process by uncovering as many situations, incidents and experiences as possible. The fact that the participants contributed with unequal numbers of interviews was not considered a problem for the present analysis, and all of the available data material was included. The data material from this study has been subjected to other analyses as well, in which development across time is explored. Some of the findings are presented in an article on challenges during work entry (Sagberg, 2014).

Analysis
The interviews were recorded on a high quality digital recorder and transcribed in their entirety, except for short affirmations or continuers. The interview material was analysed using qualitative content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004), a flexible analysis approach by which one classifies text of any kind into smaller content categories. According to the purpose of the analysis, it may be used in either an inductive way

(by deriving the categories from the data) or in a deductive way (by basing the analysis on an existing theory or model). Deductive content analysis is an appropriate approach when evaluating models against new material or in a new context (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). A meaning unit, also referred to as a coding unit or content unit, can be described as 'words, sentences or paragraphs containing aspects related to each other through their content and context' (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p. 106), and is the basic element of analysis. The meaning unit chosen in this analysis was a text unit, a text sequence of various length, referring to a strength, challenge, opportunity, or threat. For instance, 'I think making a suicide risk assessment is terribly difficult' constitutes a text unit, extracted because the text refers to a challenge. Text units of this kind were extracted from the material, and then the units were analysed deductively, by mapping them onto the four OS domains, or content areas, of Taormina's model. Theoretical foundations described by Taormina (Taormina, 1997; Taormina, 2004) guided the analysis. The guidelines are included in appendix A. To give an example, the text unit 'I think making a suicide risk assessment is terribly difficult' was classified as belonging to the "*Training*" category, because it refers to mastering a particular work task.

The material that did not correspond to any of the categories of the model was categorized as "*Other*". An inductive content analysis was then applied to this material, to explore the content not grasped by Taormina's model. The inductive content analysis was based on the approach described by Elo and Kyngäs (2008), which involves open coding of the text units, and then sorting these units into categories named with content-characteristic words. In inductive content analysis, one moves from the specific to the general, and develop categories based on the data. Similar events and topics were grouped together as categories, and categories were then grouped together into broader main categories. Graneheim and Lundman (2004, p. 107) describe a category as a 'thread throughout the codes', expressing the manifest content of the text. Categories are created to describe a phenomenon and generate knowledge about, and understanding of, a given topic (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The following is an example of a text unit that was coded as *Other*: 'And that I don't get completely burnt out, so that I have some energy to think now and then'. This unit was put in a category called *Burn-out/exhaustion*. Content related to the participant's health and well-being was gathered in a main category called *One's own health and well-being*.

According to Taormina, the OS domains may overlap and interact, like 'when a variable can be both a) knowledge about something and b) the thing itself' (Taormina, 1997, p. 30). For the sake of clarity, Taormina presents the OS domains separately when describing the model. The analysis approach in this paper was to code the text units exclusively. Exclusive coding means that a unit of analysis must be assigned to one category only. In other words, it can only be labelled with one code. It is acknowledged that some of the units may belong to more than one OS domain, and perhaps the possible overlap between OS domains contradicts exclusive coding. However, exclusive coding makes the analysis more orderly. Moreover, a conceptual separation of the OS domains was required to base an inventory on this model. In this analysis, the focus was to evaluate how well the model embraced the data material. Therefore, the fact that some of the text units could have been mapped on to additional OS domains was not considered a problem. I attempted to assign the text units to the most relevant OS domain, according to the aforementioned criteria.

Results

In this section, the results from the deductive content analysis will be presented, category by category according to the model. Representative quotes are included, to illustrate each OS domain and SWOT category. The findings from the inductive analysis of the data material that did not fit with the model's categories will be presented in a separate section below. To enhance readability, the quotes in the article are in some cases only a part of the text units they represent.

Table 3 describes the distribution of units across the OS domains and SWOT categories. Of the 1387 units identified in this analysis, 166 were categorized as belonging to the *Other* category. This implies that nearly 90 percent of the coded units were considered appropriate to map onto the OS domains of Taormina's model. The OS domains *Training* and *Understanding* were by far the most relevant to the material in this study, as the great majority of the units were considered to belong in these categories.

For comments and reflections about the quantitative differences in **Table 3**, see Discussion section.

