Coupling high self-perceived creativity and successful newcomer adjustment in organizations: The role of supervisor trust and support for authentic self-expression

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COUPLING HIGH SELF-PERCEIVED CREATIVITY AND SUCCESSFUL NEWCOMER ADJUSTMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE ROLE OF SUPERVISOR TRUST AND SUPPORT FOR AUTHENTIC SELF-EXPRESSION

ABSTRACT

This study addresses how supervisors can facilitate the socialization of newcomers with high self-perceived creativity into their new jobs. We combine self-verification theory and current literature on socialization in a dual-stage moderated mediation model where a) newcomer self-perceived creativity interacts with supervisor trust in the newcomer to trigger supervisor perception of newcomer creativity; and b) supervisor perception of newcomer creativity, in turn, interacts with supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression to impact newcomer adjustment outcomes (i.e., task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms). A two-wave, multisource study of 146 newcomer–supervisor dyads provides support for our predictions, suggesting that high levels of supervisor trust and support for authentic self-expression serve as moderating conditions allowing supervisor perception of newcomer creativity to positively mediate the relationship between newcomer self-perceived creativity and newcomer adjustment.

Keywords: Socialization, adjustment, creativity, newcomer, supervisor, trust, authenticity.

INTRODUCTION

Self-perceptions, or individuals' self-views of their own standing on specific attributes (McNulty & Swann, 1994; Pelham & Swann, 1989), provide employees with a sense of understanding that helps them navigate their work environment (Farmer & Aguinis, 2005; Swann, 1987), encouraging them to behave in ways that are consistent with how they see themselves and with how others see them (George & Park, 2016; Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989). This drive for self-consistency is particularly salient when new employees ("newcomers") enter an organization. Newcomers often choose their new organization based on assumptions they already hold about themselves (Louis, 1980). Consequently, when newcomers enter an organizational environment that facilitates their self-views to be verified and reflected back to them – a phenomenon that is referred to as self-verification (Swann, 2011) – they are more likely to transition successfully, or "adjust", into their new job (Ashford & Saks, 1996; Bauer et al. 2007; Cable and Kay, 2012; Cable, Gino, & Staats, 2013). In contrast, the surprise created by a mismatch between newcomers' self-perceptions and managerial expectations can impair newcomers' fit into their new job (Louis, 1980). Cable and Kay (2012) have demonstrated the positive impact of newcomers' self-verification of important attributes - such as self-monitoring, self-disclosure and core self-evaluation - on successful adjustment.

In this paper, we argue that newcomers' self-verification of their creative abilities can help organizations foster their newcomers' creativity that will then positively impact their performance (Shalley & Gilson, 2004), and investigate the conditions for this to happen. Newcomers' self-verification of their perceived creativity – defined as one's perceptions of his/her own ability to produce novel and useful ideas for products, services, processes, or procedures (Amabile, 1988) –

still represents an unresolved conundrum for socialization theories. One stream of work has suggested that injecting newcomers' "fresh blood" into organizations can be an effective way for sustaining organizational innovation and long-term survival (Coupland, 2001), as newcomers inherently have the potential to look at work-related issues from a novel perspective, diversify the knowledge base of their team and increase the amount and variety of new ideas within a group (Choi & Thompson, 2005; Cini, 2001; Levine, Choi, & Moreland, 2003; Rink, Kane, Ellemers, & Van Der Vegt, 2013). However, other socialization scholars have largely assumed that newcomers' creative approaches to their new role might impair their capacity to reduce role uncertainty and, thereby, to adjust to their new job successfully (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer et al., 2007; Jones, 1986). For instance, some studies have found that socialization efforts aimed at spurring newcomers' role innovation have resulted in poorer adjustment (Jones, 1986; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). This has led many organizations to force newcomers to adopt standardized behaviors and procedures, instead of encouraging them to express their unique creative potential (Cable et al., 2013), might ultimately disregard, rather than facilitate, their fit with their new role.

