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ABSRACT

Leader successions are powerful events that can create disruptions in the flow of vertical communication. To investigate how new leaders gain access to key information, we examine two types of behaviors that facilitate this process—upward voice behaviors by subordinates and pro-active selection of communication partners by the new leader. To test our hypotheses, we conducted a longitudinal study in two public elementary schools undergoing changes in principal, gathering data both before and after the leadership succession event. Our findings suggest that, immediately after succession, employees' voice behavior and the leader's choice of communication partners are predicted by pre-succession attributes of the organizational members. For example, organization members who are high change self-efficacy engage in more upward voice and are likely targets of initial leader ties. After initial socialization period, we found that that pre-succession factors have less impact on voice and tie creation. Rather, these behaviors—employee upward voice and new leader tie creation—mutually reinforce each other over time. Members' upward voice predicts tie creation from leaders and vice-versa.

Keywords: leader succession, voice behavior, social networks

INTRODUCTION

A wealth of research documents the role that leaders can play in shaping their organization's structure, processes, culture, and outcomes (e.g. Avolio, Walumbwa., Weber, 2009). As such, *leader succession* (i.e., the transitional process in which an organization's senior member is replaced by a successor) can be a pivotal event in the life cycle of any organization. The departure and replacement of the standing leader introduces uncertainty into the organizational environment, which creates both challenges and opportunities for the organization and its members (Greiner & Bhambri, 1989; Grusky, 1960). For the new leader, succession provides an opportunity to implement long-term positive changes in the organization (Rowe, Canella, Rankin, & Gorman, 2005). However, gathering information about the organization and the various possibilities for change can be a challenge, as the departure and replacement of the prior leader creates disruptions in the line of communication, realigns relationships, and generally disturbs the status quo (Gabarro, 1986; Grusky, 1960; Miskel & Cosgrove, 1985). This leaves a critical unanswered question: How does a new leader gather key organizational information and useful work-related advice?

Employees represent a critical source of information for the new leader within the organization. We suggest that there are two fundamental mechanisms for a new leader accessing information from those 'within.' First, employees may choose to speak up to the new leader at their own discretion, offering verbal input when they have potentially useful information or ideas, an act referred to as *voice behavior* (Morrison, 2011). Upward voice behavior aids in the discovery of problems and opportunities for improvement that the leader may not otherwise discover (Dutton and Ashford, 1993. Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Second, leaders may initiate the communication, actively reaching out to employees for advice and input. By doing so, the

new leader is able to establish relationships based on high quality communication and information exchange (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Taken together, employees' bottom-up voice and leaders' top-down selection of communication partners represent two potent behavioral mechanisms via which a new leader can gain access to critical information.

In this article, we build theory and test hypotheses regarding the drivers of voice behavior and leader ties in phases of a leadership transition. First, we examine the initial period of adjustment immediately after the leadership change, a time when both parties (i.e., leader and employees) are still relatively unfamiliar with each other and uncertainty is expected to be at a peak. Here we examine pre-existing conditions, such as an individual's tenure and change selfefficacy, that likely shape these initial communication choices. Second, we examine the evolution of these behaviors later into the new leader's tenure, as both parties begin to adapt to their new environment. We make the argument that the two behaviors—upward voice and leader tie creation—mutually reinforce each other over time. To wit, individuals who engage in voice early in the tenure of the new leader are sought by that leader for advice later. And, individuals whom the leader chooses as partners early are more likely to use this as an entrée for voice later.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted a longitudinal study in two public elementary schools undergoing changes in leadership. We performed hierarchical regression analyses on network and survey data collected from the schools' faculty and staff members at three points in time over the course of a calendar year, encompassing observations both before and after the leadership succession event. Our analyses reveal that the new principals made early connections to teachers who were central in the school's communication network and who exhibited lower job satisfaction and higher change self-efficacy prior to succession. At the same time, teachers who experience high change self-efficacy engage in higher levels of voice to the new principal.

Further, our findings yielded significant support for our prediction that voice behavior and leader's network connections mutually reinforce each other over time.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

The departure and replacement of an incumbent leader can create disruptions in the communication channels of an organization (Grusky, 1960). This study focuses on two particular behaviors that enable vertical communication of information following a leadership succession event: employees' upward voice behavior and the new leader's choosing of communication partners. Our conceptual model is depicted in Figure 1. Note that there are two key phases to consider: Phase I happens almost immediately, i.e. soon after the new leader arrives, and Phase II happens after the initial transition has been made and the new leader has the opportunity to settle into the role and the organization. When a new leader arrives, he or she is confronted with a roster of employees with unique individual histories, attitudes, and preferences. For example, some people are simply more likely to speak up than others, regardless of the situational context (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). Further, the new leader finds a particular social structure among the employees. In Phase I, in the absence of prior interaction between the new leader and his or her organization, all parties will make early choices to communicate as a function of this set of pre-existing conditions. We build theory that suggests that in Phase I, both individual and structural factors that may shape employees' voice behavior and the new leader's choice of ties. Phase II of the transition occurs after the initial acclimatization of the new leader. In this later phase, we argue that the role of individual and structural characteristics prior to the succession event in shaping these behaviors diminishes. Rather, we hypothesize that the two behaviors – voice and leaders' ties – mutually reinforce each other such that those who engage in upward voice early become trusted partners later and early trusted partners engage in more voice later.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Voice Behavior

Voice behavior refers to the "discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, concerns, or opinions about work-related issues with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning," (Morrisson, 2011, p. 375). Voice is critical to modern organizations which increasingly rely on innovation and constructive feedback 'from below' to survive in complex and rapidly changing environments (Detert & Burris, 2007 ; Liu, Zhu, & Yang, 2010; Senge, 1990). To date, researchers have highlighted the significance of voice in the prompt detection of problems and opportunities (Nemeth, 1997), successful handling of unexpected situations (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2003), and continuous learning and process improvement (Edmondson, 2003; Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, 2009). Given the proven benefits of voice to the organization, prior research has devoted much effort towards addressing the question of 'who' speaks up and 'when'.