Training

Assigned to the *Training* domain were units describing functional mastery, skills and abilities relating to the job itself, and units about tasks or job content. Units about

	Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities	Threats	Total
Training	155	113	211	53	**532**
Understanding	95	139	153	114	**501**
Coworker support	51	6	69	32	**158**
Future prospects	1	1	17	11	**30**
Other	23	21	67	55	**166**
Total	**325**	**280**	**517**	**265**	**1387**

Table 3: Number of text units in each OS domain and SWOT-category.

supervision or coworker assistance were included when referring to the process of acquiring professional skills or developing functional ability. Text units referring to meetings and teamwork were included when these were referred to as job tasks. Achieving a good contact with the patients or clients was often referred to as something the participants felt they mastered well, and this quote is typical: 'I think I've really mastered the art of having good contact with the patients'. Specific therapeutic tools and approaches, on the other hand, were typical examples of challenging job content. Suicide risk assessment was a concrete example of challenging tasks: 'I think making a suicide risk assessment is terribly difficult'.

Professional guidance and learning possibilities were commonly referred to as factors that facilitated work mastery, in the words of one participant: 'I think that it is absolutely necessary that I still receive good professional follow-up and guidance'. If tasks were to become too demanding or extensive, it was considered a possible threat to the participants' sense of mastery: 'It's of course if I get very many cases that I feel are so complex and that I feel I . . . that I can't manage'.

Understanding
To the *Understanding* domain, I assigned units describing how the work place is functioning and how to operate within it; organizational norms, standards, rules and routines; role clarity, role development, boundary setting and feedback; organizational culture, social climate, interpersonal conflicts and multidisciplinary issues. Text units referring to cooperation and teamwork were included when referring to understanding norms, multidisciplinary issues or workplace culture. Understanding how the health care and social security system works was frequently referred to as being challenging: 'Knowledge of the system. How it functions, who in local government one can ask about what, and where one is meant to direct it and who . . . yeah, just knowing who has what role, when the clients need more than just talk therapy.' The participants talked a lot about how to operate within the organization and handle multidisciplinary issues. Red tape and administration was considered as threats to work mastery by this participant: 'One element of control isn't too bad, but when there are one, two, three, four, five . . . then it gets to be too much. Then it takes time away from work with patients.'

Figuring out what one's role is in the new context seems to be an important part of being a newcomer. The following example illustrates how feedback from colleagues guided one participant's understanding of how to behave in meetings: 'And then today I actually received really good feedback about the fact that I am really clear, in meetings and stuff, sort of like clear and straightforward, and not afraid to speak up about things'. Gaining a better understanding of how to prioritize between tasks and responsibilities was regarded as an opportunity by another participant: 'I can't do much about the amount of work, that's just how it is, you know, and things are organized the way they are, but I can get better at figuring out [. . .] what I'm supposed to spend time on and what I'm not supposed to spend time on'.

Coworker support
The *Coworker support* domain also embraced a considerable amount of text units. Included in this OS domain were units describing social relations and interaction with coworkers, social cohesion and support from other members of the organization. Text units about cooperation with colleagues, meetings and teamwork were included when referring to social relations and support. Many participants considered building social relations and relating to colleagues to be something they mastered well, and this is a typical example of a text unit coded as a *strength*: 'I think I get on well with my colleagues'. Support and guidance from colleagues were largely described as opportunities, for example as this participant puts it: 'I can always go and knock on a door and I can chat away and have an enjoyable and pleasant time at work [. . .] I can sort of use the people around me to . . . sort of find support and advice and guidance.'

Conflict and relational problems in the workplace, on the other hand, were often described as threatening to the participants' mastery of work: 'So I tolerate very little conflict in a sense, so conflicts at work would be . . . that would be a huge obstacle for me, that's really my weak spot'. One participant was surprised to encounter difficulties while trying to establish new relations in the workplace: 'But my relationship to my colleagues, that, that's been a bit surprising, because my experience in other workplaces is that it worked out really well, but here at this place, I think things have been a bit difficult.'

Future prospects
The Future Prospects domain did not seem to be of great importance according to the participants in this study. Assigned to this category were units describing views about a future in the organization; these are aspects influencing whether the participants expected to stay or leave. One participant found it hard to be passionate enough about his workplace, due to doubt about whether to stay in the job or accept another job offer: 'In addition, when I was challenged so early, about whether I was going to continue on there or not, then it got to be very sort of . . . so I sort of haven't achieved that sense of belonging that . . . that makes you really passionate about your workplace, in a way.'