Despite the theoretical priors that portray newcomer creativity as a potential obstacle to adjustment — yet bearing in mind the potential relevance to organizational performance of new employees' creativity — the creativity-adjustment relationship has received scant empirical attention. To date, only two socialization studies have empirically examined the link between creativity and newcomer adjustment outcomes. Harris and colleagues (2014) identified task performance (an adjustment outcome) and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity as distinct positive outputs of the socialization process. However, they did not assess the relationship

between these constructs, nor did they consider newcomer self-perceived creativity. Kim, Hon, and Crant (2009) did provide evidence for a positive effect of newcomer self-perceived creativity on career satisfaction but disregarded the role of supervisor perception of newcomer's creativity.

The limitations of these theoretical and empirical premises raise the question of when, or indeed whether, newcomers with high self-perceived creativity can behave in ways that are consistent with their self-perception and with others' expectations in order to fully capitalize on their creative potential while adjusting successfully to their new job. To succeed in these two outcomes, creative newcomers need to navigate the organizational uncertainty surrounding perceptions of their creativity. They must also recognize that challenging the status quo by deploying their creativity is not incompatible with the organizational norms they strive to follow. It follows that exploring how newcomers' self-verification of their own perceptions of their creativity can enhance their adjustment is then crucial to advance the debate on the extent to which the creativity of new members may be beneficial or costly for organizations. Newcomers' failure to self-verify their own creative self-perceptions might result in a missed opportunity for organizations to retain creative talent – thus decreasing potential competitiveness (Allen, Eby, Chao, & Bauer, 2017). As such, the present study explores the conditions that allow for alignment between self-perceptions and others' perceptions of newcomers' creativity, in order to understand how to support newcomer adjustment at work. We integrate two different perspectives into our focus on the socialization of newcomers: the newcomer perspective (defined as the extent to which newcomers see themselves as being highly creative) and the supervisor perspective (defined as the extent to which the supervisor regards the newcomer as creative). Specifically, we theorize how supervisors can influence the relationship between newcomers' self-perceived

creativity and key outcomes of newcomer adjustment, such as task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms (Ashforth & Saks, 1996).

We present and empirically test a two-stage moderated mediation model (Figure 1) that identifies two key conditions. First, we identify supervisor trust in the newcomer – defined as the willingness of the supervisor to be vulnerable to the actions of the newcomer (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995) – as the condition under which newcomer self-perceived creativity positively influences supervisor perceptions of focal newcomer creativity. Second, we theorize supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression. We define this as the extent to which the supervisor values and encourages a newcomer's true self in daily activities (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). We theorize this as the second condition that enhances the perceived organizational endorsement of newcomer creativity and thus allows newcomers to adjust successfully to their new workplace.

--- INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE ---

THEORY

Creativity and newcomer adjustment: Combining the newcomer and the supervisor perspectives

The socialization of newcomers is a process where we expect the integration of the newcomer's and supervisor's perspectives to shape the effects of newcomer self-perceived creativity on adjustment outcomes. Supervisors are the first to evaluate newcomers (Ellis, Nifadkar, Bauer, & Erdogan, 2017), and through their perceptions and responses to newcomers' proactive behaviors, they play a crucial role in a newcomer's socialization and subsequent adjustment (Ellis et al., 2017; Fang, Duffy, & Shaw, 2011; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). It is

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specifically supervisors who, as key socialization agents (Ellis et al., 2017), are tasked with evaluating newcomer performance, defining appropriate role behaviors, and providing important information about their tasks at work (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). We thus expect newcomers' supervisors to act as key factors in ensuring a successful socialization process.