Phase I: Predicting Voice Behavior Immediately After the Leadership Change

To date, researchers have identified three broad antecedents of voice behavior: supervisor behavior (e.g., Detert & Burris, 2007), individual traits and attitudes (e.g., LePine & Van Dyne, 2001), and contextual variables that shape the organization's climate with regard to speaking up (e.g., Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011). Prior researchers have found that, while leaders can help to facilitate upward voice behavior in various ways, their success in evoking voice is contingent on whether or not the employees personally identify with the leader (e.g., Liu et al., 2010). Following this logic, the role of leader behavior in evoking voice behavior immediately following a succession event should be relatively constrained, as leadership successions entail the decoupling of employees from their leaders. As such, factors that are independent of the leader should take on a higher importance in shaping immediate post-

succession voice behaviors. Drawing upon prior research, we hypothesize that the decision to speak up to the new leader immediately after succession will be dependent on two structural factors – network centrality and tenure—and two individual attributes—change self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

First, we predict that an employee's centrality in the network of intra-organizational relationships prior to succession is positively related to his/her voice behavior to the new leader. An organization's internal network is formed by the pattern of repeated social interactions that lead to the sharing of information and resources among actors (Ibarra & Andrews, 1993). Person A is referred to as 'central' if he/she has access, either directly or through others, to many of his or her co-workers (Freeman, 1979). In contrast, person B, who has less interpersonal relationships—neither relying on others for help or friendship nor provides it him/herself—is described as less central. Individuals occupying highly central network positions should be better able to acquire a broad awareness of their general situation and more likely than less central individuals to become cognizant of issues facing the organization. As a result, central individuals tend to have more ideas and suggestions to offer, and are thus more likely to speak up. Accordingly, recent research found that employees' work flow centrality was positively related to their engagement in voice behavior (Venkataramani and Tangirala, 2010).

Hypothesis 1a: An individual's network centrality prior to succession positively predicts his/her level of voice behavior to the new leader.

Second, we hypothesize that people who have been in the organization longer are more likely to speak up to the new leader. Prior research suggests that individuals with longer tenure are less hesitant to engage in voice behavior than are newcomers who are more uncertain about the consequences (and safety) of speaking up (Detert & Burris, 2007; Milliken et al., 2003).

Furthermore, people who have spent more time with the organization tend to engage in more extra-role behaviors with the intent of making positive changes to their organization and work environment (Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001).

Hypothesis 1b: An individual's organizational tenure positively predicts his/her voice behavior to the new leader.

Our third hypothesized predictor of voice behavior is individuals change self-efficacy. Change self-efficacy refers to the extent to which one feels confident in his/her capacity to "execute the tasks and activities that are associated with the implementation of the prospective change" (Holt, Armenakis, Field, & Harris, 2007, p.238). Change self-efficacy is a domain-specific extension of the concept of generalized self-efficacy, i.e., one's belief in his or her capacity to succeed in a specific situation (Bandura, 1982). We argue that one's change self-efficacy contributes to voice behavior by bolstering one's perceptions of the effectiveness of his/her voice (Morrison, 2011). In other words, individuals who are confident in their ability to undergo change should be more likely to engage in behaviors, such as upward voice, that support positive change initiatives. While individuals with low change self-efficacy tend to resist change and thus refrain from change-oriented behavior, those with high levels of change self-efficacy are more likely to engage in discretionary behaviors that support positive change despite the difficulties involved (Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts, & Walker, 2007; Bandura, 1982; Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012). Accordingly, we argue that they are spurred to greater persistence towards identifying, diagnosing, and articulating various issues to improve their environment (Holt et al., 2007; Weiner, 2009), and thereby more likely to speak up to an unfamiliar leader.

Hypothesis 1c: An individual's change self-efficacy prior to succession positively predicts his/her voice behavior to the new leader.

Finally, we hypothesize that job satisfaction prior to succession will be negatively related to voice behavior. Prior research has conceptualized voice behavior as a manifestation of one's efforts to make constructive changes to an objectionable state of affairs (Farrell & Rusbult, 1992; Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers, & Mainous 1988; Withey & Cooper, 1989). The arrival of a new leader presents a potentially valuable opportunity for individuals hoping to improve dissatisfying conditions. We argue that people who are less satisfied with their jobs will be more active in addressing issues of concern. In short, dissatisfaction with one's job may serve as a motivating mechanism of voice.

Hypothesis 1d: An individual's job satisfaction prior to succession negatively predicts his/her voice behavior to the new leader.

Phase I: Predicting the New Leader's Network Immediately After Succession

Where employees can initiate bottom-up communication in the form of voice, a new leader may gain access to information from below by actively connecting with—or 'reaching out' to—selected members of the organization. By establishing network connections (or ties), a new leader begins to develop a circle of trusted confidantes with whom he/she can consult. Social networks enable the sharing of organizational resources, and a new leader's early interpersonal relationships will be critical for the prompt gathering of key information (Balkundi & Harrison, 2006; Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Wenpin, 2004). Despite the benefits of networks, maintaining extensive personal networks requires one to expend large amounts of time and cognitive resources (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Burt, 2001)—as such, new leaders are faced with the challenge of judiciously creating the right social ties to the most appropriate candidates.

