

**CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD**



**Impact of Supervisory and Coworker  
Communication Apprehension on Newcomers'  
Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment  
Outcomes: The Mediating and Moderating  
Mechanisms using an Uncertainty Reduction  
Theory Perspective**

by

**Muhammad Asad**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the

Faculty of Management & Social Sciences

Department of Management Sciences

2022

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and Adjustment Outcomes: The Mediating and  
Moderating Mechanisms using an Uncertainty Reduction  
Theory Perspective**

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*I dedicate this work to my loving family members  
including my parents, siblings, wife, my daughters,  
Ayesha Asad, Hamnah Asad and my son, Muhammad  
Abdullah*



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**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

This is to certify that the research work presented in the thesis, entitled “**Impact of Supervisory and Coworker Communication Apprehension on Newcomers' Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment Outcomes: The Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms using an Uncertainty Reduction Theory Perspective**” was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. S. M. M. Raza Naqvi**. No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences**. The open defence of the thesis was conducted on **November 10, 2022**.

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## *List of Publications*

It is certified that the following publication has been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this thesis:

1. Asad, M., Zafar, M. A., & Sajjad, A. (2022). The Impact of Supervisory Communication Apprehension on Subordinates' Job Performance: An Empirical Study in Pakistan. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 9(2), 437-448. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2022.vol9.no2.0437>.

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## *Acknowledgement*

Praise belongs to **ALLAH**, the Lord of all the worlds (**AL, QUR,AAN**). Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of ALLAH. The help and favor of **ALLAH THE ALMIGHTY**, made me able to complete my Ph.D dissertation successfully. Afterwards, I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. S. M. M. Raza Naqvi**, Professor, Department of Management Sciences, CUST, Islamabad. Without his continuous optimism concerning this work, enthusiasm, encouragement and support this study would hardly have been completed. I also express my earnest gratitude to my parents, wife, siblings, friends and well-wishers whose continuous support, affection and prayers kept me motivated to pursue my higher studies. I extend my deepest regards to the participants of this research study who took time and filled the questionnaires with complete attention and interest to make this research significant for all concerned.

**Muhammad Asad**

## *Abstract*

Drawing on uncertainty reduction theory which proposes individual behaviors and psychological states under uncertainty during initial interactions, the study tested a model of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension towards newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes through the path of social and task-related uncertainty, information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness in organizational settings. Additionally, the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance between social/task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior of newcomers was also be tested. Data were collected from newcomers associated with various public and private sector organizations using a self-administered questionnaire. A multi wave study design was followed. The collected data was multisource. As per the study results, both supervisory and coworker communication turned out to positively predict task-related and social uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Social uncertainty was found to positively influence newcomer information seeking behavior and such support was not found with regards to the relationship task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior. Similarly, we did not find support for the negative relationship of social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and coworker. Newcomer information seeking behavior was found to be positively associated with familiarity with coworker and role negotiation, while not significantly associated with familiarity with supervisor and acculturation. Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor negatively predicted familiarity with supervisor while the relationship of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker and familiarity with coworker did not receive such support. Both task-related and social uncertainty mediated the positive relationship between supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. The underlying mechanism between the negative relationship of social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor was explained by interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor. The mediation of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker was not established. Newcomer information seeking behavior mediated

the negative relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworkers, while it did not mediate between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. Information seeking behavior was found to explain the negative relationship between task related uncertainty and newcomer's role negotiation, while it did not turn out to be a mediator between social uncertainty and acculturation. We found support for the facilitating role of uncertainty avoidance in the positive relationship between social uncertainty and information seeing behavior. Finally, we did not find support pertaining to the moderation of uncertainty avoidance in the positive relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeing behavior. Theoretical and practical implications of the study are discussed. The limitations and future research directions are given subsequently.

**Keywords:** Communication Apprehension, Task-Related Uncertainty, Social Uncertainty, Information Seeking Behavior, Uncertainty Avoidance, Interpersonal Attractiveness, Familiarity With Supervisor, Familiarity With Coworker, Role Negotiation, Acculturation.

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# Abbreviations

<b>ACC</b>	Acculturation
<b>CCA</b>	Coworker Communication Apprehension
<b>FWC</b>	Familiarity with Coworker
<b>FWS</b>	Familiarity with Supervisor
<b>IAC</b>	Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker
<b>IAS</b>	Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor
<b>ISB</b>	Information Seeking Behavior
<b>RN</b>	Role Negotiation
<b>SCA</b>	Supervisory Communication Apprehension
<b>SU</b>	Social Uncertainty
<b>TRU</b>	Task Related Uncertainty
<b>UA</b>	Uncertainty Avoidance

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Effective workplace communication is an important element of organizational success (Reece & Reece, 2016; Ruck & Welch, 2012). It is appropriate communication amongst organizational members that makes an organization excel and grow in today's competitive environment (Tourish & Hargie, 2009). Organizations constitute individuals who interact at various levels to achieve a multitude of objectives (Smith & Mounter, 2008; Karanges, 2014). For example, supervisors need to constantly communicate with their subordinates and so do their subordinates. Similarly, peers or coworkers need to communicate with each other regarding various organizational matters ranging from daily work issues to complex discussions regarding the achievement of medium and long-term objectives including their anticipated and desired roles.

Internal organizational communication can be upward, downward or horizontal depending upon the situational demands and professional needs of the communicating partners (Goris, Vaught, & Pettit Jr, 2000). Upward communication is directed toward supervisors from their subordinates (Bisel, Messersmith, & Kelley, 2012). In downward communication, supervisors initiate communication with their subordinates (H. Kim & Lee, 2009). However, in both upward and downward communication, superiors and subordinates communicate with each other and are

involved in a conversation regarding various matters (Schiller & Cui, 2010). Horizontal communication occurs between the departments or units within the organization or between organizational members who are at the same level and are generally called peers or coworkers (Špoljarić & Verčič, 2021). It would be appropriate to state that communication behavior is the bloodline of organizations and achieving organizational success is impossible without effective internal communication.

Being an instinctive behavior of human beings, communication is an integral part of their personality which subsequently shapes their relationships with others. The importance and vitality of communication are universally recognized across personal and professional domains of individual lives. Research suggests that effective communication is a basic requirement to express feelings across relationships, national and organizational cultures (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Suter et al., 2009). The strength of dyadic relationships at work depends upon the appropriateness of communication between two individuals because it leads to the achievement of the desired objectives. Like other social settings, it is essential to communicate at work to explain one's point of view and to understand what others want to say, so that the desired outcomes can be achieved (Keyton et al., 2013; H. Kim & Lee, 2009). Moreover, individuals need to communicate at work because effective work relations are necessary for the effective functioning of the organization.

Communication behavior is particularly important in work settings and is vital in getting others understood about one's feelings, opinions and concerns. Extant literature recognizes the consequences of dyadic communication at work. According to Robles (2012) communication is the second most important soft skill amongst the top ten skills that business executives consider essential in today's workplace following integrity which tops the list. Communication behaviors of individuals are important in determining their communication effectiveness at work. For example, Madlock (2008) demonstrated that competent communicators create an effective and appropriate communication environment and their communication behavior leads to communication satisfaction of the receivers. Moreover, Geertshuis, Morrison, and Cooper-Thomas (2015) demonstrated a positive relationship between a

supervisor's communication traits and the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships. This implies that the communication behaviors of the sender have an impact upon receivers' understanding and subsequent behaviors.

Any hindrances or barriers in internal communication may lead to problematic situations at the workplace. It is difficult for the receiver to understand and comprehend the message if the message sender is unable to communicate effectively [Jablin and Putnam \(2004\)](#). Therefore, clarity in communication on part of the sender is a prerequisite of effective message delivery and determines the subsequent response of the receiver ([Bovee, 2008](#)). For example, if the message sender is unclear about what he/she wants to say, or is shy, or has limited expertise over the topic of discussion, the receiver will likely feel uneasy and experience discomfort with such a communication encounter. Extant literature maintains that appropriate communication is a prerequisite of many desirable intra and interpersonal states and objectives which include but are not limited to an intrapersonal sense of satisfaction, interpersonal trust, satisfaction with communication, learning and participative decision making (PDM).

Particularly, communication at work is objective-driven and communication behaviors are of prime importance for the attainment of various objectives, for instance, familiarity with organizational members, integration into organizational culture and working effectively. Conveying the message properly becomes more important when it comes to interactions with newcomers and when supervisors and coworkers are unable to convey their message clearly, the newcomers are likely to feel less attached towards them and the organization and their integration with organizational practices and members is likely to be affected negatively.

Therefore, we take a relatively new construct associated with communication at work i.e. communication apprehension (supervisory and coworker) as a predictor, which is likely to have a negative impact on newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. Communication apprehension has been identified as an attribute characterizing fear and anxiety while communicating with others. [McCroskey \(1970\)](#) introduced the concept of communication apprehension (CA), which is an "individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or

anticipated communication with another person or persons”. Such apprehension is known as context communication apprehension (Context CA) in work settings and takes place under four theoretically unique but not necessarily mutually exclusive contexts which are *interpersonal conversation, presentations / public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions*.

Inculcating organizational norms and values in newly hired employees, getting them integrated into organizational systems and making effective interactions with other organizational members is a challenge for many organizations. Because, a weak integration with organizational culture and its system keeps a newcomer a stranger to that organization, which may subsequently result in various undesired outcomes. After formally becoming part of an organization and getting its official membership, individuals get the status of employees. Before joining the organization, those individuals were strangers to that organization and they only had an outsider’s view of what the organization is all about. They used to get information about the organization, its business area, products and services, leadership and other practices through various sources and develop an idea about the organization and anticipate about their work life. However, once the employees get the official membership of the organization and start interacting with other organizational members, they start getting firsthand experience of the organization and its practices. In the beginning, the role of newcomers’ communication with their supervisor and coworkers becomes critically important because these are the two key sources of information from newcomers’ viewpoint (Kramer, 2009). Therefore, supervisory and coworker communication is considered critical in developing and shaping newcomers’ views about the organization and making them able to adjust to the organization.

Based on the above literature support, we propose that supervisory and coworker communication apprehension works as a major handicap towards newcomers’ understanding of organizational norms, values, job-related aspects and developing a friendly and pleasant working relationship with their respective supervisors and coworkers, which can be measured through relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes of newcomers. In other words, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension brings uncertainty to newcomers. Generally, uncertainty



has two forms i.e. social and task-related. [Kramer \(2015\)](#) explained social uncertainty as to the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship with others and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings. Similarly, Task-related uncertainty is a condition when individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations ([Keith, Demirkan, & Goul, 2017](#); [Kramer, 2015](#)). Thus, we take social/task-related uncertainty as the first sequential mediator of the study.

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) by Berger and [Berger and Calabrese \(1974\)](#) explains such a phenomenon, where individuals face uncertainty during the initial interaction with others. The theory which is also known as initial interaction theory suggests that individuals when faced with uncertainty during initial interaction choose to engage in information seeking behaviors to reduce their uncertainty and hence gain positive communication outcomes. Information seeking behavior has been the focus of researchers in organizational communication studies and it is linked with formal and informal communication at work. Moreover, information seeking behavior has been recognized as substantial during the organizational entry phase and socialization process ([Rodrick & Knox, 2002](#)). Research explaining the mechanism of information seeking behavior suggests, as a behavior, information seeking is primarily motivated by a desire to reduce uncertainty ([Gottlieb, Oudeyer, Lopes, & Baranes, 2013](#)). Newcomers experience higher levels of uncertainty and hence, get involved in information seeking more actively and frequently ([Fang, Duffy, & Shaw, 2011](#); [Major & Kozlowski, 1997](#); [Saks & Gruman, 2011](#)). Therefore, we take information seeking behavior as the second sequential mediator of the study. Additionally, URT suggests that uncertainty (social and task-related) also leads to reduce interpersonal attractiveness of the sender i.e. supervisor and coworker in our case, which decreases the quality of communication. Interpersonal attraction is “commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, the proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes” ([Montoya & Horton, 2014](#)). Thus, social and task-related uncertainty is likely to have a negative relationship with newcomers’ relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes

through the path of supervisory and coworker interpersonal attractiveness which we take as the third sequential mediator in the study.

Further research also indicates that Information seeking is an intentional activity and is expected to increase under uncertainty (Benzinger, 2016). Considering URT and further work on cultural dimensions of information seeking, we propose that uncertainty avoidance moderates between uncertainty and newcomer information seeking. In line with Farndale and Sanders (2017), we expect in a culture of high uncertainty avoidance, newcomers are likely to engage in more information seeking behaviors. Based on the above argument, there is likelihood that in a culture characterized by high uncertainty avoidance, newcomers are likely to increase information seeking under the conditions of uncertainty (social and task-related). Specifically, uncertainty avoidance may affect the extent to which information is sought by individuals. Hence, we take uncertainty avoidance as a moderator between uncertainty (social and task-related) and information seeking behavior of newcomers.

Based on the above discussion, the study intends to test a sequential mediation model of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension towards newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes (familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworkers, and role negotiation and acculturation) through the path of social and task-related uncertainty, information seeking and interpersonal attractiveness in organizational settings. In conjunction with explaining the mediating mechanisms, we also suggest the moderating mechanism of uncertainty avoidance upon one's information seeking, which broadly indicates a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, it reflects the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty (G. Hofstede, 1983).

Thus, the linkages which the study intends to examine are fully explained by URT where newcomers who face uncertainty due to their supervisors' and coworkers' communication apprehension engage in information seeking to reduce uncertainty and hence improve their relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. Similarly, newcomers' uncertainty due to supervisors' and coworkers' communication apprehension also leads to reduced interpersonal attractiveness of their respective

supervisors and coworkers leading to negatively affecting newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes, which is another mediating mechanism explained by URT. The study takes uncertainty avoidance as a moderator between newcomer uncertainty and their information seeking behaviors. Considering the importance of the newcomer relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes including familiarity with supervisor and coworker, acculturation and role negotiation, we formulate the problem statement as under.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Supervisory and coworker communication are amongst the most important constituents of creating a fit of newly hired employees with organizational practices and make them conveniently adjusted with organizational culture and its working environment (Bauer, Erdogan, & Simon, 2014; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Rubenstein, & Song, 2013). However, there are very few organizations that focus on newcomers' communication requirements with its full scope and usually consider it more than a formality to get the newly hired employees acquainted with organizational culture and practices which is typically done through some formal training sessions and new employee orientation (NEO) programs (Acevedo & Yancey, 2011; Fan, Buckley, & Litchfield, 2012). In this way, the newly hired employees just get a little idea about the things around and they must explore by themselves what is right and wrong and what are the acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in the organization. It is the time when the role of supervisory communication becomes the most important and the newly hired employees look toward the supervisor and coworkers for clarifications and information to familiarize them with the organization and its culture.

Supervisory and coworker communication apprehension become a handicap towards newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes because due to such apprehension in the various contexts which are interpersonal communication, meetings, discussions and presentations/ public speaking. This apprehension on part of the supervisor and coworkers leads to task-related and social uncertainty in employees. According to URT, in a state of uncertainty (task-related

and social), the subordinates need to put extra efforts to seek relevant information and their level of interpersonal attractiveness with their respective supervisor and coworker gets reduced. Hence, the state of uncertainty results in undesirable consequences in terms of familiarity, acculturation and other job-related outcomes. Communication-related outcomes of familiarity with supervisor and coworker, acculturation and role negotiation are likely to be negatively affected when the supervisor and/or coworkers are apprehensive while communicating in various contexts in line with uncertainty reduction theory.

To have familiarity with supervisors is necessary for newcomers to perform effectively. It is practically very hard for newcomers to get instructions and comply with them if there is a weak bonding between them and their respective supervisors (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb, & Ashforth, 2012). It becomes hard for newcomers to carry out their work responsibilities if they remain unable to develop a good working relationship with their supervisors (Nifadkar, Tsui, & Ashforth, 2012).

Newcomers will be unable to understand their supervisors, to discuss problems and issues with them and to have frequent conversations with them in case of supervisory communication apprehension. Therefore, familiarity with supervisors is a practical requirement of newcomers. Similarly, familiarity with coworkers is equally important. Employees don't work in isolation, they have to keep in touch and get to know their coworkers to work effectively. So, familiarity with coworkers is also an important newcomer outcome. Newcomers need to have a friendly relationship with individuals who work with them as coworkers.

Moreover, newcomers need to be comfortable while discussing various issues with their coworkers and need to know their coworkers well to communicate with ease. Therefore, familiarity with supervisors and coworkers represents significant relationship outcomes to newcomers, which can be negatively influenced if the supervisors and coworkers are apprehensive in communicating with the newcomers.

Role negotiation is another important employee outcome that is necessary for effective employee performance (Gailliard, Myers, & Seibold, 2010). There must be a degree of flexibility for employees to set their work roles according to their will and individualize their work roles (Goldman & Myers, 2015). It is hard

for the newcomers to perform effectively if they are unable to slightly modify some aspects of their job and to work a little differently than the former ones. Supervisory communication apprehension can work as a hindrance in the smooth role negotiation of newcomers. Therefore, role negation has been taken as a role-related outcome and is intended to be predicted via supervisory communication apprehension.

Finally, newcomer adjustment and socialization are practical requirements for them to gel in with the organizational culture, norms and values, to understand the accepted ways of doing things and the dos and don'ts of the workplace (Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2012; Lapointe, Vandenberghe, & Boudrias, 2013). Once the newcomers get psychologically involved in the organizational practices, they start feeling comfortable working under the organizational systems (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Saks & Gruman, 2011). However, it is quite hard to achieve without appropriate supervisory and coworker communication. Therefore, we take acculturation as an adjustment outcome that can be predicted via supervisory and coworker communication apprehension.

Based on the above discussion and in line with URT, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension is likely to bring negative outcomes through the path of social and task-related uncertainty. Generally, it is believed that communication apprehension only brings negative outcomes to apprehensive individuals, which is only one side of the story. Here, an interesting and relevant workplace issue is addressed, which is to explore and find the negative effects of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension upon newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes keeping in view the mediating and moderating mechanisms drawing on uncertainty reduction theory.

### **1.3 Research Gap**

The first gap the study is going to address is to examine the impact of communication apprehension (supervisor and coworker) on newcomer's Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment outcomes. It is a unique contribution because the impact of an individual's CA upon his/her own behavioral outcomes has been

studied in prior studies, but the impact of one's CA upon others is rarely investigated rather an uncovered area. For example, there exist various studies examining the impact of students' CA on their own academic achievements, success, learning, communication motives, emotional intelligence, leadership, adaptability, social behaviors and career thoughts (see for example, (Blume, Baldwin, & Ryan, 2013; Fall, Kelly, MacDonald, Primm, & Holmes, 2013; Martin, Valencic, & Heisel, 2002; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976; McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989; McCroskey & Sheahan, 1978; Meyer-Griffith, Reardon, & Hartley, 2009)). Similarly, there exist some studies examining the impact of employees' communication apprehension upon their own performance, learning preferences, career advancement, future leadership roles and the likelihood of emerging as a leader (Limon & La France, 2005; McCroskey & Richmond, 1979; Pitt, Berthon, & Robson, 2000; Russ, 2012). Also, Geertshuis et al. (2015) studied the LMX implications of subordinates' communication apprehension. Thus, examining the impact of supervisory and coworker communication upon newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is a distinct contribution.

The study attempts to determine whether or not supervisory and coworker communication apprehension are predictors of newcomer outcomes (familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, role negotiation and acculturation). Familiarity with supervisor (FWS) represents the degree to which individuals feel closeness to their supervisors, familiarity with coworker (FWC) shows the extent to which individuals experience familiarity and comfort with coworkers, acculturation depicts the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate into it and role negotiation (RN) shows the extent to which employees individualize and tailor their responsibilities according to their skill set and convenience. The mechanism through which SCA and CCA lead to newcomer's Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment outcomes will be uncovered in the study. As uncertainty reduction theory suggests a possible mechanism through which SCA and CCA can lead to newcomer outcomes, therefore a direct relationship between SCA/CCA and newcomer outcomes will not be conjectured. SCA and CCA are expected to predict newcomer outcomes via task-related/social uncertainty, information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness as suggested

by uncertainty reduction theory.

*Secondly, recent work suggests that the role of supervisory communication in newcomers' acculturation has been a neglected area and there exists a need to examine supervisor-specific communication traits upon newcomers' acculturation.*

Research demonstrates that the role of supervisor-specific traits in newcomer socialization is largely a neglected area and the majority of the studies only focus on newcomer traits and behaviors upon their socialization (Dufour, Andiappan, & Banoun, 2022; Ellis, Nifadkar, Bauer, & Erdogan, 2017). Therefore, we take supervisor communication apprehension as a predictor of newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. Moreover, the role of communication from coworker sources in newcomer socialization is also an understudied area. Scholars have noted that there is a need to study the relationship of coworkers' communication patterns upon newcomer socialization (DeBode, Mossholder, & Walker, 2017; Liu, Zhang, Zhang, & Wu, 2021). Based on this, we also take coworker communication apprehension as a predictor of newcomer relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. This implies that the communication traits of supervisors and coworkers are important in predicting newcomers' adjustment and socialization outcomes as highlighted by the existing literature. However, there is still a lack of scholarly work to investigate the possible influences of such traits upon newcomer adjustment outcomes. Therefore, the study addresses an important research gap pertaining to supervisory and coworkers' communication traits and their role in predicting newcomers' adjustment outcomes. Supervisory and coworker communication apprehension are taken as communication traits whose influence the study attempts to investigate empirically.

*Moreover, testing the path to Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment outcomes via interpersonal attractiveness as a mediator between newcomer uncertainty and relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is also an untapped mechanism.*

The mediating mechanism of organization socialization as suggested by URT will be a unique contribution of the study. Such a relationship needs to be studied in organizational settings. As URT provides a broad framework regarding uncertainty considering its antecedents and outcomes, there is a lack of studies examining the mediating link of interpersonal attractiveness (supervisory and coworker)

between uncertainty and newcomer socialization. Similar to initial interactions in other social contexts, the workplace represents a particular context for newcomers when they are in the beginning phase also known as the organizational entry phase. Drawing on URT, we propose that interpersonal attractiveness gets decreased when newcomers face uncertainty because of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and hence their socialization is likely to decrease which is operationalized as relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes in the study. Details are discussed in the literature review section.

In this way, the study addresses another research gap and attempts to uncover the mechanism through which newcomers' experienced uncertainty (task-related and social) may lead to newcomer outcomes. By taking interpersonal attractiveness as a mediator between uncertainty and newcomer outcomes, the answer to the question as to how such uncertainty leads to newcomer outcomes is intended to be answered. Such a mechanism is suggested by URT and we aim to investigate it empirically to address a research gap.

*Additionally, testing the moderating role of uncertainty avoidance between uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by newcomers and their information seeking behavior is neglected in the literature and its empirical validation is required in line with the framework suggested by URT.*

Factors affecting newcomers' information seeking behaviors are culture-specific which are fundamentally driven by a society's tolerance towards the uncertainty (Masood & Afsar, 2017; Fetherston, 2017). According to Venaik and Brewer (2010), uncertainty avoidance comes into play while individuals decide to seek or avoid information. Information seeking is an intentional activity and is expected to increase under uncertainty (Benzinger, 2016). Therefore, as per the above argument considering URT and further work on cultural dimensions of information seeking, we propose that uncertainty avoidance moderates between uncertainty and newcomer information seeking. In line with Farndale and Sanders (2017), we expect in a culture of high uncertainty avoidance, newcomers are likely to engage in more information seeking behaviors. There is a need to study the moderating role of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between uncertainty and information seeking behavior. Since, information seeking behaviors are highly linked with



uncertainty (Kramer, 2014), there is a need to find out what factors strengthen this relationship. Based on the guidelines found in the existing literature of uncertainty and information seeking behaviors and linking it with cultural dimensions, it appears that information seeking is likely to be higher under the cultural settings of uncertainty avoidance. Therefore, studying the role of uncertainty avoidance as a moderator in the said relationship is needed to understand the relationship in a better way.

*Next, there is a need for an integrated model pertaining to communication behaviors of supervisors and coworkers which can limit newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes alongside the mechanisms involved.*

The study attempts to develop such a comprehensive model applying uncertainty reduction theory as the overarching framework to explain the dynamics of newcomer uncertainty and subsequent relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes concerning supervisor and coworker communication apprehension. The use of URT helps in understanding the relationship between the variables of interest and offers a clear picture of how the constructs relate to each other with their respective outcomes. Extant literature suggests the importance of supervisor and coworker as the two most important sources of communication for newcomers. As per URT, the study integrates supervisory and coworker communication apprehension with newcomer social and task-related uncertainty while considering their subsequent behaviors and psychological states which ultimately influence their relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. All study variables are extracted from URT and their relationships will be examined since URT explains initial interactions and various consequences of such interactions in organizational settings.

*Finally, the study is going to address newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes in Pakistani work settings while considering the implications of uncertainty avoidance in the presence of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension, which has not been done earlier.*

In this way, the study contributes contextually with a unique target population i.e. newcomers and novel outcomes (newcomers' relationship, role-related and

adjustment outcomes) in the context of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension.

## 1.4 Research Questions

The current study has the following major research questions.

- Does communication apprehension of supervisors and coworkers have implications for newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes.
- Does newcomers' information seeking behavior mediate the relationship between the uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by them and their relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes as suggested by uncertainty reduction theory.
- Does task-related/social uncertainty mediate the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness.
- Does uncertainty avoidance moderate the relationship between the uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by newcomers and their subsequent information seeking behavior.

## 1.5 Research Objectives

The prime objectives of the study are as follows:

- To ascertain whether communication apprehension of supervisors and coworkers has an impact upon newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes.
- To examine whether newcomers' information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between the uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by them and their relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes as suggested by uncertainty reduction theory.

- To investigate the mediating role of task-related/social uncertainty between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness.
- To investigate whether uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by the newcomer's and their information seeking behavior.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The study has noteworthy theoretical, managerial and contextual implications. Theoretically, the constructs under investigation are well-connected with a broader framework explained by uncertainty reduction theory. The study attempts to present an integrated model from supervisory and coworker communication apprehension to newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes via the mechanism suggested by URT. All variables incorporated in the study are theoretically justified from the lens of URT. The sequential mediation model examines the application of URT in organizational settings where newcomers have initial interaction with their supervisors and coworkers.

Examining the impact of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension upon newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is a significant theoretical contribution. Moreover, determining the role of newcomers' information seeking as a mediator in the relationship between uncertainty (task-related and social) and newcomer relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is also a theoretical contribution. Since the relationships have been theorized in accordance with URT, it is pertinent to note that the behavioral mechanism from newcomers' experienced uncertainty to newcomer outcomes is explained by their information seeking behavior. In this way, the relationship is embedded in URT and it takes information seeking as a behavioral mediator in the relationship between uncertainty and newcomer outcomes.

Testing the path to relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes via interpersonal attractiveness as a psychological mediator between newcomer uncertainty

and relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is also a theoretical contribution. Here the mediator explains the psychological side of the mechanism that leads to newcomer outcomes via the uncertainty they experience (task-related and social). In line with URT, when faced with uncertainty, the interpersonal attractiveness of the communication partners gets decreased when individuals experience uncertainty. Additionally, the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance between the uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by newcomers and their information seeking behavior is a significant theoretical contribution. The study also has implications for practicing managers, since it highlights the importance of supervisory and coworker communication behaviors that may hinder newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes and thus reducing overall organizational productivity. The four communication contexts of interpersonal conversation, presentations/ public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions are present in everyday organizational interactions and considered as a routine activity while their far-reaching outcomes are generally ignored. Moreover, the impact of social and task-related uncertainty has also been incorporated in the study which is a practical workplace issue. Therefore, the study findings will be useful for practicing managers and will suggest valuable recommendations for them to review and fine-tune their organizational communication practices accordingly. Contextually, Pakistani work settings are different from the rest of the world. The study considers the implications of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension upon relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes in the Pakistani work context, which has not been done earlier. Newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. Hence, the study is significant from the viewpoint of uncertainty reduction theory being applied in Pakistani organizational settings.