In order to highlight why the *joint* consideration of newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity is theoretically relevant, we integrate the socialization perspective (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) with self-verification theory (Swann, 2011). Both socialization and self-verification theories share the core assumption that newcomers strive for consistency between how they see themselves and how they behave (Swann, 1987; Cable & Kay, 2012). And yet, both theories also provide complementary explanations of the conditions allowing newcomers to behave in ways consistent with themselves. The key tenet of self-verification theory is that in order to maintain their existing self-views, and thereby behave in ways they perceive to be consistent, individuals (newcomers) strive to elicit perceptions from others (supervisors) that match their own views of themselves (Cable & Kay, 2012; Swann et al., 1989). To this end, newcomers need to successfully use self-verification strategies— i.e., display signs and symbols that are reflective of their self-views — as a way to enhance the visibility of their self-relevant attributes and to maximize the chances of obtaining self-verifying perceptions from their supervisors (Moore, Lee, Kim, & Cable, 2017; Swann, 1983). A lack of such self-verification could prevent newcomers from successfully adjusting to their new jobs.

The socialization perspective complements this view by suggesting that newcomers have an inherent concern for understanding the appropriateness of their behaviors to meet

organizational expectations (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). It is only when new hires become fully aware of the behaviors valued by the organization that they can effectively navigate the perceived uncertainty surrounding organizational entry (Mignonac, Herrbach, Serrano Archimi, & Manville, 2018), and thus increase the odds that they adjust successfully to their new role (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). In sum, the tenets of self-verification theory and the socialization perspective, taken together, suggest that for newcomers with high self-perceived creativity to consistently enact their self-views and adjust successfully to their new job, their self-perceived creative attributes need to be noticed, verified but *also* endorsed by organizational members. If newcomers' self-perceived creativity were verified but not endorsed, then newcomers would feel compelled to engage in organizationally valued behaviors that fail to reflect their true creative selves. Similarly, if newcomers recognize that their creativity is organizationally valued but then fail to make their own creative attributes visible to organizational members, they would be unable to self-verify their creative identities. In both cases, newcomers' need for consistency would be thwarted, resulting in impaired adjustment outcomes.

Consequently, incorporating self-verification theory into the socialization literature is essential to understand more accurately *how* and *when* newcomers can behave consistently with their self-perceived creativity in order to enhance adjustment. Our objective in this paper is thus two-fold: first, we ought to theorize and test how supervisors, by confirming newcomers' self-perceived creativity, fulfill the self-verification needs of newcomers; and second, we theorize and test how supervisors, by organizationally endorsing creative behaviors, may allow self-verified newcomers to become successfully adjusted to their new workplaces.

We thus propose that supervisor perception of newcomer creativity may positively mediate newcomer adjustment outcomes (see Figure 1). This mediating effect is first contingent on 1) supervisor trust in newcomer – i.e., the condition that enables the self-verification of newcomers' self-perceived creativity, as detailed in the first stage of the model – and, subsequently, on 2) supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression – i.e., the condition that indicates organizational endorsement of self-verified creativity, as illustrated by the second stage of the model (Grandey, Foo, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012; Cable et al., 2013).

Supervisor trust as condition for newcomers' self-verification

The first stage of our model theorizes supervisor trust in newcomer as the condition conducive to the self-verification of newcomer self-perceived creativity. Trusting supervisors are expected to enable newcomers that perceive themselves as highly creative to engage in successful self-verification strategies. Successful strategies would allow newcomers to flag up their creativity-relevant identity cues (e.g., creative initiative, such as coming up with novel solutions or offering alternative viewpoints), thereby eliciting self-verifying supervisor perceptions of their own creativity. As a result, newcomers would be more likely to prove their creativity effectively and prompt further self-verifying perceptions from their supervisors (Cable & Kay, 2012).

Creativity literature suggests that the evaluation and subsequent recognition of someone's creativity has a subjective component (Zhou & Woodman, 2003), which is deeply rooted in a perceiver's associative evaluation process (Zhou, Wang, Song, & Wu, 2017). This process refers to the perceiver's automatic evaluative response to a target, which is triggered by a stimulus that is like relevant information stored in the perceiver's memory (e.g., information about the challenging versus dangerous nature of a behavior; Bassili & Brown, 2005). When activated

memories are more positive in valence, the perception of the target will also tend to be positive, as the perceiver will likely recognize in the target features that are concordant with the positive information stored in memory (and vice versa; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006).