We theorize that the same set of structural and individual factors that predicts employees' voice behavior upon succession will also shape to whom the new leader will connect. First, a

new leader will be more likely to connect with those members who were central in the organizational network prior to succession. There are two reasons underlying our prediction. First, highly central members are perceived as influential and frequently sought out for advice by others in the organization, often rendering them informal authority figures in the organization (Brass, 1984). We contend that, upon entering an unfamiliar organization, such informal authority figures will be the prime network targets of a new leader. In addition, highly central members have access to a variety of key resources, notably information; thus, by connecting with those members who are highly connected themselves, a new leader is able to efficiently access a large pool of information while minimizing network building costs.

Hypothesis 2a: New leaders are more likely to establish initial ties with highly central members than with less central members.

Second, we hypothesize that new leaders are more likely to connect with individuals with longer organizational tenure. Length of tenure is indicative of one's work experience and knowledge of the organization's history, processes, and norms. We argue that a newly appointed leader will reach out to individuals with longer tenure, those who are most familiar with the inner workings of the organization.

Hypothesis 2b: New leaders are more likely to establish ties with those with longer organizational tenure than those with short tenure.

Finally, a new leader should be more likely to establish ties with people with higher change self-efficacy. Prior studies have demonstrated that people prefer to interact and work with those who are competent (Berger, Wagner, & Zelditch, 1985; Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt, & Wholey, 2000). New leaders are often viewed—and/or view themselves—as change agents expected to bring about positive change to their organizations (Giambatista, Rowe, & Riaz,

2005). Thus, new leaders looking to improve their organizations should prefer to connect with those who appear capable of proactively designing and executing such change. We argue that confidence in this domain (i.e., change self-efficacy) is perceived by others as a sign of competence, and that a leader is more likely to connect with those whom exude it.

Hypothesis 2c: New leaders are more likely to establish ties with those with higher change self-efficacy than those with lower change self-efficacy.

We do not hypothesize a relationship between employees' job satisfaction and the new leader's choice of initial network connections. A new leader might choose to connect with those who are highly satisfied with their jobs as they tend to exhibit positive moods at work (Motowidlo, 1984) and/or to understand their thoughts on what the organization is doing well. Conversely, he/she might also connect with to those who are dissatisfied with their job as a way to inquire the source of the dissatisfaction— information that could be useful for boosting morale (Meyer, Macmillan, & Northfield, 2009) and/or formulating other change initiatives to improve the organization. We treat this relationship as an open research question to be informed by the empirical section of our study.

Phase II: Coevolution of Voice Behavior and Network Ties

We now turn our attention to how information flows in (or is actively sought out) to (by) a new leader *after* the initial phase of succession and later into his/her tenure. While pre-succession variables may still continue to contribute to voice and network behaviors for some time we suggest that, over the long-term, the two behaviors should coevolve, mutually reinforcing one another beyond and above the effects of individual characteristics prior to succession. People whom the leader chooses to connect to early feel emboldened and engage in

more voice behavior. On the other hand, people who engage in voice to the new leader early gain his/her attention and are more likely to become trusted connections later.

We argue that repeated interactions with a leader enhances one's perceived competence and the safety of his/her voice. Despite its prosocial and constructive nature, voice behavior is also challenge-oriented and thus risky (LePine & van Dyne, 1998; Morrisson, 2011). Potential futility (Milliken et al, 2003) and negative repercussions on one's public image (Milliken et al., 2003), relationships, and social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002) often compel employees to consciously withhold information, suggestions, questions, or other input that could be valuable to share (Morrisson & Milliken, 2000; Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003). Immediately following a succession, upward voice behavior can be viewed as more risky, as individuals have less certainty about how the new leader will react. New leaders can reduce these perceived risks by actively establishing ties with the individuals, mitigating their self-protective concerns and enhancing perceptions of the safety of voice. Repeated acts of 'reaching out' enables new leaders to cultivate dyadic relationships based on high quality communication and exchange of information (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In such relationships, the employee begins to take on the role of a trusted confidante and counselor to the new leader, and therein develops a shared understanding that it is safe to speak up and that serious consideration is given to voice.

Hypothesis 3a: Individuals with whom the new leader connects early in his/her tenure will engage in higher levels of voice behavior in subsequent time periods.

Similarly, we argue that a leader will tend to reach out to individuals who had voiced their opinions to him/her in the early phase of the leader's socialization and tenure. For the new leader, voice from below is a critical source of information (Miskel & Cosgrove, 1985) that assists him/her in getting 'up to speed' with current issues facing the organization, becoming

familiar with its internal characteristics such as its culture and political landscape, and formulating appropriate decisions and change initiatives (Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts, & Walker, 2007). For an incoming leader intending to make positive changes to the organization, it is advantageous to reach out to employees who are inclined to voice their suggestions for positive change, offering their ideas of truth at the risk of broaching sensitive issues and/or 'elephants in the room.' As such, we contend that a new leader will be more inclined to seek out the advice of those whom had exhibited tendencies to voice, sending them network ties to cultivate a trusted conduit of information.

Hypothesis 3b: The new leader is more likely to connect with individuals who engaged in higher levels of voice behavior following succession.

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

We tested our hypotheses in two public elementary schools located in the western U.S. Both schools were undergoing a change in principal during the time of the study. Principal turnover is highly prevalent in elementary schools and has various disruptive effects. Recent studies have suggested that approximately 15-30% of school principals turnover each year (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012; Gates et al., 2006), and, on average, schools get a new principal every three to four years (Louis, Leithwoord, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). Beteille and colleagues (2012) found that principal successions were associated with higher subsequent teacher turnover and declining student test scores; moreover, these effects were greatest in low-performing schools and schools in low socio-economic locales. Given the powerful leadership role that principals play in elementary schools (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom,

2004), the high rates of leader turnover, and the documented disruptive effects of this turnover, elementary schools make an excellent setting in which to study leadership succession.

