

# **Self and senior executive perceptions of fit and performance: A time-lagged examination of newly-hired executives**

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## **Abstract**

Drawing on the person–organization fit literature and person-categorization theory, we proposed that new executive performance depends on both their self-perceptions as well as their fit as seen by senior executives. Using three-phased, multisource data from newly-hired executives of a Fortune 500 pharmaceutical company across their first six months on the job, we found that senior executive pre-entry person–organization fit expectations of their followers (new executives) are positively related to their post-entry person–organization fit perceptions through the partial mediating role of their leader–member exchange relationships. Furthermore, results also revealed that senior

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executive person–organization fit perceptions were significantly and positively related to new executive in-role and extra-role performance, but only when new executives' own perceptions of person–organization fit were low.

**Keywords**

fit, leader–member exchange, leadership, new executive performance, performance appraisal and feedback, person–organization personnel selection, personnel training/development, top management

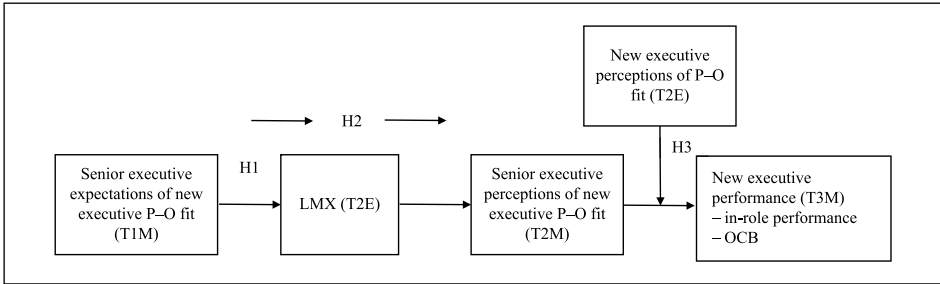
Executives are top-level managers who have strategic administrative or managerial responsibilities in an organization (Geletkanycz, 1997). They are widely seen as key organizational members, because their strategic decisions and leadership behaviors directly impact the financial performance of their firms (Hambrick et al., 2005). Organizations strive to hire and retain executives who are highly skilled and experienced. The recruitment and selection of executives is costly with direct and indirect costs of obtaining a new executive estimated to reach US \$2.7 m (Stoddard and Wyckoff, 2009). Given the significant investment needed to recruit executives and the unique requirement that they quickly establish credibility and effectiveness under high pressure owing to the visibility of their positions, a central question that attracts the attention from both management practitioners and researchers is what drives new executive performance.

One possible answer derived from the selection literature is that new executive performance depends on the extent to which executives fit within their organizations (Goodman and Svyantek, 1999; O'Reilly et al., 1991). Person–organization fit (P–O fit) is defined and often measured as the congruence between an individual's personal values and the organization's culture (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996). Because perceptions are often more useful than reality in understanding subsequent behaviors (Cable and Judge, 1997; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), researchers focus on perceptions of fit, assessed via focal employee perceptions or from others' perceptions of the focal member's fit. For example, job candidates have been found to form perceptions about the extent to which their values fit with the organization's culture (self-perception of P–O fit), influencing the attractiveness of the position (Edwards and Cable, 2009). From an alternative perspective of fit, studies indicate that recruiters assess job candidates' fit with the organization (other assessment of P–O fit) and this assessment affects their hiring recommendations for those candidates (Cable and Judge, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Rynes and Gerhart, 1990). Although prior studies support the important role of P–O fit perceptions in guiding newcomers' decisions and managers' assessment of fit in shaping newcomers' future behaviors (Arthur et al., 2006), the field is currently unclear about whether P–O fit perceptions that are formed by new executives and their upper-level managers (i.e. senior executives) during the recruitment and selection process, or prior to entry, and post entry, impact work-related outcomes once new executives are on the job. This is a critical, unaddressed gap in the literature as not only do new executives form perceptions of P–O fit, senior executives, as new executives' managers, are in the unique position of being able to make comparisons between current and past new executives in terms of fit with

the organization. Based on these perceptions, senior executives may consciously or subconsciously influence the new executives' success in attaining high performance soon after starting on the job. Organizational researchers have yet to develop an integrated framework considering both senior executives' and new executives' perspectives on P-O fit in order to enable a deeper understanding of new executive development and performance.

Thus, we aim to fill this omission by recognizing the role of senior executives' perceptions of P-O fit and documenting how it influences newly hired executives and interacts with new executives' perceptions to affect their performance at work. Person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981, 1986) provides the theoretical underpinning for the role of senior executives' P-O fit perceptions on new executive performance. Person-categorization theory notes that, prior to entry, senior executives may form P-O fit categorizations of new executives (i.e. perceptions of higher fit or lower fit) based on the relevant information they observed during the recruitment and selection process, and this categorization may influence senior executives' post-entry perceptions of and interactions with these new executives, which further affects new executive performance (assessed in terms of both in-role performance and extra-role performance, or organizational citizenship behavior, [OCB], Organ, 1988). Furthermore, although research has shown that newcomers' managers may influence newcomer performance (Bauer and Green, 1998), it remains unclear whether managers influence *all* newcomers to the *same* degree. The degree to which senior executives influence new executives before and after entry may vary depending on whether new executives are self-motivated to gather information that facilitates their performance in the new position and the extent to which they are reliant on senior executives' judgment. We contend that new executives' own P-O fit perceptions shape their motivation to improve performance and may weaken the influence of senior executives on that process.

Taken together, our research is designed to make meaningful theoretical contributions to the literature in three specific ways. First, despite the documented importance of recruiters' perceptions of newcomers during the interview and selection processes (Bretz et al., 1993; Cable and Judge, 1997), the extant literatures on socialization and new executive development have largely neglected the role of senior executive categorizations of new executives both prior to and after their entry. A major purpose of our investigation is to examine the extent to which senior executives' perceptions of new executive fit impact new executive adaptation to their job. Second, we investigate how the senior executive–new executive leader–member exchange relationship (LMX; Dienesch and Liden, 1986) affects the degree to which senior executives' P-O fit perceptions influence new executives' adjustment and performance. LMX theory suggests that leaders develop relationships of varying levels of trust, respect and liking with their employees (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Liden et al., 1997). Leader–member relations develop in a short time after newcomers' entry (Liden et al., 1993) and have been shown to be important for effective adjustment to new jobs (Bauer and Green, 1996). We contend that senior executives may provide more favorable treatment to and develop higher quality LMX relationships with new executives whom they categorize as fitting well with the organization, which further reinforces initial P-O fit perceptions by providing richer and more detailed information for senior executives and extends to subsequent



**Figure 1.** Hypothesized model.

H = hypothesis; P-O fit = person-organization fit; LMX = leader-member exchange;

OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; T1M = rated by senior executives at pre-entry; T2E = rated by new executives at Time 2, three months post entry; T2M = rated by senior executives at Time 2, three months post entry; T3M = rated by senior executives at Time 3, six months post entry.

on-the-job performance of new executives (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Third, the interaction between new executive and supervisor perceptions of new executive P-O fit render a novel perspective for understanding the role of P-O fit in the socialization process (Erdogan and Bauer, 2005; Nifadkar et al., 2012). Extant research has generally endorsed the positive influence newcomers' managers make on newcomer performance (Bauer and Green, 1998). Our research extends this line of research by suggesting that new executives who are motivated by their own high P-O fit perceptions may find senior executives' P-O fit judgments and support less salient for enhancing their in-role performance and promoting OCBs. Figure 1 depicts our overall theoretical model.