## 1.7 Theoretical Underpinning

The research model of the current study draws its foundations from uncertainty reduction theory (URT), by [Berger and Calabrese \(1974\)](#) predicting various relationships which will be tested in the form of hypotheses.

### 1.7.1 Uncertainty Reduction Theory

Berger and Calabrese (1974) proposed a groundbreaking theory about uncertainty during initial interactions known as uncertainty reduction theory (URT). The theory explains the uncertainty faced by individuals when they are in the initial phase of relationship building and offers a framework of the antecedents and outcomes of uncertainty. Additionally, the theory suggests possible behaviors using which individuals attempt to reduce uncertainty. URT also suggests individuals' psychological outcomes under uncertainty. For example, the implications of URT in intercultural communication and cross-cultural settings are well-documented (Kramer, 1993; Neuliep, 2012; Neuliep & Ryan, 1998). The theory is widely used to explain the uncertainty reduction mechanism in work settings (T. B. Harris, Li, Boswell, Zhang, & Xie, 2014; Saks & Gruman, 2018; Simosi, 2010). URT has also been tested in various work-related situations like job transfers, job transitions, mergers and volunteer activities, which involve building new relationships and adjustment with news settings (Kramer, 1993; Kramer, Callister, & Turban, 1995; Kramer, Meisenbach, & Hansen, 2013).

URT is based on the premise that uncertainty is the fundamental feature of initial interpersonal interactions and it cannot be avoided, however, it can be reduced to the extent to maintain an effective relationship. All interpersonal relationships inherently carry uncertainty while the uncertainty is maximum during relationship-building stages and initial contact (Elstak, Bhatt, Van Riel, Pratt, & Berens, 2015). During initial contact, there is a risk associated with the predictability of behaviors and it's not easy to anticipate what others will do. URT suggests that during initial contact the amount of communication is lesser, and it gets increased as time passes. URT holds that uncertainty leads to information seeking behaviors while high levels of uncertainty lead to reduced interpersonal attractiveness of the communicating parties. Moreover, Personal dissimilarities lead to high levels of uncertainty and vice-versa, while increased uncertainty causes a decline in interpersonal attractiveness. From the basic assumptions of URT, it can be deduced that high and low levels of uncertainty bring different outcomes and subsequently affect information seeking and interpersonal attractiveness.

Uncertainty reduction theory underpins the study model. As per URT, the study takes two types of uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by newcomers arising from supervisory and coworker sources (supervisory and coworker communication apprehension) during their initial interaction with them. While experiencing uncertainty, newcomers get involved in information seeking behaviors (behavioral outcome of uncertainty) to reduce it and thus improve their relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes in the form of familiarity with supervisor/coworker, role negotiation and acculturation. Similarly, in line with URT, increased uncertainty reduces the interpersonal attractiveness (psychological outcome of uncertainty) of supervisors and coworkers in the eyes of newcomers, which results in negatively affecting newcomer outcomes.

## 1.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter carries the background of the study and introduces the study variables (supervisory/coworker communication apprehension, task-related uncertainty, social uncertainty, uncertainty avoidance, information seeking behavior, interpersonal attractiveness, familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, role negotiation and acculturation) and their proposed relationships. The problem statement section discusses the context regarding the need to carry out the study and its importance. The research gap section has highlighted the current state of knowledge and the need to test the unexplored/under-studied relationships following the research questions and objectives. The significance of the study has also been presented in the introduction section. The theoretical underpinning section focuses on the integration of the theory (uncertainty reduction theory) with the research model and underlines the mechanism by which the model gets supported by the given theory.

# Chapter 2

## Literature Review

This section covers the details of study variables in light of the existing literature and a subsequent discussion regarding the relationships of predictors, outcome variables, mediators and moderators to formulate study hypotheses.

### 2.1 Communication Apprehension

Communication behavior being amongst the critical individual attributes represents a prominent aspect of one's personality and gives an overall impression of how an individual interacts and fits with various situations faced at work regularly (G. F. Thomas, Zolin, & Hartman, 2009). The workplace represents a specific context where employees need to communicate and interact with each other to achieve certain organizational and workgroup objectives (Keyton et al., 2013). This implies that workplace communication needs to be effective and objective-driven and any complications associated with such communication are likely to bring failure in achieving the set objectives. As Bauer et al. (2014) advocated that effective dyadic communication at work paves the way for a healthy relationship between employees and removes barriers towards employees' organizational adjustment. Communication apprehension has been identified as an attribute characterizing fear and anxiety while communicating with others. (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976) introduced the concept of communication apprehension (CA), which is an "individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or

anticipated communication with another person or persons”. A person with high communication apprehension feels uneasy to communicate, is shy and fearful of the communication assignments and has a feeling of anxiety regarding current and anticipated communication encounters (Beatty, McCroskey, & Heisel, 1998; Marcel, 2022). The antecedents of communication apprehension have been found to cover biological (Beatty, McCroskey, & Valencic, 2001) and dispositional characteristics of individuals (Butler, 1986) alongside cultural modeling (Richmond Virginia & McCroskey, 1997). Therefore, CA is a result of three factors that have a role to play in determining one’s level of being apprehensive in communication, ranging from one’s genetic makeup to cultural modeling and dispositional characteristics.

### 2.1.1 Types of Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension has two types i.e. traitlike and context communication apprehension.

### 2.1.2 Traitlike Communication Apprehension

As put forward by (Richmond Virginia & McCroskey, 1997), when communication apprehension is taken as traitlike, it is believed that it represents a generalized fear and/or anxiety regarding various communication encounters. In this way, individuals with high levels of traitlike communication apprehension find it difficult to adjust in social settings and are unable to express themselves effectively without the distinction of situation or context. Moreover, Beatty et al. (1998), p. 199) concluded “we view trait communication apprehension principally as individuals’ expression of inborn, biological characteristics, that are antecedent to social experience and, like many other personality traits, do not depend primarily on learning processes. As such, individual differences in communication apprehension are mostly traceable to differences in biological functioning”.

Traitlike communication apprehension is an individual’s trait and its intensity differs across individuals while it encompasses every aspect of their lives including interpersonal relationships, work and education (Teven, Richmond, McCroskey, & McCroskey, 2010; Y. Zhang, Tang, & Leung, 2011). According to Russ (2012),



traitlike communication apprehension represents an individual's enduring and lasting tendency to remain distant from communication encounters based on the discomfort felt while communicating. Therefore, it is generally categorized as closer to one's personality traits. However, the phrase "traitlike" is purposefully used in the literature to differentiate it from other established personality traits. Traitlike CA defines the general level of discomfort an individual has while communicating with others in various contexts. Hence traitlike communication apprehension is not context-specific. As per (Beatty et al., 1998), individuals may have differing levels of traitlike CA based on their level of discomfort with communication.

### 2.1.3 Context Communication Apprehension

Context communication apprehension describes CA on a situational basis study by (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). Contrary to traitlike communication apprehension, context communication apprehension is based on the context or situation which the individual is experiencing (Russ, 2013a). In this way, context communication apprehension is the anxiety and fear about specific communication situations including those which one experiences at work. Various communication contexts have been identified at work which includes meetings, presentations, public speaking, one-on-one communication, brainstorming sessions, job interviews, appraisal interviews and customer interactions, etc. (Adler, Elmhorst, & Lucas, 2012). Each of these contexts poses different requirements and levels of communication competence for effective communication and employees may experience varying levels of discomfort based on the situational requirements and communication objectives to be achieved.

More specifically, context communication apprehension in work settings takes place under four theoretically unique but not necessarily mutually exclusive contexts which are interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). According to Russ (2013b), employees can exhibit varying degrees of apprehension in various contexts (interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions), which indicates that an employee experiencing high communication apprehension in one context may face little apprehension in another

context. Research also maintains that the situations covered under context communication apprehension are important and have significant workplace implications; See for example (Bartoo & Sias, 2004; Cole & McCroskey, 2003; Russ, 2013a, 2013b). Hence, there is a strong likelihood of negative consequences, in case the communication quality between organizational members suffers concerning the four contexts of communication apprehension.

## 2.2 Communication Perspective at Workplace

Research suggests that individuals' communication characteristics predict various communication outcomes at work (Keyton et al., 2013). Specifically, communication competence which is defined as the effectiveness and appropriateness of communication in specific communication contexts like that of the workplace (Titsworth & Okamoto, 2017), gets affected by individual communication traits. This suggests that individuals' level of communication competence at work is determined by their communication traits and positive communication traits lead to positive outcomes. In the same vein, Teven et al. (2010) demonstrated an inverse relationship between an individual's communication apprehension with his/her self-perceived communication competence (SPCC), and the willingness to communicate was found to be positively associated with SPCC. This implies that one's communication apprehension internally brings a sense of negative perception about his/her own communication competence to that individual.

As noted by (Jo & Shim, 2005), interpersonal conversations are the lifeline of any relationship in organizations and the trust in organizational relationships deeply relies on such communication, since interpersonal conversation between managers and subordinates and interpersonal conversation between coworkers is a common occurrence at the workplace. Interpersonal conversation involves direct interaction and exchange of views and ideas alongside experience sharing (Tsai, Chuang, & Hsieh, 2009). Supervisors exchange important work information with their subordinates when they communicate interpersonally and such communication is a central part of workplace interactions in general and supervisor-subordinate relationships in particular (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2008; Bisel et al., 2012; Chun, Choi, &

Moon, 2014). Supervisors with a high degree of apprehension in interpersonal conversation remain unable to express themselves appropriately and the other party may get into a state of uncertainty regarding the meaning of the conversation. Similarly, interpersonal communication between coworkers is equally important when it comes to sharing crucial information, ideas and opinions (Abu Bakar & Sheer, 2013). Coworkers or peers are most frequently contacted while on work and they seek information and advice from each other regarding various work and nonwork issues while they generally do not have any formal authority over each other (Fonner, 2015). Thus, coworkers are expected to communicate candidly with each other and their importance gets increased when close coordination is required or the job responsibilities are team-based. Coworkers also serve as the social support mechanism to each other through helping behavior (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2011). In this study, we take context communication apprehension of supervisors and coworkers as an independent variable because traitlike communication apprehension is closely linked with introvert personality type and there exist few studies examining the impact of supervisor's introvert personality upon coworkers' socialization. While, context communication apprehension is a recent concept and specifically constitutes four work-related situations i.e. interpersonal conversation, presentations/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions where an individual is shy and fearful of communication. Therefore, examining the impact of supervisory and coworkers' context communication apprehensions upon workplace outcomes (familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, role negotiation and acculturation) is different from the studies which take into account introversion as a predictor of work outcomes.

### **2.3 Uncertainty at Work**

The concept of uncertainty arising from supervisor and coworker communication apprehension is discussed in the following paragraphs. Uncertainty is an inevitable element of verbal interactions. Uncertainty occurs “when details of situations are ambiguous, complex, unpredictable or probabilistic; when information is unavailable or inconsistent; and when people feel insecure in their own state of knowledge

or the state of knowledge in general” (Brashers, 2001), p. 478). Employees face a number of uncertainties in work interactions, while various context at the workplace carries the likelihood of the occurrence of uncertainty (Walker et al., 2013). The work environment needs to be free of ambiguities so that the employees can work with a clear and transparent view with regards to their job requirements and relationship requirements with their superiors, and coworkers. However, there exists some level of uncertainty at the workplace which causes discomfort amongst the individuals experiencing uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Employees try to find ways to reduce and manage uncertainty and seek to manage their uncertainty at various organizational levels ranging from macro i.e. environmental level to individual levels (Heath & Gay, 1997).

Although some level of uncertainty is a common part of all workplace interaction, still there are some contexts at work that carry greater uncertainty than others. Research suggests that the contexts having the characteristics of building new relationships and adjustment with new settings carry higher uncertainty. For example, initial interactions, job transfers, job transitions, mergers and volunteer activities have the maximum likelihood of uncertainty (Barrett, 2018; Kramer, 2017, 1993; Kramer et al., 1995, 2013; D. Wang, Hom, & Allen, 2017). Uncertainty in work interactions is a common phenomenon and may take the forms of social and task-related uncertainty.

### **2.3.1 Task-Related Uncertainty (TRU)**

Similarly, Task-related uncertainty is a condition when individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (Keith et al., 2017; Kramer, 2015). Hence, task-related uncertainty depicts a condition where employees feel a lack of understanding about their job responsibilities and the linkage of their work with other organizational activities. Task-related uncertainty which is also termed as job-related uncertainty or simply task uncertainty work as a handicap for employees to understand their job requirements and expectations (Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois, & Callan, 2004). Kramer et al. (2013) explained that in general, such uncertainty is about the standards of

performance which employees are expected to meet. In addition, task-related uncertainty is considered to be at lower levels when employees feel that they are provided with all the information that is needed to work as an effective member of the organization (Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia, & Irmer, 2007; Sias, 2005). Knowledge about the goals and values of the organization also indicates employees' level of task-related uncertainty (Brashers, 2001). This implies that the organizational objectives which are translated into team and department objectives must be clearly communicated to employees to reduce task-related uncertainty. Such uncertainty is expected to prevail if the employees are unclear about their roles and are unable to determine the purpose of them being part of the organization.

### 2.3.2 Social Uncertainty (SU)

Uncertainty in work interactions is a common phenomenon and may take the forms of social and task-related uncertainty. Social or relational uncertainty is an important part of uncertainty which researchers have extracted from uncertainty reduction theory by (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). As per (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010), social or relational uncertainty refers to a state of ambiguity an individual experiences regarding the status of a relationship and the associated perceptions. This implies that such uncertainty exists when an individual is uncertain about the current and future standing of the relationship. Additionally, it depicts a state where individuals are unable to predict future behaviors of others with whom they are in a relationship (Kreye, 2017). As per Kramer (2015), p. 2), "social uncertainty concerns determining how to develop relationships to others, including other organizational members such as supervisors, peers, subordinates, and staff, as well as individuals outside the organization such as customers, clients, or vendors". Hence, social uncertainty is considered as the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship with others and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings. It affects an individual's level of confidence regarding, how to relate, interact and get along with organizational members. Organizational members may face social uncertainty when they do not have the right information and atmosphere to build relationships, perform their duties effectively and adjust to organizational settings.

As social uncertainty is concerned with relationship building, it is important to note that employees need to face several people and situations which call for a clear understanding of events and relevant dynamics to ensure a strong relationship. For example, employees need to have a clear understanding of the relationship expectations of their supervisors (Mikkelsen, York, & Arritola, 2015). The same is the case with coworkers, where employees remain in a state of uncertainty without having a clear understanding of coworkers' relationship expectations (Yoo & Park, 2007).

### 2.3.3 Newcomers and Uncertainty

Scholars in the domain of newcomer relationships at work consistently maintain that such relationships are inherently subject to uncertainty (Ellis et al., 2015; Perrot et al., 2014; Zhu, Tatachari, & Chattopadhyay, 2017). And this has been identified as a major area amongst various organizational contexts that carry uncertainty. Among others are job transfers, job transitions, mergers and volunteer activities as stated earlier. Newcomers initially interact with other organizational members including their supervisors and coworkers who are the most important sources of communication and with whom they need to interact most frequently (Ellis et al., 2017; Lapointe, Vandenberghe, & Boudrias, 2014). Newcomers gain a firsthand view of the organization through their supervisors and coworkers.

Being an aspirant to apply for a job in an organization individuals attempt to reduce uncertainty regarding the organization (Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015). And it is logically understandable since it is hard to predict an organization's internal work structure and the actual way of doing things before formally joining it. They try to get themselves familiarized with the target organization's culture and other aspects through various sources including company websites, annual statements, archival material and conversations with organizational insiders (Breugh, 2017; Ployhart, Schmitt, & Tippins, 2017). Uncertainty is generally highest when individuals join an organization as newcomers and they have very little idea about the organization (Ellis et al., 2017; Fang, McAllister, & Duffy,

2017; N. Li, Harris, Boswell, & Xie, 2011). Therefore, newcomer experienced uncertainty is an important workplace issue to be studied and its antecedents and outcomes are worth investigating. Newcomers are subject to face uncertainty since they are new to the organization and have very little idea about it (T. B. Harris et al., 2014). After formally becoming a part of the organization, newcomers need more information and clarity to fulfill their job responsibilities successfully, to adjust to the new environment and to have an effective working relationship with their supervisor, coworkers and other organizational members (De Vos & Freese, 2011). The two main sources of information to newcomers are their supervisors and coworkers (Kramer, 2009; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Nifadkar et al., 2012). From these two sources, there can arise both types of uncertainty i.e. social and task-related. About employee relationships in their work environment, employees need social and relational information which includes how to interact, relate and get along with their supervisor and other organizational members (Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wei, Liu, Chen, & Wu, 2010). This is because, they want to develop relationships, attain familiarity with them and want to be able to work effectively. While remaining in a state of ambiguity as to how to get along with the supervisor, it is hard for newcomers to have a strong personal and working relationship with him/her. It is supported by the view that when supervisors frequently interact with subordinates, the level of uncertainty experienced by the subordinates gets reduced and they feel comfortable while working with him/her (J Harris & Kacmar, 2005). Moreover, it is maintained by the literature that the employees who enjoy a strong relationship with their supervisors experience lesser uncertainty (Rosen, Harris, & Kacmar, 2011). Social ties are important at the workplace and lead to a healthy working relationship.

## 2.4 Uncertainty Arising from Supervisory Communication Apprehension (SCA)

Supervisors represent a significant source of communication to subordinates and they expect their supervisors to provide them with relevant and accurate information about their duties and other job aspects (Kramer, 2017; Mishra, Boynton,

& Mishra, 2014). Organizational communication literature maintains that supervisors with their communication style and communication behaviors set the tone of organizational communication and the communication atmosphere in their respective departments and workgroups is shaped by them (Abu Bakar, Dilbeck, & McCroskey, 2010). Additionally, the subordinates expect their supervisors to have a cordial and harmonious working relationship with them where the subordinates clearly know what are the topics that the supervisor likes to discuss and which topics he/she gets uncomfortable with (Jalalkamali, Ali, Hyun, & Nikbin, 2016; Mikkelsen, Hesse, & Sloan, 2017). Supervisory communication constitutes upward and downward communication, guidance extended by them, open and candid information sharing, attention paid by them, while it also carries the element of trustworthiness of the supervisor (Chan & Lai, 2017; Marques, 2010). This implies that effective supervisory communication is necessary for healthy supervisor-subordinate relationships and subordinates' productivity, while any problems associated with such communication can result in negative outcomes. One source of such faulty communication is supervisory communication apprehension.

It is because of the uncertainty that newcomers face initially, they generally get involved in information seeking behavior. However, apprehensive supervisors may become an additional source of uncertainty to newcomers. As discussed earlier that supervisory communication apprehension is a contextual variable that carries uncertainty in the contexts of interpersonal communication, meetings, discussions and presentations/ public speaking. According to (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2008), interpersonal communication explains "the means" by which organizational activities, such as managing, controlling, planning, and leading are delivered". They further explain that the substance of the message, the credibility of the sender and appropriate decoding of the message are highly dependent upon the quality of interpersonal communication. This reinforces the idea that effective communication depends upon the skills of the sender and any ambiguity caused on part of the sender may create uncertainty. Interpersonal communication is the cornerstone of work relationships, while relationship building and maintaining are not possible without having it (Wood, 2015). Communication partners at work desire to understand and negotiate the expectations of their relationship, the way to interact



and to resolve differences in case they arise (Tse & Dasborough, 2008)). At the interpersonal level, the satisfaction obtained from supervisory communication helps in fulfilling employees' intrinsic needs and motivates them for better performance (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2014; Dasgupta et al., 2014).

#### **2.4.1 Supervisory Communication Apprehension in Interpersonal Context**

From the above discussion, it seems obvious that a supervisor who is apprehensive pertaining to interpersonal communication i.e. he/she remains nervous, fearful and tense while communicating with employees at an interpersonal level, will not be able to create a healthy working relationship and will remain unable to deliver the message appropriately. This situation will leave that employee in a state of uncertainty regarding the expectations, norms and communication objectives with the supervisor. This implies that the message delivery on part of the supervisor will be faulty and will not be able to create clear expectations and the norms of communication. Hence, such apprehension in interpersonal communication on part of the supervisor may lead subordinates to experience higher levels of uncertainty.

#### **2.4.2 Supervisory Communication Apprehension in the Context of Formal Meetings**

Next, there comes the role of meetings in organizational communication. Meetings are a regular part of organizational activities and are held with a proper agenda and issues to be discussed. Rogelberg, Leach, Warr, and Burnfield (2006) defined meetings as "purposeful work-related interactions occurring between at least two individuals that have more structure than a simple chat, but less than a lecture. Meetings are typically scheduled in advance, last 30–60 minutes on average, and can be conducted face to face, in distributed settings (e.g., conference calls), or a combination". Moreover, satisfaction with meetings is amongst the predictors of job satisfaction (Rogelberg, Allen, Shanock, Scott, & Shuffler, 2010). Meetings represent an important workplace context that has implications for various work-related outcomes (Baran, Shanock, Rogelberg, & Scott, 2012). This implies

that meetings are objective-driven and it is quite important to make their communication clear and free of ambiguities to achieve the desired objectives. If the supervisor has apprehension with regards to meetings while having fear and anxiety in communicating, then there is a likelihood that the employees will experience uncertainty. On the other hand, if the supervisor is calm, relaxed and comfortable while communicating at meetings, then the employees are more likely to receive clear messages and experience and uncertainty-free communication.

### **2.4.3 Supervisory Communication Apprehension in Presentations/Public Speaking Context**

We further move towards another important and regular activity in the context of the workplace which is making presentations and getting involved in public speaking. Presentations are made to communicate projects, results, change programs, anticipated organizational and departmental outcomes, etc. According to [Jaffe \(2015\)](#), public speaking is defined as “a person delivering a presentation to a group that listens, generally without interrupting the speaker’s flow of ideas”. Supervisors must be calm, relaxed and comfortable while making presentations and facing employees. The audience expects the presenter to remain confident, organized and assertive while making a presentation ([Carlin, Gelb, Belinne, & Ramchand, 2018](#)). The landmark work of ([Beatty et al., 1998](#)) noted that apprehension while making presentations and public speaking has been recognized a major obstacle in effective communication in a time spanning four decades. Thus, a supervisor who has high apprehension while communicating in public speaking context is likely to deliver the message inappropriately resulting in employee uncertainty.

### **2.4.4 Supervisory Communication Apprehension in the Context of Group Discussion**

Another important workplace context relating to communication is group discussions. Group discussions are aimed at rigorously discussing various organizational matters. According to [Kaner \(2014\)](#), group discussion is the key to participatory

discussion making. Supervisors need to facilitate group discussion smoothly so that the exchange and sharing of ideas are possible and the objectives of discussion are met (Y. Zhang et al., 2011). Group discussion is generally intended for group decision making, brainstorming of ideas and creativity outcomes (Putman & Paulus, 2009). Getting engaged in group discussion, involving others in it, remaining calm and relaxed represent a person who is comfortable with such discussions. On the contrary, an individual who gets nervous and dislikes group discussion depicts an apprehensive tendency (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). If a supervisor has such apprehensive tendencies then he/she will not be able to facilitate effective group discussions and hence uncertainty will result.

## **2.5 Uncertainty Arising from Coworkers' Communication Apprehension (CCA)**

Coworkers are an important source of information for employees. Similar to supervisory communication apprehension, coworkers' communication apprehension may also cause uncertainty and become a hindrance in effective communication. Below we discuss communication apprehension in various contexts that may arise from coworker sources.

### **2.5.1 Coworkers' Communication Apprehension in Interpersonal Context**

As discussed above, interpersonal communication is based on mutual understanding while it sets the tone for any relationship and any problems associated with interpersonal communication are harmful to effective relationship building (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2008; Hynes, 2012). Amongst other factors, communication apprehension poses an obstacle to effective interpersonal communication (Bartoo & Sias, 2004; Russ, 2013b). If coworker/s is/are apprehensive with regards to interpersonal communication i.e. having fear and anxiety while communicating at an interpersonal level, then there is a likelihood that uncertainty will be experienced by the communicating partners (Russ, 2012). In this state, the communication

partner of apprehensive coworkers will be unable to understand relationship norms and the ways to interact subsequently. Moreover, it is likely to be a relationship with trust deficit (G. F. Thomas et al., 2009; Walden, Jung, & Westerman, 2017). This implies that apprehensive employees will make their communication partners experience uncertainty at an interpersonal level.

### **2.5.2 Coworkers' Communication Apprehension in the Context of Formal Meetings**

As discussed above, meetings represent a routine activity at the workplace. Meetings are held with a purpose and structured to follow an agenda. Therefore, it is essential for meeting attendees (employees) to put forward their points of view and to discuss various issues with comfort and ease (Bens, 2017). If some employee is unable to express his/her views in a meeting and has apprehensions while speaking up in meetings, then others will remain unable to understand them. An employee who is apprehensive in the context of meetings will be characterized by experiencing fear, anxiety and nervousness while presenting his/her views. In this way meeting objectives will be negatively affected and others are likely to experience uncertainty at the same time (Kramer et al., 2013). Therefore, in the context of formal meetings coworkers' communication apprehension and their tendencies to avoid communication can lead to uncertainty.

### **2.5.3 Coworker Communication Apprehension in Presentations/Public Speaking Context**

It is a frequent requirement to make presentations in organizational settings. To make an effective oral presentation is highly regarded as an important soft skill and the presenter is required to be confident, calm and comfortable during formal presentations (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Moslehifar & Ibrahim, 2012). An apprehensive employee in the context of presentations/public speaking is characterized by experiencing fear, rigidity, confusion and forgetfulness while giving a presentation (Beatty & Valencic, 2000). There is much likelihood that such an employee will be unable to make an effective presentation and the audience will be in a state of

ambiguity regarding the content covered in the presentation (Beatty et al., 1998). Because presentations act as a vital means to convey important organizational and departmental information, such problems associated with formal presentations are anticipated to bring negative outcomes in the form of uncertainty on part of the audience.

#### **2.5.4 Coworker Communication Apprehension in the Context of Group Discussion**

As discussed above, group discussions are an important means to brainstorm and discuss ideas together with making group decisions and developing consensus on various work issues (Kaner, 2014). Participants of group decisions are expected to present their ideas and viewpoints openly for optimal outcomes (Saaty & Peniwati, 2013). An apprehensive employee in the context of group discussion is characterized by having an aversion towards group discussion and experiencing nervousness and stress in such communication encounters (McCroskey & Beatty, 1986). On the other hand, an employee who has less or no apprehension will be comfortable, calm and expressive in a group discussion. It is plausible that an apprehensive employee will be unable to express his/her ideas and viewpoint and will become a cause of creating ambiguity in the mind of other group members.

## **2.6 Information Seeking Behavior (ISB)**

Information seeking behavior of newcomers which is a mediator in the present study is discussed below. Information seeking is taken as a behavioral outcome of uncertainty (social and task-related) as per URT.

The concept of information seeking at work is linked with proactive behaviors (Bauer, Perrot, Liden, & Erdogan, 2019). Information seeking studies highlight the importance of such behavior to increase socialization, learning and improving the situation. Information seeking behavior has been the focus of researchers pertaining to organizational communication studies and it is linked with formal and

informal communication at work (Crant & Bateman, 2000; Morrison, 2002; Tidwell & Sias, 2005). Moreover, information seeking behavior has been recognized as substantial during the organizational entry phase and socialization process (Rodrick & Knox, 2002). Research explaining the mechanism of information seeking behavior suggests, as a behavior, information seeking is primarily motivated by a desire to reduce uncertainty (Gottlieb et al., 2013). Newcomers experience higher levels of uncertainty and hence, get involved in information seeking more actively and frequently (Fang et al., 2011; Major & Kozlowski, 1997; Saks & Gruman, 2011).

Newcomers' information seeking is one of their proactive behaviors (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Crant & Bateman, 2000; Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006; Song, Liu, Shi, & Wang, 2017). Crans, Gerken, Beausaert, and Segers (2021) argued that information seeking is particularly important in learning and building new relationships and newcomers actively get involved in information seeking as part of their action plans for higher-order goals. Acquiring the needed information is one of the major determinants of employee learning (C. Li, Sun, & Dong, 2018). Fang et al. (2011) advocate that, while newcomers face uncertainty during the entry phase, they seek information both from their supervisor and coworkers. Therefore, information seeking becomes important while an employee is in the entry phase and it becomes even more important if there exists uncertainty in communication.