We collected data at three points in time over a period of 12 months that began before the change in principal and ended at the end of the new principal's first academic year. Principal transitions tend to occur in the summer between academic years. Time 1 (T1) occurred in the late spring (i.e. early June) at the end of the academic year prior to the departure of the incumbent principal. Time 2 (T2) was one month into the new principal's tenure in the next academic year (i.e. early October). Time 3 (T3) was in the late spring (i.e. May) of the new principal's first academic year. We gathered online survey data from all of the faculty and staff of each school. School A had 66 faculty and staff employed at the school at T1, and 68 people employed at T2 and T3. School B had 30 people employed at T1 and 28 at T2 and T3. Employee turnover and new hiring typically occurs in the summer—between T1 and T2. As such, in School A, 15 people left the school after T1 and 17 others joined at T2; and in School B, 4 people left after T1 and 2 others joined at T2. Across the two schools, our surveys yielded response rates of 77%, 91%, and 80% for T1, T2 and T3, respectively. In addition, 58 people responded to surveys in both T1 and T2 and 63 responded in both T2 and T3. In our sample, 67% of the participants were female. A majority of our respondents (52%) were Caucasian, 30% were Hispanic, 13% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, and 4% identified themselves as "other."

Measures

For two of our constructs—network centrality and ties from the leader—we gathered social network data within the school. We used a sociomatrix approach (Wasserman & Faust, 1994) to gather data regarding the information and advice-laden relationships that exist within the school or that the new principal might establish. In a sociomatrix approach, the researcher

provides the participant with a roster or list of all potential members of the network and asks the participant to identify the ties or connections he or she has to any of the members of the list. Our response rates all approached or exceeded the minimum threshold of 80% response typically employed by network researchers (Kossinets, 2006; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Faculty/Staff Network Centrality: At T1 and T2, we asked faculty and staff in each school to complete a sociomatrix regarding their work related communication with other members of the faculty and staff. We presented each participant with a list of all members of the school faculty and staff and asked three questions about each of the others. We asked each member to identify the people they connect with to get work related advice, the people they trusted with sensitive information, and the people who influenced their views on important issues. We chose the three tie contents of advice, influence, and trust, as they represent facets of a relationship based on high stakes work related communication and our intention was to aggregate the three items into one measure. By aggregating the items, our measure is composed of three highly related items, thus increasing reliability. In contrast, to avoid survey fatigue, network researchers often use a less reliable single-item measure (Marsden, 1993).

To measure a member's advice ties, we asked "How often do you go to each of the following people for advice to help you perform your job more effectively?" The response options were 1 = "Once in the past two months", 2 = "1-2 times per month", 3 = "Every week or two", and 4 = "1-2 times a week.." To measure trust ties, we asked "How likely are you to talk candidly with each person listed below regarding topics that are important to you?" (response options: 1 = "Not very likely", 2 = "Somewhat likely", 3 = "Very likely"). Finally, for influence ties, we asked "How influential are this person's views in shaping your views about the school?" (response options: 1 = "A little influential", 2 = "Moderately influential", 3 = "Very influential").

We used these data to construct three matrices depicting the three types of interpersonal relationships, for each time period at each school. Since our response scales employed different values, we dichotomized the raw scores prior to aggregation. We dichotomized the advice network by coding all responses that indicated “1-2 times a week" or more frequent as ‘1’ and anything less frequent as ‘0.’ Similarly, we dichotomized the influence network by coding all responses that indicated "moderately influential” or greater as 1 and anything lower as 0. Finally, we dichotomized the trust network by coding all responses that indicated the respondent was "Very likely" to talk candidly to the candidate about important issues and those indicating lesser likelihood as 0.

To assess each individual's position within these networks, we computed their in-degree centrality in each matrix. In-degree centrality refers to the number of relationships that link other members to the focal individual (Freeman, 1979). Network researchers tend to use in-degree centrality (in which all of the other members of the organization identify the relationship with a given focal individual) rather than out-degree centrality (in which the focal individual identifies all of his/her relationships with each other member) which suffers from single source bias (Scott & Carrington, 1991).

Preliminary analyses revealed that individual centralities across the three networks were highly inter-correlated, justifying our decision to aggregate responses across the three types of ties. In T1, advice ties was correlated with influence ties at $r = .78$, advice and trust ties were correlated at $r = .72$, and influence and trust ties were correlated at $r = .77$; in T2, the correlations were .89, .82, and .86, respectively.

Inbound Ties from the Leader: We used a similar approach to assess inbound ties from the old and new leaders. In all *three* time periods, we provided the principal with a list of all

members of the organization at the time and asked him/her to assess the extent to which he/she connected with each of the others members through the same ties of advice, influence, and trust. This allowed us to construct three sets of scores for each participant that reflect the extent to which the old/new principal reaches out to him or her for advice, influence or trust. We then aggregated the three sets of scores to construct a three item measure of the extent to which the principal reaches out to the participants for high stakes communication. Prior to aggregation, we dichotomized the raw scores using the dichotomization rules described earlier.

Voice Behavior: In each time period, we measured upward voice behavior (to the principal) by asking each faculty and staff to answer four questions adapted from Van Dyne and LePine's (1998) 6-item scale of prosocial voice behavior. We selected the four items from this scale that reference verbal behaviors, and we adapted these items to reflect voice to the principal. The items were: "How often do you speak up to the principal with ideas for new processes, instructional approaches or policies?", "How often do you give suggestions to the principal about how to improve the school?", "How often do you point out to the principal changes that would make the school better?" and "How often do you communicate your views about work issues to the principal, even if your views differ?" Responses were given on a five-point frequency scale, ranging from 1 = "Almost never" to 5= "Always." Internal consistency reliability ranged from .95 to .97 across times 1, 2, and 3 (see Table 1).