## Theoretical background and hypotheses

When entering a new organization, newcomers are likely to face ambiguities and uncertainties, and experience a 'breakpoint' or 'reality shock' (Jones, 1983). Socialization, a process through which newcomers learn the task and social knowledge to transition from 'outsiders' to 'insiders', is seen as a process of uncertainty reduction (Bauer et al., 2007). Interpersonal interactions with an organization's current insiders, such as newcomers' managers, appear to be pivotal in accelerating the newcomer socialization process and helping them enhance performance (Bauer and Green, 1998; Major et al., 1995). Indeed, research indicates that managers' treatment of their newcomers plays an influential role in shaping newcomer adjustment and performance outcomes (Jokisaari and Nurmi, 2009; Li et al., 2011; Nifadkar et al., 2012). Yet, it is unclear what perceptions precipitate managers' favorable treatment toward newcomers. Based on the socialization literature, we propose that senior executives' perceived fit of new executives matters in terms of the quality of the LMX relationships that senior executives develop with new executives during the first few months on the job. P-O fit, the compatibility between an individual and the organization in which he or she works (Kristof, 1996), has been described as one of the most dominant psychological concepts (Schneider, 2001). Meta-analytic results show that P-O fit is positively related to pre-entry (e.g. organizational attraction, job

acceptance and job offers) and post-entry criteria (e.g. new hires' job attitudes, task performance and contextual performance) (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Likewise, new executive P-O fit as perceived by their senior executives is expected to have an impact on how new executives and senior executives interact and how new executives behave and perform after entry.

Person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981, 1986), a theory that describes how managers' categorizations of their employees impact their interactions and behaviors, is particularly relevant in explaining the role of senior executives' perceptions in new executive performance and thus serves as a theoretical basis for our argument. This theory states that managers categorize and evaluate their employees at the beginning of their relationships through either a subconscious automatic process or a consciously monitored categorization process (Feldman, 1981). This categorization may direct managers' later perceptions of and interactions with these employees (Feldman, 1986). According to the selection literature, one important way that managers are likely to categorize candidates (i.e. future employees) is the extent to which they are thought to fit with the organization (Cable and Judge, 1996). It follows that senior executives may consciously and subconsciously categorize new executives into different groups in terms of their perceptions of new executives' P-O fit at an early stage of the development of the relationship. This categorization is based on both the new executives' salient behaviors as well as cues emanating from others in the organization, such as colleagues' comments pertaining to the new executives' attitudes and behaviors (Shore et al., 1995). Once these categories are formed, they guide senior executives' subsequent judgments and LMX relationships with their new executives (Hoobler et al., 2009; Liden et al., 1993; Shore et al., 1995). These LMX relationships, conveying interactions and exchanges between senior executives and new executives on their daily work, in turn, provide richer information with which senior executives can reform categorizations for new executive P-O fit after their entry (Feldman, 1981, 1986). As a result, this person categorization evokes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Eden, 1984) that generates expectations about new executives' task and extra-role performance and guides senior executives' decisions that directly influence new executive performance (Feldman, 1981, 1986).

### *Senior executives' pre-entry expectations of person-organization fit and post-entry leader-member exchange*

We first propose that senior executive expectations of P-O fit positively impact the quality of LMX relationships. LMX describes the individualized relationships leaders develop with each of their direct reports. High-quality LMX relationships are characterized by mutual respect, trust and liking and involve an exchange of resources that goes beyond the formal employment contract, whereas low-quality LMX relationships are limited to resource exchanges only for completing formal task assignments (Liden et al., 1997). According to person-categorization theory, through a series of observations, evaluation of background information and interviews, senior executives are likely to form impressions of how well new executives fit with the organization. When managers sense that new executives have a good fit with the organization prior to

entry, they are likely to engage in positive and supportive behaviors with the new executives that are consistent with their initial perceptions (Feldman, 1981; Liden et al., 1993). As such, managers are likely to show support and help to these new executives by providing useful information and feedback to the new executives to assist them with their work (Liden et al., 1997) and by helping them expand their social networks (Sparrowe and Liden, 2005). As a result, senior executives develop high-quality LMX relationships with these new executives who are judged as 'good fits' with the organization. Empirical evidence on socialization has shown that leaders' positive expectations of newcomers facilitate subsequent leader–newcomer exchange relationships (Chen and Klimoski, 2003; Liden et al., 1993). The recruitment and selection literature also provides indirect support to this argument, showing that interviewers (especially new executives' future bosses) are interested in evaluating candidates' fit with the organization and rely on these fit perceptions to make employment decisions (Bretz et al., 1993). Interviewers who have a generally positive impression of the candidates tend to engage in warmer, friendlier and more supportive behaviors in interacting with the candidates (Higgins and Judge, 2004; Judge et al., 2000). It is important to note that support from managers may be particularly valuable for newcomers in executive positions, which require more up-to-date information for making strategic decisions and involve more interpersonal networking than may be needed in other types of work (Hambrick et al., 2005). From a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), these benevolent behaviors initiated by senior executives, who see their new executives as fitting well with the organization, are likely to result in desirable reciprocation efforts on the part of new executives, both of which form the basis of high-quality relationships with their senior executives. In contrast, when senior executives hold initial images that certain new executives are not as well suited to the organization, senior executives tend to withhold their favorable treatment toward these new executives, leading to lower LMX:

*Hypothesis 1:* Senior executive expectations of P–O fit prior to entry are positively related to their LMX relationships with new executives after entry.