Miller and Jablin (1991), reported seven information seeking tactics of newcomers including "testing limits, indirect questioning, surveillance, observing, disguising conversations, use of third parties/secondary information sources, and overt questions." They also reported the information content that newcomers seek has been categorized as referent information which "tells the worker what is required of him or her to function successfully on the job" (Hanser & Muchinsky, 1978). "Appraisal information tells the worker if he or she is functioning successfully on the job" (Hanser & Muchinsky, 1978). "Relational information tells the worker about the nature of his or her relationship with another" (Baxter & Wilmot, 1984). Hence, information seeking is of critical importance for newcomers and is a fundamental behavior in which employees get involved to reduce uncertainty regarding the task and work relationships.

## 2.7 Interpersonal Attractiveness (IA)

The interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors and coworkers in the eyes of newcomers which is the next mediator in the study is discussed further. As per URT, the interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors and coworkers in the eyes of newcomers is taken as a psychological outcome of uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by the newcomers. Interpersonal attraction is “commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, the proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes” ([Montoya & Horton, 2014](#)).

Interpersonal attractiveness involves spending time with another person, attempting to know more about him/her, meeting more often and having a desire to work together ([Singh et al., 2015](#)). This implies that people feel a sense of attachment, try to know more about and enjoy working with others toward whom they are interpersonally attracted and vice versa. Uncertainty reduction theory holds that higher levels of uncertainty in initial interactions lead to decreased interpersonal attraction implying that uncertainty shares an inverse association with interpersonal attractiveness ([Berger & Calabrese, 1974](#)). This suggests that if there exists uncertainty in interaction due to supervisory or coworker communication apprehension, then there is a likelihood of newcomers being less interpersonally attracted toward the supervisor and respective coworkers.

## 2.8 Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)

Uncertainty avoidance is taken as a moderator between uncertainty (social and task-related) and information seeking behavior of newcomers. Below is a discussion regarding the concept of uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty avoidance refers to the propensity of employees to avoid uncertain or ambiguous situations due to feelings of uneasiness ([Dorfman & Howell, 1988](#)). Employees with such feelings try to follow rules, regulations, organizational policies and simultaneously seek help

and guidance from their supervisors to evade uncertain situations (X. Zhang & Zhou, 2014). Although the societal definition of uncertainty avoidance is significant in the identification of critical values and preferences in various societies, substantial variations between individuals in a given society were found in later works in cross-cultural psychology, organizational behavior, and management (Masood & Afsar, 2017).

Furthermore, these studies confirmed that workplace outcomes were more strongly determined by the individual differences than society-level values (Dorfman & Howell, 1988; Farh, Hackett, & Liang, 2007; Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). G. H. Hofstede and Hofstede (2001) further explains that uncertainty avoidance indicates the degree to which individuals desire to know the views and expectations of their supervisors about their initiatives. Employees who have high levels of uncertainty avoidance tend to deal with uncertainty through a detailed understanding of rules, regulations, existing processes, guidelines, and potential constraints (G. H. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2001).

## 2.9 Newcomers' Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment Outcomes

Newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes taken in the study are: familiarity with supervisor and coworkers (relationship outcomes), role negotiation (role-related outcome) and acculturation (adjustment outcome). Familiarity with coworker (FWC) which is conceptualized as the extent to which individuals experience familiarity and comfort with coworkers), familiarity with supervisor (FWS) (the degree to which individuals feel closeness to their supervisors), acculturation (the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate into it), and role negotiation (RN) (the extent to which employees individualize and tailor their responsibilities according to their skill set and convenience) (Gailliard et al., 2010). Newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes are equally important for both the newcomers and the organization. Since it not only leads to financial gains in the form of competitive advantage but also increases



employee loyalty with the organization (Fang et al., 2011). Similarly, newcomers get integrated with the organizational culture through effective communication (from supervisor and coworkers) and their anxieties get reduced resulting in better performance.

## **2.10 Supervisory and Coworker Communication in the Context of Newcomer' Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment Outcomes**

Communication is an instinctive behavior of human beings and it is an integral part of their personality that subsequently shapes their relationships with others. The importance and vitality of communication are universally recognized across personal and professional domains of individual lives. The strength of dyadic relationships depends upon the appropriateness of communication between two individuals because it leads to the achievement of the desired objectives. It is essential to communicate in various social settings to explain one's point of view and to understand what others want to say so that the desired outcomes can be achieved (Keyton et al., 2013; T.-Y. Kim, Hon, & Crant, 2009).

Research suggests that effective communication is a basic requirement to express feelings across relationships, national and organizational cultures (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Suter et al., 2009). Therefore, communication behavior is a vital behavior in getting others to understand one's feelings, opinions and concerns in general. Whereas, communication is equally important in work settings. According to Stross (2018), communication is the second most important soft skill amongst the top ten skills that business executives consider essential in today's workplace following integrity which tops the list. Moreover, a communicator's competence is recognized as a strong predictor of communication satisfaction and job satisfaction amongst employees (Madlock, 2008; Steele & Plenty, 2015). Therefore, supervisory communication behavior at work is of utmost importance and its centrality to newcomers' socialization cannot be disregarded. Moreover, appropriate communication is a prerequisite of many desirable intra and interpersonal

states and objectives which include but are not limited to an intrapersonal sense of satisfaction, interpersonal trust, satisfaction with communication, learning and participative decision making. Interpersonal communication exists wherever human beings live and interact with each other. Communication at work is objective-driven and communication behaviors are of prime importance for the attainment of various objectives, for instance, familiarity with organizational members, integration into organizational culture and working effectively. When supervisors and coworkers are unable to convey their message clearly due to their communication apprehension, newcomers are likely to feel less attached towards them and the organization and hence newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes are likely to be affected negatively.

Literature indicates the implications of organizational communication (supervisory and coworker communication) on employee outcomes. For example, [Van Vuuren, De Jong, and Seydel \(2007\)](#) reported a positive relationship between supervisor communication and employee affective commitment. [Karanges \(2014\)](#) demonstrated a positive relationship between supervisor communication support and employee engagement. According to [Brunetto, Farr-Wharton, and Shacklock \(2012\)](#) supervisor-subordinate communication relationships are important pertaining to affective commitment and wellbeing of employees. Supervisors' effective communication enhances the motivation, satisfaction and commitment of employees ([Mikkelsen et al., 2015](#)). Subordinates' communication with the supervisor is positively linked with relational identification and meaningfulness at work [Monnot \(2016\)](#). Specifically, a high level of context communication apprehension on part of supervisors (concerning meetings and group discussions) has been proposed to have a negative relationship with project success in project-based organizations ([Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013](#)).

Internal communication practices have an impact on employees' stress and commitment ([Malhotra & Ackfeldt, 2016](#)). [McCroskey and Richmond \(2000\)](#) established a positive linkage between supervisor communication and subordinates' attitude towards the supervisor. [Willemyns and Gallois \(n.d.\)](#) demonstrated that supervisors' communication behavior leads to an increase or decrease in employee trust. Trust appears to be a very important element in creating effective relationships

and familiarity. As [G. F. Thomas et al. \(2009\)](#) demonstrated a positive relationship between quality of communication (between supervisor and subordinate) and subordinate trust in supervisor. A healthy supervisor-subordinate relationship is a predictor of positive employee outcomes ([Brunetto, Teo, Shacklock, Farr-Wharton, & Shriberg, 2017](#)). Moreover, [Werbel and Henriques \(2009\)](#) noted that the supervisor's interactional openness instead of apprehension brings a quality dyadic relationship between the supervisor and subordinate. Therefore, familiarity with supervisors (the degree to which individuals feel closeness to their supervisors) is expected to get negatively affected when supervisors are apprehensive while communicating with newcomers.

Similarly, coworkers or peers also have an impact on employee outcomes. Literature supports that coworker communication is an important element of the overall organizational communication environment and has pertinent implications ([Fonner, 2015](#)). For example, [G. F. Thomas et al. \(2009\)](#) found a positive link between the quality of communication amongst coworkers and employee involvement via the path of trust. Moreover, [Boyas and Wind \(2010\)](#) conceptualized supportive and open communication from coworkers and supervisors as social capital and demonstrated its positive effects in the form of trust and organizational commitment.

Literature also highlights the importance of organizational communication and subsequent employee involvement, engagement, attachment and integration with the organization and its culture. For example, ([Mishra et al., 2014](#)) demonstrated that executives' communication is important in achieving employee engagement. ([Zohar & Polachek, 2014](#)), reported a significant relationship between supervisory communication and developing a specific climate and desired behaviors amongst employees. One of the greatest challenges for organizations is the adjustment and integration of newcomers into organizational culture ([Kowtha, 2011](#)). Therefore, acculturation (the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate into it) is expected to get negatively affected when supervisors are apprehensive while communicating with newcomers. Similarly, coworker communication also has an impact upon employees' integration into organizational culture, because coworker source has been identified as the most important source of

communication along with supervisor source (Kramer, 2009). Research suggests that organizational socialization is one of the most crucial elements pertaining to newly hired employees (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Fang et al., 2011; Morrison, 2002; Saks & Gruman, 2011). Coworkers are the first to be contacted when newcomers attempt to understand organizational culture and proceed to integrate into it (Coetzer, Peter, & Peter, 2011).

Organizational communication is central in creating employee involvement. For example, G. F. Thomas et al. (2009) demonstrated a positive link between organizational communication and employee involvement. Mishra et al. (2014) also found a positive relationship between executives' communication and employee engagement. Since organizational communication involves communication both from supervisor and coworker sources, it is expected that both sources are important in creating employee involvement. Additionally, open communication from coworkers becomes even more important because newcomers spend more of their time with their coworkers rather than their supervisors. This implies that interaction of newcomers with their coworkers is far more frequent than other organizational members and they expect to get them familiarized with the organization through them. Moreover, communication with coworkers becomes even more important when teamwork is common (Chen, 2005).

Supervisory communication is important in determining employees' discretion and independence with which they can choose their roles and design their work as per their skill set and suitability. Employees cannot design their jobs according to their convenience if the supervisor is not cooperative (M. Wang, Zhan, McCune, & Truxillo, 2011). Supervisors must communicate effectively with subordinates to have an atmosphere of feedback sharing and give subordinates a feeling of being heard (Van Vuuren et al., 2007). This implies that employees can have better negotiation with managers regarding their roles if the managers communicate effectively and it is only possible in an environment of feedback sharing and mutual understanding. Additionally, supervisory support leads to role clarity in newly hired employees (newcomers) and it is more important for employees to have an open discussion with their respective supervisor to change job elements accordingly (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Research also suggests that employees having quality relationships

with their managers work in a more resourceful environment (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Van Den Heuvel, 2015). This indicates that communication effectiveness is likely to lead to a more empowered relationship where employees can design their job elements as per their skill set. The performance of employees is associated with organizational communication. For example, Esmailzadeh, Sambasivan, Kumar, and Nezakati (2013) demonstrated a positive relationship between management communication and employee performance (both in-role and extra-role).

Improved communication between supervisors and subordinates leads to other positive outcomes as well. For example, Harvey and Harris (2010) demonstrated that increased supervisory communication reduces job frustration of employees. Additionally, Carriere and Bourque (2009) established a positive relationship between organizational communication and job satisfaction and the organizational commitment of employees. As discussed above, there is a link between organizational communication and employee performance, we propose that coworker communication (one of the most important communication sources) will lead to reducing newcomers' job performance. Because in case of apprehensive coworkers who do not communicate openly during interpersonal communication, meetings, discussions and presentations/ public speaking, the newcomers will feel less informed and less attached which may ultimately lead to decreased performance.

Therefore, role negotiation which represents the extent to which employees individualize and tailor their responsibilities according to their skill set convenience) is not likely to occur when the supervisor is apprehensive while communicating with his/her subordinates. After explaining the study variables and the study context, we proceed to discuss the relationships between independent, dependent, mediating and moderating variables considering the existing literature. Keeping in view the relationships in line with uncertainty reduction theory, we do not hypothesize a direct relationship between supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and newcomer outcomes, rather we hypothesize the relationships based on the sequence that the theory suggests.

Therefore, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension are taken as the sources of newcomer experienced uncertainty. We argue that communication

apprehension of supervisors and coworkers has implications for newcomer outcomes through uncertainty (task-related and social), information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness as per uncertainty reduction theory and proceed to hypothesis formulation subsequently.

## **2.11 Supervisory Communication Apprehension (SCA) and Newcomers' Experienced Uncertainty**

Newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty when the supervisors are apprehensive in their communication with them. As discussed above, supervisory communication source is one of the most important communication sources for newcomers (K. J. Harris, Harris, & Wheeler, 2009). Newcomers expect their supervisors to be confident and assertive while having a conversation as they expect to have the required information and professional advice from them (Simosi, 2012). Newcomers expect a smooth exchange of information while supervisors are involved in interpersonal communication with them and seek a relationship in which their respective supervisors are open and candid in sharing of views. However, it becomes a tough situation for newcomers when the supervisor is uncomfortable and fearful in expressing his/her thoughts in interpersonal communication. Subsequently, the newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty pertaining to the relationship and the tasks to be performed (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2013). This is in line with uncertainty reduction theory and supervisory communication apprehension works as a source of uncertainty that newcomers experience during their interactions with their respective supervisors.

Additionally, the contexts in which such uncertainty exists or is experienced by newcomers are related to both the interpersonal relationships and tasks that are to be performed. For instance, if the supervisor is apprehensive to communicate in interpersonal conversations then the newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty at an interpersonal level and are likely to remain ambiguous about the instructions being given and how to comply with them. Interpersonal conversation

at work carries the element of both relationship and work instructions, while it is likely to influence the quality of relationship and compliance with work instructions (Abu Bakar et al., 2010; Bisel et al., 2012; Steele & Plenty, 2015; Zhou, Wang, Chen, & Shi, 2012). Similarly, meetings are important and necessary at work, and these days satisfaction with meetings is being treated as a facet of job satisfaction (Rogelberg et al., 2010). If the supervisor is apprehensive during meetings, which is a very important work activity, then the newcomers are likely to remain uncertain regarding the points raised and discussed by the supervisor (Baran et al., 2012; Ruck & Welch, 2012). Likewise, work-related discussions are a part of workplace communication and need to be lucid to be productive and healthy. In the case of apprehensive supervisors, such discussions are likely to remain ambiguous and the newcomers' experienced uncertainty may increase. Finally, formal presentations are also an important part of workplace communication and supervisors are expected to present the idea, points of view and other details in a very clear and open manner (Lolli, 2013). However, in the case of apprehensive supervisors, the listeners (in our case, the newcomers) are likely to remain unable to understand the presentation completely and hence experience uncertainty. This implies that the higher the supervisory communication apprehension, the higher will be the uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Subsequently, we hypothesize the following;

**H1: SCA positively influences newcomers' TRU.**

**H2: SCA positively influences Newcomers' SU.**

## **2.12 Coworker Communication Apprehension (CCA) and Newcomers' Experienced Uncertainty**

Being an important source of communication, apprehensive coworkers can also be a potential cause of uncertainty for newcomers. Newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty when their coworkers are apprehensive in their communication

with them because coworker communication source is one of the most important communication sources for them (K. J. Harris et al., 2009; Park & Raile, 2010).

Coworker communication is an important element of workplace communication. To achieve communication satisfaction, employees expect their coworkers to be self-assured and assertive while having a conversation as they seek the requisite information and discuss professional issues with them (Heide & Simonsson, 2011; Tsai et al., 2009). Moreover, newcomers look for an even exchange of information while coworkers are involved in communication with them and seek a relationship in which their coworkers are unambiguous and frank in sharing of views (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). However, it becomes a difficult situation for newcomers when the coworkers are fearful of expressing their thoughts/ideas and exchange of information. Therefore, newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty with respect to both the relationship and the tasks. Coworker communication apprehension also works as a source of uncertainty to newcomers which is based on uncertainty reduction theory, where individuals experience uncertainty during initial interactions. Here the source of uncertainty becomes the coworkers who are apprehensive while communicating with the newcomers.

Uncertainty may arise if the coworkers are apprehensive in various communication contexts at work. The contexts in which such uncertainty can be problematic for newcomers can be related to both interpersonal relationships and tasks that are to be performed (Fang et al., 2011; Lapointe et al., 2014). For example, if the coworkers are apprehensive while communicating interpersonally, then the newcomers are likely to experience uncertainty at an interpersonal level and are likely to remain unable to understand the information being shared. Interpersonal conversation at work carries the element of both relationship and work-related elements and is likely to impact the quality of relationship and understanding of work issues (Abu Bakar et al., 2010; Bisel et al., 2012; Steele & Plenty, 2015; Zhou et al., 2012).

As mentioned above, meetings are important and necessary at work, and these days satisfaction with meetings is being treated as a facet of job satisfaction (Rogelberg et al., 2010). If the coworkers are apprehensive in meetings, then the newcomers are likely to remain uncertain regarding the points highlighted and debated



by them. Also, work-related discussions are an integral part of workplace communication and cannot be avoided. In the case of apprehensive coworkers, these discussions are likely to remain unclear and the newcomers' experienced uncertainty may increase. Formal presentations being an important part of workplace communication (Lolli, 2013) are expected to be clear and open for a smooth sharing of ideas and clear understanding of the message receiver. However, in the case of apprehensive coworkers, the listeners (in our case, the newcomers) are likely to remain unable to comprehend the presentation and hence experience uncertainty. This implies that the higher the coworker communication apprehension, the higher will be the uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Subsequently, we hypothesize the following:

**H3: CCA positively influences Newcomers' TRU.**

**H4: CCA positively influences Newcomers' SU.**

## **2.13 Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior (ISB)**

Communication uncertainty at work has been a major topic for management scholars (Morrison, 2002). As discussed above, such uncertainty may prevail under various organizational scenarios and conditions, specifically the scenarios where a new relationship is in the formation process. For example, initial interactions, job transfers, job transitions, mergers and volunteer activities have the maximum likelihood of becoming a cause of uncertainty (Barrett, 2018; Kramer, 1993; Kramer et al., 1995, 2013; D. Wang et al., 2017). Uncertainty can be in the form of ambiguity regarding the relationship (social uncertainty) and the tasks to be performed (task-related uncertainty). In work settings, social uncertainty (SU) is the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship and about the social norms and relationship requirements (Kramer, 2015), while task-related uncertainty (TRU) is a condition when individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (Keith et al., 2017; Kramer, 2015). As per URT, individuals attempt to reduce the uncertainty

that they experience. The theory suggests that individuals choose to seek information to reduce uncertainty and to come out of the feelings of ambiguity and anxiety.

[Kowtha \(2011\)](#) explained in his work that information seeking behavior (ISB) is particularly important for newcomers. When faced with social and/or task-related uncertainty, they are likely to engage in information seeking behaviors as per URT. Information seeking is primarily motivated by a desire to reduce uncertainty ([Gottlieb et al., 2013](#)). This implies that the primary motive to seek information is to reduce uncertainty. Based on URT and newcomers' motivation to manage and reduce uncertainty, it appears that uncertainty and information seeking are closely linked with each other. Literature suggests that in case of uncertainty, newcomers generally get engaged in information seeking behaviors pertaining to job-related topics, procedures for the completion of work, handling work problems, work priorities, the usage of equipment and material, standards about quality and quantity of work. Under uncertainty, it becomes inevitable for newcomers to seek the requisite information to attain positive work outcomes which includes but is not limited to effective socialization, learning and work-related negotiations. Also, [Benzinger \(2016\)](#) demonstrated that in case of social uncertainty (SU), the information seeking of newcomers will be increased. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**H5: TRU positively influences newcomers' ISB.**

**H6: SU positively influences newcomers' ISB.**

## 2.14 Uncertainty and Interpersonal Attractiveness (IA)

Uncertainty experienced by employees leads to various outcomes. Uncertainty not only affects work-specific outcomes but also has the potential to affect the attachment-based elements of employee relationships ([Kramer, 2014](#)). Under uncertainty, the individuals who experience uncertainty may develop a feeling of reduced association with the person who is the source of uncertainty ([Kramer,](#)

1999). As a result, the individual facing uncertainty may feel disassociated with their supervisors and coworkers. Uncertainty reduction theory offers the foundation for this relationship, which holds that the interpersonal attractiveness of the communication partners decreases under uncertainty and increases as uncertainty decreases (Berger & Calabrese, 1974).

The cause of uncertainty may be supervisory and coworker communication apprehension as discussed earlier. It can also be linked with supervisory and coworker communication apprehension from the angle of trust. As highlighted by Colquitt, LePine, Piccolo, Zapata, and Rich (2012) uncertainty may be a consequence of the decreasing level of trust in the supervisor and/or coworker. Colquitt and colleagues further reported a negative relationship between trust and uncertainty i.e. the higher the trust in supervisor/coworker, the lower will be the uncertainty and vice versa. Supervisory and coworker communication apprehension represent the condition where the newcomers are likely to have reduced trust because of unclear and ambiguous communication (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976).

Therefore, it is likely that the resulting uncertainty will decrease the attractiveness of apprehensive supervisors/coworkers in the eyes of a newcomer. Interpersonal attractiveness refers to one's attachment with his/her communication partner and also known as likeability. Interpersonal attraction is "commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes" (Montoya & Horton, 2014). Since interpersonal attractiveness is linked with relationships of newcomers with their supervisor/coworker, it is plausible that it is more likely to decrease in case of social uncertainty. Therefore, supervisory/coworker interpersonal attractiveness appears to be an important outcome of social uncertainty (the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings). Based on URT and further work pertaining to communication uncertainty, we argue that the interpersonal attractiveness of the apprehensive supervisor/coworker will be reduced for newcomers in case of high social uncertainty and vice versa. Implying that the relationship is likely to become weaker and subsequently it is hypothesized that:

**H7: Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences supervisory interpersonal attractiveness.**

**H8: Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness.**

## **2.15 Information Seeking Behavior (ISB) and Relationship Outcomes**

Information seeking studies represents the importance of such behaviors with regards to various relational and work outcomes and it appears to be amongst the important work behaviors. Information seeking has gained researchers' attention in various organizational contexts with emphasis on several outcomes including relationship and socialization outcomes (Bauer & Green, 1998; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993). Information seeking behavior has been the focus of researchers pertaining to organizational communication studies and it is linked with formal and informal communication at work (Crant & Bateman, 2000; Morrison, 2002; Tidwell & Sias, 2005). Moreover, these behaviors have been recognized as substantial during the organizational entry phase and socialization process (Rodrick & Knox, 2002; Zou, Tian, & Liu, 2015). Bauer et al. (2019) argued that information seeking is mainly important in learning and building new relationships and newcomers actively get involved in information seeking as part of their action plans for higher-order goals. Acquiring the needed information is one of the major determinants of employee learning and further employability (Froehlich, Beausaert, Segers, & Gerken, 2014). While experiencing uncertainty, newcomers are likely to engage in information seeking behaviors in line with uncertainty reduction theory. Whereas, such information seeking leads to positive outcomes including role clarity, socialization, learning and adjustment (Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett, 2015; Brown, Ganesan, & Challagalla, 2001; Crant & Bateman, 2000; De Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2005; Saks & Gruman, 2018; J. P. Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; M. Wang et al., 2011; Yang & Ariel, 2014). This implies that newcomers' information seeking behavior appears to be linked to both relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. This can be explained through

the lens of uncertainty reduction theory, which holds that under uncertainty, the information seeking behavior is triggered to attain positive communication outcomes. Based on this, familiarity with supervisors (the degree to which individuals feel closeness to their supervisors) and familiarity with coworkers (the extent to which individuals experience familiarity and comfort with coworkers) is likely to increase when newcomers chose to seek information.

**H9: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with supervisor.**

**H10: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with coworkers.**

## **2.16 Information Seeking Behaviors, Role Negotiation and Acculturation**

Information seeking in organizations is an important work variable that has significance for communication and other outcomes at work. Newcomers need information about various work aspects (Benzinger, 2016; De Vos & Freese, 2011), while all employees, in general, expect feedback from their respective supervisors regarding their performance and work issues (Hays & Williams, 2011; Whitaker & Levy, 2012). A desire to reduce uncertainty motivates employees to seek information and they seek beneficial outcomes from it. Moreover, employees seek information for self-evaluation, correction of errors and gain competence (Morrison, 2002; Nifadkar et al., 2012). A special context of information seeking is of newcomers joining an organization where they have a greater desire to reduce uncertainty (De Vos & Freese, 2011). Although organizations arrange programs for newcomers' orientation, still the nature and scope of the information provided in such programs remain inadequate (Rollag, 2004; Wesson & Gogus, 2005). This implies that newcomers are bound to acquire the additional information by themselves. Research suggests that employees in general and newcomers, in particular, seek information (performance and social information) from their supervisors and coworkers (Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000; Xu & HEE-WOONg, 2011). Literature also

underscores the importance of information seeking behavior of newcomers and its benefits both in terms of short and long term (Fonner & Timmerman, 2009; Morrison, 2002).

Newcomers can be in a better position to attain positive role outcomes when they have the requisite information pertaining to the role to be performed and their role requirements. Because every role has certain associated responsibilities and expectations, it is of prime importance that employees clearly understand their work roles and remain able to meet the role requirements (Diefendorff, Richard, & Croyle, 2006; Folger, 1993). Role clarity is a prerequisite of effective employee performance and other work outcomes. As Whitaker, Dahling, and Levy (2007) demonstrated a positive link between role clarity and job performance. Similarly, role clarity has been found to weaken the relationship between job demand and strain (Bliese & Castro, 2000; Lang, Thomas, Bliese, & Adler, 2007). Information seeking on part of newcomers helps in clarifying many issues at work. For example, they may ask about job-related topics, work procedures, problem handling at the workplace, work priorities (Benzinger, 2016) and their required contribution in the completion of a whole task, assignment or a project (Chen & Klimoski, 2003; M. Wang et al., 2011). It appears that when newcomers feel that there lies certain ambiguity regarding the roles, they feel it is necessary to acquire the requisite information to be able to achieve a state of clarity and hence better performance, which is also supported by uncertainty reduction theory. Information seeking is specifically important for newcomers because they are in the process of acquiring new roles (Barrett, 2018; N. Li et al., 2011).

Moreover, if newcomers do not acquire the required information, there is a likelihood that they base their work roles according to their own understanding instead of keeping in view the actual role requirements (T.-Y. Kim et al., 2009). This implies that Information seeking is necessary for newcomers if they want to tailor their jobs according to their knowledge, skills and abilities. The concept of slightly changing some aspects of the job and doing it a bit differently from the predecessors is called role negotiation (Gailliard et al., 2010). Moreover, making employees able to shape part of their work as per their willingness may help them in achieving their work objectives effectively. For example, employees who make

necessary changes in some aspects of their jobs find their work meaningful and identify themselves with their roles (Tims, Derks, & Bakker, 2016; Wrzesniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, & Berg, 2013). Additionally, it has a positive influence on employee engagement and job satisfaction and a negative influence on burnout (Tims, Bakker, Derks, & Van Rhenen, 2013). Based on the literature on information seeking behavior and role negotiation, it appears that role negotiation depends upon the level of information that an individual holds regarding the role. Hence, we argue that If newcomers seek sufficient information about their role, its requirements and role expectations then it is likely that they will be in a better position to negotiate the role.

Social integration and adjustment of newcomers with the organizational culture is a major element of organizational effectiveness. The process known as newcomer socialization, is also of uncertainty reduction. Organizational socialization of newcomers may differ from organization to organization. For example, Jones (1986) presented the types of socialization tactics including content tactics. Content tactics of organization socialization represent a situation where the timeline of newcomer adjustment is given, and clear stages of training exist. Context tactics involve formal training before starting the actual job in a group learning environment. While social tactics involve developing a trust-based relationship with organizational members and supervisors to receive feedback and guidelines. Keeping in view newcomer socialization tactics, it is plausible that newcomer adjustment and socialization greatly depend upon the element of information seeking. Acculturation (the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate into it) which is often used to measure newcomer adjustment and socialization appears to be linked with newcomer information seeking (Hsiung & Hsieh, 2003; N. Li et al., 2011). Newcomers acquire information pertaining to various functions of the job (referent information), standards of work (appraisal information) and nature of the relationship (relational information) with organizational members (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Based on the literature on newcomer information seeking, role outcomes and organizational socialization, we hypothesize the following.