Change Self-Efficacy: We measured change self-efficacy in T1 using Oreg's (2003) resistance to change scale, consisting of 16 items designed to measure one's dispositional inclination to resist (vs. support) change. Sample items include "I like to do the same old things rather than try new and different ones," and "If I were to be informed that there's going to be a significant change regarding the way things are done at my work, I would probably feel

stressed." All of the items were measured on a five point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = "Very slightly or not at all" to 5 = "Extremely." The scale demonstrated high internal consistency reliability (α = .94, see Table 1).

Job Satisfaction: To measure job satisfaction in T1, we used the five-item measure developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). All responses were given on a 5-poing agreement scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 "Strongly agree." Sample item: "I find real enjoyment in my work." This scale demonstrated a sufficient level of internal consistency among the items (α = .73, see Table 1).

Tenure: In T1, we asked each participant to indicate the number of years he/she has worked at the school. On average, the respondents worked at the school for 6.1 years (see Table1).

Control Variables: In each of our statistical models, we controlled for potential autoregressive effects of the dependent variable. To predict voice behavior in T2 and T3, we controlled for voice behavior in T1 and T2, respectively. Similarly, to predict inbound ties from the leader in T2 and T3, we controlled for their prior values in T1 and T2, respectively. In addition, we included a dummy variable in each model to control for the variation across the two schools

In our models predicting voice behavior and inbound ties from the leader in T3, we controlled for network centrality in T2. Our decision to control for network centrality was due to the possibility that the post-succession network structure could significantly differ from that prior to succession and hence drive the variation in the dependent variables. Prior studies have shown that turnover among organizational members can have significant impacts on the behaviors and attitudes (e.g., turnover intentions) of those who shared a connection with the departing members

(Krackhardt & Porter, 1985; Miskel & Cosgrove, 1985). As such, the departure of a standing leader can result in a significant realignment of network positions, especially among those whom were connected to the leader. Given that the events prior to T2 included both a leadership succession and the summer (i.e., a time when turnover is relatively high), we decided to control for post-succession network centrality.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and simple correlations among variables are presented in Table 1. The moderate to high autocorrelations of voice behavior (ranging from .42 to .65) suggest that individuals' tendencies to voice were somewhat, but not completely, stable across points in time. Inbound ties from the leader increased significantly over time; i.e., from a mean of .11 at time 1, to a mean of .32 in time 2, to a mean of .47 in time 3. There was no significant autocorrelation effect of inbound ties from the leader from time 1 to time 2, suggesting that the new principal's choice of network partners significantly differed from that of the previous principal's. Change self-efficacy (T1) was significantly correlated with voice behavior in T2 ($r = .25$, $p < .05$), providing preliminary support for the hypothesized positive relationship between the two variables (H1c). Similarly, voice in T2 was significantly correlated with inbound ties from the leader in T3 ($r = .23$, $p < .05$), and inbound ties from the leader in T2 was significantly correlated with voice in T3 ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). These correlations provided preliminary support for the hypothesized co-evolutionary relationship between the two behaviors (H3a & b).

Insert Table 1 about here

To test the hypotheses, we conducted a series of hierarchical regression analyses. When predicting voice behavior, we used Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). Table 2 summarizes results predicting voice behavior in T2 while controlling for prior voice behavior in T1. As shown in

Model 7, we found no significant effects for network centrality (β = -.01, p = .96), tenure (β = -.01, p = .96), or job satisfaction (β = -.17, p = .29). Model 7 also seems to suggest that change self-efficacy is not significant (β = .25, p = .10). However, in Model 5, where change self-efficacy is a lone predictor, we find that change self-efficacy is significant and that Model 5 is a significant improvement in fit over the null model (i.e., Model 1). Post-hoc analyses suggest that change self-efficacy is confounded by job satisfaction, as we found that in any configuration of our model without job satisfaction change self-efficacy was significant. Taken together, we conclude that change self-efficacy does in fact predict voice behavior, although its effects are possibly confounded by those of job satisfaction. In summary, we found no support for H1a, H1b, and H1d, and partial support for H1c.

The three item measure of inbound ties from the leader has four possible values: 0, .33, .66, and 1. It is an ordered variable without a normal distribution. Therefore, to predict leader ties, we fit ordered logistic regression models. Table 3 summarizes results predicting inbound ties from the leader in T2 while controlling for the effects of inbound ties from the leader in T1. We found support for H2a, that network centrality predicts inbound ties from the leader in T2, (β = .19, p < .05; see Model 7). We found no significant support for H2b, that tenure positively predicts inbound ties from the leader in T2 (β = -.11, p = .26; see Model 7). We found support for H2c, that change self-efficacy positively predicts inbound ties from the new leader in T2 (β = 1.55, p < .05; Model 7). We note, however, that change self-efficacy did not significantly predict inbound ties from the leader in T2 when specified as the only predictor (β = .55, p =.18; see Model 5). Upon entering job satisfaction as a second predictor in our post-hoc analyses, change self-efficacy was significantly related to the dependent variable, suggesting the existence of a suppressor effect. We had left the question of how job satisfaction predicts

inbound ties from the new leader as an empirical question. In our analyses, we discovered a significant negative relationship between teacher job satisfaction and inbound ties from the leader in T2 (β = -1.76, p < .05; Model 7). In summary, the new principal made early connections to teachers who were central in the peer network, have high change self-efficacy, and exhibited lower job satisfaction.

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

Tables 4 and 5 summarize results predicting voice behavior and inbound ties from the leader, respectively in T3, at the end of the principal's first academic year in the role. As with our T2 predictions, we used OLS when predicting voice behavior and ordered logistic regression when predicting leader ties. We found significant support for H3a, that inbound ties from the leader in T2 positively predicts voice behavior in T3 (β = .34, p < .01; see Model 2, Table 4). This main effect explained a significant amount of variance in addition to that explained by the control variables (ΔR^2 = . 10, p < .01). Similarly, we found significant support for H3b, that voice behavior in T2 positively predicts inbound ties from the leader in T3 (β = .63, p < .05; see Model 2, Table 5). Taken together, our results suggest that voice behavior and inbound ties from the leader coevolve via a mutually reinforcing relationship.