### ***Leader–member exchange as a mediator in the relationship between senior executive perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry person–organization fit***

Not only do senior executives form impressions of new executive P–O fit prior to entry, they also evaluate how well new executives fit with the organization after their entry based on their subsequent interactions with these new executives. We contend that senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit at pre- and post-entry are positively related. Our argument is guided by the notion that senior executives may engage in a hypothesis confirmation strategy, which suggests that once they form an initial impression about new executives, they tend to subsequently confirm their impressions (Dougherty et al., 1994; Kristof, 1996). In support of this argument, Saks and Ashforth (2002) found that one's pre-entry P–O fit expectations were positively related to their post-entry P–O fit perceptions.

We further propose that the positive association between senior executive perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P–O fit is mediated by their LMX relationships. This mediating process can be explained by person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981), which suggests that the categories (e.g. good or poor fit with the organization) managers assign to new executives at the beginning of a relationship affect their later interactions and relationships with these new executives, which further serves as a basis for their subsequent categorizations of new executives after their entry. After new executives enter the organization, senior executives may deepen their understanding of P–O fit through their exchange relationship with these new executives. Specifically, the social interactions and resource exchanges inherent in a LMX relationship at post entry may reinforce senior executive evaluations about new executive fit with the organization. In high-quality LMX relationships, new executives are likely to be motivated to exert more effort to adjust to the new workplace and gain more opportunities to demonstrate their potential value to the organization than is the case with new executives in lower quality LMX relationships (Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001). This, in turn, serves to strengthen senior executives' positive judgments of new executive post-entry P–O fit. In addition, when senior executives form an initially high expectation of new executives' P–O fit, they are likely to consider these new executives as embodying the characteristics of prototypical members of the organization. These favorable perceptions, in turn, motivate senior executives to include them as in-group members (Hogg and Terry, 2000) by forming high-quality LMX with them (Liden et al., 1997). Senior executives with high LMX relationships tend to trust new executives' capabilities (Bauer and Green, 1996), have positive evaluations of them (Liden et al., 1993), and regard them as fitting well with the new workplace (Van Vianen et al., 2011). Taken together, we contend that senior executives' perceptions of new executives' pre-entry P–O fit indirectly influences these post-entry perceptions through the LMX relationships between senior executives and new executives (see Erdogan et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2013):

*Hypothesis 2: LMX partially mediates the relationship between senior executive pre-entry expectations and post-entry perceptions of new executive P–O fit.*

### ***The interaction of senior executive and new executive person–organization fit perceptions on new executive performance***

Given the key role that managers play in impacting new executive adjustment in the organization, senior executive perceptions of new executive post-entry P–O fit are likely to positively influence new executive in-role and extra-role performance. In-role performance measures the degree to which new executives accomplish the tasks required for their jobs. Extra-role performance, or OCB, is defined as individual behaviors that are outside the formal reward system, but in aggregate promote organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988). Because of the strategic role and high-ranking positions that executives hold, executives' OCBs are highly valued, as they have an impact on organizational functioning and other employees' engagement in OCBs (Hambrick et al., 2005).

The person categorization process invokes the self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1948) by suggesting that senior executive expectations about new executives may directly influence senior executives' leadership behaviors displayed to the new executives and impact new executive future performance (Eden, 1984). As Eden noted, managers' positive perceptions lead them to 'be both more supportive and more task oriented towards their subordinates, resulting in higher subordinate performance' (p. 66). That is, when senior executives view new executives at post entry as fitting well with the organization, they tend to expect these new executives to be good performers and good citizens. These expectations may influence senior executives' leadership decisions, such as resource allocations and task assignments, which assist new executives to accomplish tasks and impact their actual in-role performance (Eden, 1992; Hoobler et al., 2009). In addition to the provision of tangible resources, the self-fulfilling prophecy allows senior executives to see the behaviors of those new executives whom they consider as fitting well with the organization in a more positive light (Srivastava et al., 2006) and to display more recognition and acceptance towards those new executives (Eden, 1992). This creates within new executives a sense of psychological closeness with their senior executives and organization (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013), which makes them more likely to voluntarily contribute more to the organization (Eden, 1992), thereby promoting more OCBs (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Tyler and Blader, 2000).

A precondition of the self-fulfilling prophecy is that employees are dependent on managers to boost motivation to perform well, and managers' expectations of these employees influence their leadership and motivation strategies (Eden, 1984). However, it may not be the case for new executives who already are motivated to perform at a high level. Prior research has shown that new executives' own perceptions of P-O fit motivate them to achieve higher task performance (Arthur et al., 2006) and engage in more OCBs (Cable and DeRue, 2002). Thus, we propose that new executives' own P-O fit perceptions may make senior executives' expectations less important.

It is important to note that senior executives' and new executives' perceptions of P-O fit are not necessarily aligned with each other. For example, after entry, new executives may experience a 'honeymoon effect' and see the organization in an overly positive light; however, this effect may only last a short period (Fichman and Levinthal, 1991) and after that, they may encounter unmet expectations and generate unfavorable feelings toward the organization, which is also known as a 'hangover effect' (Boswell et al., 2009). This process may affect their P-O fit perceptions. New executives' superiors, although in a close position to observe new executives' behaviors, may not be able to precisely feel what new executives actually experience and thus may form different evaluations of new executive P-O fit. In addition, neither senior executives nor new executives tend to have complete knowledge of the values of the organization (Feldman, 1981), and thus their subjective evaluations of new executive P-O fit are likely to be biased and divergent. Thus, the new executives and their senior executives may see new executive P-O fit differently and the interaction between the two may explain the level of new executive in-role performance and OCB.

We propose that new executives' P-O fit perceptions weaken the importance and salience of senior executives' positive perceptions. New executives with high P-O fit perceptions see a high congruence between what the organization exhibits and values and



what they value and desire to achieve in their careers (Kristof, 1996), resulting in a better understanding of and more confidence about their new roles (Erdogan and Bauer, 2005). In turn, they have a greater need to control their actions (Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009) and stronger motivation to put effort to accomplish tasks that will assist their careers (Arthur et al., 2006; Kraimer et al., 2011). New executives' efforts may be exhibited through a variety of behaviors, such as active information seeking, resource acquisition and social network building, which helps to clarify their roles and improve their performance (Bauer et al., 2007) and lessens the need to rely on their senior executives (Li et al., 2011). The social psychology literature suggests that when the support and help are not perceived as needed, senior executives' help and perceptions may be less beneficial for new executives' task performance (Deelstra et al., 2003; Fisher et al., 1982). Conversely, new executives who perceive low P-O fit may lack motivation to actively seek resources for their performance and hence are likely to passively wait for support from senior executives, which will pay off when the senior executive perceives that they fit well with the organization.