**H11: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences role negotiation.**

**H12: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences acculturation.**

## 2.17 Interpersonal Attractiveness and Relationship Outcomes

Interpersonal attractiveness between organizational members may affect the strength of the relationship that exists between them. Healthy work relations are important to achieve work outcomes efficiently and effectively (Mishra et al., 2014; G. F. Thomas et al., 2009). Employees generally perceive a workplace as representing a healthy work environment where people are friendly and helpful and the relationship with supervisor and coworkers is good (Lowe, Schellenberg, & Shannon, 2003). This shows that it is necessary to have a cordial relationship with organizational members to achieve positive feelings and work outcomes. Since newcomers are a novice to the organization and they do not know much about their supervisors and coworkers, it is more important for them to achieve a friendly work relationship with their respective supervisors and coworkers. If they feel interpersonally attracted towards their supervisors and coworkers, then it is likely that they gain much familiarity with them. If the interpersonal attractiveness of a relationship is high, then the communication partners prefer to meet and look forward to working with each other more frequently, have a positive feeling for each other and want to know more about each other. Attraction is widely discussed as a mechanism by which value congruence affects outcomes (Edwards & Cable, 2009). Attraction refers to mutual liking and friendship among organizational members as opposed to mere approach-avoidance tendencies (K.-S. Kim, 2018).

Interpersonal attraction is “commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, the proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes” (Montoya & Horton, 2014). They further mention that interpersonal attraction has been evolved as a concept referring to the ability for an object to draw an object to itself, and then to the ability of a person to draw another person to him or her. Whereas some researchers



have maintained this focus on behavior (i.e., drawing one to another, others have emphasized the affective (i.e., feeling positive toward) or cognitive (i.e., inferring positive attributes) dimensions. The consistent aspect of these definitions is the description of a positive evaluation of another person (Berscheid & Walster, 1985; Huston & Levinger, 1978). In work situations, a positive evaluation of supervisor/coworker may lead to increased familiarity and relationship building, and social interaction (Vecchio & Bullis, 2001) implying that it has a positive link with relationship outcomes.

Familiarity with supervisors and coworkers can be explained in terms of considering them friends, being comfortable while talking to them, a feeling that the understanding level with them is high, discussing work problems and talking frequently (Gailliard et al., 2010; Goldman & Myers, 2015). Familiarity appears to be an immediate outcome of interpersonal attractiveness (Strauss, Barrick, & Connerley, 2001; Van Vianen, Shen, & Chuang, 2011). This implies that a higher attractiveness level pushes communication partners towards achieving a higher level of familiarity. As discussed earlier, higher levels of uncertainty (social and task-related) may create a distance between newcomers and their supervisors/coworkers. Thereby the reduced level of interpersonal attractiveness due to the newcomer felt uncertainty is likely to decrease the familiarity level of supervisor and coworkers. The literature suggests that the variables pertaining to creating a fit between subordinate and supervisor are important and have an impact upon various work outcomes. For example, (Van Vianen et al., 2011) demonstrated that person-supervisor fit positively affects employee commitment.

Astakhova (2016) also reported employee commitment as an outcome of person-supervisor fit amongst employees of US and Japan. Likewise, the person-supervisor fit has been found to moderate the relationship between leaders' moral competence and employees' psychological empowerment (T.-Y. Kim & Kim, 2013). Similarly, the relationship strength between coworkers also has an impact on work outcomes. For example, the literature highlights the importance of alignment between individuals working together (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). For example, Person-group fit positively affects employee performance at the group level (Seong, 2015). Moreover, the person-group fit has been

found to moderate between person-organization and person-job fit (Vogel & Feldman, 2009). Viewing from the lens of uncertainty reduction theory, it is plausible that when newcomers have a positive evaluation of their supervisors and coworkers in terms of interpersonal attraction, their familiarity with the supervisors and coworkers gets increased. Based on the literature on interpersonal attractiveness in work relationships and alignment between employees and supervisors/coworkers it appears that if newcomers get interpersonal attraction with their supervisors and coworkers, they are likely to get more familiar with their supervisors and coworkers (relationship outcomes). Hence, we put forward the following hypotheses.

**H13: Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor positively influences newcomers' familiarity with supervisor.**

**H14: Interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers positively influences newcomers' familiarity with coworkers.**

## **2.18 Social and Task-Related Uncertainty as Mediator Between Supervisory and Coworker Communication Apprehension and Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior**

It is pertinent to note that uncertainty can be reduced by getting engaged in information seeking behaviors as per uncertainty reduction theory. Using uncertainty reduction theory as the overarching framework, the study takes social and task-related uncertainty (two major types of uncertainty arising from supervisory and coworker communication apprehension) as mediators between supervisor's/coworker communication apprehension and newcomers' information seeking behaviors. Below is the argumentation based on which the mediation hypotheses are formulated. Task-related uncertainty (TRU) is a condition when individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (Keith et al., 2017; Kramer, 2015). Ellis et al. (2015) indicates

that such uncertainty is expected to increase in case of supervisor's communication apprehension and this will lead to information seeking behavior of newcomers as suggested by uncertainty reduction theory. Supervisory communication apprehension acts as a major handicap in employee understanding of their roles, responsibilities and expected level of performance (Myers, 2015). In other words, apprehensive supervisors create an environment where employees feel uncertain about various aspects related to their tasks and responsibilities. As all contexts of communication apprehension i.e. interpersonal communication, meetings, discussions and presentations / public speaking have implications for workplace communication, it is palpable that supervisory communication apprehension has the potential to become a major source of uncertainty experienced by employees. During interpersonal communication, employees need to clarify their concerns regarding work issues that they might face at individual level. Similarly, employees expect confident communication from their supervisors in various communication encounters at work (Mikkelsen et al., 2017, 2015; Steele & Plenty, 2015; Teven et al., 2010) including meetings, group discussions and presentations/public speaking.

According to Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) by (Berger & Calabrese, 1974), uncertainty is a result of initial interaction with others. In organizational context, the two most important sources of newcomer communication, which are supervisor and coworkers play the most important role pertaining to newcomer communication dyad (Kramer, 2009; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Nifadkar et al., 2012). Moreover, URT suggests when faced with uncertainty individuals choose to engage in information seeking behavior (ISB) to reduce their uncertainty and attain positive communication outcomes. Similarly, (Bauer et al., 2007) in a meta-analysis identified the positive effects of information seeking as role clarity, self-efficacy and social acceptance.

Moreover, task-related uncertainty is also connected with communication between newcomers and their coworkers. Newcomers expect their coworkers to communicate them the work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (De Vos & Freese, 2011). Nevertheless, in case of coworker communication apprehension, newcomers are likely to face task-related uncertainty and subsequently get involved in information seeking behaviors as advocated by uncertainty reduction

theory (Anseel et al., 2015; Keith et al., 2017). Since URT explains newcomers' involvement in information seeking while they face uncertainty (social and task-related) because of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension, we put forward the following hypotheses:

**H15: TRU mediates the relationship between SCA and newcomer's ISB.**

**H16: TRU mediates the relationship between CCA and newcomer's ISB.**

The concept of social uncertainty (SU) by (Kramer, 2015) which is defined as the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings, is proposed to mediate between supervisor's communication apprehension and newcomers' information seeking behaviors. Social uncertainty is also linked with communication between newcomers and their coworkers (Dainton & Zelle, 2022; Kramer, 2014). As discussed above, newcomers look towards their coworkers for better understanding of working relationships and organizational norms. However, in case of coworker communication apprehension, newcomers are likely to face social uncertainty and hence get involved in information seeking behaviors in line with uncertainty reduction theory. Therefore, we hypothesize as follows. Supervisory communication is central in creating an environment where employees have a clear understanding related to their tasks and social relationships (T.-Y. Kim et al., 2009; Madlock, 2008; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell, & Marrs, 2009). Moreover, it is through supervisory communication that employees receive the required information about organizational culture, their role requirements and their coworkers (Sollitto & Myers, 2015). Hence, the importance of supervisory communication in creating an uncertainty-free environment is well-documented and lack of clear communication from the supervisor can be a potential source of uncertainty in organizations. A supervisor with high degree of context communication apprehension (interpersonal communication, meetings, discussions and presentations / public speaking) portrays a major source of uncertainty and is expected to increase task-related and social uncertainty among subordinates. This implies that employees have a need to be certain about task-related and social relationship in the organization;

whereas, the opposite of such certainty that is present in the situation refers to uncertainty (Goldberg, Riordan, & Schaffer, 2010; Hullett & Witte, 2001; Kramer, 1993; Kramer et al., 2013). Uncertainty is maximum at workplace while the employees join an organization and the entry phase is quite difficult for newcomers to manage with respect to understanding the tasks, roles and relationship requirements (De Vos & Freese, 2011; Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995). As discussed earlier that uncertainty occurs “when details of situations are ambiguous, complex, unpredictable or probabilistic; when information is unavailable or inconsistent; and when people feel insecure in their own state of knowledge or the state of knowledge in general” (Brashers, 2001), p. 478). Employees’ work environment needs to be free of ambiguities so that they can work with a clear and transparent vision with regards to their job requirements and relationship requirements with their superiors, and coworkers. moreover, URT suggests that uncertainty is an integral part of initial communication encounters between two individuals. Similarly, there exists ample scholarly work confirming that uncertainty is maximum for newcomers during organizational entry phase (see for example (Ashforth et al., 2007; Bauer et al., 2007; De Vos & Freese, 2011; Saks, Gruman, & Cooper-Thomas, 2011; Sluss et al., 2012; Tan, Au, Cooper-Thomas, & Aw, 2016)). This implies that newcomers face uncertainty at its maximum during organizational entry phase.

**H17: SU mediates the relationship between SCA and newcomer’s information seeking behavior.**

**H18: SU mediates the relationship between CCA and newcomer’s information seeking**

## **2.19 Interpersonal Attractiveness as Mediator between Social Uncertainty and Familiarity with Supervisor/Coworker**

Uncertainty at work potentially influences many outcomes. Task-related uncertainty typically affects work outcomes, whereas social uncertainty influences relationship outcomes (Bauer et al., 2007). The underlying mechanism by which

social uncertainty is likely to impact upon relationship can be explained through uncertainty reduction theory. The theory explains that interpersonal attractiveness of the communication partner gets reduced under social uncertainty. While this reduced interpersonal attractiveness negatively affects relationship outcomes. Therefore, URT offers an explanation pertaining to the mediation of interpersonal attractiveness in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor/coworker.

Relationship outcomes are likely to be influenced by social uncertainty at work. In our study, we take familiarity with supervisor and coworker as relationship outcomes. As per the literature of uncertainty, social or relational uncertainty is a determinant of relationship outcomes (Sias & Wyers, 2001; Thau, Aquino, & Wittek, 2007). As an established workplace stressor, social uncertainty may increase the anxiety of newcomers with regards to the relationship and they may wonder whether their actions will initiate an exchange where their supervisor/coworker will provide regular updates and feedback (Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2011). Such uncertainty has also been found to trigger negative emotions such as sadness and fear (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010). There is a compelling theoretical and empirical evidence of individuals of having a “pervasive drive” to form and maintain interpersonal bonds and experiencing emotional distress and anxiety when they feel their relationships to be threatened (Bauer & Green, 1998). This implies that social uncertainty weakens relationship outcomes in the form of familiarity with supervisor and coworker. However, the underlying mechanism by which uncertainty influences relationship outcomes is explained by uncertainty reduction theory as discussed further.

As already discussed, uncertainty not only affects work specific work outcomes but also has the potential to affect the attachment-based elements of employee relationships (Kramer, 2014). Newcomers may feel isolated under uncertainty because they are experiencing a new environment and new relationships (Son & Ok, 2019). As a new entrant they are in need to make new relationships and a sense of closeness with other including the supervisor and coworkers. Social uncertainty may affect many elements of relationship building and maintaining (Ellis et al., 2017). For example, getting to know about the supervisor and coworkers, adjustment

with organizational members and system and the like (Bauer et al., 2007; N. Li et al., 2011; Simosi, 2010). Under uncertainty, the individuals who experience uncertainty may develop a feeling of reduced association with the person who is the source of uncertainty (Kramer, 1999, 2009). As a result, the individual facing uncertainty may feel disassociated with their supervisors and coworkers. Since, interpersonal attractiveness is linked with relationships of newcomers with their supervisor/coworker, it is plausible that it is more likely to decrease in case of social uncertainty. Therefore, supervisory/coworker interpersonal attractiveness appears to be an important outcome of social uncertainty (the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings). Hence, we argue that interpersonal attractiveness of the supervisor/coworker will be reduced for newcomers in case of high social uncertainty and vice versa.

As discussed above, interpersonal attraction which is “commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes” (Montoya & Horton, 2014). In work settings, a positive evaluation of supervisor/coworker may lead to increased familiarity and relationship building, and social interaction (Vecchio & Bullis, 2001) implying that it has a positive link with relationship outcomes. In the same way, familiarity (explained in terms of considering them friend, to be comfortable while talking to them, a feeling that the understanding level with them is high, discussing work problems and talking frequently) appears to be an immediate outcome of interpersonal attractiveness (Strauss et al., 2001; Van Vianen et al., 2011). This implies that a higher attractiveness level pushes communication partner towards achieving a higher level of familiarity and vice versa. Based on the above literature support and subsequent argumentation, we hypothesize the following.

**H19: Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor.**

**H20: Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker.**

## 2.20 Information Seeking Behavior as Mediator Between Uncertainty (Social and Task-related) and Newcomers' Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment Outcomes

As discussed earlier, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension is likely to increase the uncertainty levels of newcomers while initially the newcomers are already less informed about their supervisor, coworkers and the organizational culture. Uncertainty reduction theory suggests that while newcomers' experience uncertainty, they attempt to reduce it via information seeking behaviors. Therefore, in line with (Berger & Calabrese, 1974), the mediating mechanism by which individuals reduce their uncertainty during initial interaction is of information seeking.

Newcomers generally experience higher levels of uncertainty and hence, get involved in information seeking more actively and frequently (Fang et al., 2011; Major & Kozlowski, 1997; Saks et al., 2011). (Tan et al., 2016) argued that information seeking is particularly important in learning and building new relationships and newcomers actively get involved in information seeking as part of their action plans for higher order goals. (Fang et al., 2011) advocate that, while newcomers face uncertainty during entry phase, they seek information both from their supervisor and coworkers. Therefore, information seeking becomes important while an employee is in the entry phase and it becomes even more important if there is additional uncertainty because of supervisor and coworker/s' communication apprehension. Reduced levels of uncertainty brought through information seeking are likely to bring positive communication outcomes to newcomers. Among the positive outcomes of uncertainty reduction are quality of communication and increased reciprocity (Allen et al., 2007; Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Based on the above argument, we propose that information seeking will mediate the relationship between uncertainty (social and task-related) and newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes. While experiencing social uncertainty, newcomers will be involved in information seeking behaviors in line with uncertainty



reduction theory and this will lead to positive outcomes (Anseel et al., 2015; Yang & Ariel, 2014). More specifically, in case of social uncertainty, the information seeking of newcomers will be increased and their familiarity with their supervisor will also be increased subsequently.

As discussed above that while experiencing social uncertainty, newcomers will be involved in information seeking behaviors in line with uncertainty reduction theory and this will lead to positive outcomes (Anseel et al., 2015; Yang & Ariel, 2014).

More specifically, (Benzinger, 2016; Bauer et al., 2007) demonstrated that in case of social uncertainty, the information seeking of newcomers will be increased. In this way, their familiarity with their coworkers is also likely to increase. Therefore, information seeking behaviors will mediate the relationship between social uncertainty experienced by newcomers and their familiarity with the coworkers. This can be explained through the lens of uncertainty reduction theory. While experiencing social uncertainty, newcomers' information seeking behaviors will be triggered leading to positive outcomes. In this way information seeking behaviors will mediate the relationship between social uncertainty experienced by newcomers and their familiarity with the supervisor and coworker, which is hypothesized as follows.

**H21: Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor.**

**H22: Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomer's familiarity with coworkers.**

Moreover, newcomers' integration into organizational culture and proper socialization also gets affected in the presence of uncertainty (Ellis et al., 2017; T. B. Harris et al., 2014; Perrot et al., 2014). Therefore, acculturation, which is described by (Gailliard et al., 2010) as the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate in it gets affected under the condition of uncertainty. When there exists social uncertainty, the information seeking of newcomers will be increased and their integration with organization will also be increased (Anseel et al., 2015; Yang & Ariel, 2014).

In this way information seeking behaviors will mediate the relationship between social uncertainty experienced by newcomers and their integration with the organization, which can be explained through the lens of uncertainty reduction theory (Kramer, 2015). Moreover, newcomers' involvement can also be linked with the openness of communication their supervisors and coworkers offer to them (Craig, Allen, Reid, Riemenschneider, & Armstrong, 2013). Employee involvement (the extent to which employees take additional assignments and responsibilities, enjoy their work and offer volunteer services) as defined by (Gailliard et al., 2010) is likely to decrease when there exists social uncertainty due to communication apprehension of supervisor and coworkers as indicated by (G. F. Thomas et al., 2009). Under such scenario, the newcomers will attempt to reduce their uncertainty by engaging in information seeking behaviors to attain higher levels of involvement, which is held by uncertainty reduction theory (Kramer et al., 2013). Hence, while experiencing social uncertainty, newcomers' information seeking behaviors will be triggered leading to positive outcomes.

As per (Perrot et al., 2014), employees need to tailor their jobs according to their knowledge, skill and abilities. This is only possible when their supervisors and coworkers communicate with them openly (Men, 2014). There arises a state of uncertainty which is felt by newcomers when supervisors and coworkers do not share work-related information openly (Kramer, 2015; Kramer et al., 2013). Looking from the lens of uncertainty reduction theory by (Berger & Calabrese, 1974), such uncertainty may be categorized as task-uncertainty. Subsequently task-uncertainty is expected to increase newcomers' information seeking for better role negotiation (the extent to which employees individualize and tailor their responsibilities according to their skill set convenience) as suggested by URT. Based on the above argumentation pertaining to newcomer role negotiation and acculturation, we hypothesize the following.

**H23: Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomers' acculturation.**

**H24: Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between TRU and newcomer's role negotiation.**

## 2.21 Uncertainty Avoidance as Moderator between Uncertainty and Information Seeking

Newcomer uncertainty (social and task-related) is a problematic issue when it comes from supervisory and coworker source (Kramer, 2015; Ploeger-Lyons & Kelley, 2017; Sollitto & Myers, 2015). The above discussion delineated the sources of uncertainty and the mechanism of uncertainty reduction as per URT. However, the theory suggests that there is a difference between information seeking behaviors of individuals and all individuals not always actively engage in information seeking (Anseel et al., 2015). Further research also indicates that the use of information seeking tactics is highly associated with many factors ranging from the social cost i.e. linked with the social image to personality traits of the information seeker (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 2002).

This implies that individuals not always choose to seek information when faced with uncertainty and they generally weigh the benefits of information seeking against its cost. Some individuals are more concerned with their image than the needed information and they decide not to seek information actively (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016). If they feel that the acquisition of information will lead to negatively affect their reputation, for example they may think that they will be considered incompetent if they seek information. Other factors affecting newcomers' information seeking behaviors are culture-specific which are fundamentally driven by a society's tolerance towards uncertainty (Masood & Afsar, 2017). Cultural differences have a role to play pertaining to newcomer information seeking (Morrison, Chen, & Salgado, 2004). Uncertainty avoidance may come into play while newcomers decide to seek or avoid information, since newcomer information seeking is primarily motivated by a desire to reduce uncertainty. Information seeking is a deliberate activity and is expected to increase under uncertainty (Benzinger, 2016) idering URT and further work on the effects of cultural dimensions on information seeking, we propose that uncertainty avoidance moderates between uncertainty and newcomer information seeking.

### 2.21.1 Research Model

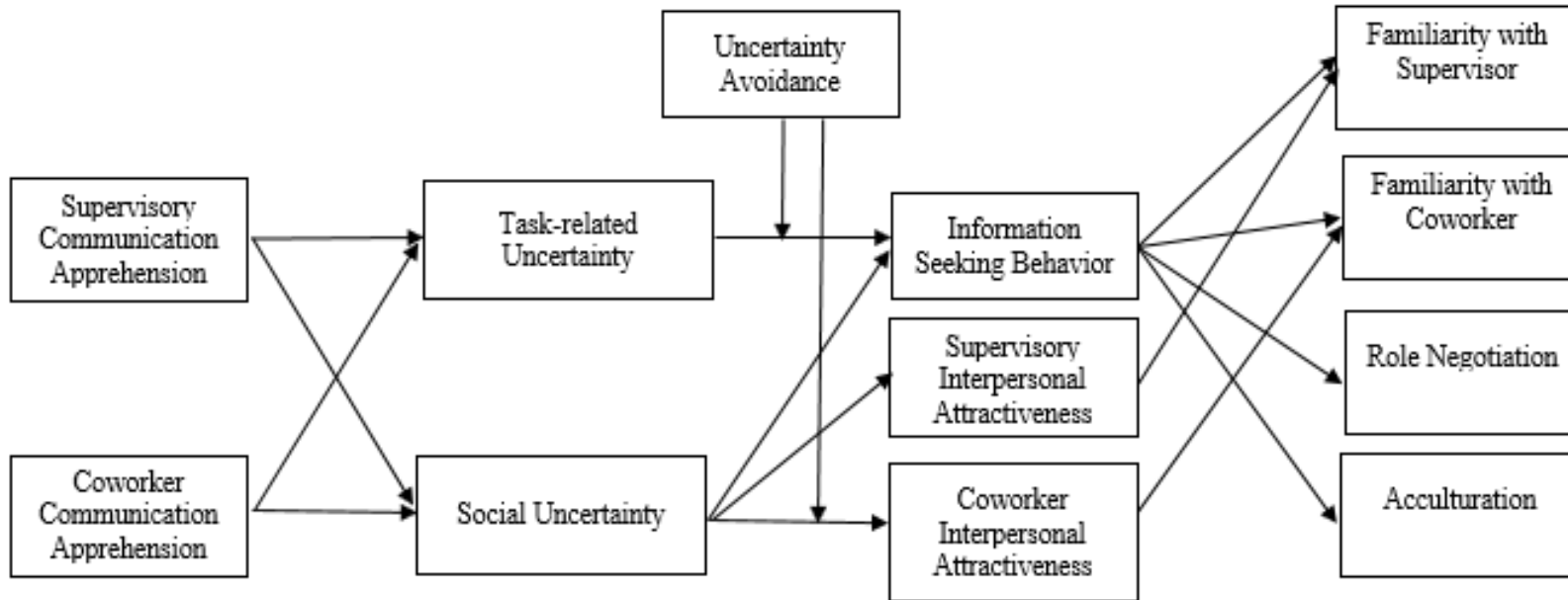


FIGURE 2.1: Research Model

Uncertainty avoidance broadly indicates a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, it reflects the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty (G. H. Hofstede & Hofstede, 2001)<sup>3</sup>. In line with (Farndale & Sanders, 2017), we expect in a culture of high uncertainty avoidance, newcomers are likely to engage in more information seeking behaviors. Based on the above argument, there is a likelihood that in a culture characterized by high uncertainty avoidance, newcomers are likely to increase information seeking under the conditions of uncertainty (social and task-related). Specifically, uncertainty avoidance may affect the extent to which information is sought by individuals. Hence, we take uncertainty avoidance as moderator between uncertainty (social and task-related) and information seeking behavior of newcomers. Therefore, we hypothesize the following.

**H25: Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.**

**H26: Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.**

## 2.22 Research Hypotheses

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<b>Hypothesis Statement</b>	
<b>H1</b>	SCA positively influences newcomers' TRU
<b>H2</b>	SCA positively influences Newcomers' SU
<b>H3</b>	CCA positively influences Newcomers' TRU
<b>H4</b>	CCA positively influences Newcomers' SU
<b>H5</b>	TRU positively influences newcomers' ISB
<b>H6</b>	SU positively influences newcomers' ISB

- 
- H7** Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences supervisory interpersonal attractiveness
- H8** Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness
- H9** Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with supervisor
- H10** Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with coworkers
- H11** Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences role negotiation
- H12** Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences acculturation
- H13** Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor positively influences newcomers' familiarity with supervisor
- H14** Interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers positively influences newcomers' familiarity with coworkers
- H15** TRU mediates the relationship between SCA and newcomer's ISB
- H16** TRU mediates the relationship between CCA and newcomer's ISB
- H17** SU mediates the relationship between SCA and newcomer's information seeking behavior
- H18** SU mediates the relationship between CCA and newcomer's information seeking
- H19** Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor
- H20** Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker
- H21** Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor

- 
- H22** Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomer's familiarity with coworkers
- H23** Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between SU and newcomers' acculturation
- H24** Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between TRU and newcomer's role negotiation
- H25** Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.
- H26** Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.
-

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology

This Chapter deals with research methodology including the research design (type of study, unit of analysis, extent of researcher's interference and so forth), the characteristics of target population, discussion on research instrument and statistical techniques employed to obtain results. It covers the details of how the investigation took place, including how the data was gathered, what instruments were employed, how the instruments were used and the means and methods for analyzing the collected data.

### 3.1 Research Design

A well-designed research helps the researcher in finding out the hypothesized relationships successfully (Wiersma, 2000). A research design is needed before data collection and analysis. "The function of research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the initial questions as unambiguously as possible" (De Vaus, 2001). It describes the logical structure of the inquiry. The research design provides a basic framework as to how the research will proceed in order to achieve its objectives. A quantitative research method was followed in the study to establish relationships between the study variables. Since the study was based on hypothesis testing and to establish the hypothesized relationships based on survey questionnaire in accordance with research questions and research objectives, a quantitative research method better suited the current



study. The data was collected on likert scale, which is used in behavioral sciences to measure various constructs.

As the study was based on testing the relationships formulated as hypotheses, the study was of hypothesis testing. We attempted to test the hypothesized relationships between the study variables and employed a multi-wave design by collecting data in three waves (discussed later). There can be minimal, moderate or excessive interference of researcher in the study based on the type of investigation and its intended outcomes. Mostly, the researcher's interference is excessive when an experimental design is followed (Blanche, Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). As the work was based on survey research, the researcher's interference was minimal i.e. the researcher introduced no changes or modifications in natural settings where actual work takes place. In this way, the study design was noncontrived and the behavior of investigator was unlikely to alter or influence the participants' actual responses. The unit of analysis were individuals in the form of newcomers.

## 3.2 Population and Sample

### 3.2.1 Population

Population must be defined before proceeding for data collection and analysis. Population of a study represents the larger group of individuals out of which the sample needs to be drawn. Population is the broader group of people to whom the researcher intends to generalize the results of the study. The focus of the study was upon newcomers, therefore, the main population of the study consisted of public and private sector organizations' newcomers. Newcomers are those employees who are in their first year of employment. Typically, newcomers are surveyed in their first year of employment in research that focuses on them (De Vos & Freese, 2011; McCroskey et al., 1989; Payne, Culbertson, Lopez, Boswell, & Barger, 2015). And the first year of employment is also very important with respect to newcomer outcomes (De Vos et al., 2005; Morrison, 2002).

Only those organizations were targeted where a reasonable number of newcomers could be approached which included universities, banks and large organizations

including oil and gas sector organizations of Pakistan. universities, banks and oil and gas sector organizations generally hire people for entry level positions who can be most suitable respondents for a study based on newcomers. Newcomers working in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Quetta cities of Pakistan were contacted. The organizations targeted had formal induction programs. The responses were sought from newcomers based on the study variables. Additionally, the data pertaining to newcomer information seeking behavior was obtained from their respective supervisors as discussed below in detail.