Another participant had decided to settle with the type of work the current job provided her with, and seemed to be very happy with this decision: 'Yes, I have made a choice, which I am very glad to have made, in relation to research and also other similar types of projects (. . .) that I am not going to do that, not for the next few years. I'm just going to, just concentrate on the clinical [work].' This text unit was interpreted as a strength.

Reflections on possibilities of continued employment and perceptions about the rewards (or the lack of such) offered by the organization were also included in this OS domain. For instance, insecurity regarding short-term job contracts was expressed by some participants, and was regarded as a threat to mastery: 'They try and pressure them into like three month commitments and stuff [. . .] If you have something to do over the summer, right,

those types of things'. One participant described receiving a proper salary as an opportunity: 'In relation to how a person is meant to be happy at work, at least to a certain degree, but especially with regard to the type of work I invest, then the salary is important'. Another topic referred to was having to change jobs due to participation in the specialist education programme.

The Other category – findings from inductive content analyses

As described in the Method section, the text units in the *Other* category were analysed inductively by categorizing them into content areas. An overview of the proposed categories is attached in Appendix B. One's own attitude towards the work situation was referred to as an important factor, for instance being satisfied with what one is doing. Some participants also referred to experience, work environment factors and conditions for psychologists. However, most of the units that were not comprised by the OS model domains were categorized as being about work life in a broader context: the work/non-work interface and taking care of oneself mentally and physically during organizational entry.

A typical threat to the newcomers' sense of work mastery was 'being tired'. Many participants expressed that they were tired, and they worried about getting exhausted or burnt-out, as this is often described as a threat to young and inexperienced psychologists: 'It may happen that I get that kind of burnout syndrome rather quickly, actually. I'm starting to fear that, as I am aware that this is a danger to . . . to new psychologists, that is, the first years.' Another participant worried about his own ability to set limits for himself: 'So I wonder . . . whether or not I will manage to regulate things . . . in such a way that I don't get burnt out after two years . . . like I have heard many people do'. Several of the newcomer psychologists said that they had begun in personal therapy themselves, and that this was of great help both personally and professionally. Getting enough sleep and relaxation was described as something that would contribute to work mastery: 'That I take care of myself physically, that I get enough sleep and enough food and practice getting up in the morning and things like that, because that will influence how tired I get and how good a job I am able to do.'

'Go to bed early' is an example of a challenge, however. The above mentioned topics were categorized as being about *one's own health and well-being.*

Experiencing personal problems, and how one is doing otherwise in life, were referred to as having a great impact on mastery of work. Handling the time crunch, especially for those who had already established a family, work commute and arriving to work on time were issues many participants talked about: 'I manage to get up early, get here on time. Be here at the time I am supposed to'. Being able to set work aside, for instance after encountering deeply troubled patients, seemed to be challenging for many participants:

> 'When I have gotten rather serious cases, the whole thing about being able to set it aside, and, in a way,

I notice this can really affect me, that I can be lying there and brood about it to the point that it can almost negatively impact my sleep in a way.'

Balancing between work and personal life, and establishing some boundaries between work and personal life were other topics described by the newcomer psychologists: 'I know that there's a lot going on in my life with, yeah, remodelling a new apartment and moving [. . .] And work, caregiving, responsibilities for my child and getting everything to balance out'.

Study companions and other beginners, and for some, their loved ones, were considered as sources of support outside of the organization:

> 'And also conversations with other psychologists . . . friends. Like on Wednesday, I am going to meet up with a gang from my student days, and then, according to the plan, we are meant to have a sort of set date where we discuss different psychological issues (. . .) That can be a source of development.'

This quote underlines that not only colleagues, also people outside of the organization may provide support and learning, and as such have a positive effect on newcomers' professional development and job performance. The above mentioned topics were categorized as being about the *work/non-work interface*, a concept that embraces the reciprocal nature of these issues and the fact that they can be both demanding and resourceful. Work/non-work interface can be defined as 'a global concept referring to the point where "work" and "non-work" meet each other, either in a negative or a positive way' (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003, p. 279).

Discussion

The first question is how suitable Taormina's model is in the context of newcomer psychologists. Nearly 90 percent of the text units identified in this analysis were considered to fit well with this model (see **Table 3**). At first glance, this signals that the model is valuable within this context. The *Training* and *Understanding* domains encompassed the majority of units in this analysis.