Regarding OCB, because of its altruistic and discretionary nature, perceptions of high P-O fit make new executives perceive the organization's success and problems as their own, be more concerned about their organization's improvement and functioning, and be more empathetic about coworkers' difficulties at work and more willing to offer help (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Oh et al., 2014). These affective experiences resulting from new executives' own fit perceptions serve as salient relational resources for them to exhibit OCBs, leaving senior executives' positive treatment and perceptions of their P-O fit to be somewhat redundant for encouraging OCBs. In contrast, for new executives who do not see themselves as fitting well with the organization, senior executives' P-O fit categorizations and their support becomes an important relational source in strengthening their relational bonding with the new workplace and increasing their motivation to contribute more:

*Hypothesis 3:* P-O fit perceptions of new executives and their senior executives interact, such that the relationship between senior executive perceptions of new executive post-entry P-O fit and new executive (a) in-role performance and (b) OCBs are more positive when new executives' own perceptions of post-entry P-O fit are lower.

## Method

### *Participants and procedures*

These data were collected over a period of six months from new executives of a Fortune 500 multinational pharmaceutical organization based in the United States as part of a larger data collection that has resulted in previously published work (Bauer, Erdogan, Liden, & Wayne, 2006). With the help of the organization's HR department, we identified all 231 new executives (both new hires and transferees to executive-level positions) and their senior executives to participate in the study. Only transferees moving to a new position with a new immediate superior were asked to participate

(transferees who were promoted, but still working under the same supervisor were not asked to participate). All surveys were web-based. At Time 1, senior executives (direct superiors of the new executives) rated their expectations of new executive P–O fit in a web-based survey that our research team sent to them directly. These senior executives were actively involved in the recruitment and selection process. This process took several days during which senior executives spent considerable time with the new executives during one or more on-site visits. Demographic information, including sex, age, race, education and type (i.e. whether a newcomer to the company or a transferee to the new position) for new executives were provided by the HR department of the company. The HR department also provided demographics for the senior executives. At Time 2, three months post-entry, both new executives and their senior executives were invited to complete surveys. The newly-hired executive survey assessed new executive P–O fit perceptions and LMX with their senior executives. The senior executive survey examined senior executives' ratings of new executive P–O fit. At Time 3, six months after their entry, senior executives rated new executives' in-role performance and OCB.

A total of 116 senior executives completed the pre-entry survey (response rate = 50%), 128 senior executives and 146 new executives completed the survey three months after entry (for senior executives: response rate = 55%; for new executives: response rate = 63%), and 111 senior executives provided ratings at six months after entry (response rate = 48%). The number of matched new executive-senior executive dyads with complete data across the three time points was 67, resulting in a final effective response rate of 29%. This response rate is comparable with those reported in previous studies including data collected at multiple times (e.g. Kim and Yoon, 2012; Major et al., 1995). According to organizational records, in the new executive sample, 66% of the new executives were new hires whereas 34% were managers transferred within the organization. A majority of the new executives were men (57%) and their average age was 41 years ( $SD = 7.20$ ). In terms of education level, 37% of the new executives had a bachelor's degree, 33% a master's degree and 30% a doctorate degree. With respect to new executives' job titles, 37.5% were associate directors, 26.6% were directors, 17.2% were general managers, 10% were senior managers or senior directors, and 6.2% were vice presidents. Individuals with these titles took significant and strategic managerial responsibilities of their organization and thus fit with the definition of executives (e.g. Geletkanycz, 1997). In the senior executive sample, 75% of the senior executives were men and the average age was 45 years ( $SD = 6.54$ ). Most of the senior executives had attained high levels of education: 22% held a bachelor's degree, 30% held a master's degree and 48% held a doctorate degree. On average, senior executives spent 149 minutes ( $SD = 121$ ) interacting with new executives during the selection and recruitment process.

## Measures

**Person–organization fit.** New executives' P–O fit was rated by both new executives and their senior executives using Saks and Ashforth's (1997) five-item scale. Specifically, new executives rated their perceptions of P–O fit at three months after entry (Time 2),

and senior executives rated their perceptions of new executive P–O fit both prior to entry (Time 1) and at three months after entry (Time 2). The items were presented with seven Likert-type response options, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely). New executives' and senior executives' evaluations had slightly modified wording. A sample item for new executives asked them to assess 'To what extent do you think the values of \_\_\_\_ (the name of the organization) are similar to your own values?' ( $\alpha = .85$ ). A sample item for senior executives to rate their expectations for new executives' P–O fit prior to entry was 'To what extent do you think the values of \_\_\_\_ (the name of the organization) will be similar to this employee's values?' ( $\alpha = .85$ ), and a sample item for senior executives' assessment of new executives' P–O fit at three months after entry (Time 2) was 'To what extent do you think the values of \_\_\_\_ (the name of the organization) are similar to this employee's values?' ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Leader–member exchange.** At three months after entry (Time 2), new executives rated their LMX quality using Liden and Maslyn's (1998) 12-item LMX-MDM scale. Respondents used a seven-point response format (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). This scale comprises four dimensions (affect, loyalty, contribution and professional respect) that together form a higher-order construct of LMX (Liden and Maslyn, 1998), which we created by averaging the 12 items. A sample item was 'My leader would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake' ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

**In-role performance.** At six months after entry (Time 3), senior executives rated new executives' in-role performance using the Role-Based Performance Scale (RBPS) developed by Welbourne et al. (1998) with a rating scale from 1 (Needs much improvement) to 5 (Excellent). Three categories of performance behaviors were measured: job performance (four items; e.g. 'quantity of work output'), innovative performance (four items; e.g. 'coming up with new ideas') and team performance (four items; e.g. 'working as part of a team or group'). We did not include the organizational performance dimension, because the items overlap with the OCB measure and also omitted the career performance dimension, because it is not closely related to one's job requirements. Welbourne and colleagues (1998) demonstrated that the different roles of performance, although distinct, are highly related to each other, resulting in a higher-order factor (i.e. the performance construct). Thus, we utilized overall performance as a latent factor and averaged all 12 items to represent new executive in-role performance ( $\alpha = .97$ ).

**Organizational citizenship behavior.** At Time 3, senior executives also rated new executive OCBs using Niehoff and Moorman's (1993) 20-item scale with a rating scale from 1 (Needs much improvement) to 5 (Excellent). Specifically, the scale assessed new executives' altruism (e.g. 'helping others who have heavy workloads'), courtesy (e.g. 'not abusing the rights of others'), sportsmanship (e.g. 'not consuming a lot of time complaining about trivial matters'), conscientiousness (e.g. 'being punctual') and civic virtue (e.g. 'keeping up with developments in the company'), with four items for each dimension. Researchers have found the five dimensions to be highly correlated and have suggested that the five dimensions can be used as a composite measure of global OCB (LePine et al., 2002). Thus, we averaged all items to form the OCB score ( $\alpha = .96$ ).