The associative evaluation account suggests that supervisor trust is relevant for the recognition of creativity in the socialization context. Creative people, unlike conformists, tend to have higher cognitive flexibility and are more likely to engage in divergent thinking (Amabile, 1983), which could lead to deviating from conventional ways of completing tasks. While some could deviate for beneficial and constructive reasons (e.g., improving how employees can accomplish a work task), others might deviate to rationalize and justify the enactment of unethical behaviors (e.g., complying less with work duties; Gino & Ariely, 2012). Because supervisors possess relatively little knowledge of the integrity and benevolence of their newcomers in the early phases of socialization, they are inherently unable to gauge the extent to which newcomers will use their creativity for helpful rather than dishonest purposes (McAllister, 1995). Importantly, while trusting people tend to see others as benevolent and reliable, their distrusting counterparts tend to interpret others' intentions as dishonest, selfish, and unsupportive (Ross & Mirowsky, 2006). Accordingly, in the socialization context, different degrees of trust towards newcomers holding strong self-perceived creativity will likely influence the activation of supervisors' positive (versus negative) associations between newcomers' creativity and supervisors' corresponding positive (or negative) perceptions.

In line with the activation account, supervisors who trust their newcomers (as opposed to their distrusting counterparts) would associate their newcomers' creativity with useful and benign intentions, as creativity matches the information that supervisors have stored in their memory. In

other words, newcomers with strong self-perceived creativity would activate many positive associations for trusting supervisors. Supervisors, in turn, would thus be more inclined to view newcomers' creativity positively. As a result, newcomers' self-verification strategies (to make their creative-self noticeable to supervisors) will be more likely to confirm their creative identity with success. In other words, newcomers' efforts to make new modifications to existing work procedures, as well as to engage in alternative thinking and problem solving, will be rated more positively by supervisors (Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Supervisors will thus be able to infer that newcomers are highly creative, resulting in a positive relationship between newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity:

H1: Supervisor trust in newcomer moderates the relationship between newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity, such that the relationship is stronger when supervisor trust in newcomer is high rather than low.

Supervisor support for authentic self-expression as condition for successful newcomer adjustment

The second stage of our model (Figure 1) defines the supervisor behaviors under which self-verified newcomer creativity positively influences successful adjustment. Self-verification research has shown that if self-verification strategies succeed and self-verification needs are fulfilled, then people will be less likely to withdraw from the context they entered in the first place (i.e., the organization), both psychologically and physically (Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004), creating effective conditions for successful adjustment (Bauer et al., 2007). This premise suggests that, in general, self-verifying supervisor perceptions of newcomer creativity should lead to better adjustment outcomes, but by integrating self-verification with a socialization approach,

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we posit that supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression acts as a necessary boundary condition.

The socialization perspective has consistently highlighted that newcomers experience intense feelings of uncertainty and anxiety about fitting in and performing well. As such, they are particularly vulnerable to organizational influence and expectations regarding appropriate behaviors, values, and attitudes (Cable et al., 2013; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Newcomers' concerns about understanding organizationally desired behaviors could well become particularly relevant when such behaviors imply uncertain and potentially undesired outcomes, as is the case with creativity (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean-Parks, 1995). Creativity scholars suggest that in order to maximize the chances of successfully achieving creative outcomes, creative workers need to develop ideas beyond their initial states (i.e., idea elaboration), champion their ideas to obtain approval within the work environment (i.e., idea promotion), and convert them into finished products, services or processes (i.e., idea implementation; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013; Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). Effective accomplishment of these three stages inherently requires newcomers' full involvement in the entire creative process to meet its related demands. However, such involvement only becomes possible if newcomers realize that organizational members (i.e., supervisors) value creativity.