The *Training* domain is about the functional mastery of one's job. For newly graduated professionals testing out their therapeutic skills and abilities in a real work setting, the functional aspects of the job situation will be salient. This OS domain is broadly conceptualized, encompassing all units that refer to the functional aspects of the psychologists' work role. Considering this fact, the *Training* domain is naturally dominant. The *Training* domain refers to the functional mastery of job tasks or skills, and the development of job related skills and abilities. In the inventory based on the model, however, the questions about training refers to the training and supervision received in the organization (Taormina, 2004). This could mean that the model is less suitable for newcomers who are educated specifically for a given work role, particularly for newcomers who are educated in a profession, like teachers or psychologists. Still, even when newcomers come to

an organization with an education, they need to figure out how to perform their work role in a real life context and within the boundaries of an organization – a professional community of culture, rules and regulations, tacit or explicit. Although even an experienced psychologist may find it very challenging to assess the risk of suicide, a newcomer will need to practice within, and preferably receive help from, a professional community to develop the ability to do such a risk assessment – as a part of his or her job related skills and abilities. However, this category would have encompassed less text units if the domain had been conceptualized strictly according to the inventory.

According to Taormina (1997), the *Understanding* domain is an overarching and comprehensive OS domain, underlying nearly all organizational behaviour. This is reflected in this study, as a large number of units refer to the understanding of one's role, organizational practices, interdisciplinary issues, and the requirements of the health care system. However, it could be argued that both of these OS domains are too broadly defined, making them suitable for nearly any aspect of the work situation. Chao et al.'s model (1994) has four specified dimensions that will conceptually belong in the *Understanding* domain; these are *Politics, Goals and values, History,* and *Language.* According to Taormina (2004) splitting the *Understanding* domain into several dimensions does not add to the model's structural integrity. However, Taormina suggests that Chao et al.'s model 'may be more useful if the researcher desires very specific information' (Taormina, 2004, p. 91). Specific knowledge about the various concepts that require understanding might be useful even for practitioners dealing with newcomers. The "fuzziness" of this domain may call for a refinement, or perhaps even an expansion, of the model. This will be further discussed later in this section, in light of the *Other* category.

The *Coworker support* domain also covers a considerable amount of text units. Establishing and maintaining social relations in the work place was obviously an important issue to the newcomer psychologists in this study. However, considering the significant role of social relations in the theory and research on organizational socialization (Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999; Bravo et al., 2003; Elfering et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007; Thomas & Lankau, 2009), one might expect this OS domain to be more prominent in the interview material. One reason for it being relatively modest in this study could be that text units coded for training or understanding also may be about social relations. Because of the exclusive coding applied in this analysis, only the text units that were primarily about social relations and support were assigned to the *Coworker support* domain.

The *Future prospects* domain was not given much attention by the participants in this study. There were only a few references to these aspects of the adjustment process. This could be due to how the interview questions were posed, referring to the participants' mastery of the work situation. Perhaps they did not think that this was relevant to their sense of mastery, though future prospects may have been relevant to them in other ways. The participants were asked early in the interviews whether their

job was a permanent or a temporary position, and if they, given the choice, would want to stay in the job. It appeared that very many of them had temporary positions and that they felt they had little say over their future in the organization. For some of the participants, it took some time to get a job, and very few were afforded the choice between several tempting job offers. Moreover, to qualify as a specialist, the psychologists need to assume several types of clinical work positions during their participation in the educational programme. This seemed to influence their career decisions greatly during their early years of work. No matter how satisfied they were with their workplace, they would have to change jobs sometime in the near future. These are among the possible reasons why the *Future prospects* domain was hardly noticeable in this study. It should again be noted that some of the text units that were categorized as being about training or understanding also might have been categorized as being about future prospects, for instance, when the participants talked appreciatively about training courses provided by the organization. In sum, the lack of support to the *Future prospects* domain does not mean that this OS domain is irrelevant in the context of newcomer psychologists, but it may be less relevant to them than it is to more established psychologists and newcomers in general.

As described above, all of Taormina's OS domains apply to the interview data, and this supports the model in a conceptual sense. The inventory based on the model gives equal weight to each OS domain, measuring each of them with the same number of questions. In my study, on the other hand, the relative weights of the four OS domains are very uneven (see **Table 3**). The findings from the semistructured interviews do not support giving all the OS domains equal attention.