**Control variables.** We identified several theoretically relevant control variables. We controlled for *new executive type* (e.g. new hire or transferee from within the organization) owing to the potential differences in behaviors between new hires and transferees in terms of their knowledge of the company and their future senior executives. We also controlled for the amount of *time spent with new executives during recruitment*, as the more interactions senior executives had with the new executives, the higher the likelihood that senior executives have a strong expectation of their new executives' P-O fit prior to entry. We also controlled for *new executive sex* and *senior executive sex*, because sex may influence perceptions of P-O fit (O'Reilly et al., 1991).

### Response/non-response analyses

In order to examine any potential differences among those who responded to their corresponding surveys (for new executives, the survey at Time 2; for senior executives, surveys at Time 1, 2 and 3) and those who did not, we conducted independent *T*-tests (for continuous variables, such as age of new executives and senior executives, LMX and performance outcomes) and Chi-square tests (for categorical variables such as sex, race, education and employee status) for differences between non-respondents and respondents. For the new executive sample, the results showed that there were no significant differences between non-respondents and respondents in terms of their demographic information such as sex ( $\chi^2 [1] = 3.49, p > .05$ ), age ( $t [220] = .13, p > .05$ ), race ( $\chi^2 [5] = 5.56, p > .05$ ), education ( $\chi^2 [4] = 8.72, p > .05$ ) or employee status (i.e. new hires versus transferees) ( $\chi^2 [1] = .81, p > .05$ ). For the senior executive sample, the results revealed no significant differences between non-respondents and respondents regarding their sex ( $\chi^2 [1] = .94, p > .05$ ), age ( $t [211] = -.84, p > .05$ ), race ( $\chi^2 [5] = 7.60, p > .05$ ) or education ( $\chi^2 [4] = 8.60, p > .05$ ). Furthermore, results showed that there was no statistical difference between non-respondents and respondents with respect to their LMX relationships ( $t [144] = -.38, p > .05$ ), senior executives' ratings of in-role performance ( $t [125] = -.49, p > .05$ ) and OCB ( $t [125] = -.93, p > .05$ ).

### Power analysis

Although our sample was larger for some time points than others as shown in our correlation matrix (Table 1), in the end, we have a modest sample size ( $N = 67$ ). Therefore, we conducted power analyses to determine the power of the hypothesized mediation and moderation tests. By using Cohen's (1988) approach, we found that significant effect size change could be detected with greater than 95% power for senior executive perceptions of new executive P-O fit, in-role performance and OCB respectively, which exceed the conventional cut-off value of 80% (Cohen, 1992) and suggest that our sample was sufficient to detect significant mediating and moderating effects. Furthermore, because 94% of the senior executives in our sample rated only one new executive and the other 6% rated two or three new executives, the dependence issue resulting from one senior executive rating multiple new executives is not a major concern in the current sample. Thus, we proceeded with the analyses at the individual level.

**Table 1.** Confirmatory factor analysis results for study variables.

Model	Model description	$\chi^2$	d.f.	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta$ d.f.	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
<i>New executive rated variables</i>								
Two-factor model	LMX and P–O fit perceptions were treated as two separate factors	55.27	26			.92	.92	.13
One-factor model	LMX and P–O fit perceptions were combined as one factor	99.88	27	44.61	1	.83	.84	.20
<i>Senior executive rated variables</i>								
Four-factor model	Perceptions of new executives' pre- and post-entry P–O fit and ratings of new executives' in-role performance and OCB were four separate factors	202.98	129			.94	.94	.09
Three-factor model	Ratings of in-role performance and OCB were treated as a combined factor and the other two variables were another two factors	214.94	132	11.96	3	.93	.93	.10
Three-factor model	Perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P–O fit were treated as a combined factor and the other two variables were another two factors	305.37	132	102.39	3	.88	.89	.14
Two-factor model	Ratings of new executive in-role performance and OCB were treated as a combined factor and perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P–O fit were treated as a combined factor	315.63	134	112.65	5	.88	.88	.14
One-factor model	All four senior executive-rated variables were combined as one factor	403.57	135	200.59	6	.84	.84	.17

N = 67. All  $\chi^2$  and  $\Delta\chi^2$  were significant at .001 level; d.f. = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; LMX = leader–member exchange; P–O fit = person–organization fit; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

## Results

### *Confirmatory factor analysis*

Before testing the hypotheses, we conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to evaluate the discriminant validity of study variables using LISREL 8.72. For constructs that have been consistently shown as unidimensional (i.e. pre-entry and post-entry P–O fit), we included all items as indicators for each construct. For the multidimensional constructs (i.e. LMX, in-role performance and OCB), to maintain an acceptable subject-to-item ratio and obtain a reasonable degree of freedom of the models (Bandalos, 2002), we parceled items into their respective dimensions and used dimensions as indicators in the CFA (Bagozzi and Edwards, 1998). Item parcels tend to be more reliable and more normally distributed and provide more accurate parameter estimates than the items from which they are aggregated (Bandalos and Finney, 2001) and this item parceling technique has been used in a number of studies (e.g. Antonakis et al., 2003; Chen et al., 2007; Thompson, 2005; Webster et al., 2010).

Two separate sets of CFAs were conducted, because the measures were provided by two different sets of respondents (i.e. new executives and senior executives). To examine the distinctiveness of the two variables (LMX and P–O fit at Time 2) rated by new executives, the CFA results, as presented in Table 1, demonstrated that the hypothesized two-factor model (i.e. LMX and P–O fit as two separate factors) ( $CFI = .92$ ,  $IFI = .92$ ,  $RMSEA = .13$ ) yielded a better fit than the single-factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 44.61$ ,  $p > .001$ ). We acknowledge that the RMSEA value of the two-factor model is higher than the conventional cut-off value of .08 for a good fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1992). Owing to the support by other statistics (e.g. the chi-square difference scores; Anderson and Gerbing, 1988), we proceeded to treat new executives' LMX and P–O fit as two independent variables in the following analysis. In testing the discriminant validity for the variables rated by senior executives (i.e. senior executives' perceptions of new executive pre-entry and post-entry P–O fit and ratings of new executive in-role performance and OCB), the CFA results showed that the hypothesized four-factor model (i.e. the four variables as four separate factors) ( $CFI = .94$ ,  $IFI = .94$ ,  $RMSEA = .09$ ) produced a significantly better fit than a three-factor model (i.e. in-role performance and OCB as a combined factor and the other two variables as separate factors),  $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 11.96$ ,  $p < .001$ ; another three-factor model (i.e. senior executives' perceptions of pre- and post-entry P–O fit as a combined factor and the other two variables as separate factors),  $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 102.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ; a two-factor model (i.e. in-role performance and OCB ratings as a combined factor and senior executives' pre- and post-entry P–O fit perceptions as a combined factor),  $\Delta\chi^2(5) = 112.65$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and a one-factor model (all four variables as a combined factor),  $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 200.59$ ,  $p < .001$ . All in all, these results demonstrated that the study variables were distinct from each other.