This line of reasoning suggests that the benefits provided by self-verifying supervisor perceptions of newcomers' creativity would increase if such perceptions also clearly conveyed that same creativity as endorsed by the organization. Signaling endorsement could make it more likely for newcomers to successfully complete all the phases of the "idea journey" (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017) and ultimately bring about the changes that would help them face the

challenges associated with their new job (Devloo, Anseel, De Beuckelaer, & Salanova, 2015). The sense of psychological stability, control, and understanding issued from verified creative self-views would not be thwarted by a lack of endorsement, thus increasing the odds of newcomers translating their verified self-perceived creativity into improved adjustment (Swann, 2011).

We contend that supervisors could play a key role in conveying the extent to which newcomers' unique, creative potential should be supported by the organization. Creativity research has highlighted the role of supervisor support in facilitating the conversion of creative ideas into tangible usable products (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). Thus, providing specific support for newcomers' authenticity would be a key supervisory behavior legitimizing newcomers' creative approaches and highlighting creativity as an organizationally valued and encouraged endeavor, as opposed to pushing for preserving traditional approaches. Therefore, we propose that supervisors can facilitate the transition from supervisors' verifying perceptions of newcomer creativity to newcomer adjustment outcomes by supporting *newcomers' authentic expression*, i.e., allowing newcomers to act as a reflection of their true creative core self (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression is expected to enable newcomers to engage successfully in elaboration, promotion, and implementation activities that facilitate the conversion of newcomers' creative conceptions into usable, adjustment-oriented innovations (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017).

We will now detail the theoretical mechanisms that explain the moderating role of supervisor support for authentic self-expression on three key outcomes of newcomer adjustment that have received extensive attention in the socialization literature: improved task performance, increased job satisfaction, and reduced stress (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Nelson & Quick, 1991).

Task Performance. First, supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression conveys the message that newcomers can express themselves without the risk of being judged or criticized (Cable et al., 2013; Grandey et al., 2012). If newcomers receive this encouragement from their supervisors, then supervisors' verification of newcomer creativity would more likely signal that newcomers will not be punished for proposing their ideas nor for potential failures that might result from the implementation of their creative solutions. Newcomers may thus accept the risk of introducing novel ideas (Baer & Frese, 2003), enabling them to elaborate on them further, as well as promote, experiment with, and adopt creative solutions that can improve their work performance (Gong, Zhou, & Chang, 2013).

Job satisfaction. Second, people who believe they can express their authentic selves tend to attribute their actions to internal causes and in turn feel responsible for them (Cable et al., 2013). This process boosts their commitment to goal-directed behaviors and improves goal accomplishment (Kahn, 1990), which in turn contributes towards job satisfaction (Koestner, Lekes, Powers, & Chicoine, 2002). Thus, by perceiving that high (i.e. strong) authenticity-supportive conditions are provided, newcomers likely believe that they can rely on their creative expertise to bring about changes that might facilitate adjustment. As a result, newcomers tend to be more committed to putting their ideas into practice, thereby gaining a sense of personal competence (Devloo et al., 2015) that boosts their job satisfaction (Koestner et al., 2002).

Stress. Third, high authenticity-supportive conditions allow room for newcomers' autonomy (i.e., increased psychological freedom and volition) in the execution of work tasks, in turn allowing them to perceive a greater concordance between their work and their own values, motives, and goals (Leroy, Anseel, Gardner, & Sels, 2015). Research has indicated that when

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employees recognize that their work is concordant with their own values, they are more likely to

find meaning in stressful and challenging events, and this buffers against stress symptoms and

improves well-being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007). These benefits are

particularly relevant in the context of creativity, since creativity inherently requires newcomers to

engage in demanding tasks that can give rise to general stress, such as convincing potentially

resistant decision makers to support their ideas or solving unexpected obstacles to idea

implementation (Janssen, 2004). By enhancing newcomers' experience of volition and

psychological freedom at work, perceiving support for authentic self-expression will lead

newcomers to feel that their work is more concordant with their creative needs, values, and

motives. As a result, they will ascribe a positive meaning to the challenging demands associated

with creative tasks and consequently, their creativity will be less likely to evoke general stress

reactions. Thus we hypothesize that:

> *H2: Supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression moderates the relationship*
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> *between supervisor perception of newcomer creativity and newcomer adjustment outcomes*
>
> *(task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms), such that the relationship is*
>
> *positive when supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression is high rather than*
>
> *low.*

Overall moderated mediation model

We combine our two hypotheses in an integrative framework, where the sequential path

from newcomer self-perceived creativity to adjustment outcomes – through supervisor

perceptions of newcomer creativity – is moderated both by supervisor trust in newcomer and

supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression. We predict that when supervisor trust

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and support for authentic self-expression are higher, there will be stronger relationships between (a) newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity, and between (b) supervisor perception of newcomer creativity and adjustment outcomes. Accordingly, we hypothesize that supervisor trust in a newcomer and supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression will intervene in the first stage and the second stage of the moderated mediation model, respectively.

> *H3: Supervisor trust in newcomer and supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression moderate the mediated relationship between newcomer self-perceived creativity on newcomer adjustment outcomes (task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms) through supervisor perception of newcomer creativity, such that the mediated relationship is positive when supervisor trust in newcomer and supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression are both high.*

METHODS

Data and sample

Our initial sample consisted of 445 apprentices enrolled in a 2-year Master in Management program at a top-10 ranked French business school. During their masters, apprentices worked as full-time paid employees for a year (3 weeks a month) by various domestic and international firms based in France. 55% of the apprentices were women and they averaged 25.1 years (SD = 1.61) of age.

Each apprentice was assigned to a mentor employed by the business school. Every two months, each mentor organized a joint meeting with the apprentice and his or her supervisor to discuss various aspects of the apprenticeship, including the supervisor's expectations of the

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apprentice. Informal interviews with all 12 mentors confirmed that almost all supervisors expected their apprentices to propose new creative ideas that could lead to concrete improvements and positive changes in their new workplaces.

> "Very few apprentices do per se creative tasks on a regular basis, except maybe those who work in advertising. However, most of our apprentices have to be creative in the sense that the enormous majority of their supervisors that I talked to expect them to be so, given that they want them to try to improve the functioning of their team, to propose new ideas, and to work towards implementing these ideas in order to improve the functioning of their team and their firm." (Mentor, 5)

All apprentices were surveyed twice, both one month and six months after they joined the organization, to capture the meaningful intervals of the socialization process (e.g., Morrison, 1993). Of the 445 apprentices surveyed, 320 responded to the first questionnaire (72% response rate); of these, 274 responded to the second (86% retention). We also surveyed the supervisors twice, one month and six months after the apprentices arrived, yielding 196 supervisor responses in the first case, and retaining 146 (74%) in the second. Thus, at Time 1 (after one month), the study sample included 196 newcomer–supervisor dyads; and at Time 2 (after six months), it consisted of 274 newcomers and 146 supervisors, or 146 newcomer–supervisor dyads. Respondents represented the industries included in the apprenticeship program (e.g., manufacturing, computing and technology, consulting and research, and finance) and worked across different functional areas and positions. To minimize common method bias and establish a temporal order for our variables, we measured the three adjustment outcomes (task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms) at Time 2, but asked supervisors to rate their own level of

trust in newcomer and support for newcomer authentic self-expression, as well as supervisor

perception of newcomer creativity, at Time 1 (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Measures

Apprentices completed surveys of their self-perceived creativity and adjustment outcomes

(task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms); supervisors rated newcomers'

creativity, as well as their own trust in newcomers and support for newcomers' authentic self-

expression. All measures were collected using 7-point Likert scales.

Newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer

creativity. We selected four items from the Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory (KAI)

sufficiency of originality subscale (Kirton, 1976) that could assess both newcomers' self-

perceived creativity and supervisor perception of newcomer creativity. Items from this subscale

have previously been used to measure creativity perceptions in several studies (e.g. Farmer,

Tierney & Kung-McIntyre, 2003). We selected the four items that would be less subject to the

interpretation of supervisors (e.g. "I always think of other ways to solve problems when I run into

obstacles"; Cronbach's alpha = .70). We used the same items to measure supervisors' perceptions

of newcomers' creativity, rewording the items accordingly to refer to newcomers (e.g. "The

newcomer has lots of new ideas".) Cronbach's alpha was .73.

Supervisor trust in newcomer. This five-item scale (α = .79), based on Gabarro and

Athos's (1976) measure, was adapted to the supervisor–newcomer context, adding items such as

"I am not sure I fully trust this newcomer" (reverse scored).

Supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression. We adapted a three-item

support for authentic self-expression scale from Cable et al. (2013) to capture the extent to which

the supervisor supports the newcomer's expression of authenticity ($\alpha = .88$). A sample item is "I try to make sure that the newcomer doesn't feel that she or he needs to hide who he or she really is."

Newcomer adjustment outcomes. To evaluate stress symptoms, we selected three items ($\alpha = .70$) from House and Rizzo's (1972) six-item scale (e.g., "I have felt fidgety or nervous as a result of my job"). Similarly, job satisfaction ($\alpha = .96$) and performance ($\alpha = .92$) each include three items from the scales developed by Yang, Mossholder, and Peng (2009). Job satisfaction included items such as "All things considered, I am satisfied with my job," and task performance used items such as "I perform my job well."

Control variables. Following prior socialization and creativity research, we controlled for several variables. To rule out organizational heterogeneity, we controlled for firms' size and industrial sector (manufacturing-intensive vs. knowledge-intensive industries[1]), since variations in organizational characteristics can influence employee creativity and adjustment (Gong et al., 2013). We also included the effects of supervisors' age, education level, gender, and organizational tenure as demographics can affect supervisors' ratings of employee performance (Ferris, Munyon, Basik, & Buckley, 2008). Finally, we included several variables to control for newcomers' heterogeneity, including demographics (gender and age), job role (assistant, advisor, or manager), and job function (administration and human resources, sales and marketing, or accounting and finance). Since some apprentices can inherently be more talented than others, we control for their human capital using their university GPA (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). We also

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[1] We opted for this simplified coding to preserve degrees of freedom. A detailed coding of the 20-plus industries present in our sample did not significantly change our results.

included newcomer self-monitoring as a control (Fang et al., 2011; de Vet & de Dreu, 2007). We implicitly control for students' previous work experience and education as the sample is very uniform in terms of age (M: 25.1 years; SD 1.61) and lack of work experience.

Data analyses and estimation procedure

To examine the first and second stages of the moderated mediation model (H1 and H2, respectively), we conducted hierarchical, moderated multiple-regression analyses with centered variables in PROCESS (Model 1; Aiken & West, 1991; Hayes, 2012). For the integrative dual-stage moderated mediation model (H3), we conducted bootstrap analyses in PROCESS (Model 21; Hayes, 2012), which uses ordinary least squares to estimate the moderated mediation effect. This method supports the simultaneous testing of complete models that integrate mediation and moderation to examine the conditional nature of the mediated relationship. It also features a bootstrapping procedure to estimate conditional mediated relationships, by resampling the data multiple times and calculating the statistic of interest (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993). A 95% confidence interval (CI), created through the bias-corrected percentile method, helped test the significance of the conditional mediated relationships (Hayes, 2013).

RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analysis

We established discriminant validity among the study variables by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis with Mplus 7.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012). Table 1 shows that the hypothesized seven-factor model displayed a good fit to the data ($\chi^2[231] = 350.90$, confirmatory fit index = .94, root mean squared error of approximation = .06, standardized root

mean residual = .06), outperforming all simpler representations of the data ($p < .01$). The

descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliability estimates for the measures are in Table 2.