### 3.3 Sampling Method and Sample

Sampling is a practice through which an appropriate portion of total population is selected to determine the parameters of total population which is also supposed to be representative of total population (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 2013). Sampling is necessary in order to carry out a quantitative research study carrying a large population. It is easy to approach the sample instead of approaching the entire population, which is challenging and often impractical. Less time and monetary resources are required when the study uses a representative sample. While, data handling, analysis and interpretation of the results also become less complicated based on the data obtained by the sample. This implies that a good sample serves the purpose of representing the population and helps the researcher in generalizing the study findings to the entire population.

The sampling techniques that are commonly used in social sciences are probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling technique makes sure that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected as sample. While in non-probability sampling technique each member of the population is not given equal chance of being selected as sample. If complete information exists about the population, then probability sampling can be applied in order to extract a sample from the population using simple random sampling (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2007). This generally results in ease of use and accuracy of representation. However, if the researcher does not have complete information about the population and unable to access the sampling frame

then he/she remain bound to utilize non-probability sampling technique. This implies that non-probability sampling technique is more useful when the access to sampling frame is not given to the researcher. The respondents of the study were newcomers and the relevant organizations did not share complete lists of the employees who were in their first year of employment, therefore, we relied on accessing the respondents on the basis of convenience. After getting approval from concerned HR/Administrative Heads, we entered the organizations and contacted only those employees who were in their first year of employment. In this way, convenience sampling technique was applied to access employees who qualified to become study respondents. All employees working in target organizations could not become study respondents as the study was focused on newcomers. Only newcomers could become study respondents as per the purpose of the study. The researcher asked employees about their work tenure and distributed questionnaires to only those who were in their first year of employment. A total of 324 respondents became study. We employed Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table to determine the sample size. After discussion with the relevant HR heads of the selected organizations, the estimated population of newcomers turned out to be 1500. To be careful, we distributed 500 questionnaires and received 324 usable responses. As per the table, 324 is a sufficient sample size for a population of 2000, which turned out to be more than the estimated population size. Hence, the sample size sufficiently represented the target population.

### **3.4 Procedure**

Questionnaires were distributed amongst study participants after getting official approval from their concerned authorities. The study questionnaire has various sections, including demographic profile of respondents (age group, gender, work experience, qualification and nature of job) and likert-scale questions regarding each variable. An introductory cover letter was attached with the questionnaire, explaining the purpose of study and the respondents will be encouraged to participate promising confidentiality. In order to approach the respondents, the respective Directors/Heads of Human Resources were contacted. The author explained

the purpose of study and the expected outcome to them. It was also informed that the data is intended from the newcomers and their supervisors. The author shared the questionnaire with HR Heads and showed them the cover letter. Additionally, it was informed that the authors do not know any of the respondents personally and they were being contacted through their HR departments, ensuring full confidentiality of data collected and anonymity of the respondents. The confidentiality and anonymity statements were given in the cover letter. After getting the approval from the HR Heads and getting a list of newcomers, the questionnaires were distributed amongst study respondents subsequently. The respondents were then chosen randomly to participate in the study.

Newcomers were asked to report about supervisory and coworker communication apprehension, uncertainty (social and task-related), uncertainty avoidance, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor/coworkers, familiarity with supervisor/coworker, acculturation and role negotiation. While the supervisors' responses were recorded pertaining to newcomers' information seeking behavior. Additionally, the demographic data of the respondents was also collected including their gender, age, qualification and organizational tenure. After collecting the data from newcomers about SCA, CCA, TRU and SU initially (time one), a gap of fifteen days (time two) was given to collect data regarding information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness and uncertainty avoidance. While the data pertaining to newcomer outcomes (familiarity with supervisor/coworker, acculturation and role negotiation) was collected in time 3 after one month.

### 3.5 Data Collection

A time lag multi-wave study design was used for data collection. The data was also multisource i.e. it was collected from newcomers and their supervisors. In this way, two sources of data were used for data collection.

**Time Lag 1-T1:** In time lag 1, responses of supervisor and coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's uncertainty (social and task-related) were gathered. Uncertainty is experienced when the communication encounter takes

place between the newcomer and supervisor/coworker. Therefore, the responses were obtained in the same time lag.

**Time lag 2-T2:** Responses on uncertainty avoidance, newcomer information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness were obtained in time lag 2. Uncertainty avoidance has been taken as moderator in the study, while information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness are mediators.

**Time lag 3-T3:** Newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes (familiarity with supervisor/coworker, acculturation, role negotiation) data was finally gathered in time lag 3.

The data were collected between October 2017 to February, 2018.

## 3.6 Sample Characteristics

### 3.6.1 Gender

It can be observed in table 3.1 that out of 324 respondents, 171 were males and the remaining 153 were females, representing 52.8 and 47.2 percent of each gender respectively.

TABLE 3.1: Gender of Participants

Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
171	52.8	52.8
153	47.2	100

### 3.6.2 Age

**Table 3.2** shows the age mix of study participants. The participants were from different age groups. As per table 3.2, the percentages of participants representing each age category were 12% (18 -21 years), 21.6% (22 – 25 years), 52.5% (26 – 29 years) and 13.9% (30 years or above). The number of respondents in each category was 39, 70, 170 and 45 respectively.

TABLE 3.2: Age of Participants

Age	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 – 21 years	39	12	12
22 -25 years	70	21.6	33.6
26 -29 years	170	52.5	86.1
30 years or above	45	13.9	100

### 3.6.3 Qualification of Participants

**Table 3.3** shows the qualification of study participants. The participants had different qualification levels. As per **Table: 3.3**, the percentages of participants representing each qualification category were 13.9% (intermediate), 19.4% (Bachelors or BS Degree), 39.8% (Masters Degree) and 26.9% (M.S/M.Phil Degree or higher). The number of respondents in each category was 45, 63, 129 and 87 respectively.

TABLE 3.3: Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Valid Percent	Per- cent	Cumulative Percent
Intermediate	45	13.9		13.9
Bachelors or BS Degree	63	19.4		33.3
Masters Degree	129	39.8		73.1
M.S/M.Phil or Higher Degree	87	26.9		100

### 3.6.4 Time Spent with the Current Organization

Table 3.4 shows the participants' time spent with the current organization. As per table 3.4, the percentages of participants representing each category were 11.1% (1 – 3 months), 22.5% (4 – 6 months), 34.3% (7 – 9 months) and 32.1% (10 – 12 months). The number of respondents in each category was 36, 73, 111 and 104 respectively.

TABLE 3.4: Participants' time spent with the Current Organization of Participants

Participants' time spent with the Current Organization of Participants	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 – 3 months	36	11.1	11.1
4 – 6 months	73	22.5	33.6
7 – 9 months	111	34.3	67.9
10 – 12 months	104	32.1	100

### 3.7 Measures

All variables of the study were measured through standard instruments developed and validated previously. Responses on all variables were obtained on likert scale.

#### 3.7.1 Communication Apprehension

The most widely used operationalization of communication apprehension is by [McCroskey and Anderson \(1976\)](#) which is known as Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA). [Russ \(2013b\)](#) used the scale to assess communication apprehension in work settings. But the scale takes responses from the respondents on a self-report survey. Keeping in view the problem of common method variance, we adapted the scale to make it newcomer-reported and used the adapted version to assess the level of communication apprehension of supervisors and coworkers.

Based on the available scale, adapted sample items for each dimension include; “*My supervisor/coworker gets involved in group discussions*” (*group discussions*). “*My supervisor/coworker doesn't express him/herself at meetings*” (*meetings*). “*My supervisor/coworker is very tense and nervous in conversations*” (*conversations*). “*My supervisor/coworker looks relaxed while giving a presentation*” (*presentations*

and public speaking). The scale has 24 items. Negative items were reverse coded by changing the values of 5 to 1, 4 to 2, 2 to 4 and 1 to 5.

### **3.7.2 Uncertainty (Social and Task-related)**

Scale by [Kramer \(2017\)](#) was adapted to measure social and task-related uncertainty experienced by newcomers. They developed the scale for volunteer services organizations. Only the word “organization” was added to fit the items for our requirements. Sample item for task-related uncertainty include, “I don’t know the standards for performing in this organization”. While a sample item for social uncertainty is, “I am not sure how to interact with other organizational members”. The scale has 08 items.

### **3.7.3 Information Seeking Behavior**

Information seeking behavior of newcomers was measured by adopting the scale of ([Major & Kozlowski, 1997](#)). [Gruman et al. \(2006\)](#) used the same scale to gauge newcomers’ information seeking behavior in organizational socialization context. Newcomers will be asked about how frequently they initiate conversations with their coworkers and supervisor about various topics (job-related, work priorities, job duties and procedures etc.) in a typical week. The scale has 08 items.

### **3.7.4 Uncertainty Avoidance**

Newcomers’ uncertainty avoidance was measured by using the scale of ([Dorfman & Howell, 1988](#)). Sample items are, “it is important to have job requirements and instructions spelled out in detail so that employees always know what they are expected to do” and “instructions for operations are important for employees on the job”. The scale has 05 items.

### **3.7.5 Interpersonal Attractiveness**

Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors and coworkers in the eyes of newcomers was measured by adapting the scale of ([Singh et al., 2015](#)). They developed



the scale to assess the interpersonal attractiveness between partners and their likelihood to meet, interact and work together. Sample item for supervisor's interpersonal attractiveness include, "I look forward to working with my supervisor". Similarly, sample item for coworker's interpersonal is, "I look forward to working with this coworker". The scale has 04 items.

### 3.7.6 Relationship, Role-related and Adjustment Outcomes

Newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes were measured by adopting the scale of Gailliard et al. (2010). Sample items for familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, acculturation and role negotiation are "I feel comfortable talking to this coworker" (familiarity with coworker). "I feel like I know my supervisor pretty well" (familiarity with supervisor). "I know the values of my organization" (acculturation). "I have changed some aspects of my position" (role negotiation).

TABLE 3.5: Measures

S.No	Variable	Measure
1	Supervisory Communication Apprehension	Mccroskey and Anderson (1976)
2	Coworker Communication Apprehension	Mccroskey and Anderson (1976)
3	Task-related Uncertainty	Kramer (2017)
4	Social Uncertainty	Kramer (2017)
5	Uncertainty Avoidance	Dorfman and Howell (1988)
6	Information Seeking Behavior	Major and Kozlowski (1997)
7	Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor	Singh et al. (2015)
8	Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker	Singh et al. (2015)
9	Familiarity with Supervisor	Gailliard et al. (2010)
10	Familiarity with Coworker	Gailliard et al. (2010)
11	Acculturation	Gailliard et al. (2010)
12	Role Negotiation	Gailliard et al. (2010)

### 3.8 Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted. It was a requirement since some of the study questions were slightly modified. The initial Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was found 0.768 which is above the cutoff value of 0.50. KMO value near to 1 shows sufficient sampling adequacy. The results of Bartlett's test of Sphericity were also significant establishing the suitability of the data. The eigenvalues are greater than 1 for all the factors. The first factor explained the highest percentage of variance followed by the variance of the remaining factors. The loading values which were less than 0.4 were dropped from the study.

Item 3 "My supervisor looks tense and nervous while participating in group discussions" and item 7 "My supervisor generally looks nervous when he/she has to participate in a meeting" of the supervisory communication apprehension scale were dropped due to low factor loadings. Item 12 "My coworker looks very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting" of the coworker communication apprehension scale was dropped due to low factor loading.

TABLE 3.6: Dropped Items

Scale	Item dropped
Supervisory communication apprehension	"My supervisor looks tense and nervous while participating in group discussions"
Supervisory communication apprehension	"My supervisor generally looks nervous when he/she has to participate in a meeting"
Coworker communication apprehension	"My coworker looks very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting"

TABLE 3.7: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.745	15.272	15.272	13.745	15.272	15.272	6.447	7.163	7.163
2	7.175	7.972	23.245	7.175	7.972	23.245	5.351	5.946	13.109
3	5.424	6.027	29.271	5.424	6.027	29.271	5.057	5.618	18.728
4	4.699	5.221	34.493	4.699	5.221	34.493	5.045	5.606	24.334
5	4.289	4.765	39.258	4.289	4.765	39.258	4.886	5.429	29.762
6	3.847	4.274	43.532	3.847	4.274	43.532	4.725	5.25	35.013
7	2.984	3.315	46.847	2.984	3.315	46.847	4.502	5.002	40.015
8	2.577	2.863	49.71	2.577	2.863	49.71	4.174	4.638	44.652
9	2.214	2.459	52.17	2.214	2.459	52.17	3.323	3.692	48.345
10	2.199	2.444	54.613	2.199	2.444	54.613	3.281	3.645	51.99
11	1.966	2.184	56.798	1.966	2.184	56.798	3.219	3.577	55.567
12	1.886	2.096	58.894	1.886	2.096	58.894	2.994	3.327	58.894

N=324, Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

TABLE 3.8: KMO and Bartlett's Test

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			0.768
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	21526.133	
	df	4005	
	Sig.	0.000	

### 3.9 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Before hypotheses testing, factor analysis CFA was carried out to test the factor structure and validity of the constructs measured through data. A factor analysis of validated instruments helps the researchers ensure that the instruments are equally valid in the context of the study being carried out. CFA was performed by using Amos and model fitness was evaluated through a number of measurements such as, RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation), (IFI) incremental fit index, CFI (comparative fit index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis index) and GFI (goodness of fit index). The results showed that the final 12 factor model (Chi-square/df = 2.25, CFI=.90, IFI=.91; TLI=.90; RMSEA = 0.04 and GFI = 0.85) was better fit as compared to the initial 12 factor model (Chi-square/df = 2.77, CFI = 0.68, IFI = 0.7; TLI = 0.68; RMSEA = 0.07 and GFI = 0.62).

TABLE 3.9: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Measurement Model

<b>Model</b>	$\chi^2$	<b>Df</b>	$\chi^2/\text{df}$	<b>CFI</b>	<b>IFI</b>	<b>TLI</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>
Initial 12 Factors model	9947	3587	2.77	0.68	0.70	0.68	0.62	0.07
Modified 12 Factors Model	4326	1917	2.25	0.90	0.91	0.90	0.85	0.04

### 3.10 Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Convergent and discriminant validity of the measures was tested. Convergent validity refers to a condition where the degree to which two measures of constructs that theoretically should be related, are actually related. while discriminant validity tests whether concepts or measurements that are not supposed to be related are actually unrelated. table 4.4 reports CR, AVE (average variance extracted) and MSV (maximum shared variance). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is greater than Maximum Shared Squared Variance (MSV) for all theoretical variables, which is an evidence of the establishment of discriminant validity among variables of the study (Hair et al. 2010). Table 4.4 also represents composite reliability (CR) of all theoretical variables which is greater than Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and AVE is greater than the threshold value which is 0.5 which indicate convergent validity among variables. Moreover, CR is greater than 0.7 for all theoretical variables. Hence, both the discriminant and convergent validities of the study variables are established.

TABLE 3.10: Convergent and Discriminant Validity

<b>Variables</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>MSV</b>
<b>SCA</b>	0.850	0.540	0.210
<b>CCA</b>	0.890	0.600	0.270
<b>TRU</b>	0.974	0.95	0.182
<b>SU</b>	0.772	0.630	0.182
<b>UA</b>	0.850	0.531	0.153
<b>ISB</b>	0.944	0.677	0.066
<b>IAS</b>	0.966	0.935	0.065
<b>IAC</b>	0.791	0.517	0.175
<b>FWC</b>	0.763	0.518	0.206
<b>FWS</b>	0.809	0.585	0.149
<b>ACC</b>	0.824	0.652	0.083
<b>RN</b>	0.859	0.766	0.206

SCA = Supervisory Communication Apprehension, CCA = Coworker Communication Apprehension, CP = coworker presentation, CM = Coworker Meeting, SGD = Supervisory Group Discussion, SC = supervisory conversation, SP = supervisory presentation, SM = supervisory meeting, TRU = Task-related Uncertainty, SU = social uncertainty, UA = uncertainty avoidance, ISB = information seeking behavior, IAS = interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor, FWC = familiarity with coworker, FWS = familiarity with supervisor, IAC = interpersonal attractiveness of coworker, ACC = acculturation, RN = role negotiation.

### 3.11 Scale Reliabilities

TABLE 3.11: Scale Reliabilities

Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Supervisory Communication Apprehension	24	0.83
Coworker Communication Apprehension	24	0.87
Task-related Uncertainty	5	0.71
Social Uncertainty	3	0.74
Uncertainty Avoidance	5	0.7
Information Seeking Behavior	8	0.72
Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor	4	0.9
Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker	4	0.87
Familiarity with Supervisor	3	0.72
Familiarity with Coworker	3	0.7
Acculturation	4	0.7
Role Negotiation	3	0.74

### 3.12 Data Analysis

The study was quantitative in nature; therefore, certain statistical techniques were employed to analyze the relationship between the dependent, independent, mediating and moderating variables. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the

characteristics of sample in terms of age, gender, work experience, qualification. Scale variables' descriptive statistics were explained in terms of mean and standard deviation. Correlation was applied to look at the association between study variables and to make sure that the variables are not associated with each other to the extent that there arise and issues of multicollinearity.

Moreover, when using an existing measure, it is important to examine whether the measure is appropriate for the population included in the current study. In these circumstances, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) can be used to examine whether the original structure of the measures works well in the new population (Harrington, 2009). Therefore, CFA was applied to ensure that the adopted measures have a good reliability and validity for our study, which is a basic requirement of social sciences research. Additionally, CFA examined whether the factor model has a good fit for further analysis. Path analysis was run to test the relationship between study variables using structural equation modeling.

The research study had three stages in the data analysis section. In the first stage, descriptive statistics of demographic variables were calculated alongside the calculation of alpha reliabilities of scale variables (supervisory communication apprehension, coworker communication apprehension, task-related uncertainty, social uncertainty, uncertainty avoidance, information seeking behavior, interpersonal attractiveness, familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, acculturation and role negotiation). The alpha reliabilities of all variables were in acceptable range as mentioned above. Moreover, correlation coefficients were calculated which describes the extent of association between study variables.

In the second stage, the relationship among study variables i.e. supervisory/coworker communication apprehension, task-related uncertainty, social uncertainty, uncertainty avoidance, information seeking behavior, interpersonal attractiveness, familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, acculturation and role negotiation were statistically examined using structural equation modelling. In the third stage, mediation and moderation analyses were run. The moderating role of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between task-related/social uncertainty and information seeking behavior was tested. The mediating role of

task-related/social uncertainty between supervisory /coworker communication apprehension and information seeking behavior was tested. The mediating role of task-related/social uncertainty between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and interpersonal attractiveness was tested. The mediating role of information seeking behavior between task-related/social uncertainty and newcomer outcomes (familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, acculturation and role negotiation) was tested. While the mediating role of interpersonal attractiveness between task-related/social uncertainty and newcomer outcomes (familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker) was also tested using structural equation modelling.



# Chapter 4

## Results and Findings

The central purpose of this chapter is to analyze the data from various angles and obtain its statistical results. The chapter covers descriptive statistics of study variables, correlation analysis, convergent and discriminant validity tests, confirmatory factor analysis and relationship testing for direct, indirect and moderation hypotheses.

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics of scale variables i.e. supervisory and coworker communication apprehension, task-related uncertainty, social uncertainty, information seeking behavior, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and coworker, familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworker, acculturation and role negotiation are presented in the following table 4.1 in the form of mean and standard deviation. The mean value represents the average for each variable, while the standard deviation represents that how far the values are from the mean observed value. Higher values of mean indicate the inclination of respondents towards agreement side, while lower value of mean depicts respondents' inclination towards disagreement side of feedback.

The mean value of supervisory communication apprehension was (Mean = 3.138, S.D = 0.506). The mean value of coworker communication apprehension was (Mean = 3.239, S.D = 0.577). The mean value of task-related uncertainty was

(Mean = 3.122, S.D = 0.716). The mean value of social uncertainty was (Mean = 3.081, S.D = 0.779). The mean value of uncertainty avoidance was (Mean = 3.550, S.D = 0.561). The mean value of information seeking behavior was (Mean = 3.553, S.D = 0.440). The mean value of interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor was (Mean = 2.139, S.D = 0.776). The mean value of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker was (Mean = 2.161, S.D = 0.671). The mean value of familiarity with supervisor was (Mean = 3.494, S.D = 0.784). The mean value of familiarity with coworker was (Mean = 3.559, S.D = 0.758). The mean value of acculturation was (Mean = 3.449, S.D = 0.812). The mean value of role negotiation was (Mean = 3.332, S.D = 0.843).

TABLE 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Supervisory communication apprehension	3.138	0.506
Coworker communication apprehension	3.239	0.577
Task-related uncertainty	3.122	0.716
Social uncertainty	3.081	0.779
Uncertainty avoidance	3.55	0.561
Information seeking behavior	3.553	0.44
Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor	2.139	0.776
Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker	2.161	0.671
Familiarity with supervisor	3.494	0.784
Familiarity with coworker	3.559	0.758
Acculturation	3.449	0.812
Role negotiation	3.332	0.843

## 4.2 Correlation Analysis

**Table: 4.2** presents the correlation analysis of study variables. Supervisory communication apprehension was significantly correlated with coworker communication apprehension ( $r = 0.659, p < 0.01$ ), task-related uncertainty ( $r = 0.528, p < 0.01$ ), social uncertainty ( $r = 0.492, p < 0.01$ ), uncertainty avoidance ( $r = 0.160, p < 0.01$ ) information seeking behavior ( $r = 0.481, p < 0.01$ ) interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = -0.302, p < 0.01$ ) interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.319, p < 0.01$ ) and acculturation ( $r = -0.153, p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.003, p > 0.05$ ), familiarity with coworker ( $r = -0.011, p > 0.05$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.063, p > 0.05$ ).

Coworker communication apprehension was significantly correlated with task-related uncertainty ( $r = 0.421, p < 0.01$ ), social uncertainty ( $r = 0.516, p < 0.01$ ), uncertainty avoidance ( $r = 0.249, p < 0.01$ ), information seeking behavior ( $r = 0.412, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = 0.271, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.317, p < 0.01$ ), familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.200, p < 0.01$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.226, p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.067, p > 0.05$ ) and acculturation ( $r = 0.043, p > 0.05$ ).

Task-related uncertainty was significantly correlated with social uncertainty ( $r = 0.642, p < 0.01$ ), uncertainty avoidance ( $r = 0.261, p < 0.01$ ), information seeking behavior ( $r = 0.376, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = -0.280, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.261, p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.096, p > 0.05$ ), familiarity with coworker ( $r = -0.017, p > 0.05$ ), acculturation ( $r = -0.018, p > 0.05$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.039, p > 0.05$ ).

Social uncertainty was significantly correlated with uncertainty avoidance ( $r = 0.161, p < 0.01$ ), information seeking behavior ( $r = 0.416, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = -0.245, p < 0.01$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.237, p < 0.01$ ) and familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.165, p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with coworker ( $r = -0.013,$

$p > 0.05$ ), acculturation ( $r = 0.074$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.046$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Uncertainty avoidance was significantly correlated with information seeking behavior ( $r = 0.196$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.235$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), acculturation ( $r = 0.166$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.445$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = -0.085$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.081$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.106$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Information seeking behavior was significantly correlated with interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor ( $r = -0.122$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.112$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.143$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.178$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = -0.107$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and acculturation ( $r = 0.045$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor was significantly correlated with interpersonal attractiveness of coworker ( $r = 0.650$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.129$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and acculturation ( $r = 0.187$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.099$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.013$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker was significantly correlated with acculturation ( $r = 0.133$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) but not significantly correlated with familiarity with supervisor ( $r = 0.026$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.072$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = -0.021$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Familiarity with supervisor was significantly correlated with familiarity with coworker ( $r = 0.526$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), acculturation ( $r = 0.685$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.511$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Familiarity with coworker was significantly correlated with acculturation ( $r = 0.600$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and role negotiation ( $r = 0.378$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). While acculturation was significantly correlated role negotiation ( $r = 0.430$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The strongest correlation (0.68) was found between Familiarity with supervisor and acculturation. This may have happened because newcomers may find getting familiar with the supervisor and being socialized as the same thing, which is also supported by the literature on acculturation and supervisor familiarity.

TABLE 4.2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	SCA	CCA	TRU	SU	UA	ISB	IAS	IAC	FWS	FWC	ACC	RN
SCA	1											
CCA	.659**	1										
TRU	.528**	.421**	1									
SU	.492**	.516**	.642**	1								
UA	.160**	.249**	.261**	.161**	1							
ISB	.481**	.412**	.376**	.416**	.196**	1						
IAS	-.302**	-.271**	-.280**	-.245**	-0.085	-.122*	1					
IAC	-.319**	-.317**	-.261**	-.237**	-0.081	-0.107	.650**	1				
FWS	0.003	.200**	0.096	.165**	.235**	.112*	0.099	0.026	1			
FWC	-0.011	0.067	-0.017	-0.013	0.106	.143**	.129*	0.072	.526**	1		
ACC	-.153**	0.043	-0.018	0.074	.166**	0.045	.187**	.133*	.685**	.600**	1	
RN	0.063	.226**	0.039	0.046	.445**	.178**	0.013	-0.021	.511**	.378**	.430**	1

\*\*p < .05, \*p < .01, SCA = Supervisory Communication Apprehension, CCA = Coworker Communication Apprehension, TRU = Task-related Uncertainty, SU = Social Uncertainty, UA = Uncertainty Avoidance, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior, IAS = Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor, IAC = Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker, FWS = Familiarity with Supervisor, FWC = Familiarity with Coworker, ACC = Acculturation, RN = Role Negotiation.

The second strongest correlation (0.65) was found between supervisory and coworker communication apprehension. This implies that the respondents may have found the communication apprehension of supervisors and coworkers to be coinciding and part of the norm in dealing with newcomers. The last strongest correlation (0.65) was found between the interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and interpersonal attractiveness of coworker. This can have the reasoning that being new and in the first year of employment with the organization, newcomers may have maintained similar levels of attractiveness with the supervisor and coworker, which can have varying degrees in later stages of employment.

### 4.3 Control Variables

One-way ANOVA was performed to find out if there is a need to control any demographic variables in the study in relation to outcome variables i.e. familiarity with supervisor, familiarity with coworkers, role negotiation and acculturation of newcomers. As reported below, no significant differences were found for our sample of newcomers. Results showed insignificant difference in familiarity with supervisor (FWS) across gender ( $F = 1.328, P > 0.05$ ), age ( $F = 1.255, P > 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F = 1.179, P > 0.05$ ) and time spent with the organization ( $F = 1.453, P > 0.05$ ). Results showed insignificant difference in familiarity with coworker (FWC) across gender ( $F = 2.293, P > 0.05$ ), age ( $F = 0.616, P > 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F = 0.077, P > 0.05$ ) and time spent with the organization ( $F = 1.317, P > 0.05$ ). Results showed insignificant difference in role negotiation (RN) across gender ( $F = 0.722, P > 0.05$ ), age ( $F = 0.685, P > 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F = 0.633, P > 0.05$ ) and time spent with the organization ( $F = 0.792, P > 0.05$ ). Results showed insignificant difference in acculturation (ACC) across gender ( $F = 0.504, P > 0.05$ ), age ( $F = 0.147, P > 0.05$ ), qualification ( $F = 0.159, P > 0.05$ ) and time spent with the organization ( $F = 0.471, P > 0.05$ ).

### 4.4 Hypothesis Testing

**Hypothesis 1: SCA positively influences newcomers' TRU.**

The result of hypothesis 1 shows the effect of supervisory communication apprehension on newcomers' task-related uncertainty. According to the result, SCA is positively and significantly associated with newcomers' TRU i.e.  $\beta = 0.625$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Hence, hypothesis H1 is supported which states that SCA and Newcomers' TRU are positively related with each other. This implies that for every one unit increase in SCA, task-related uncertainty increases by 0.62 units.

TABLE 4.3: Structural Path (H1)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Supervisory communication apprehension → Task-related uncertainty	0.625	0.088	0.000

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

### Hypothesis 2: SCA positively influences Newcomers' SU.

The result of hypothesis 2 shows the effect of supervisory communication apprehension on newcomers' social uncertainty. According to the result, SCA is positively and significantly associated with newcomers' SU i.e.  $\beta = 0.413$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Hence, hypothesis H2 is supported which states that SCA and Newcomers' SU are positively related with each other. This implies that for every one unit increase in SCA, social uncertainty increases by 0.41 units.