Insert Table 4 about here

Insert Table 5 about here

Our initial hypothesis was that the four T1-pre-succession attributes (network centrality, tenure, change self-efficacy, and job satisfaction) predicted initial post-succession (T2) voice and

leader ties. Though not hypothesized, we were also interested in whether these attributes significantly predicted either voice and/or inbound ties from the leader inT3, at the end of a full academic year with the new principal. We conducted a post-hoc analysis that recreated the hierarchical regressions summarized in Tables 2 and 3, but used voice behavior and ties from the leader in T3 (rather than T2) as the dependent variables. The analysis revealed no significant main effects of these attributes on either of the dependent variables. These results are consistent with our view that, during the uncertain and turbulent early phase of leader succession, pre-existing attributes such as change self-efficacy and network centrality are the overriding drivers of voice behavior and leader's network ties. However, in the later phase of succession, more intimate and dyadic interactions—whether in the form of voice behavior or leader's networking behavior—determine how these behaviors evolve over time.

We were also interested in ascertaining whether pre-succession voice behavior (T1) predicts incoming ties from the new leader and whether incoming ties from the previous leader (T1) enhances post-succession voice behavior, i.e. does co-evolution occur while the transition is underway? As such, we ran two additional regression models. First, we tested for a main effect of voice in T1 on inbound ties from the leader at T2, controlling for inbound ties from the previous leader (T1). The results did not indicate a significant effect (β = -.02, p = .90; see Model 8, Table 3). Similarly, we tested for a main effect of inbound ties from the leader at T1 on voice behavior in T2, while controlling for pre-succession voice behavior (T1). Again, we did not find a significant effect (β = .09, p = .53; see Model 8, Table 2). These findings suggest that no mutually reinforcing effects occurred between the pre-succession and post-succession behaviors. This is a logical outcome that seems to be a function of the disruptive effects stemming from leader succession.

DISCUSSION

In order to address the question of how new leaders gain access to information 'from within,' we examined two types of behaviors that facilitate a new leader's accrual of key work-related information and advice: employees' bottom-up voice behavior and the new leader's top-down selection of communication partners. In our first set of hypotheses, we examined the drivers of voice behavior immediately after a leadership succession event. Our results yielded partial support for the notion that individuals with high change self-efficacy tend to engage in more voice behavior toward the new leader than other members. This finding is consistent with existing literatures that suggest people with high change self-efficacy are spurred to greater discretionary behaviors that support positive organizational change (e.g., Holt et al., 2007). It is also consistent with findings from prior studies linking related constructs such as self-esteem (e.g., Le Pine & Van Dyne, 1998) and locus of control (e.g., Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003) to one's tendency to speak up. Contrary to our prediction, highly central organizational members were not significantly more likely to engage in upward voice behavior, which suggests that simply having access to more information does not result in a higher tendency to speak up about important issues. In our study, individuals with longer tenure were not significantly more likely to speak up to the new leader. This finding is inconsistent with prior literatures that suggest positive effects of tenure on the safety perceptions of voice (Milliken et al., 2003). Our findings also revealed that individuals with lower job satisfaction were not significantly more likely to speak up. We suspect that, while dissatisfaction with one's job may stimulate ideas for potential improvement, dissatisfaction alone does not result in a higher tendency to speak up to an unfamiliar leader.

In our second set of hypotheses, we examined the individual factors which predicted with whom new leaders are likely to establish new, early, relationships. The findings supported our prediction that a new leader is more likely to build relationships with highly central individuals, those individuals who are highly connected to the remainder of the organization. Interestingly, we found that the new leader was more likely to connect with those with lower job satisfaction, implying that he/she views dissatisfied employees as a valuable source of change-oriented ideas and information. We suggest that new leaders tend to view dissatisfied organizational members as those whom are most susceptible to demotivation, turnover, and other outcomes that are detrimental to the organization. Thus, new leaders looking to improve the status quo may find themselves prioritizing the task of connecting with said members to identify and rectify the source of their dissatisfaction. Contrary to our predictions, a new leader was not significantly more likely to establish ties with individuals with longer tenure. That new leaders do not search out those with long tenure but do search out those with low job satisfaction suggest that the new leader is in search of the "problems" within the organization early. We also found that new leaders were more likely to connect with individuals with higher levels of change self-efficacy. This finding implies that people with high change self-efficacy are often viewed as those who are competent at undergoing change, and that new leaders are drawn to individuals whom exude this quality.

In our third set of hypotheses, we examined the coevolution of voice and leader ties over time. Our findings yielded significant support for a mutually reinforcing relationship between these variables. Individuals who spoke up early in the new leader's tenure were more likely to be sought out later, and, individuals who were sought out by the leader were more likely to engage in subsequent voice behavior. As revealed in our post-hoc analysis, pre-succession attributes of

the organizational members eventually ceased to become significant drivers of these behaviors, highlighting the overriding precedence of dyadic interactions in shaping these behaviors after the initial phase of leader succession.

Taken together, our findings reinforce the general notion that leader successions simultaneously engender opportunities as well as challenges. It appears that individuals who speak up the loudest after a leadership change are not necessarily those who have access to the most information or have the most ideas for change. Rather, they may be the 'bold and fearless' individuals with high confidence in their ability to undergo change. For these individuals, leader succession is an excellent opportunity to voice their ideas and become recognized by the new leader. As revealed in prior research, voice behavior leads to many benefits for the actor engaging in them, such as enhanced motivation, more positive attitudes (Morrison & Milliken, 2000), and improved individual performance (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Moreover, as these individuals continue to participate in the discourse of key issues facing the organization, the new leader starts to reach out to them more frequently for information and advice, enhancing these individuals' informal power and social reputation within the organization.