The inductive content analysis showed that various aspects of the work/non-work interface, in addition to taking care of oneself mentally and physically, were issues frequently talked about. Further, the participants also mentioned work environment factors, one's own attitude towards the work situation, and earlier experience. Earlier experience and individual differences in, for instance, proactivity and self-efficacy are frequently studied variables, which are expected to influence organizational socialization (Adkins, 1995; Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Carr, Pearson, Vest, & Boyar, 2006; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2012; Saks, 1995). These issues are naturally brought up in interviews with organizational newcomers, but individual attitudes and earlier experience do not conceptually belong in a model of organizational socialization content.

The reported issues concerning work/non-work interface and health and well-being support earlier research on psychologists. As mentioned in the introduction, moral quandaries concerning the balance between the private sphere and one's career may be a concern among newcomer psychologists (Solbrekke, 2008). In a study of selfcare strategies among psychologist interns, the researchers found that one of the most effective strategies was getting social support from family and friends (Turner et al., 2005). Are the issues context related, that is, relevant only

to psychologists and other caring professions, or are they relevant to other work groups in general? Taking care of oneself mentally may be particularly important for psychologists. Burnout is a potential threat to psychologists and people in other caring professions (Cushway & Tyler, 1994; Rupert, 2005). Self-therapy is probably an issue that is mostly relevant to psychologists and other therapists. However, there is reason to believe that taking care of one's health and well-being during the intensive adjustment phase is important to employees from other emotionally demanding care-giving professions as well.

Another question is whether health and well-being and the work/non-work interface are relevant during organizational socialization solely to newly graduated employees. If, on the other hand, they are important aspects of adjustment to a new organization in general, one may argue that they should be included in a model of organizational socialization. The transition from school to work certainly involves a particularly big change in lifestyle, from being a student to becoming a worker with strict time schedules and serious responsibilities. These issues will naturally be especially important during the transition from student to practitioner, for newcomers who are socialized into a new organization while learning how to handle their particular occupation in a way that they will be able to live with in the long run. However, organizations will have different policies regarding how to help employees handle the work/non-work interface, for instance, through providing flexible working arrangements or supportive services like kindergarten or home assistance. Entering a new organization may involve a new location, a change in work commute, and a different physical environment. In addition, people may receive different levels of support from family and friends, and apply different strategies when encountering challenges in the private sphere. This means that entering a new job involves an adjustment phase when it gets to the work/non-work interface, also for new employees with more work experience. Some workplaces will facilitate physical training, physical therapy, relaxation, healthy lunch arrangements, and other services that may make it easier to take care of one's health and well-being. Adjusting to a new organization also involves adjusting to new threats and possibilities for self-care. A recently published book about sustainable working lives includes a chapter about organizational socialization and balancing work and family (Wiese & Knecht, 2015). The authors argue that socialization is a critical life event that is substantially stressful and will affect other life domains, which gives OS a potential when it comes to preventing stress-related problems and burnout. Training programs that promote newcomers' self-efficacy beliefs and stress management skills, and an organizational system of family supportive activities and work-time arrangements are among the suggested possibilities of integrating the work-family interplay into OS programs. Moreover, Wiese and Knecht underline that: 'This benefit of optimizing organizational socialization is, of course, not restricted to young adults but is also applicable to adaption processes of more experienced employees.' This supports my suggestion that the health and well-being and work/non-work issues are relevant to OS in general, not only to newly graduated employees.

An early, and oft-cited, OS stage model by Feldman (1976) states that resolving home-career conflicts is an important part of role management during the "settling in" stage of organizational socialization. With a few exceptions, for example, in the work of Settoon and Adkins (1997), the work/non-work interface nearly seems to have disappeared from the OS research agenda, and variables related to the non-work and private sphere are rarely included in OS studies. Elsewhere in the work and organization research area, the work/non-work interface is greatly addressed (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Innstrand, Langballe, Espnes, Falkum, & Aasland, 2008). One might argue that these issues are important factors in organizational socialization, but not necessarily as OS *content*. If a content model is supposed to cover what is learned as the newcomer adjusts to a particular role in the organization (Chao et al., 1994), which Taormina seems to intend his model to do, work/non-work issues as well as health and well-being issues may belong in such a model. On the other hand, if a content model should be limited to being about «understanding of the way in which the organization functions», as described by Bauer and Erdogan (2012, p. 101), then these issues may not so easily find their place in a content model.