TABLE 4.4: Structural Path (H2)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Supervisory communication apprehension → Social uncertainty	0.413	0.095	0.000

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

### H3: CCA positively influences Newcomers' TRU.

The result of hypothesis 3 shows the effect of coworker communication apprehension on newcomers' task-related uncertainty. According to the result, CCA is positively and significantly associated with newcomers' TRU i.e.  $\beta = 0.162$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H3 is supported which states that CCA and Newcomers' TRU are positively related with each other. This implies that for every one unit increase in CCA, task-related uncertainty increases by 0.16 units.

TABLE 4.5: Structural Path (H3)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P
Coworker communication apprehension → Task-related uncertainty	0.162	0.077	0.037

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H4: CCA positively influences Newcomers' SU.**

The result of hypothesis 4 shows the effect of coworker communication apprehension on newcomers' social uncertainty. According to the result, CCA is positively and significantly associated with newcomers' SU i.e.  $\beta = 0.458$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Hence, hypothesis H4 is supported which states that CCA and Newcomers' SU are positively related with each other. This implies that for every one unit increase in CCA, social uncertainty increases by 0.45 units.

TABLE 4.6: Structural Path (H4)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Coworker communication apprehension → Social uncertainty	0.458	0.083	0.000

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H5: TRU positively influences newcomers' ISB.**

The result of hypothesis 5 shows the effect of newcomers' experienced task-related uncertainty on their information seeking behavior. According to the result, TRU is not significantly associated with ISB i.e.  $\beta = 0.018$ ,  $p > 0.59$ . Hence, hypothesis H5 is not supported which stated that TRU and newcomers' ISB are positively related to each other.

TABLE 4.7: Structural Path (H5)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P- value
Task-related uncertainty → Information seeking behavior	0.018	0.034	0.590

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H6: SU positively influences newcomers' ISB.**



The result of hypothesis 6 shows the effect of newcomers' experienced social uncertainty on their information seeking behavior. According to the result, SU is positively and significantly associated with ISB i.e.  $\beta = 0.107$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Hence, hypothesis H6 is supported which states that SU and newcomers' ISB are positively related with each other. This implies that for every one unit increase in SU, ISB increases by 0.18 units.

TABLE 4.8: Structural Path (H6)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Social uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Information seeking behavior	0.107	0.031	0.000

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H7: Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences supervisory interpersonal attractiveness.**

The result of hypothesis 7 shows the relationship between newcomers' experienced social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of their supervisors. According to the result, SU is not significantly associated with IAS i.e.  $\beta = -0.081$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H7 is not supported which stated that SU and IAS are negatively related to each other.

TABLE 4.9: Structural Path (H7)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Social uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor	-0.081	0.084	0.334

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H8: Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness.**

The result of hypothesis 8 shows the relationship between newcomers' experienced social uncertainty on interpersonal attractiveness of their coworkers. According to the result, SU is negatively and significantly associated with IAC i.e.  $\beta = -0.142$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H8 is supported which states that newcomer experienced social uncertainty and coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness are negatively related with each other.

TABLE 4.10: Structural Path (H8)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Social uncertainty → Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker	-0.142	0.087	0.103

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H9: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with supervisor.**

The result of hypothesis 9 shows the relationship between newcomers' information seeking behavior and their familiarity with supervisor. According to the result, ISB is not significantly associated with FWS i.e.  $\beta = 0.100$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H9 is not supported which states that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with familiarity with supervisor.

TABLE 4.11: Structural Path (H9)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Information seeking behavior → Familiarity with supervisor	0.100	0.108	0.356

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error

**H10: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with coworkers.**

The result of hypothesis 10 shows the relationship between newcomers' information seeking behavior and their familiarity with coworkers. According to the result, ISB is positively and significantly associated with FWC i.e.  $\beta = 0.319$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Hence, hypothesis H10 is supported which states that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with familiarity with coworkers. This implies that for every one unit increase in ISB, FWC increases by 0.31 units.

TABLE 4.12: Structural Path (H10)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Information seeking behavior → Familiarity with supervisor	0.319	0.108	0.356

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H11: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences role negotiation.**

The result of hypothesis 11 shows the relationship between newcomers' information seeking behavior and role negotiation. According to the result, ISB is positively and significantly associated with RN i.e.  $\beta = 0.364$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Hence, hypothesis H11 is supported which states that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with role negotiation. This implies that for every one unit increase in ISB, RN increases by 0.36 units.

TABLE 4.13: Structural Path (H11)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Information seeking behavior → Familiarity with coworker	0.364	0.106	0.002

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H12: Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences acculturation.**

The result of hypothesis 12 shows the relationship between newcomers' information seeking behavior and their acculturation. According to the result, ISB is not significantly associated with ACC i.e.  $\beta = 0.112$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H12 is not supported which states that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with acculturation.

TABLE 4.14: Structural Path (H12)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Information seeking behavior → Acculturation	0.112	0.107	0.297

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H13: Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor positively influences newcomers' familiarity with supervisor.**

The result of hypothesis 13 shows the relationship between interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and their familiarity with supervisor. According to the result, IAS is positively and significantly associated with FWS i.e.  $\beta = 0.109$ ,

$p < 0.01$ . Hence, hypothesis H13 is supported which states that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor is positively related with newcomers' familiarity with supervisor. This implies that for every one unit increase in IAS, FWS increases by 0.10 units.

TABLE 4.15: Structural Path (H13)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor → Familiarity with supervisor	0.109	0.041	0.008

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H14: Interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers positively influences newcomers' familiarity with coworkers.**

The result of hypothesis 14 shows the relationship between interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers and newcomers' familiarity with coworkers. According to the result, IA is not significantly associated with FWC i.e.  $\beta = 0.048$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . Hence, hypothesis H14 is not supported which states that interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers is positively related with newcomers' familiarity with coworkers.

TABLE 4.16: Structural Path (H14)

Structural Path	B	S.E	P-value
Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker → Familiarity with coworker	0.048	0.039	0.213

B = unstandardized regression coefficient, S.E = Standard Error.

**H15: Task-related uncertainty mediates the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior.**

Hypothesis 15 predicted the mediating effect of task-related uncertainty in the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomers' information seeking behavior. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.077 with no zero value lying between the lower (0.026) and upper (0.136) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that TRU mediates (explains the relationship) between CCA and newcomer's ISB is supported.

TABLE 4.17: Mediation (H15)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SCA → TRU → ISB	0.340	0.077	0.026	0.136

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SCA = Supervisory Communication Apprehension, TRU =Task-related Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior.

**H16: Task-related uncertainty mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomer’s information seeking behavior.**

Hypothesis 16 predicted the mediating effect of task-related uncertainty in the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomers’ information seeking behavior. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.235 with no zero value lying between the lower (0.079) and upper (0.045) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that TRU mediates (explains the relationship) between CCA and newcomer’s ISB is supported.

TABLE 4.18: Mediation (H16)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
CCA → TRU → ISB	0.235	0.079	0.045	0.120

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SCA = Coworker Communication Apprehension, TRU =Task-related Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior.

**H17: Social uncertainty mediates the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomer’s information seeking behavior.**

Hypothesis 17 predicted the mediating effect of social uncertainty in the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomers’ information seeking behavior. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.101 with no zero value

lying between the lower (0.049) and upper (0.155) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that SU mediates (explains the relationship) between SCA and newcomer's information seeking behavior is supported.

TABLE 4.19: Mediation (H17)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SCA → SU → ISB	0.316	0.101	0.049	0.155

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SCA = Supervisory Communication Apprehension, SU =Social Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior

**H18: Social uncertainty mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior.**

Hypothesis 18 predicted the mediating effect of social uncertainty in the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomers' information seeking behavior. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.108 with no zero value lying between the lower (0.063) and upper (0.160) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that SU mediates (explains the relationship) between CCA and newcomer's information seeking behavior is supported.

TABLE 4.20: Mediation (H18)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
CCA → SU → ISB	0.205	0.108	0.063	0.160

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; CCA = Coworker Communication Apprehension, SU =Social Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior

**H19: Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor.**

Hypothesis 19 predicted the mediating effect of interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. The indirect effect turned out to be -0.036 with no zero value lying between the lower (-0.078) and upper (-0.010) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor mediates (explains the relationship) between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor is supported.

TABLE 4.21: Mediation (H19)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SU → IAS → FWS	0.202	-0.036	-0.078	-0.01

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SU = social uncertainty, IAS = interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor, FWS =familiarity with supervisor

**H20: Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker.**

Hypothesis 20 predicted the mediating effect of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker. The indirect effect turned out to be -0.168 with no zero value lying between the lower (-0.529) and upper (0.009) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates (explains the relationship) between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker is not supported.

TABLE 4.22: Mediation (H20)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SU → IAC → FWC	0.004	-0.168	-0.529	0.009
	P > 0.05	P > 0.05		

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SU = social uncertainty, IAC = interpersonal attractiveness of coworker, FWC =familiarity with coworker

**H21: Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor.**

Hypothesis 21 predicted the mediating effect of information seeking behavior in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.022 with a zero value lying between the lower (-0.254) and upper (0.074) boot limits. Hence, the hypothesis that newcomer information seeking behavior mediates (explains the relationship) between SU and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor is not supported.

TABLE 4.23: Mediation (H21)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SU → ISB → FWS	0.143	0.022	-0.254	0.074
	P > 0.05			

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SU =Social Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior, FWS = Familiarity with Supervisor

**H22: Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer's familiarity with coworkers.**

Hypothesis 22 predicted the mediating effect of information seeking behavior in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.072 with no zero value lying between the lower (0.027) and upper (0.126) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates (explains the relationship) between SU and newcomer's familiarity with coworkers is supported.

TABLE 4.24: Mediation (H22)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SU → ISB → FWC	-0.085	0.072	0.027	0.126
	P > 0.05			



Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SU =Social Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior, FWC= Familiarity with Coworker.

**H23: Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomers' acculturation.**

Hypothesis 23 predicted the mediating effect of information seeking behavior in the relationship between social uncertainty and acculturation. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.007 with a zero value lying between the lower (-0.058) and upper (0.064) boot limits. Hence, the hypothesis that information seeking behavior mediates (explains the relationship) between SU and newcomers' acculturation is not supported.

TABLE 4.25: Mediation (H23)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
SU → ISB → ACC	0.069	0.007	-0.058	0.064
	P > 0.05	P > 0.05		

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; SU =Social Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior, ACC = Acculturation

**H24: Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer's role negotiation.**

Hypothesis 24 predicted the mediating effect of information seeking behavior in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and role negotiation. The indirect effect turned out to be 0.084 with no zero value lying between the lower (0.034) and upper (0.149) boot limits. Hence the hypothesis that information seeking behavior mediates (explains the relationship) between TRU and newcomer's role negotiation is supported.

TABLE 4.26: Mediation (H24)

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
TRU → ISB → RN	-0.038	0.084	0.034	0.149
	P > 0.05			

Note: Bootstrap sample size 5000. LL= lower limit; CI = confidence interval; UL = upper limit; TRU =Task-related Uncertainty, ISB = Information Seeking Behavior, RN = Role Negotiation

**H25: Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.**

Hypothesis 25 predicted the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking behavior. The value of interaction term turned out to be significant ( $\beta = 0.191$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Hence the hypothesis is supported which stated that uncertainty avoidance moderates (strengthens the relationship) between social uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.

TABLE 4.27: Moderation of Social Uncertainty between Task-related Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior

Structural Paths	Coefficients	P-value
SU → ISB	0.189	0
UA → ISB	0.071	P > 0.05
Interaction	0.191	P < 0.05

SU = social uncertainty, ISB = information seeking behavior, UA = uncertainty avoidance.

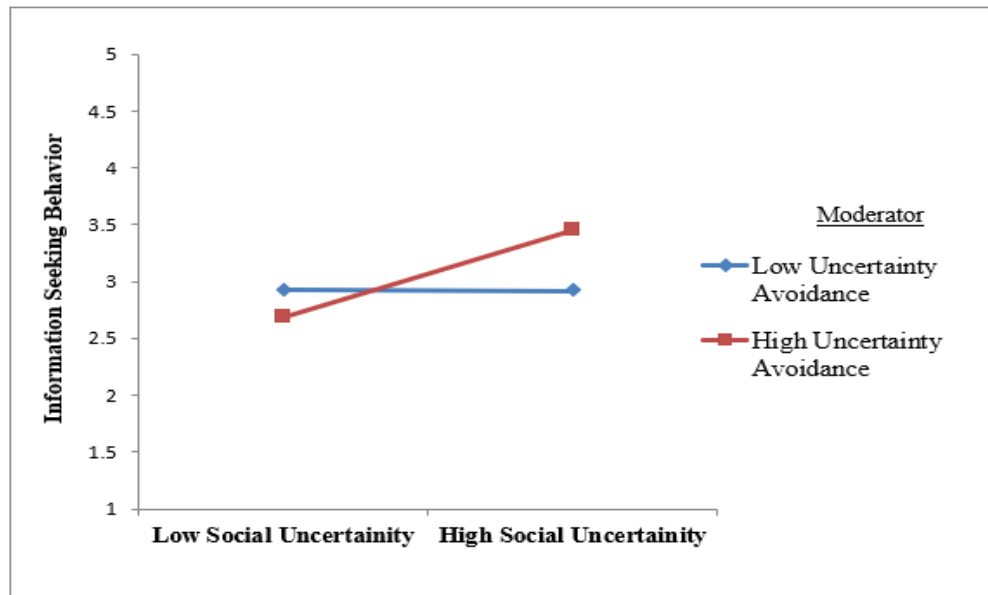


FIGURE 4.1: Interaction Graph

**H26: Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.**

Hypothesis 26 predicted the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior. The value of interaction term did not turn out to be significant ( $\beta = -0.086$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Hence the hypothesis has not been supported which stated that uncertainty avoidance moderates (strengthens the relationship) between task-related uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.

TABLE 4.28: Moderation of Task-related Uncertainty between Task-related Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior

Structural Paths	Coefficients	P-value
TRU $\rightarrow$ ISB	0.03	$P > 0.05$
UA $\rightarrow$ ISB	0.071	$P > 0.05$
Interaction	-0.086	$P > 0.05$

TRU = Task-related uncertainty, ISB = information seeking behavior, UA = uncertainty avoidance,

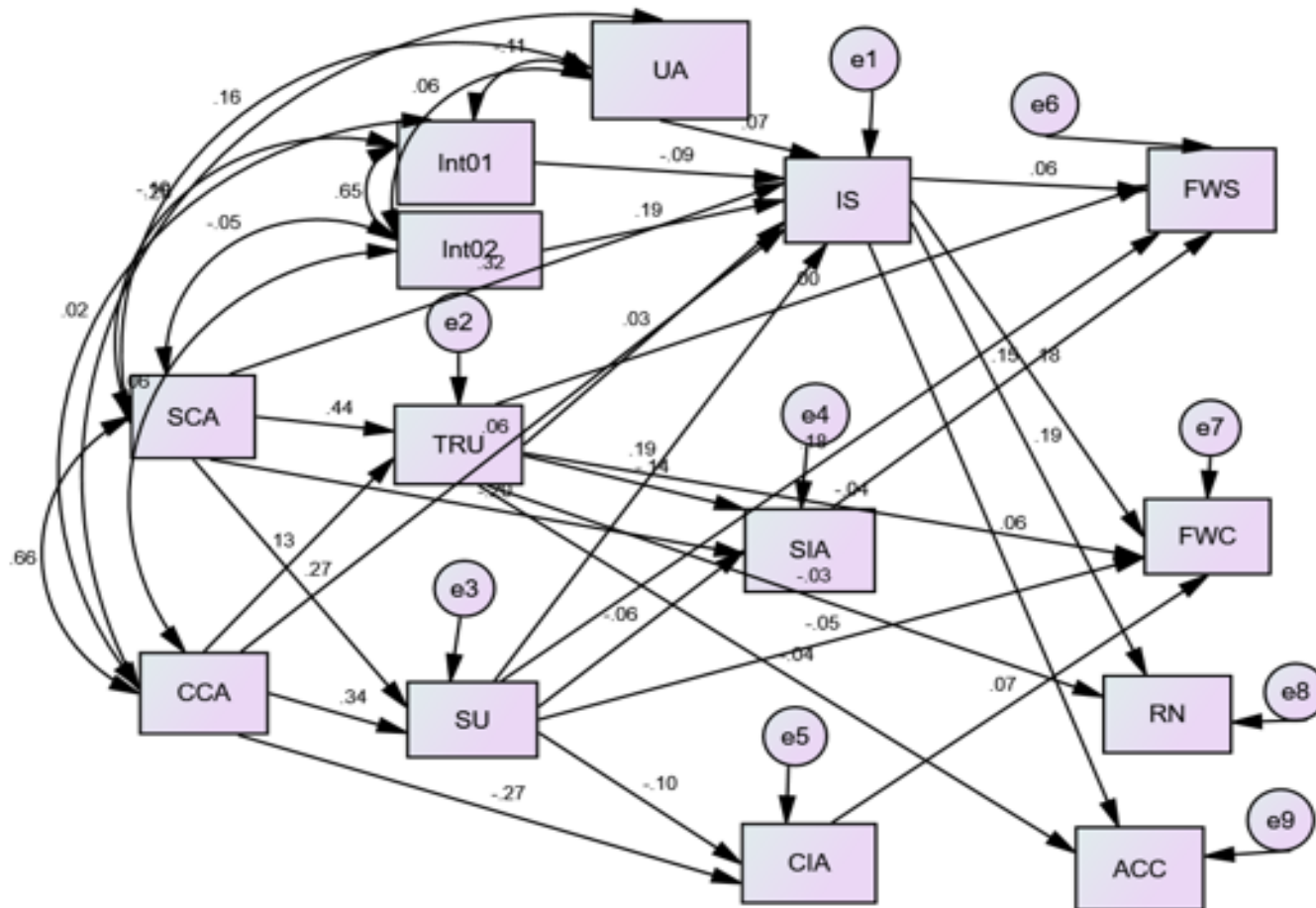


FIGURE 4.2: Path Diagram

TABLE 4.29: Structural Equation Modeling Results

	<b>Paths</b>	<b>Unstandardized <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>H1</b>	SCA $\rightarrow$ TRU	0.625	0.08	0.00	Supported
<b>H2</b>	SCA $\rightarrow$ SU	0.413	0.09	0.00	Supported
<b>H3</b>	CCA $\rightarrow$ TRU	0.16	0.07	0.030	Supported
<b>H4</b>	CCA $\rightarrow$ SU	0.45	0.08	0.00	Supported
<b>H5</b>	TRU $\rightarrow$ ISB	0.018	0.03	0.59	Not Supported
<b>H6</b>	SU $\rightarrow$ ISB	0.10	0.03	0.00	Supported
<b>H7</b>	SU $\rightarrow$ IAS	-0.08	0.08	0.33	Not Supported
<b>H8</b>	SU $\rightarrow$ IAC	-0.14	0.08	0.10	Not Supported
<b>H9</b>	ISB $\rightarrow$ FWS	0.10	0.10	0.35	Not Supported
<b>H10</b>	ISB $\rightarrow$ FWC	0.31	0.10	0.00	Supported
<b>H11</b>	ISB $\rightarrow$ RN	0.31	0.10	0.00	Supported
<b>H12</b>	ISB $\rightarrow$ ACC	0.11	0.10	0.297	Not Supported
<b>H13</b>	IAS $\rightarrow$ FWS	0.10	0.04	0.008	Supported
<b>H14</b>	IAC $\rightarrow$ FWC	0.04	0.03	0.213	Not Supported

Continued Table: 4.29 Structural Equation Modeling Results Structural Equation Modeling Results

Paths	Unstandardized $\beta$		SE	p		Decision
	Direct effect	Indirect Effect	LLCI	ULCI		
<b>H15</b> SCA → TRU → ISB	0.34		0.07	0.026	0.136	Supported
<b>H16</b> CCA → TRU → ISB	0.23		0.07	0.045	0.12	Supported
<b>H17</b> SCA → SU → ISB	0.31		0.1	0.049	0.155	Supported
<b>H18</b> CCA → SU → ISB	0.2		0.1	0.063	0.16	Supported
<b>H19</b> SU → IAS → FWS	0.2		-0.03	-0.78	-0.01	Supported
<b>H20</b> SU → IAC → FWC	0.004		-0.168	-0.529	0.009	Not Supported
<b>H21</b> SU → ISB → FWS	0.143		0.022	-0.254	0.074	Not Supported
<b>H22</b> SU → ISB → FWC	-0.085		0.072	0.027	0.126	Supported
<b>H23</b> SU → ISB → ACC	0.069		0.007	-0.058	0.064	Not Supported
<b>H24</b> TRU → ISB → RN	-0.038		0.084	0.034	0.149	Supported
	Unstandardized $\beta$			p		
<b>H25</b> SU * UA → ISB	0.191				<0.05	Supported
<b>H26</b> TRU * UA → ISB	-0.086				>0.05	Not Supported

## 4.5 Summary of Hypotheses Supported/Not Supported

Hypotheses	Statements	Results
H1	SCA positively influences newcomers' TRU	<b>Supported</b>
H2	SCA positively influences Newcomers' SU	<b>Supported</b>
H3	CCA positively influences Newcomers' TRU	<b>Supported</b>
H4	CCA positively influences Newcomers' SU	<b>Supported</b>
H5	TRU positively influences newcomers' ISB	Not Supported
H6	SU positively influences newcomers' ISB	<b>Supported</b>
H7	Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences supervisory interpersonal attractiveness	Not Supported
H8	Newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness	<b>Not Supported</b>
H9	Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with supervisor	Not Supported
H10	Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with coworkers	<b>Supported</b>
H11	Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences role negotiation	<b>Supported</b>
H12	Newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences acculturation	<b>Not Supported</b>
H13	Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor positively influences newcomers' familiarity with supervisor	<b>Supported</b>
H14	Interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers positively influences newcomers' familiarity with coworkers	Not Supported

<b>H15</b>	Task-related uncertainty mediates the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H16</b>	Task-related uncertainty mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H17</b>	Social uncertainty mediates the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H18</b>	Social uncertainty mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H19</b>	Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H20</b>	Interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker	Not Supported
<b>H21</b>	Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor	Not Supported
<b>H22</b>	Newcomer Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer's familiarity with coworkers	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H23</b>	Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomers' acculturation	Not Supported



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<b>H24</b>	Information seeking behavior mediates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer's role negotiation	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H25</b>	Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H26</b>	Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking, such that in a culture high on uncertainty avoidance, newcomers will be more involved in information seeking activities and vice-versa.	<b>Not Supported</b>

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**Total Hypotheses: 26**

**Supported: 16**

**Not supported: 10**

# Chapter 5

## Discussion

The chapter gives a conclusive touch to the study, delineating its findings based on theoretical and logical reasoning. It also covers the theoretical and practical implications of the study together with potential limitations and future research directions. The study was based on hypothesis-testing and the key objective was to investigate the relationships between study variables. A discussion of the study results obtained by performing statistical results are discussed below.

### 5.1 Hypotheses Pertaining to Communication Apprehension and Newcomers' Experienced Uncertainty

The hypotheses pertaining to supervisory communication apprehension and uncertainty were H1 and H2. Hypothesis 1 stated that SCA positively influences newcomers' TRU. Similarly, H2 stated that SCA positively influences Newcomers' SU. According to the results, both the hypotheses have been supported.

The study took supervisory and coworker source as the two most important sources of communication that can make a newcomer well-informed about the practices of the organization, its culture, role requirements, important aspects of job and the necessary help to adjust and socialize in the organization. Supervisory communication apprehension was hypothesized to increase the level of uncertainty

experienced by newcomers. Context communication apprehension was taken as the predictor of uncertainty both task-related and social. Context communication apprehension in work settings takes place under four theoretically unique but not necessarily mutually exclusive contexts which are interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions. As discussed earlier, uncertainty at work can occur both in the form of task-related and social uncertainty. The hypothesis that supervisory communication apprehension increases uncertainty has been supported which shows that SCA is a significant predictor of uncertainty in work settings. Task-related uncertainty is a condition when individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (Keith et al., 2017; Kramer, 2015).

Hence, task-related uncertainty depicts a condition where employees feel lack of understanding with respect to their job responsibilities and the linkage of their work with other organizational activities. Task-related uncertainty which is also termed as job-related uncertainty or simply task uncertainty work as a handicap for employees to understand their job requirements and expectations (Bordia et al., 2004). As per (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010), social or relational uncertainty refers to a state of ambiguity an individual experience regarding the status of relationship and the associated perceptions. This implies that such uncertainty exists when an individual is uncertain about the current and future standing of the relationship.

The relationship of supervisory communication apprehension and uncertainty (task-related and social) has been examined in the study. The study empirically established a positive relationship between SCA and uncertainty. It depicts that newcomers experience task-related and social uncertainty in case of apprehensive supervisors in the contexts of interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions. This implies that supervisory communication apprehension can become a hurdle for newcomers with regards to gaining clarity in task-related and social issues at work. Therefore, apprehensive supervisors are a source of uncertainty to newcomers which can be a problem for both the newcomers and the organization. The hypotheses pertaining to coworker communication apprehension and uncertainty were H3 and H4. Hypothesis 3 stated that

CCA positively influences Newcomers' TRU. Hypothesis 4 stated that CCA positively influences Newcomers' SU. According to the results, both the hypotheses have been supported.

In the study, along with supervisory source, coworker source was taken as the most important communication source for newcomers. Similar to supervisory communication apprehension, coworker communication apprehension was also hypothesized to positively affect newcomers' experienced uncertainty. Coworker communication apprehension was taken in the contexts of work i.e. interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions. The study empirically established a positive relationship between CCA and newcomers' experienced uncertainty (task-related and social). This implies that the higher the level of CCA, the higher will be the uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Task-related and social uncertainty have been discussed in the discussion of hypothesis 1 and 2. The study findings confirmed that apprehensive coworkers are a practical source of uncertainty for newcomers. If the coworkers are apprehensive (in interpersonal communication, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions), it is difficult for newcomers to understand the task, responsibilities and social dynamics of the relationship. Apprehensive coworkers can become a hurdle for newcomers in understanding their roles and hence may lead to reduced productivity. Similarly, in case of apprehensive coworkers, it becomes difficult for newcomers understand the social fabric of organization.

Past studies have highlighted the importance and benefits of competent communicators and effective communication at work. Communication competence which is characterized as the appropriateness and effectiveness of communication in contexts like that of work gets affected by inadequate skills (situational awareness, interaction management, message production, listening) of the communicator (Titsworth & Okamoto, 2017). Specifically, communication competence which is defined as the effectiveness and appropriateness of communication in specific communication contexts like that of workplace (Titsworth & Okamoto, 2017) has been studied with regards to work outcomes. Here, we argue that it is equally important to watch for negative communication behaviors that can affect work outcomes. Therefore, the study findings are unique in this way that it highlights the role of negative

communication behaviors of supervisors and coworker with respect to uncertainty experienced by newcomers.

## **5.2 Hypotheses Pertaining to Newcomer Experienced Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior**

The hypotheses pertaining to newcomer experienced uncertainty and their subsequent information seeking behavior were H5 and H6. H5 stated that TRU positively influences newcomers' ISB. H6 stated that SU positively influences newcomers' ISB. Based on the study results, we did not find support for, H5 while found support for while H6.

The hypothesis that predicted a significant relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior has not been supported. It was based on uncertainty reduction theory, that while newcomer experience task-related uncertainty, they are likely to engage in information seeking behaviors. As mentioned earlier, task-related uncertainty or job-related uncertainty or simply task uncertainty work as a handicap for employees to understand their job requirements and expectations ([Bordia et al., 2004](#)). Next, we attempt to find the possible reasons to explain the unsupported hypothesis. Mainly, the study was conducted amongst the newcomers working in Pakistan. One reason behind the unsupported hypothesis may be that Pakistan represents a collectivist culture ([Kashif, Ramayah, & Sarifuddin, 2016](#)). People are more concerned with their social circle and relationships in a collectivist culture ([de Melo & Giavoni, 2010](#)). Therefore, it is plausible that in case of task-related uncertainty, the broader focus is upon the tasks and responsibilities, but it is unlikely to affect the social relationships of newcomers at work. That is why, newcomers do not get engaged in information seeking behavior when faced with task-related uncertainty.