Managerial Implications

Two important practical implications stem from our study. First, new leaders can play a pivotal role in ‘unlocking’ the voice of his/her followers through networking. In our study, we found that people who should have the most information, organizational experience, and ideas for improvement don't necessarily speak up more than the others in the organization. As such, one implication is that incoming leaders need to proactively establish network ties with such individuals in order to elicit future voice behavior and thereby establish more rich and robust channels of communication. To this end, the new leader must work towards identifying these

important individuals based on their contextualized attributes such as network centrality, tenure, and job satisfaction. Second, our findings suggest that people who speak up to a new leader early are more likely to be sought out by that leader in the future. For members of an organization facing leadership change, the implication here is that, early voice behavior will 'get them closer' to the new leader. In spite of the potential risks associated with voice behavior, we suggest that individuals intending to connect with influential organizational members should actively speak up to a new leader and to do so early.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

One of the limitations of our study is that all of the participants were nested in one of two organizations, meaning we were not able to examine organization level effects, such as the organization's structure, culture or political landscape. In addition, the study setting (i.e., elementary school) may be somewhat idiosyncratic, making generizability of the findings more difficult. Future research could overcome this limitation and achieve higher generalizability by collecting data from multiple sites and/or different settings. An interesting research pursuit that might extend our theory would be to examine whether drivers of voice behavior and new leader's network ties interact with pre-succession characteristics such as the organization's performance history or personality traits of the prior leader.

Conclusion

Leader successions require the (re)establishment of vertical communication channels through which a new leader may gain access to information 'from below.' To shed insight into how this process occurs, we developed and tested a conceptual framework delineating the drivers of upward voice behavior from organizational members and new leader's proactive establishment of new communication relationships over time. Analysis on our multi-source longitudinal data

revealed that while employees' voice behavior and new leader's "reaching out" behavior were driven by pre-succession individual attributes, over time, these behaviors mutually reinforce each other, over and beyond the effects of individual and structural factors prior succession. By placing our focus on behavioral outcomes, our study charts new territory for the study of leader succession and its impacts. The findings of our study reinforce the notion that leader successions simultaneously engender challenges and opportunities. We hope others will join us in further exploring the role of behaviors on the outcomes of leader succession.

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FIGURE 1

Conceptual Model of Relationships

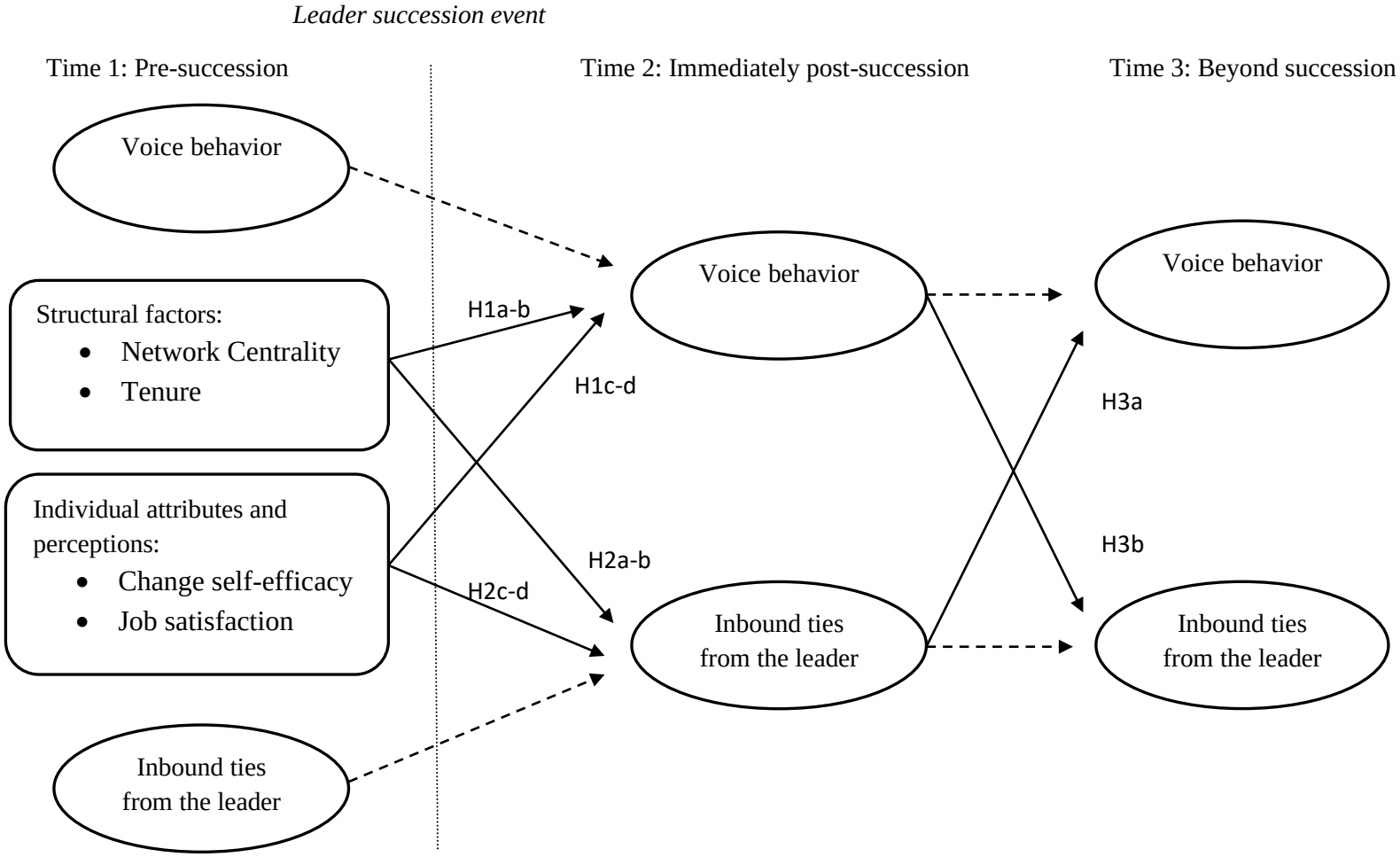

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients, and Correlations of Study Variables