However, managing health and well-being, and making the best of the work/non-work interface, are spheres of influence or activity, and areas of continuous development. Kramer (2010) argues that the way organizations and their members handle work-family issues is an indication of organizational culture. As such, one could consider these issues as a part of the *Understanding* domain of Taormina's OS content model. On the other hand, this area of development differs from understanding the organization, because it involves a wider perspective and includes other contexts that are closely intertwined with work. Besides, the *Understanding* domain of OS is already very encompassing and, as I suggested above, perhaps already too broadly defined. One might also discuss whether to conceptualize the two preliminary, new-found categories – work/non work interface and health and well-being – as *one* OS domain. There is some overlap, for instance when a newcomer gets sleeping problems because of thinking too much about work at night. However, the analysis gets more nuanced by keeping the two categories apart until these issues, hopefully, are further explored in OS research, for instance by way of factor analytic procedures.

'Work' and 'non-work' are highly interrelated in contemporary work life (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Flexible working arrangements and fuzzy borders between work and private life may increase the importance of such perspectives in the future of OS, not only for researchers but for practitioners as well. Recent literature supports this view. Ellis and colleagues (2015) seek to integrate the work stress and socialization literature, and suggest that newcomer health and well-being should be included in a socialization model along with concepts like job performance and understanding organizational culture and values. They argue that '(. . .) garnering an understanding of

how the experience of stress affects newcomer work and nonwork outcomes related to health and well-being is an important next step for socialization research' (Ellis et al., 2015, p. 228). The model suggested by Ellis and colleagues does in addition point to a somewhat confusing feature of OS research, which is also relevant to the present discussion about my findings. *Employee health and well-being* is presented as an outcome in their model, along with factors like *job performance* and *organizational culture/values*. The outcome column could nearly be confused with the content domains of Taormina's model. In a complex continuous process like organizational socialization it may be difficult to differentiate between process and outcome. This is rather typical of the OS research literature; the same phenomenon may move about from model to model, and there are a lot of reciprocal arrows. This does not bring us much closer to a final decision about whether the *Other* issues belong in a content model or not, they may or they may not, depending on how content, process and outcomes are conceptualized.

A more refined conceptualization of important concepts and phenomena is perhaps called for in OS research. To a human resources management practitioner, it is less important where in a model a certain concept belongs, but he or she needs to know what matters to a newcomer. The argument that work/non-work and well-being issues belong in OS practice and research *in general* is strengthened by Ellis and colleagues (2015), and by Bauer and Erdogan (2012), who point to several interactions and interferences between organizational socialization and the newcomer's personal life that may prove to be interesting avenues for future research. For instance, the authors point to how family support may be helpful for newcomers during organizational entry. On that note, the findings in my study provide a nuanced picture of the broader context of work. The same event or phenomenon can be both a strength and a challenge, an opportunity or a threat, depending on the situation. Work-family issues, for instance, are often conceptualized as stressors in the literature (Kramer, 2010). The work/non-work interface is not just conflictual and demanding, but also potentially facilitating (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Innstrand et al., 2008). Issues in the *Other* category were largely regarded as opportunities for work mastery.

Implications
It can be useful to evaluate an established model using qualitative data. This study may contribute to the research on organizational socialization by building on existing knowledge about socialization content. The SWOT-format used here can elicit rich data about work-related issues, and is an appropriate choice for this purpose. Making use of a model in a new context may strengthen the model or point to its possible weaknesses or areas in need of improvement. This study is based on a relatively small sample, but the number of interviews is substantial, representing a variety of workplaces and several points in time during organizational entry. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 27–28), the most useful generalizations from qualitative studies are of the analytical sort,

that is, we generalize from our findings to existing or new theories, not from sample to population.

The findings in this study may be relevant to other researchers in the field of organizational entry and socialization. Based on these findings and recent research literature, I suggest that more attention should be paid to the work/non-work interface and personal health and well-being in research on organizational entry. It could be interesting to explore whether Taormina's model and similar models in this field would benefit from the inclusion of an additional OS domain that embraced the work/non-work interface. A comprehensive view of organizational socialization is more in line with contemporary work and organizational psychology, in which the work/non-work interface is a much-studied phenomenon. As mentioned above, a wider perspective is also called for in recent OS literature. According to Wiese and Knecht (2015, p. 102), 'embedding organizational socialization into employees' broader life context represents a promising approach to better understand and promote healthy and sustainable career development'.