Secondly, power distance can be a reason of newcomers' non-engagement in information seeking behavior. Pakistan represents a culture with relatively high power distance with respect to work settings, because Pakistan has a profound impact of

the colonial era (Islam, 2004). Power distance is the degree of inequality among people which the population of a country considers normal or to the extent a society accepts the unequal distribution of power. In a culture of high power distance, superiors keep their subordinates at a distance. Moreover, in a culture of high power distance, superiors and subordinates are not considered equal, subordinates accept discipline, while respect for authority and status is high (Carl, Gupta, & Javidan, 2004; Wasti, Tan, Brower, & Önder, 2007). This is why, newcomers may not engage in information seeking behavior when faced with uncertainty. Power distance can be a hindrance toward information seeking behavior and newcomers may get reluctant to seek the requisite information.

Thirdly, research suggests that there is a cost of information seeking and individuals not always actively engage in information seeking. Research indicates that the use of information seeking tactics is highly associated with the social cost i.e. linked with the social image of the information seeker (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Miller & Jablin, 1991). This implies that individuals not always choose to seek information when faced with uncertainty and they generally weigh the benefits of information seeking against its cost. Some individuals are more concerned with their image than the needed information and they decide not to seek information actively. If they feel that the acquisition of information will lead to negatively affect their reputation, for example they may think that they will be considered incompetent if they seek information. Specifically, impression management motives come into play while individuals decide to seek or avoid information (Kramer et al., 2013).

We contend that newcomers with high impression management motives are likely to engage less in information seeking behaviors to secure their image of a cooperative, polite worker and a good citizen as highlighted by the literature. Moreover, they may try to secure a positive image in the eyes of their supervisor and other organizational members with the use of praise, showing interest in their personal life, giving them personal favors and complimenting them for their dressing and appearance. Therefore, newcomers high on impression management are likely to avoid information seeking under the conditions of uncertainty which they feel may portray their negative image in the eyes of others. Hypothesis 6 stated that social

uncertainty and newcomers' information seeking behavior are positively related with each other. As mentioned earlier, social or relational uncertainty refers to a state of ambiguity an individual experience regarding the status of relationship and the associated perceptions (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010). This means that if newcomers experience social uncertainty i.e they feel that they are in a state of ambiguity regarding their relationships, they chose to engage in information seeking behavior. Uncertainty reduction theory posits that uncertainty leads to information seeking behavior (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Moreover, Gottlieb et al. (2013) accentuated that information seeking is primarily motivated by a desire to reduce uncertainty. The primary motive to seek information is to reduce uncertainty. Here, social uncertainty may exist if, a) newcomers are unable to understand as to how to relate with other organizational members, b) they feel ambiguity in interacting with their supervisors and coworkers c) find it difficult to get along with other organizational members. The study results support that newcomers opt to engage in information seeking behavior when they experience social uncertainty. Importance of information seeking to reduce uncertainty and establishing the relationship between uncertainty and information seeking ((Gruman et al., 2006; T.-Y. Kim & Kim, 2013; Xu & HEE-WOONg, 2011). Specifically, (Benzinger, 2016; Bauer et al., 2007) demonstrated that in case of social uncertainty (SU), the information seeking of newcomers will be increased. Therefore, the result of hypothesis 6 are consistent with the existing literature.

### **5.3 Hypotheses Pertaining to Newcomer Experienced Uncertainty and Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor and Coworkers**

The hypotheses pertaining to newcomer experienced uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and coworkers were H7 and H8. H7 stated that newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences supervisory interpersonal attractiveness while H8 stated that newcomer experienced social uncertainty negatively influences coworkers' interpersonal attractiveness .

Both hypothesis 7 and 8 have not been supported with study results i.e. we did not find a significant relationship between social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor/coworker. Uncertainty reduction theory emphasizes that uncertainty leads to reduced interpersonal attractiveness of the source of such uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Additionally, under uncertainty, the individuals who experience uncertainty may develop a feeling of reduced association with the person who is the source of uncertainty (Kramer, 1999).

Therefore, we hypothesized that in case of social uncertainty arising from supervisory source, it is likely that the interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors/coworkers will be reduced in the eyes of newcomers. As discussed earlier, interpersonal attractiveness refers to one's attachment with his/her communication partner and also known as likeability. Interpersonal attraction is "commonly thought of as a positive emotional evaluation of another person (i.e., an affective evaluation), and it is often operationalized behaviorally (e.g., degree of affiliation, proximity of chair placement) or cognitively e.g., assessment of traits/ attributes" (Montoya & Horton, 2014).

The hypothesis did not get empirical support, which can be explained below. First, it can be viewed from the angle of cultural dimension of collectivism. Pakistan represents a culture of collectivism (Kashif et al., 2016). In a collectivist society, the group an individual belongs to have vital importance to him/her. We argue that the individuals in a collectivist society are more concerned with the group they belong to i.e. the whole of the organization including their supervisor, coworkers and other organizational members. They may view their supervisors from the angle of superior-subordinate relationship and supervisory interpersonal attractiveness may not be linked with the social uncertainty initiated by them. Therefore, they may feel that it is not as important for their supervisors to properly make relationship rules etc. Next, it can also be linked with power distance dimension of culture. As Pakistan represents a culture with relatively high power distance, it is likely that newcomers do not accept a close relationship with supervisor as in a culture of high power distance, superiors and subordinates are not considered equal, subordinates accept discipline, while respect for authority and status is high (Carl et al., 2004; Wasti et al., 2007). Therefore, interpersonal attractiveness of



supervisor is not likely to get influenced by an informal social relationship with the supervisor. Moreover, in a collectivist orientation the attraction of coworkers may not necessarily be linked with social uncertainty and other factors may influence such a relationship.

Next, the literature suggests that interpersonal attractiveness is linked with age, gender, interest and similarity. There is a positive relationship between newcomer-supervisor/coworker interpersonal attractiveness and relationships on the bases of the match that exists between them (Bakar & McCann, 2014; Lankau, Riordan, & Thomas, 2005). For example, Schaubroeck and Lam (2002) demonstrated that subordinates find more interpersonal attraction in supervisors whose personalities they find similar to that of their own.

Likewise, Strauss et al. (2001) advocated a positive relationship between supervisor-subordinate similarity and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors. This implies that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and coworker may be influenced by many other factors including the demographic characteristics, personality similarity and interest-matching of the newcomer and supervisor/coworker. Therefore, we did not find empirical support between social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisors/coworker in the work settings of Pakistan.

## **5.4 Hypotheses Pertaining to Information Seeking Behavior and Familiarity with Supervisor/Coworkers**

Hypotheses Pertaining to information seeking behavior and familiarity with supervisor/coworker were H9 and H10. Hypothesis 9 stated that newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with supervisor. Hypothesis 10 stated that newcomer information seeking behavior positively influences familiarity with coworkers.

Hypothesis 9 has not been supported with study results as we did not find a significant relationship between newcomer information seeking behavior and their

familiarity with supervisor. We took familiarity with supervisor as a relationship outcome in the study. The result of this hypothesis can be explained below. As discussed earlier, Pakistani society is characterized with high power distance where superiors and subordinates are not considered equal, subordinates accept discipline, while respect for authority and status is high (Carl et al., 2004; Wasti et al., 2007). This indicate that in Pakistani work settings, subordinates normally accept the authority and they do not have a strong desire to familiarize them with their supervisors. In other words, they consider it normal to keep at a distance with their superiors and do not intend to have frequent interactions and discussions with them.

As discussed earlier, the desire to interact with the supervisor may get higher when there exists similarity between a newcomer and the supervisor, which may increase with the passage of time. This shows that information seeking is not enough to gain familiarity, but demographic/personality similarity and interest-matching can also play their role here. This can also be explained from the angle of uncertainty reduction theory, which emphasizes that relationship status gets stronger with the passage of time (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Hence, it is expected that familiarity with supervisor may get increased with the passage of time and newcomers may get greater familiarity as their tenure with the organization increases.

Hypothesis 10 stated that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with familiarity with coworkers. This hypothesis has been supported with study results. It was hypothesized that newcomer information seeking behavior would lead to familiarity with coworkers. This was hypothesized in the light of uncertainty reduction theory, which explains that relationship outcomes can be enhanced by information seeking behavior. A positive relationship between newcomer information seeking behavior and familiarity with coworkers implies that, while newcomers seek information, they start befriending their coworkers, feel comfortable while talking to them and know them better. Familiarity with coworker has emerged as an outcome of information seeking behavior in line with uncertainty reduction theory. Moreover, a stream of research maintains that information seeking behavior leads to positive outcomes including role clarity, socialization, learning and adjustment (Anseel et al., 2015; Brown et al., 2001; Crant

& Bateman, 2000; De Vos et al., 2005; Saks & Gruman, 2018; J. P. Thomas et al., 2010; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000; Yang & Ariel, 2014). The study results extend the work of the said researchers as it has brought forward another outcome of information seeking behavior in the form of familiarity with coworkers in line with uncertainty reduction theory. Another reason of gaining familiarity with coworkers may be, that newcomers are likely to spend more time with their coworkers and information seeking generally gets increased, which may lead to enhanced role-related outcomes in the form of familiarity with coworkers. Moreover, being the members of a collectivist society, newcomers need to create ingroup harmony by seeking information about their coworker, which may result in increased familiarity.

## **5.5 Hypothesis Pertaining to Newcomer Information Seeking and Role Negotiation**

Hypothesis pertaining to newcomer information seeking behavior and role negotiation stated that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with role negotiation. The hypothesis has been supported with study results. Role negotiation was taken as role-related outcome in the study. Role negotiation refers the extent to which employees individualize and tailor their responsibilities according to their skill set and convenience (Gailliard et al., 2010). It was hypothesized that role negotiation will be higher when newcomers get engaged in information seeking behavior. Newcomers can be in a better position to attain positive role outcomes when they have the requisite information pertaining the role to be performed and their role requirements. Because every role has certain associated responsibilities and expectations, it is of prime importance that employees clearly understand their work roles and remain able to meet the role requirements (Diefendorff et al., 2006; Folger, 1993). Information seeking is specifically important for newcomers because they are in the process of acquiring new roles (Barrett, 2018; N. Li et al., 2011). The study results support the idea that information seeking can enhance the role negotiation of newcomers. With the requisite information about their roles, job procedures and work problems, newcomers

can slightly change some aspects of their jobs as per their skill set and convenience. The result of the hypothesis is consistent with the notion that information seeking is particularly important for newcomers because they are in the process of acquiring new roles (Barrett, 2018; N. Li et al., 2011). Moreover, the findings are consistent with other scholarly work which demonstrates the importance of newcomer information seeking behavior in acquiring role-related information and its implications (Bauer et al., 2007; Miller & Jablin, 1991).

## **5.6 Hypothesis Pertaining to Newcomer Information Seeking behavior and Acculturation**

Hypothesis pertaining to newcomer information seeking and acculturation stated that newcomer information seeking behavior is positively related with acculturation. The hypothesis has not been supported with study results. In the study, acculturation was taken as adjustment outcome of newcomers. Acculturation is explained as the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate in it, which is often used to measure newcomer adjustment and socialization (Hsiung & Hsieh, 2003; Li et al., 2011). It was hypothesized that newcomer information seeking will increase the level of their acculturation, however we did not find empirical support for the hypothesis. We explain it.

Although information seeking is an important element of various outcomes concerning newcomers (De Vos & Freese, 2011; Fonner & Timmerman, 2009; Zou et al., 2015), it appears that alone it is not enough to cause acculturation of newcomers. The concept of integration into organizational culture is also studied as newcomer socialization. Since, acculturation represents a newcomer's integration into organizational culture, it is likely that alongside information seeking it depends upon many other factors as well. For example, research demonstrates the importance of supervisory support and undermining in newcomer socialization outcomes (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Job standardization also has a role to play in newcomer acculturation (Hsiung & Hsieh,

2003). Moreover, newcomer socialization largely depends upon the socialization tactics used by them (Cable & Parsons, 2001). Newcomer socialization also gets affected with social network ties they keep and maintain (Morrison, 2002). This shows that many variables influence newcomer socialization including supervisory support and negative behavior, job standardization, socialization tactics and social networks. The above discussion manifest that although information seeking is important in newcomer socialization, yet it gets affected with other variables as well.

## **5.7 Hypotheses Pertaining to Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor/Coworker and Familiarity with Supervisor/Coworker**

Two hypotheses were formulated pertaining to interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor/coworker and familiarity with supervisor/coworker. Hypothesis 13 stated that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor positively influences newcomers' familiarity with supervisor. While hypothesis 14 stated that interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers positively influences newcomers' familiarity with coworkers.

The hypothesis that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor is positively related with newcomers' familiarity with supervisor has been supported with study results. The hypothesis was based on uncertainty reduction theory, which posits that interpersonal attractiveness of communicating partners lead to improved relationship outcomes. In the study, familiarity with supervisor has been taken as a relationship outcome. This shows that the higher the level of interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor, the higher will the familiarity with supervisor and vice versa. Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor reflects a newcomer's willingness to meet more frequently, looking forward to work together and a desire to know more about the supervisor. The result is consistent with the studies that link the interpersonal attractiveness and level of familiarity (Strauss et al., 2001; Van Vianen et al., 2011). This implies that a higher level of interpersonal attractiveness pushes newcomer towards achieving a higher level of familiarity which is reflected

in the form of having more frequent interactions, discussions and knowledge about the supervisor. Furthermore, it can be viewed from the angle of power distance. It is plausible to state that in power distance settings like that of Pakistan, newcomers get familiar with their supervisors only if they find them interpersonally attractive.

Similarly, the hypothesis pertaining to interpersonal attractiveness of coworker and familiarity with coworker stated that interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers is positively related with newcomers' familiarity with coworkers. This hypothesis has not been supported with study results. It was hypothesized in line with uncertainty reduction theory, that newcomers will get more familiar with their coworkers if they are interpersonally attractive for them, as coworkers are the most important communication partners of newcomers. However, the study results did not support this notion. This is explained below.

In work settings, interpersonal attractiveness is commonly conceptualized as a positive evaluation of another individual, attaching positive attributes and keeping closer to him/her ([Montoya & Horton, 2014](#)). Pakistani society represents a culture of collectivism, which focuses on having group harmony. We argue that in a culture of collectivism, a desire to gain familiarity with coworker may not necessarily be initiated by interpersonal attractiveness, rather it is a common occurrence regardless of a coworker's interpersonal attractiveness. In collectivist societies, conformity with group norms is already there and coworkers are concerned in getting to know about each other ([Jetten, Postmes, & McAuliffe, 2002](#)).

Conformity with group norms generally lead individuals to act in a way that is acceptable to the group, therefore, other outcomes including the relationship outcomes mostly rely on it. It is plausible that gaining familiarity with coworkers is a group goal in collectivist societies, therefore it may exist irrespective of the fact that the coworkers is interpersonally attractive to newcomers or not. This may be why interpersonal attractiveness did not turn out as a significant predictor of familiarity with coworker. Another explanation of this result is the maintenance contribution that exists in collectivist cultures. In a collectivist culture, the members of group are evaluated more positively on the basis of maintenance contribution i.e. a person's contribution to relationships in a team ([Gomez, Kirkman,](#)

& Shapiro, 2000). Maintenance inputs, such as demonstrating encouragement and resolving conflicts, are critical for promoting harmony, and it is these inputs (rather than task inputs) that collectivists generally value more than individualists (Hook, Worthington Jr, & Utsey, 2009). Collectivists' actions depend upon social networks which are based on reciprocity and trust and that facilitate cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit (Realo & Allik, 2009). Therefore, it is probable that in order to have a desire of getting more familiarity with others, newcomers might expect their coworkers to be high on maintenance contribution and vice versa.

## **5.8 Hypotheses Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Task-Related Uncertainty between Supervisory/Coworker Communication Apprehension and Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior**

Two hypotheses were formulated to test the mediation of task-related uncertainty in the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. Hypothesis 15 stated that task-related uncertainty (TRU) mediates the relationship between supervisory communication apprehension (SCA) and newcomer information seeking behavior (ISB). While hypothesis 16 stated that task-related uncertainty (TRU) mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension (CCA) and newcomer information seeking behavior (ISB). The study results supported both the hypotheses.

As discussed earlier, uncertainty can be reduced by getting engaged in information seeking behaviors as per uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Using uncertainty reduction theory as the overarching framework, the study took social and task-related uncertainty (two major types of uncertainty arising from supervisory and coworker communication apprehension) as mediators

between supervisor's/coworker communication apprehension and newcomers' information seeking behaviors. The support found for the mediating effect of TRU in the said relationship is the manifestation of the fact that TRU represents the path from SCA to newcomer ISB. Likewise, TRU also turned out to mediate between CCA to newcomer ISB, representing a path between the two.

The results demonstrate that, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension both play their role in causing task-related uncertainty, which was conceptualized as a condition where individuals are unable to clearly understand work standards, role requirements and performance expectations (Keith et al., 2017; Kramer, 2015). This implies that newcomers start experiencing task-related uncertainty in case the supervisors and coworkers are apprehensive in communicating with respect to communication contexts at work i.e. interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions. For example, some scenarios of supervisory communication apprehension are when: the supervisor dislikes participating in group discussions, looks tense and nervous while participating in group discussions, looks afraid to express him/herself at meetings, communicating at meetings usually makes him/her uncomfortable, he/she looks afraid to speak up in conversations, he/she gets confused and jumbled when giving a presentation, he/she looks very tense and rigid while giving a presentation. When the supervisor expresses apprehension while communicating, it leads to task-related uncertainty of newcomer.

Under the conditions of task-related uncertainty, the newcomers chose to engage in information seeking behavior, and thereby reduce their uncertainty. In an attempt to reduce the uncertainty, newcomers may seek information regarding job related topic, procedures for work completion, methods to handle job problems, work priorities and usage of equipment and material etc. The same applies to coworker communication apprehension and its relationship with task-related uncertainty and subsequent information seeking behavior. The study data supports that task-related uncertainty mediates the relationship between SCA/CCA and newcomer information seeking behavior. Thus task-related uncertainty has been established as a mediator in the said relationship. The results are comparable to the studies which highlight the importance of organizational communication



and uncertainty. For example, see the work of (Harvey & Harris, 2010; Kramer, 2014; Kramer et al., 2013; Johlke & Duhan, 2000, 2001). At the same time, the results are compatible with the work that emphasizes the relationship between uncertainty and information seeking behavior at work, see for example, (Anseel et al., 2013; De Vos & Freese, 2011; Morrison, 2002a; Sias, 2005). However, the mediating role of task-related uncertainty that has been found in the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior is unique to this study.

## **5.9 Hypotheses Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Social Uncertainty between Supervisory/- Coworker Communication Apprehension and Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior**

Two hypotheses were formulated to test the mediation of social uncertainty in the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. Hypothesis 17 stated that social uncertainty mediates the relationship supervisory communication apprehension between newcomer's information seeking behavior. Hypothesis 18 stated that social uncertainty mediates the relationship between coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's information seeking behavior. The study results supported both the hypotheses.

The results demonstrate that, supervisory and coworker communication apprehension both play their role in causing social uncertainty, which was conceptualized as the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship with others and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings. It affects an individual's level of confidence regarding, how to relate, interact and get along with organizational members. This implies that newcomers start experiencing social uncertainty in case the supervisors and coworkers are apprehensive in communing with respect to various communication contexts at work. For example, some scenarios of supervisory/coworker communication apprehension are

when: the supervisor/coworker looks tense and nervous while participating in a conversation with a newcomer, seems to have fear of speaking up in conversations, looks afraid to speak up in conversations. When the supervisor expresses apprehension while communicating, it leads to social uncertainty of newcomer. Under the conditions of social uncertainty, the newcomers chose to engage in information seeking behavior, and thereby reduce their uncertainty. This applies equally to supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and its relationship with social uncertainty and subsequent information seeking behavior. The study data supports that social uncertainty mediates the relationship between SCA/CCA and newcomer information seeking behavior. Thus alongside task-related uncertainty, social uncertainty has also been established as a mediator in the said relationship. In the study, two mediators were tested in the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. The results are consistent with the work of (Harvey & Harris, 2010; Kramer, 2014; Kramer et al., 2013; Johlke & Duhan, 2000, 2001), that emphasizes the importance of organizational communication and uncertainty. Similarly, the results are also in line with the work of (Anseel et al., 2015; De Vos & Freese, 2011; Morrison, 2002; Sias, 2005) stressing the value of relationship between uncertainty and information seeking behavior at work. However, the mediating role of social uncertainty that has been found in the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior is unique to this study.

## **5.10 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor between Social Uncertainty and Familiarity with Supervisor**

A hypothesis was formulated to test the mediating effect of interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. The study results supported the hypothesis.

Initially, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor was proposed to positively effect social uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Under uncertainty, the individuals who experience uncertainty may develop a feeling of reduced association with the person who is the source of uncertainty (Kramer, 1999). As a result, the individual facing uncertainty may feel disassociated with their supervisors. Uncertainty reduction theory offered the foundation for this relationship, which holds that the interpersonal attractiveness of the communication partners decreases under uncertainty and increases as uncertainty decreases (Berger & Calabrese, 1974) the uncertainty.

Therefore, it was proposed that Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor would lead to social uncertainty of newcomers, which refers as the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship with others and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings.

Following social uncertainty, it was proposed that a relationship outcome i.e. newcomer's familiarity with supervisor will be reduced. In this way, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor, appeared to explain how social uncertainty influences newcomer's familiarity with supervisor. As a result, the individual facing uncertainty may feel disassociated with their supervisors. Uncertainty reduction theory offered the foundation for this relationship. In line with uncertainty reduction theory, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor was hypothesized as the mediating link between social uncertainty and newcomer's familiarity with supervisor (the degree to which individuals feel closeness to their supervisors). The mediation hypothesis has been supported.

The relationship that has been found between social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor is compatible with the work of Kramer et al. (2013), who proposed that uncertainty reduces attractiveness. Additionally, the result with respect to the relationship between interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and subsequent familiarity, the current work is similar to that of (Strauss et al., 2001). Finally, the mediating effect is consistent with uncertainty reduction theory, which explains that uncertainty leads to reduced interpersonal attractiveness and the reduced attractiveness subsequently lead to decrease the strength of

relationship (Berger & Calabrese, 1974).

### **5.11 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker between Social Uncertainty and Familiarity with Coworker**

A hypothesis was formulated to test the mediating effect of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker stating that: interpersonal attractiveness of coworker mediates the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker. The hypothesis has not been supported with study results. It is explained below.

Like interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor, such attractiveness of coworker was also proposed to positively effect social uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Employees experiencing uncertainty are likely to develop a feeling of reduced association with the person who has the source of uncertainty (Kramer, 1999). Based on the footings provided by uncertainty reduction theory, it was proposed that interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor would lead to social uncertainty of newcomers, which refers as the feeling of ambiguity and vagueness regarding the relationship with others and about the social norms and relationship requirements in work settings.

Further it was proposed that a relationship outcome i.e. newcomer's familiarity with coworker will be reduced when experiencing social uncertainty. In this way, interpersonal attractiveness of coworker was expected to explain how social uncertainty influences newcomer's familiarity with coworker. However, interpersonal attractiveness of coworker did not emerge as a mediator in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker.

It is plausible that some other variable/s may act as mediator in the said relationship. Basically, the link between interpersonal attractiveness of coworker

and familiarity with coworker was also not established in the previous hypothesis. This may have caused the mediating effect to be nonsignificant. As discussed earlier that Pakistani society represents a culture of collectivism, which focuses on having group harmony. In a collectivist culture, the desire to gain familiarity with coworker may not necessarily be initiated by interpersonal attractiveness, rather it is a common occurrence regardless of a coworker's interpersonal attractiveness. We argue that, even in the presence of interpersonal attractiveness if conformity with group norms and maintenance contribution are affected negatively, then there is less likelihood that interpersonal attractiveness plays its role in creating familiarity with coworkers. In this way, it is probable that in case of social uncertainty, the feeling of conformity with group norms may decrease regarding the coworker leading to reduced familiarity with coworker. Therefore, feeling of conformity with group norms may mediate the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker. Likewise, under social uncertainty, reduced maintenance contribution of coworker may be perceived by newcomers leading to reduced familiarity with coworker. Hence, in future studies, we propose to test two mediators (perceived conformity with group norms and perceived maintenance contribution) in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker.

## **5.12 Hypotheses Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior between Social Uncertainty and Familiarity with Supervisor**

We formulated a hypothesis to ascertain the mediating role of newcomer information seeking behavior between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. The hypothesis has not been supported with study results. We explain it below. It was conjectured that social uncertainty leads to information seeking behavior of newcomers. The foundation for this relationship was obtained from uncertainty reduction theory, which states that under social uncertainty, information seeking becomes important to reduce uncertainty and gain understanding. Based on

uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1974), it was also proposed that, by seeking information newcomers can enhance their relationship outcome with their supervisor in the form of familiarity with supervisor, which also appears consistent with the work of (Allen et al., 2007). However, we did not find social uncertainty as mediator in the said relationship. As discussed earlier, Pakistan represents a culture of relatively high power distance, which demonstrates the degree of inequality among people which the population of a country considers normal or to the extent a society accepts the unequal distribution of power. Moreover, in a culture of high power distance, superiors and subordinates are not considered equal, subordinates accept discipline, while respect for authority and status is high (Carl et al., 2004; Wasti et al., 2007). In a culture of high power distance like that of Pakistan, it is likely that newcomers do not accept a close relationship with supervisor. Since, superiors and subordinates are not considered equal, subordinates accept discipline, while respect for authority and status is high (Carriere & Bourque, 2009; Wasti et al., 2007). Moreover, it appears that alone information seeking is not sufficient to increase familiarity with supervisor in a culture of power distance. For example, the variables of interest-matching and the matching of demographics may play their role in relationship outcomes with the supervisor as highlighted by (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2002). The above-mentioned reasons may have contributed in not making us able to find the empirical support of information seeking as mediator in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity supervisors.

### **5.13 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior between Social Uncertainty and Familiarity with Coworker**

A hypothesis was formulated to test the mediating effect of newcomer information seeking behavior as mediator in the relationship between social uncertainty and

newcomer's familiarity with coworkers. The hypothesis has been supported with the study results.

As discussed earlier, the hypothesis was based on uncertainty reduction theory. The theory highlights the importance of uncertainty and information seeking behavior. It was proposed that social or relational uncertainty which refers to a state of ambiguity an individual experience regarding the status of relationship and the associated perceptions, leads to information seeking behavior. Also, the main motivation to seek information is to reduce uncertainty (Gottlieb et al., 2013).

This had been discussed in the hypothesis which stated the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeking behavior. Subsequently, information seeking behavior was proposed to positively influence familiarity with coworker (relationship outcome). This was also hypothesized in the light of uncertainty reduction theory, which explains that relationship outcomes can be enhanced by information seeking behavior.

The mediating mechanism of information seeking behavior between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker has been uncovered in the study. Information seeking behavior was taken as a mediator on the foundations provided by uncertainty reduction theory. The theory suggests that information seeking behavior is the key to reduce uncertainty and positive relationship and communication outcomes can be achieved by reducing uncertainty. The results depict that familiarity with coworkers is influenced by social uncertainty through the path of information seeking behavior i.e. when newcomers seek information under social uncertainty, there familiarity with coworkers increases. The study has empirically established that information seeking behavior actually acts as a mediator in the said relationship which is in line with uncertainty reduction theory.

With reference to uncertainty and subsequent information seeking behavior; the results are comparable to that of (Kramer, 2014) and (Gottlieb et al., 2013). While, in relation to information seeking behavior and its outcomes, our results are broadly in congruence with the work of previous researchers. For example, see the work of (Anseel et al., 2015; Bauer et al., 2007; Benzinger, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2018; Yang & Ariel, 2014). However, the mediating role of information

seeking behavior that has been found in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker is unique to this study.