Variable	M	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Pre-succession variables													
1. Tenure	6.11	4.81											
2. Job satisfaction	4.10	.60	-.07	(.73)									
3. Change self-efficacy	3.93	.51	-.19	.35**	(.94)								
Indegree centrality													
4. Time 1	5.26	4.85	.24*	.08	.12								
5. Time 2	7.26	7.24	.07	.15	-.17	.07							
Voice behavior													
6. Time 1	2.26	1.08	.13	.22	.13	.18	-.11	(.95)					
7. Time 2	2.06	1.13	-.06	.18	.25*	.11	.21	.46**	(.96)				
8. Time 3	2.32	1.21	.04	.18	.19	.03	.29*	.42**	.65**	(.97)			
Inbound ties from the leader													
9. Time 1	.11	.23	.13	.10	.04	.31*	-.03	.47**	.16	.08			
10. Time 2	.32	.38	-.05	-.17	.19	.29*	.23*	-.05	.38**	.45**	.07		
11. Time 3	.47	.30	-.30*	.08	.08	-.01	.22*	-.41*	.23*	.22	-.17	.32*	
Dummy variable													
12. Organization	.72	.45	-.19	.08	.05	.07	.17	-.53**	-.10	-.16	-.21*	.22*	.60**

Notes: N ranges from 46 to 96. Internal consistency reliability coefficients (alphas) appear on the diagonal.

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

16324

TABLE 2

Predicting Voice in T2 (Ordinary Least Squares Regressions)

Measures	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Control								
Voice behavior (T1)	.57** (.17)	.57** (.18)	.65** (.23)	.58** (.18)	.49** (.18)	.58** (.18)	.63** (.24)	.60* (.25)
Organization (dummy variable)	.17 (.38)	.15 (.39)	.12 (.30)	.16 (.39)	.10 (.37)	.16 (.38)	.12 (.49)	.10 (.49)
Predictor								
Indegree centrality (T1)		.05 (.04)					-.01 (.05)	.01 (.05)
Job Satisfaction			-.07 (.30)				-.17 (.33)	-.15 (.33)
Tenure				-.03 (.04)			-.04 (.05)	-.06 (.05)
Change self-efficacy					.27* (.25)		.25 (.31)	.23 (.32)
Post-hoc analysis								
Inbound ties from leader (T1)						-.02 (.70)		.09 (.88)
Global F	7.50**	4.96**	6.60**	4.92*	6.45**	4.91**	3.91**	3.35**
Adjusted R^2	.20	.19	.29	.18	.24	.18	.29	.28
Δ ***R^2*** †		.00	.00	.00	.07	.00	.06	.07
F for ΔR^2 †		.14	.25	.05	4.54*	.013	.92	.80

Notes: N = 58. Standard errors of the estimates in parentheses.
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
† Models 2-8 are compared to Model 1.

16324

TABLE 3

Predicting Inbound Ties from the Leader in T2 (Ordered Logistic Regressions)

Measures	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Control								
Inbound ties from leader (T1)	1.33 (.92)	.89 (.99)	1.90 (1.15)	.31 (.99)	.71 (.96)	.24 (.04)	.39 (1.33)	.78 (1.49)
Organization (dummy variable)	-.95* (.48)	-.85 (.50)	-.90 (.65)	-.77 (1.85)	-.71 (.52)	-.64 (.63)	-.42 (.84)	.05 (.95)
Predictor								
Indegree centrality (T1)		.12* (.06)					.19* (.08)	.21* (.09)
Job Satisfaction			-.88 (.49)				-1.76** (.63)	-1.72* (.67)
Tenure				.00 (.06)			-.11 (.10)	-.09 (.10)
Change self-efficacy					.55 (.41)		1.55* (.67)	1.53* (.68)
Post-hoc analysis								
Voice (T1)						.06 (.31)		-.31 (.47)
-2 Log Likelihood	48.06	147.15*	89.46	121.91	172.38	96.31	96.91	95.17

Notes: $N = 58$. Standard errors of the estimates in parentheses.
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

16324

TABLE 4

Predicting Voice in T3 (Ordinary Least Squares Regressions)

Measures	**Model 1**	**Model 2**
Control		
Voice (T2)	.57** (.11)	.46** (.11)
Indegree centrality (T2)	.19 (.02)	.15 (.02)
Organization (dummy variable)	-.13 (.23)	-.21* (.24)
Predictor		
Incoming ties from Principal (T2)		.34** (.30)
Global F	18.10**	19.62**
Adjusted R^2	.43	.53
ΔR^2 †		.10
F for ΔR^2 †		13.55**

Notes: $N = 63$. Standard errors of the estimates in parentheses.
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
† Model 2 is compared to Model 1.

16324

TABLE 5

Predicting Inbound Ties from the Leader in T3 (Ordered Logistic Regressions)

Measures	**Model 1**	**Model 2**
Control		
Incoming ties from Principal (T2)	1.84**	1.77*
	(.65)	(.80)
Indegree centrality	.03	-.01
	(.03)	(.03)
Organization (dummy variable)	-2.79**	-3.45**
	(.53)	(.68)
Predictor		
Voice (T2)		.63*
		(.26)
-2 Log Likelihood	168.79	135.08

Notes: $N = 63$. Standard errors of the estimates in parentheses.
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$