### *Hypothesis testing*

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the study variables. We tested the hypotheses using hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses via SPSS 20.0 software. Table 2 presents the summary of the results.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, correlations among study variables.

Variable name	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 New executive type	.66	.46	—									
2 New executive sex	.57	.49	-.08	—								
3 Senior executive sex	.75	.45	.02	.18**	—							
4 Time spent with new executives during recruitment (T1)	149.10	121.49	.06	.12	.13	—						
5 Senior executive expectations of P-O fit (T1)	5.66	.57	-.14	.05	.08	-.01	(.85)					
6 LMX (T2)	5.84	.77	.14	.11	-.07	.08	.13	(.90)				
7 New executive perceptions of P-O fit (T2)	5.55	.78	.01	.18*	-.04	.11	.14	.42**	(.85)			
8 Senior executive perceptions of new executive P-O fit (T2)	5.59	.71	-.08	.06	.02	-.02	.27**	.19	.17	(.89)		
9 In-role performance (T3)	4.28	.59	-.08	-.04	-.06	.12	.21	.22*	.13	.60**	(.97)	
10 OCB (T3)	4.22	.52	-.15	.05	-.09	.08	.19	.22*	.12	.64**	.81**	(.96)

N for the correlations ranges from 87 to 237. SD = standard deviation. Reliabilities are in parentheses on the diagonal. New executive type coded as 1 = new hire, 0 = transferee. Sex is coded as 1 = male, 0 = female. Time spent with new executives during recruitment is reported in minutes. T1 = Time 1, pre-entry. T2 = Time 2, three months post entry. T3 = Time 3, six months post entry.  
P-O fit = person-organization fit. LMX= leader-member exchange. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.  
\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

**Table 3.** Summary of results.

Variables	LMX (T2)	Senior executive perceptions of new executive P-O fit (T2)		New executive in-role performance (T3)		New executive OCB (T3)	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<i>Control Variables:</i>							
New executive type	.19	.05	-.03	-.04	-.02	-.02	.00
New executive sex	-.02	.09	.12	.06	-.01	.09	.03
Senior executive sex	-.05	.12	.13	-.08	-.11	-.16	-.19
Time spent with new executives during recruitment	.11	-.01	-.07	-.07	-.06	.01	.02
<i>Mediation:</i>							
Senior executive expectations of P-O fit (T1)	.14*	.45***	.48***	.17	.18	.11	.12
LMX (T2)			.31**	.35**	.30*	.24*	.20
<i>Moderation:</i>							
Senior executive perceptions of new executive P-O fit (T2)				.46***	.43***	.53***	.50***
New executive P-O fit perceptions (T2)				-.06	.06	-.02	.08
Senior executive P-O fit × New executive P-O fit perceptions					-.25*		-.23*
R <sup>2</sup>	.20	.23	.31	.47	.52	.47	.51
ΔR <sup>2</sup>			.08		.05		.04

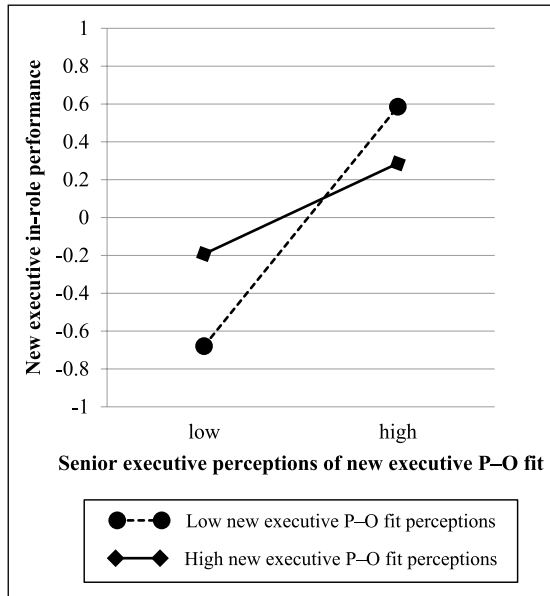
N = 67. New executive type: 1 = new hire, 0 = transferee; Sex: 1 = male, 0 = female. T1 = Time 1, pre-entry. T2 = Time 2, three months post entry. T3 = Time 3, six months post entry. P-O fit = person-organization fit. LMX = leader-member exchange. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

The coefficients shown in the table were standardized.

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

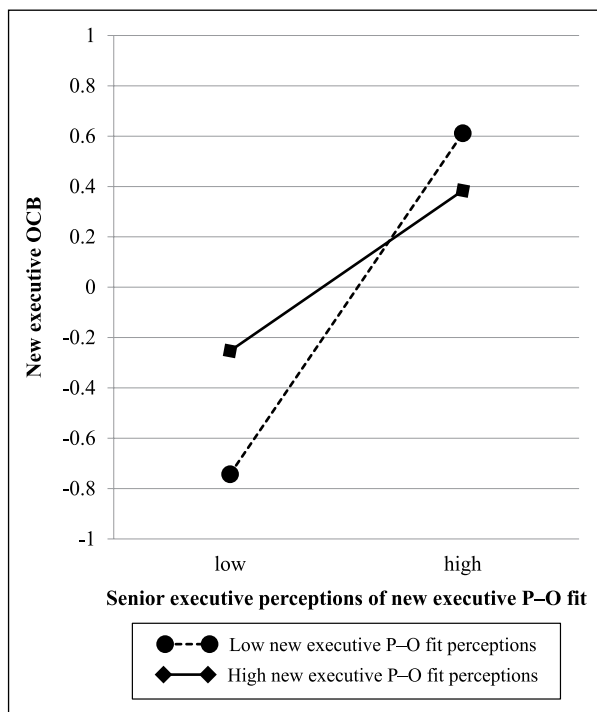
Consistent with Hypothesis 1 as shown in Table 3 (Model 1), after controlling for new executives' type (new hires versus transferees), sex of new executive and senior executive, and time (in minutes) senior executives spent with the new executive during recruiting, results showed that senior executive expectations of pre-entry P-O fit had a significantly positive relationship with their post-entry LMX ( $B = .14, p < .05$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Furthermore, as shown by the results of Model 3 in Table 3, when including senior executive perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P-O fit and LMX in the same equation, LMX was significantly related to senior executive perceptions of new executive post-entry P-O fit ( $B = .31, p < .01$ ), and the relationship between senior executive perceptions of new executive pre-entry and