The findings of this study can also be useful for practitioners in the field of human resources development and employers welcoming newcomers to their organizations. The relevance of Taormina's model of organizational socialization was confirmed by this study, as the OS content domains may very well be used as a conceptual framework for developing introductory programmes. However, the *Training* and *Understanding* domains are very general, and could preferably be adapted and specified according to the job and organization in question. In addition, those responsible for guiding newcomers into a new organization could be well advised to pay attention to the newcomers' personal well-being and life situation in general. This may be particularly important when the new hires have recently graduated. For people about to enter a new workplace, this paper may provide useful advice on the various areas of learning and development they may encounter in a new organization.

Limitations
The participants were encouraged to consider their overall work situation, including their surroundings, when answering the questions about mastery of work. The questions were asked in this way to open up for all of the issues that were important to the participant at the time of the interview. The questions were posed in general terms, but they may have directed the participants' attention towards health factors and life surrounding the job. However, this does not contradict the finding that these aspects were important during organizational entry.

The *Understanding* and *Training* domains of Taormina's model embraced the majority of the text units analysed in this paper. It may be that these OS domains are too broad and general, covering a wide variety of issues. One challenge when carrying out a deductive analysis may be the tendency to want to place the units in the categories. This can perhaps be too easy when the categories are broad. However, in the present study, the number of units put in the *Other* category suggests that this tendency was less of

a problem here. The categories are still broad, and some may find Chao et al.'s model (1994), or a model that is more specific in terms of process variables and outcomes, more useful for both research and practical purposes. It had possibly been preferable to compare two different models in a study like this, as has been done with psychosocial work environment surveys (Hoff et al., 2009). An OS model with a very complex structure may be too comprehensive, at least for practical purposes. While perhaps also being its weakness, its simplicity is the beauty of the content model.

All text has multiple meanings, and there are of course other possible ways to interpret and categorize the data material from this study. In this study the data were coded by one researcher only, and even though there is disagreement in the research literature about the appropriateness of seeking agreement (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004), it may have strengthened the findings if the coding had been discussed in a research team. However, the study's context, procedure and findings are presented in a way that allows the reader to look for alternative interpretations and consider whether the findings are transferable to other contexts. This will, according to Graneheim and Lundman (2004), enhance the trustworthiness of the research presented here.

The fact that the statements may be categorized in more than one category is inherent in rich, qualitative data. Still, it means that the counts presented in this article must be read with caution. It is more important whether issues were embraced by the model or not, than how many issues that were covered by each domain or category. When a participant talks about being tired because of a long work commute, the text unit can be categorized as a health and well-being issue and a work/non-work interface issue. As the initial problem is the long work commute, it was categorized as this. Either way, it cannot be categorized according to Taormina's OS model. It can, however, be something one has to adapt to when adjusting to a new workplace – with or without help from the organization – that deserves more attention in future research.

Conclusion

Taormina's organizational content model covers the content of interviews with newcomer psychologists rather well, and it is considered relevant in this context. However, the model does not cover all of the issues that were important to the participants in this study, and one of the OS domains received very limited support in this context. The model is perhaps not specific enough for some practical purposes. The *Training* and *Understanding* domains are very comprehensive, and include many important aspects that may deserve a more nuanced treatment in an organizational socialization setting.

Of the issues that were not covered by the model, the work/non-work interface and the newcomers' health and well-being are particularly salient. I argue that these issues may be relevant in other contexts as well and not only to newly graduated employees. It is a matter of discussion whether health perspectives and work/non-work interface should be included in an OS content model or not.

Nevertheless, recent literature and the findings presented here suggests that future organizational socialization research will benefit from taking a more expansive look at newcomers' life situation during organizational entry. This study contributes, however modestly, to a broader perspective on organizational socialization, in line with what is regarded as a promising and interesting way forward for future research.

Supplementary Files
The supplementary files for this article can be found as follows:

- **Supplementary File 1: Appendix A.** http://dx.doi.org/10.16993/sjwop.1.s1
- **Supplementary File 2: Appendix B.** http://dx.doi.org/10.16993/sjwop.1.s2

Competing Interests
The author declares that they have no competing interests.

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