## **5.14 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior between Social Uncertainty and Newcomer Acculturation**

A hypothesis was formulated regarding the mediation of information seeking behavior in the relationship between SU and newcomers' acculturation. The hypothesis has not been supported with study results, which is explained below.

As discussed above, uncertainty reduction theory suggest that uncertainty leads to information seeking behavior. newcomers' integration into organizational culture and proper socialization also gets affected in the presence of uncertainty (Ellis et al., 2017; T. B. Harris et al., 2014; Perrot et al., 2014). Acculturation was taken as adjustment outcome of newcomers. Acculturation is described by (Gailliard et al., 2010) as the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate in it gets affected under the condition of uncertainty. It was hypothesized that in presence of social uncertainty, the information seeking of newcomers will be increased and their integration with organization will also be increased (Anseel et al., 2015; Yang & Ariel, 2014).

In this way information seeking behavior was tested as a mediator in the relationship between social uncertainty experienced by newcomers and their acculturation. However, the results did not support the mediation hypothesis. This may be attributed to the reason that acculturation is a lengthy process and takes time. Commonly, newcomers' information seeking is not enough to get them integrated into organization. For example, supervisory and coworker support may play their role in making newcomers able to adjust with organizational culture and practices. It is evident that support variables play a significant role newcomer socialization. For example, the work of (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013) demonstrated that



early support and undermining by supervisors and coworkers significantly impact newcomer socialization and sets the stage for later work outcomes.

It appears that although social uncertainty leads to information seeking behavior, there is less likelihood that such information seeking subsequent lead to newcomer acculturation. As discussed above, that information seeking alone it is not sufficient to cause acculturation of newcomers. Since, acculturation represents a newcomer's integration into organizational culture, it is likely that alongside information seeking it depends upon many other factors as well. Job standardization also has a role to play in newcomer acculturation (Hsiung & Hsieh, 2003). Moreover, newcomer socialization largely depends upon the socialization tactics used by them (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Kowtha, 2011). Newcomer socialization also gets affected with social network ties they keep and maintain (Morrison, 2002). This shows that many variables influence newcomer socialization including supervisory support and negative behavior, job standardization, socialization tactics and social networks. Therefore, there is a need to study the mediating and moderating effect of the above variables in the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer acculturation.

## **5.15 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Mediating Role of Newcomer Information Seeking Behavior between Task-related Uncertainty and Newcomer Role Negotiation**

A hypothesis was formulated regarding the mediation of information seeking behavior in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer role negotiation. The hypothesis has been supported with study results, which is discussed below.

In line with uncertainty reduction theory, it was hypothesized that newcomers will involve in information seeking behavior under the condition of task-related uncertainty. While information seeking behavior was hypothesized to positively

affect newcomer role negotiation subsequently. The study results established the mediation of information seeking behavior in the said relationship. This implies that information seeking behavior explains the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer role negotiation. Therefore, the mediation of information seeking behavior explains the underlying mechanism that leads to role negotiation from task-related uncertainty.

The finding that under the state of uncertainty newcomers seek information has support from the preceding work. Primarily, uncertainty reduction theory postulates that under the state of uncertainty, individuals seek information. This was hypothesized in our study in work settings in the context of newcomer experienced uncertainty. This result is consistent with previous studies demonstrating the importance of information seeking to reduce uncertainty and establishing the relationship between uncertainty and information seeking (Gruman et al., 2006; T.-Y. Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005; Xu & HEE-WOONg, 2011). This implies that our sample also confirmed that uncertainty leads to information seeking behavior of newcomers.

The result is consistent with the idea that information seeking is particularly important for newcomers because they are in the process of acquiring new roles (Barrett, 2018; N. Li et al., 2011). The relationship between information seeking behavior and role negotiation that has been found in the study has support from the studies that explains the importance of information seeking in the context of newcomer outcomes. Moreover, the findings are consistent with other scholarly work which demonstrates the importance of newcomer information seeking behavior in acquiring role-related information and its implications (Bauer et al., 2007; Miller & Jablin, 1991). However, the mediating role of information seeking behavior that has been found in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer information role negotiation is unique to this study. Finally, information seeking behavior turned out to be a mediator in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer role negotiation. The mechanism that has been uncovered in the study is meaningful for both the researchers and practitioners. Therefore, task-related uncertainty serves to clarify the nature of the relationship between the social uncertainty and newcomer role negotiation.

## **5.16 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Moderation of Uncertainty Avoidance between Social Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior**

A hypothesis was formulated regarding the moderation of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior. The hypothesis has been supported with study results, which is discussed below.

As supported by the literature, there are many factors that influence information seeking behavior. Moreover, information seeking is fundamentally motivated by uncertainty. Further research also indicates that the use of information seeking tactics is highly associated with many factors ranging from the social cost i.e. linked with the social image to personality traits of the information seeker (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 2002; Tidwell & Sias, 2005). This implies that individuals not always choose to seek information when faced with uncertainty and they generally weigh the benefits of information seeking against its cost. Some individuals are more concerned with their image than the needed information and they decide not to seek information actively (Bolino et al., 2016). Other factors affecting newcomers' information seeking behaviors are culture-specific which are fundamentally driven by a society's tolerance towards uncertainty (Masood & Afsar, 2017). Therefore, we hypothesized that uncertainty reduction would moderate the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior for which we found support with study results. This implies that uncertainty avoidance has emerged as a factor that strengthens the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior. In other word, in the presence of higher uncertainty avoidance, information seeking behavior of newcomers will be amplified. This indicate the importance of reducing uncertainty in our sample. Here, information seeking has been found to increase under social uncertainty which restrain relationship building and has been externally affected by uncertainty avoidance. This suggest that individuals

who live in a culture of high uncertainty avoidance more actively seek information under social uncertainty in order to secure their relationship. This can also be explained in conjunction with the concept of collectivism. Since Pakistani society is high on collectivism, newcomers seek more information in order to avoid uncertainty in the relationships.

### **5.17 Hypothesis Pertaining to the Moderation of Uncertainty Avoidance between Task-related Uncertainty and Information Seeking Behavior**

A hypothesis was formulated regarding the moderation of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior. The hypothesis has not been supported with study results, which is discussed below.

Similar to the case of social uncertainty, we hypothesized that uncertainty avoidance would moderate between task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior. However, this hypothesis has not been supported as anticipated. One explanation may lie in the fact that alongside uncertainty avoidance, Pakistani culture also has high collectivism. This implies that newcomers social and relationship status is not likely to get much affected under task-related uncertainty and they do not feel it important to correct the situation by seeking information. This also suggest that newcomers in such a culture consider their social ties more important than their tasks and job responsibilities. As collectivists cultures are characterized by more need for ingroup harmony and orientation towards self as embedded in a complex web of social relationships ([Hom & Xiao, 2011](#)).

Research suggest that an individualist act as though he or she defines self as an entity consisting of a single person, bounded by his or her own skin, but a collectivist acts as if he or she defines self as an entity extending beyond the individual to include a particular group of others, bounded by the social perimeter

of that group. (Ramamoorthy, Kulkarni, Gupta, & Flood, 2007) suggest that a collectivist orientation may be more associated with job security, loyalty to the organization and a greater emphasis on the social network inside the organization.

This implies that the results need to be viewed from the angle of both uncertainty avoidance and collectivism. At the same time, it opens an opportunity to test other moderators in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior. For example, individual traits and other contextual factors may trigger information seeking behavior under the state of task-related uncertainty. For example, attention to detail may trigger information seeking behavior when a newcomer experience task-related uncertainty. Newcomers' differences in their learning preferences and achievement motivation may also strengthen or weaken the said relationship. For example, newcomers who are interested to learn more and achieve success in their career may be active information seeker.

Additionally, organizational culture gaining knowledge about task-related matters may also strengthen the relationship of task-related uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior. Therefore, we propose that other moderators also need to be tested in the said relationship as discussed above.

## **5.18 Theoretical Implications**

The study contributed to the literature of newcomer outcomes in several ways and addressed a number of theoretical gaps alongside notable theoretical implications. The model was based on uncertainty reduction theory (URT). Mainly, the hypotheses were formulated as per the postulates of URT. We found support for the majority of hypotheses based on URT. Hence, broadly, the study results confirmed the propositions of URT. We designed a comprehensive model based on theoretical foundations, in which supervisory and coworker communication apprehension led to newcomer outcomes via uncertainty, information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness. Supervisory and coworker communication apprehension were taken as the two sources (predictors) of newcomer outcomes in line with the literature of communication apprehension and uncertainty reduction

theory. The study is unique as it used two sources of uncertainty from organizational communication perspective and attempted to examine newcomer outcomes of such apprehension. In this way, the study addressed an important theoretical gap, because the impact of an individual's CA upon his/her own behavioral outcomes have been studied in prior studies, but the impact of one's CA upon others was an understudied area. As already highlighted in the research gap, there exists a number of studies examining the impact of employees' communication apprehension upon their own performance, learning preferences, career advancement, future leadership roles and likelihood of emerging as leader (Limon & La France, 2005; McCroskey & Richmond, 1979; Pitt et al., 2000; Russ, 2012). Thus, examining the impact of supervisory and coworker communication upon newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes is a distinct theoretical contribution.

Secondly, an important theoretical gap that was identified was that recent work suggests that the role of supervisory communication in newcomers' acculturation has been a neglected area and there exists a need to examine supervisor-specific communication traits upon newcomers' acculturation. The study addressed this theoretical gap as well. Additionally, testing the path to newcomer outcomes via interpersonal attractiveness as mediator between newcomer uncertainty was also an untapped mechanism. As URT provided a broad framework regarding uncertainty considering its antecedents and outcomes, there was a need to examine the mediating link of interpersonal attractiveness (supervisory and coworker) between uncertainty and newcomer socialization. Moreover, testing the moderating role of uncertainty avoidance between uncertainty (social and task-related) experienced by newcomers and their information seeking behavior was neglected in the literature and its empirical validation is required in line with the framework suggested by URT. The study also contributed in this perspective as well.

Broadly, the study theoretically confirmed the relationship between supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and both types of uncertainty i.e. social and task-related, which confirms that negative communication traits of supervisor and coworkers predict uncertainty at work. Other results and their possible explanations have already been given in the previous section. Below, we summarize the results to get a theoretical insight of the findings to understand the theoretical

link of study variables. Social uncertainty turned out to be a predictor of newcomer information seeking, while task-related uncertainty did not. This suggests further work to find out the causes. Social uncertainty predicted interpersonal attractiveness of coworker but not of supervisor. Newcomer information seeking behavior predicted familiarity with coworkers but not with supervisor. Similarly, newcomer information seeking behavior predicted role negotiation but not acculturation. Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor predicted familiarity with supervisor but not with coworkers. Both types of uncertainty (social and task-related) mediated the relationship between supervisory/coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. This uncovers the underlying mechanism from supervisory/coworker communication apprehension to newcomer information seeking behavior.

Interpersonal attractiveness mediated the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor but did not mediate between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworkers, highlighting the need to find out other possible mediators in the relationship. Newcomer information seeking behavior mediated the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworkers but not with supervisor, which depicts the need to test other possible mediators in the said relationship. Newcomer information seeking behavior mediated the relationship between task-related uncertainty and role negotiation. While, information seeking behavior did not mediate between social uncertainty and newcomer acculturation demonstrating the need to test other possible mediators.

As a theoretical contribution, the study uncovered uncertainty avoidance as a moderator in the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer information seeking behavior. It is evident from the findings that several relationships (direct, indirect and moderation) have been examined in the study that were not studied before. The relationships that have been empirically established in the study offer a theoretical verification from the lens of uncertainty reduction theory and the work of other scholars as discussed above. Likewise, those mediation and moderation relationships that did not find empirical support present an opportunity for future researchers to theoretically test other possible mediators and moderators in the relationships that have been examined in the study.

## 5.19 Practical Implications

Alongside its theoretical contribution, the study has potential implications for managers and practitioners as well. We took relationship, role-related and adjustment variables (familiarity with supervisor/coworker, role negotiation, acculturation) of newcomers as outcomes of the study. The study was carried out in the context of newcomers, which is special with respect to uncertainty (Ellis et al., 2015; Perrot et al., 2014; Zhu et al., 2017). The study results confirmed that supervisory and coworker communication apprehension leads to uncertainty (social and task-related) for newcomers. Supervisory and coworker communication sources are the two most important sources of communication for newcomers at workplace (Ellis et al., 2017; Lapointe et al., 2014).

As described earlier, communication apprehension in work settings takes place under four theoretically unique but not necessarily mutually exclusive contexts which are interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions. This implies that apprehensive supervisors and coworkers become a source of uncertainty to newcomers. For example, the supervisors/coworkers who are apprehensive and fearful while communicating in interpersonal conversation, presentation/public speaking, formal meetings and group discussions can create a situation where newcomers start experiencing social and task-related uncertainty. This implies that in real work settings, it is very important for supervisors/managers/leaders and coworkers to communicate competently so that no ambiguities remain for newcomers and they can work in an ambiguity-free environment.

This has implications for the recruitment at both supervisory/managerial and other positions in the organization. Recruiters need to look the communication traits of applicants for supervisory/managerial and other positions. Moreover, communicator's competence (the appropriateness and effectiveness of communication in contexts like that of work) need to be assessed at the time of recruitment which is recognized as a strong predictor of communication satisfaction and job satisfaction amongst employees (Madlock, 2008; Steele & Plenty, 2015). Additionally, communication competence must also be considered for promotions and



other employment decisions in order to ensure an ambiguity-free organizational environment.

Moreover, the study results highlight that under uncertainty, newcomers need to seek more information, which can be an additional activity and may involve newcomers in the pursuit of information that is not otherwise required. This implies that by reducing uncertainty at work, managers can reduce the extra effort of newcomers that is used in seeking additional information and that energy can be diverted to some other beneficial work activities. Likewise, the study results demonstrate that interpersonal attractiveness of coworkers in the eyes of newcomers also get negatively affected under uncertainty. This implies that uncertainty becomes a hurdle in the way of a harmonious work environment relating to organizational communication between newcomers and older coworkers.

The findings also revealed that newcomers' information seeking increases familiarity with coworkers. This implies that a culture of harmony and understanding can be fostered in the organization by giving newcomers and previously working employees opportunities to meet each other so that their level of familiarity can be increased. Another practical insight obtained from the study result is about the importance of information seeking behavior in role negotiation of newcomers. Role negotiation of newcomers increases as they seek information about their duties and responsibilities. This signifies the importance of creating a culture where newcomers are already provided with the requisite information about their roles and responsibilities for better performance and role negotiation.

Regarding acculturation, the results revealed that information seeking behavior and newcomer acculturation do not have a significant relationship with each other. This suggests that getting newcomers adjusted with the organization depend upon other factors as well other than information seeking behavior. Since acculturation represents the acceptance level of organizational culture and readiness to integrate in it, managers need to set specific timelines and stages for newcomer acculturation with formal mentoring and a culture of transferring organizational norms and values to them. The results also depict that familiarity with supervisor can be increased by reducing social uncertainty through the path of interpersonal attractiveness. This suggest that managers need to create an environment where

newcomers can have an opportunity to interact with them, which will ultimately lead to increased familiarity with supervisor.

## **5.20 Strengths, Limitations and Future Research Directions**

The study has some methodological strengths which increase the confidence in results. Firstly, the data was multisource i.e. it was collected from newcomers and their supervisors. Newcomers were asked to report about supervisory and coworker communication apprehension, uncertainty (social and task-related), uncertainty avoidance, interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor/coworkers, familiarity with supervisor/coworker, acculturation and role negotiation. While the supervisors' responses were recorded pertaining to newcomers' information seeking behavior. In this way, two sources of data were used for data collection. Secondly, a time lag study design was used for data collection i.e. the study was multi-wave in nature. In time 1, responses of supervisor and coworker communication apprehension and newcomer's uncertainty (social and task-related) were gathered. While the responses on uncertainty avoidance, newcomer information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness were obtained in time 2. Likewise, newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes (familiarity with supervisor/-coworker, acculturation, role negotiation) data was finally gathered in time 3. These strengths reduce the potential effects of common methods and single source biases.

There are certain limitations that are associated with the study. The study was restricted to newcomers only. It appears from the literature and further study results that almost all employees can get negatively affected by supervisory and coworker communication apprehension in organizational context. Therefore, it is suggested for future researchers to examine the potential impact of supervisory and coworker communication by taking sample from all employees in organization. Moreover, the study examined one side of communication apprehension i.e. we assessed the impact of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension upon newcomer outcomes. Based on the literature of communication apprehension

and newcomers' communication behavior at work, we infer that there are implications of newcomer communication apprehension upon organizational outcomes as well. Therefore, further studies need to assess the other side of this scenario by taking newcomers communication apprehension as the predictor of supervisory and coworker outcomes. Some mediation hypotheses did not get support from the data. We suggest few variables to be tested as mediators in future. Interpersonal attractiveness did not mediate between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworkers. We propose to test two mediators (perceived conformity with group norms and perceived maintenance contribution) in the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker. Information seeking behavior did not mediate between social uncertainty and newcomer acculturation. We put forward that supervisory support and negative behavior, job standardization, socialization tactics and social networks can be tested in future as mediators in the relationship between social uncertainty and newcomer acculturation.

## **5.21 Conclusion**

Drawing on uncertainty reduction theory which proposes individual behaviors and psychological states under uncertainty during initial interactions, we study tested a model of supervisory and coworker communication apprehension towards newcomers' relationship, role-related and adjustment outcomes through the path of social and task-related uncertainty, information seeking behavior and interpersonal attractiveness in organizational settings. Additionally, the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance between social/task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior of newcomers was also tested. The overall statistical results of the study support the model of the current study as a majority of the hypotheses are accepted. The study results demonstrate both supervisory and coworker communication apprehension turned out to be important predictors of task-related and social uncertainty experienced by newcomers. Social uncertainty was found to positively influence newcomer information seeking behavior and such support was not found with regards to the relationship task-related uncertainty and information seeking behavior. Similarly, we did not find support for the negative

relationship of social uncertainty and interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and coworker. Newcomer information seeking behavior was found to be significantly associated with familiarity with coworker and role negotiation, while not significantly associated with familiarity with supervisor and acculturation. Interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor and familiarity with supervisor were significantly associated with each other while the relationship of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker and familiarity with coworker did not receive such support.

Both task-related and social uncertainty mediated the relationship between supervisory and coworker communication apprehension and newcomer information seeking behavior. The underlying mechanism of social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor was explained by interpersonal attractiveness of supervisor. The mediation of interpersonal attractiveness of coworker between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworker was not established. Newcomer information seeking behavior mediated the relationship between social uncertainty and familiarity with coworkers, while it did not mediate between social uncertainty and familiarity with supervisor. Information seeking behavior was found to explain the relationship between task-related and newcomer's role negotiation, while it did not turn out to be a mediator between social uncertainty and acculturation. We found support for the facilitating role of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between social uncertainty and information seeing behavior. Finally, we did not find support pertaining to the moderation of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between task-related uncertainty and information seeing behavior. The study has both theoretical and practical implications, while it also opens avenues for future researchers to extend the work and increase the understanding of study variables in work settings.

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# Appendix-A

## Questionnaire

**Dear Respondent**

My name is Muhammad Asad. As a Ph.D research scholar at Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST), Islamabad, I am collecting data for my research thesis. It will take your 15-20 minutes to answer the questions and to provide the valuable information. I assure you that data will be strictly kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. To ensure anonymity, you are not supposed to write your name or name of organization anywhere in the questionnaire.

**Thanks a lot for your help and support!**

Sincerely,

**Muhammad Asad**

**Ph.D (HRM) Research Scholar**

**Faculty of Management and Social Sciences**

**Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) Islamabad**

**Pakistan**

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## Section 1: Demographics

Your Gender	1- Male 2- Female
Your Age	1 (18-21 years), 2 (22-25 years), 3 (26-29 years), 4 (30 years or above)
Qualification	1 (Intermediate) 2 (Bachelor or BS Degree) 3 (Master Degree), 4 (M.S/M.Phil or Higher Degree)
Time Spent with the Current Organization:	1 (1-3 months), 2 (4-6 months), 3 (7-9 months), 4 (10-12 months)

## Section 2: Familiarity with Coworker

Please tick the relevant choices: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Think of the coworker you need to contact most frequently during your work and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Sr. No.	Item					
1	I consider this coworker friend	1	2	3	4	5
2	I feel comfortable talking to this coworker	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel like I know this coworker pretty well	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Familiarity with Supervisor</b>						
<b>Think of your supervisor and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement</b>						
1	I feel like I know my supervisor pretty well	1	2	3	4	5



2	My supervisor sometimes discusses problems with me	1	2	3	4	5
3	My supervisor and I talk together often	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Acculturation</b>						
<b>Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement</b>						
1	I understand the standards of my organization	1	2	3	4	5
2	I think I have a good idea about how my organization operates	1	2	3	4	5
3	I know the values of my organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	I do not mind being asked to perform my work according to the organization's standards	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Role Negotiation</b>						
1	I have been helped to change the duties of my position	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have changed some aspects of my position	1	2	3	4	5
3	I do this job a bit differently than the former employee did	1	2	3	4	5

### Section 3: Information Seeking Behavior

In a typical week, how frequently this employee initiates conversations about the following topics:

Sr. No	Statement	very infrequently	2	3	moderately frequently	4	5	very frequently
1	Job related topics in general	1	2	3		4	5	
2	Procedures for the completion of work	1	2	3		4	5	
3	How to handle problems on the job	1	2	3		4	5	
4	Specific work tasks	1	2	3		4	5	
5	Work priorities	1	2	3		4	5	
6	How to use equipment and materials	1	2	3		4	5	
7	Quantity and quality of work	1	2	3		4	5	
8	Job duties and procedures	1	2	3		4	5	

## Section 4: Task-related Uncertainty

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Task-related Uncertainty						
1	I don't know the standards for performing in this organization	1	2	3	4	5

2	I need more information on what I should be doing as an employee	1	2	3	4	5
3	I don't understand the goals and values of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	It is not clear to me what the organization is trying to accomplish	1	2	3	4	5
5	I don't know what is expected of me as a team member	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Social Uncertainty</b>						
1	I don't know how to relate to my coworkers	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am not sure how to interact with other organizational members	1	2	3	4	5
3	I don't know how to get along with other organizational members	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 5: Interpersonal Attractiveness of Supervisor

Think of your supervisor and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement .

Sr. No	Statement					
1	I would like to meet my supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
2	I would like to be with my supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
3	I look forward to working with my supervisor	1	2	3	4	5

4	I would like to get to know my supervisor better	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Interpersonal Attractiveness of Coworker</b>						
<b>Think of the coworker you need to contact most frequently during your work and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement</b>						
1	I would like to meet this coworker	1	2	3	4	5
2	I would like to be with this coworker	1	2	3	4	5
3	I look forward to working with this coworker	1	2	3	4	5
4	I would like to get to know this coworker better	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 6: Supervisory Communication Apprehension Group Discussions

Think of your supervisor and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Sr. No	Statement					
1	My supervisor dislikes participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
2	My supervisor generally looks comfortable while participating in a group discussion	1	2	3	4	5
3	My supervisor looks tense and nervous while participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
4	My supervisor gets involved in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
5	Engaging in a group discussion with newcomers make my supervisor tense and nervous	1	2	3	4	5
6	My supervisor looks calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Meetings</b>						

7	My supervisor generally looks nervous when he/she has to participate in a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
8	My supervisor usually looks calm and relaxed while participating in a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
9	My supervisor looks very calm and relaxed when he/she is called upon to express an opinion at a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
10	My supervisor looks afraid to express him/herself at meetings	1	2	3	4	5
11	Communicating at meetings usually makes my supervisor uncomfortable	1	2	3	4	5
12	My supervisor looks very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting					
<b>Interpersonal Conversation</b>						
13	While participating in a conversation with a newcomer, my supervisor looks very nervous	1	2	3	4	5
14	My supervisor seems to have no fear of speaking up in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
15	Ordinarily, my supervisor looks very tense and nervous in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
16	Ordinarily, my supervisor looks very calm and relaxed in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
17	While conversing with a newcomer, my supervisor looks very relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
18	My supervisor looks afraid to speak up in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Presentations</b>						
19	My supervisor seems to have no fear of giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
20	My supervisor looks very tense and rigid while giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5

21	My supervisor looks relaxed while giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
22	My supervisor gets confused and jumbled when giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
23	My supervisor looks confident when giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
24	While giving a presentation, my supervisor gets so nervous, he/she forgets facts he/she really knows	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 7: Coworker Communication Apprehension Group Discussions

Think of the coworker you need to contact most frequently during your work and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

Sr. No	Statement					
1	My coworker dislikes participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
2	My coworker generally looks comfortable while participating in a group discussion	1	2	3	4	5
3	My coworker looks tense and nervous while participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
4	My coworker gets involved in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
5	Engaging in a group discussion with newcomers make my coworker tense and nervous	1	2	3	4	5
6	My coworker looks calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Meetings</b>						

7	My coworker generally looks nervous when he/she has to participate in a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
8	My coworker usually looks calm and relaxed while participating in a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
9	My coworker looks very calm and relaxed when he/she is called upon to express an opinion at a meeting	1	2	3	4	5
10	My coworker looks afraid to express him/herself at meetings	1	2	3	4	5
11	Communicating at meetings usually makes my coworker uncomfortable	1	2	3	4	5
12	My coworker looks very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting					
<b>Interpersonal Conversation</b>						
13	While participating in a conversation with a newcomer, my coworker looks very nervous	1	2	3	4	5
14	My coworker seems to have no fear of speaking up in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
15	Ordinarily, my coworker looks very tense and nervous in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
16	Ordinarily, my coworker looks very calm and relaxed in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
17	While conversing with a newcomer, my coworker looks very relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
18	My coworker looks afraid to speak up in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Presentations</b>						
19	My coworker seems to have no fear of giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
20	My coworker looks very tense and rigid while giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5

21	My coworker looks relaxed while giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
22	My coworker gets confused and jumbled when giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
23	My coworker looks confident when giving a presentation	1	2	3	4	5
24	While giving a presentation, my coworker gets so nervous, he/she forgets facts he/she really knows	1	2	3	4	5

## Section 8: Uncertainty Avoidance

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement .

Sr. No	Statement					
1	It is important to have job requirements and instructions spelled out in detail so that employees always know what they are expected to do	1	2	3	4	5
2	Managers expect employees to closely follow instructions and procedures	1	2	3	4	5
3	Rules and regulations are important because they inform employees what the organization expects of them	1	2	3	4	5
4	Standard operating procedures are helpful to employees on the job	1	2	3	4	5
5	Instructions for operations are important for employees on the job	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix-B



TABLE 5.8: Items Loading of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item No.	SCA	CCA	TRU	SU	ISB	SIA	CIA	UA	FWS	FWC	RN	ACC
1	0.443	0.494	0.537	0.845	0.594	0.872	0.876	0.671	0.823	0.843	0.82	0.641
2	0.587	0.527	0.752	0.894	0.563	0.901	0.911	0.748	0.764	0.901	0.811	0.693
3	0.281	0.536	0.76	0.698	0.565	0.878	0.904	0.768	0.815	0.552	0.815	0.786
4	0.526	0.535	0.641		0.664	0.867	0.851	0.701				0.793
5	0.470	0.483	0.724		0.496			0.44				
6	0.605	0.602			0.437							
7	0.252	0.494			0.639							
8	0.541	0.548			0.376							
9	0.473	0.614										
10	0.418	0.498										
11	0.419	0.564										
12	0.481	0.243										
13	0.400	0.504										
14	0.61	0.47										
15	0.417	0.444										
16	0.479	0.471										
17	0.418	0.657										
18	0.535	0.487										
19	0.528	0.586										
20	0.435	0.513										
21	0.627	0.519										
22	0.423	0.479										
23	0.611	0.575										
24	0.484	0.436										

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.