**Figure 2.** Interactive effects of senior executive and new executive person–organization (P–O) fit perceptions on new executive in-role performance.

post-entry P–O fit remained significant ( $B = .48, p < .001$ ). Therefore, LMX partially mediates the relationship between senior executive expectations and perceptions of P–O fit, lending support to Hypothesis 2. Supporting Hypothesis 3, a significant interaction was found between senior executive and new executive perceptions of post-entry P–O fit in relating to new executive (a) in-role performance and (b) OCB. As shown in Models 5 and 7 in Table 3, after accounting for variance in the control variables and the main predictors, the interaction terms were significant for both in-role performance ( $B = -.25, p < .05$ ) and OCB ( $B = -.23, p < .05$ ). The interaction term alone explained an additional 5% of the variance in in-role performance (Model 5) and explained an additional 4% of the variance in OCB (Model 7). To further determine the nature of the interaction, Figure 2 showed that when new executives perceived a lower level of P–O fit (1 standard deviation [SD] lower), senior executive perception of new executive P–O fit had a significantly positive value on new executive in-role performance ( $B = .63, t = 4.21, p < .001$ ), whereas when new executives perceived a higher fit to the organization (1 SD higher), the relationship between senior executive P–O fit perceptions and new executive in-role performance was not significant ( $B = .24, t = 1.41, p > .05$ ). Similarly, as shown in Figure 3, senior executive perceptions of new executives P–O fit were more positively related to new executive OCB when new executives perceived lower fit with the organization ( $B = .68, t = 5.15, p < .001$ ) than when new executives experienced a higher degree of fit with the organization ( $B = .32, t = 2.23, p < .05$ ). These findings provide support for Hypotheses 3a and 3b.



**Figure 3.** Interactive effects of senior executive and new executive person–organization (P–O) fit perceptions on new executive organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

### Auxiliary analyses

To test the hypothesized relationships in an integrated fashion and to accurately estimate the non-normally distributed indirect effects, we followed Edwards and Lambert's (2007) path-analytic approach, which adopts a bootstrapping technique to produce 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for indirect effect estimation. This approach allowed us to test a 'second stage moderation model' (Edwards and Lambert, 2007), wherein new executive P–O fit perceptions act as a moderator of the path from senior executive P–O fit perceptions to performance outcomes, which is the second stage of the indirect effect of LMX on performance outcomes. The path from senior executive expectations of P–O fit to LMX was also included. Using 1000 resamples and after controlling for the effect of senior executive perceptions of new executive pre-entry P–O fit on LMX, we found a significant indirect effect of LMX on in-role performance (through senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit) at lower levels of new executive P–O fit perceptions ( $\beta = .19$ , CI [.049, .522]), but an insignificant indirect effect at higher levels of new executive P–O fit perceptions ( $\beta = .07$ , CI [–.047, .141]). The difference between the indirect effects at higher and lower levels of new executive P–O fit perceptions was significantly negative ( $\beta = -.12$ , CI [–.504, –.037]). Similarly, we found that the indirect effect of LMX on OCB through senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit

was significantly positive when new executive P–O fit perceptions were lower ( $\beta = .21$ , CI [.056, .466]) but was not significant when new executive P–O fit perceptions were higher ( $\beta = .10$ , CI [–.033, .183]). The difference between the indirect effects at higher and lower levels of new executive P–O fit perceptions was significantly negative ( $\beta = -.11$ , CI [–.389, –.049]). These results thus lend further support to the hypotheses.

## Discussion

Understanding the factors influencing new executive performance is of paramount importance given the high financial cost of selecting, training and compensating new executives and the major decisions they make within organizations (Conyon, 2006). Despite the importance of managers' attitudes in shaping newcomers' behaviors and of P–O fit perceptions in guiding newcomers' decisions, scholars have not yet theoretically and empirically examined whether, and how, senior executives' P–O fit perceptions impact newly hired executives in a major way and how P–O fit perceptions of senior executives and new executives interacts to affect new executives' performance. To fill this important gap in the literature, and to advance our knowledge of new executive performance, the current research grounds predictions firmly on person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981). Further, it develops a theoretical model that integrates the influence of P–O fit from both new executives' and their senior executives' perspectives as well as prior to and after their entry. We found that senior executives' expectations of new executive P–O fit prior to entry impacts new executives through the quality of their work relationships, which further solidified senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit after entry and affected new executive in-role performance and OCBs. Furthermore, our study represents an active response to recent calls for the consideration of both new executives and their senior executives (Bauer and Green, 1998; Bauer et al., 2007), and discovers that senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit exerted a significantly positive influence on new executive in-role performance and OCB only when new executives' own P–O fit perceptions were lower. These results offer a number of theoretical and practical implications.

As a key contribution, the current study sheds light on the crucial role senior executive perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P–O fit play in building new executive performance at a later time point. Although prior research has demonstrated how newcomers' anticipation prior to entry influences their perceptions and behaviors after entry (e.g. Carr et al., 2006; Major et al., 1995; Swider et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2013) and how managers' interactions with newcomers facilitate newcomers' adjustment to the new environment (e.g. Bauer and Green, 1998; Nifadkar et al., 2012), limited attention has been paid to the fact that newcomers' future bosses (i.e. new executives' senior executives) also have pre-entry expectations and these may directly affect their relationships and interactions with these new executives after entry. Our study is the first of which we are aware to investigate senior executive expectations of new executive fit *both* prior to and after entry as well as their impact on new executive in-role and extra-role performance. Using person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981) as a theoretical lens, we explain that senior executive expectations of P–O fit before they actually come into the organization plays an important role in guiding senior executives' interactions and relationships with these new

executives, which further shapes senior executive P–O fit categorizations of these new executives after entry. This, in turn, positively links to new executive in-role performance and extra-role performance. Our three-phased investigation of new executives in a pharmaceutical company largely supported these arguments. Thus, the study addresses a critical omission in both the socialization and new executive development literatures and advances our understanding of how senior executives influence new executive performance outcomes before and after their entry.

Not only do we address *how* senior executives impact new executive performance, but we also answer the question of *when*. Senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit are likely to lead to their providing help to these new executives, which further benefits new executive performance. Our results revealed that senior executive P–O fit perceptions influence outcomes for new executives whose P–O fit perceptions are low. However, senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit may be seen as less influential for new executives whose own P–O fit perceptions are high. An interesting finding is that the highest performance occurs when there are lower levels of new executive P–O fit perceptions, but higher levels of senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit. This implies that high new executive P–O fit perceptions and high senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit may be somewhat redundant in terms of enhancing new executive performance. Stated otherwise, for new executives with high self-reported P–O fit perceptions, their own motivation and capability alone is sufficient for them to perform well in the organization. This may be especially true for newcomers in executive positions, who generally have more experience and are better able to perform well and contribute more than other members if they see themselves as fitting well with the organization and are self-motivated to exert effort in demonstrating their capabilities. The findings thus contribute a critical and novel perspective to the literatures of P–O fit and executive socialization. Further, as prior research reported that managers and employees tend to look at things in a different light owing to reasons such as employment status, experience and biased information (Bashshur et al., 2011; Liao et al., 2009), we built on this perspective and found that new executives and their senior executive perceptions of new executive P–O fit are not only different but also appear to function as substitutes, because they are both beneficial for new executive performance outcomes. We showed that the role of senior executive P–O fit perceptions is diminished in the presence of high levels of new executives' own P–O fit perceptions.

### *Practical implications*

The study offers significant implications for new executive development in organizations. Organizations devote a great deal of money, time and energy when hiring and selecting executives in the hope that they will perform at a high level and have a positive impact on organizational effectiveness. Results of the current study suggest that the senior executives form high-quality relationships with new executives and facilitate and improve new executive performance when they believe – before and after organizational entry – that these new executives fit well with the organization. Therefore, we recommend that senior executives in organizations be involved in new executives' selection and subsequent socialization in order to obtain a more accurate evaluation of their degree

of fit with the organization, and exert more influence in helping these new executives to adjust to their new positions.

Assessing new executives' perceptions of their fit with the organization is especially important given that socialization assistance needs to be provided to new executives who perceive relatively low levels of fit. It is imperative that the organizational members reach out to such executives so that fit can be enhanced. Although it is not problematic for new executives to initially rely on their immediate senior executives for guidance, as executives they eventually need to achieve the self-motivation expected of those at senior levels of the organization. Our results showed that new executives with high perceived fit are less responsive to the fit perceptions of their senior executives and are less reliant on their senior executives to assist them in achieving performance outcomes. These findings imply that with high P-O fit perceptions, new executives are likely to be self-motivated to improve their performance levels. Thus, socialization practices should include attempts to enhance new executives' P-O fit perceptions and make them feel motivated to work for their new organizations. It is also likely that P-O fit perceptions enhance new executives' concern for their organizations and galvanize their motivation to engage in more OCBs (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Thus, organizations may not only design sound hiring procedures to select candidates who see themselves as fitting well but also pay attention to new executives' feelings about their level of fit during the socialization process so that fit perceptions can be augmented.

### *Limitations and future research directions*

Our findings should be considered in light of potential limitations, which point to several promising areas for future research. A limitation of this study is that our final sample size was modest. Although a total of 116 senior executives completed the pre-entry survey, 128 completed the survey at three months after entry, and 111 completed the survey at six months after entry, and a total of 146 new executives participated, the number of matched dyads (new executives paired with senior executives) following listwise deletion was 67 (effective matched-dyad response rate = 29%). Although the response rate is acceptable compared with previous studies (Shore et al., 1995), the relatively small sample size may raise concerns of statistical power and our ability to generalize these results to other settings. We feel this is not a major concern as the power analysis results suggest that 67 dyads were sufficient to detect significant mediating and moderating results (Cohen, 1992). In addition, because executives are unique members in an organization, our sample size of new executives is relatively smaller than those of studies examining newcomers in other positions. We thus do not view the sample size of new executives as a serious limitation of the findings of our study. Future research would benefit from testing our hypotheses with newcomers from lower levels of the organizational hierarchy with larger sample size.

Second, although our primary focus is on LMX as a mediator in the senior executives' perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P-O fit, we cannot deny the possibility of other theoretically relevant variables that could explain this relationship. Indeed, we found the mediating role of LMX to be partial, suggesting the existence of additional mediators. Thus, a promising future step to take is to further explore

potential mediating variables in senior executive perceptions of new executive pre- and post-entry P-O fit. Other potential mediators include senior executives' behaviors toward and resource allocation for new executives. For instance, senior executives may provide valuable resources to new executives whom senior executives regard as fitting well with the organization. These resources may increase new executive engagement in their new jobs (Kahn, 1990), which, in turn, may enhance senior executive evaluations of new executive post-entry P-O fit. Relatedly, future research can deepen our understanding of *how* P-O fit perceptions of new executives and senior executives influence new executive performance outcomes through affecting new executives' motivation and behaviors.

Third, an interesting finding of the current study lies in the interplay between new executive and senior executive perceptions of P-O fit. For new executives who are self-motivated by their own high P-O fit perceptions, their senior executives' P-O fit perceptions become less important. However, new executive P-O fit perception is not the only boundary condition of the impact of senior executive P-O fit perception on new executive performance. For instance, new executives who possess ample task resources may also be less reliant on senior executives to enhance their performance. Or new executives' job context, such as job demand and complexity, is likely to help us to understand when senior executives' perceptions and behaviors are more salutary for new executives. Thus, the interaction finding from the current study should encourage scholars to more carefully consider the role of senior executives in the socialization process and to further specify boundary conditions that clarify when senior executives' perceptions and behaviors are able to positively influence new executive performance outcomes.

Fourth, our study focused on new executives' behavioral adaptation to the new organization, measured by senior executive rated in-role and extra-role performance. Senior executives' evaluations of performance, although being frequently and widely used in theory and practice, may not capture every aspect of new executives' behaviors at work. The salient role of senior executives' perceptions in new executive performance could be owing to the fact that senior executives provided ratings of new executive performance and were likely to think highly of those new executives they perceived as fitting well with the organization. Indeed, senior executives' ratings of P-O fit and performance were related significantly and positively in our data. Thus, other measures based on observations of coworkers, clients, subordinates or objective data, such as sales performance or financial revenue, may offer additional valuable information that represents how new executives behave and perform at their new roles. Future research will benefit from providing a deeper understanding of the different aspects and evaluations of new executives' performance and behaviors.

In conclusion, drawing on person-categorization theory, the current study proposed and found that senior executive expectations of P-O fit prior to entry may be influential in shaping the LMX relationships between senior executives and new executives, which, in turn, positively related to senior executive perceptions of new executive P-O fit after entry. Furthermore, senior executive P-O fit perceptions of new executives played a positive role in new executive performance outcomes only for new executives perceiving low P-O fit. The integration of new executives' and their senior executives' perspectives

represents a response to the call for research on the consideration of both new executives and organizational insiders (Bauer and Green, 1998; Bauer et al., 2007). We hope the current study sparks additional work based on an interactionist perspective to further explore the adjustment process and executives in particular.

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