--- INSERT TABLES 1 AND 2 ABOUT HERE ---

Hypotheses testing

The results of the hierarchical moderated regression analysis for supervisor perception of

newcomer creativity (first-stage moderation) and the three adjustment outcomes (second-stage

moderation) appear in Table 3. For each dependent variable, we first present the hypothesized

moderation in the first two models, then include control variables in subsequent specifications to

reduce potential multicollinearity concerns and to showcase coefficients stability.

--- INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE ---

We first test H1 in Models 1 through 3. After including the linear term in Model 1, we add

the interaction term between newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor trust in newcomer

in Model 2. The positive coefficient of the interaction term demonstrates a significant effect on

supervisor perception of newcomer creativity ($B = .20$, $p < .05$), explaining 4% of the additional

variance. Controlling for a wide set of organizational, newcomer, and supervisor factors does not

significantly change the interaction term (Model 3), indicating the robustness of our findings.

Simple slope test for H1. We explore the shape of the hypothesized interaction with a

simple slope test (Aiken & West, 1991) as illustrated by an interaction plot for supervisor

perception of newcomer creativity in Figure 2. Newcomer self-perceived creativity does not

predict supervisor perception of newcomer creativity ($B = -.22$, *ns*) at low levels of supervisor

trust in the newcomer (1 SD below the mean). However, at high values of trust (1 SD above the

mean), it does ($B = .23$, $p < .05$). These results support H1 and meet the first condition for the dual-stage moderated mediation.

--- INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE ---

We follow a similar procedure to test H2 in models 4 to 12. The interaction term of supervisor perception of newcomer creativity and supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression is also positive and significantly relates to task performance ($B = .25$, $p < .01$, Model 5), job satisfaction ($B = .29$, $p < .01$, Model 8), and stress symptoms ($B = -.21$, $p < .05$, Model 11), accounting for an additional 6%, 8%, and 4% of the variance, respectively. Once again, the addition of newcomer, supervisor, and organizational controls strengthen confidence in our results (Models 6, 9, 12).

Simple slope test for H2. A simple slope analysis suggests that when supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression is above the mean, supervisor perception of newcomer creativity is significantly associated with higher levels of task performance (+1SD $B = .46$, $p < .01$; –1SD $B = -.08$, *ns*) and job satisfaction (+1SD $B = .48$, $p < .05$; –1SD $B = -.57$, $p < .01$), and lower levels of stress (+1SD $B = -.52$, $p < .01$; –1SD $B = .14$, *ns*). Furthermore, as can be seen in Table 3, the interaction effects remained significant after the inclusion of control variables. Similarly, the results of the simple slope test were analogous to those obtained without the inclusion of control variables for each criterion, namely: supervisor perception of newcomer creativity (+1SD $B = .25$, $p < .05$; –1SD $B = -.22$, $p < .05$), task performance (+1SD $B = .53$, $p < .01$; –1SD $B = -.12$, *ns*), job satisfaction (+1SD $B = .49$, $p < .05$; –1SD $B = -.66$, $p < .01$), and stress symptoms (+1SD $B = -.47$, $p < .01$; –1SD $B = .19$, *ns*)

The interaction plots are presented in Figure 3. These results yield consistent support for H2, the second condition in the dual-stage moderated mediation.

--- INSERT FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE ---

Mediation test for H3. To test H3 we bootstrapped 5,000 samples to generate bias-corrected 95% CIs for the magnitude of the mediated relationships between newcomer self-perceived creativity and adjustment outcomes through supervisor perception of newcomer creativity at different values of supervisor trust and supervisor support for authentic self-expression. Table 4 shows that supervisor perception of newcomer creativity mediates the effects of newcomer self-perceived creativity on task performance (estimate = .11, 95% CI [.01, .26]), job satisfaction (estimate = .12, 95% CI [.01, .31]), and stress symptoms (estimate = –.12, 95% CI [–.31, –.01]). However, this is only true if both supervisor trust and supervisor support for authentic self-expression are high (+1 SD). In the other combinations of supervisor trust and supervisor support for authentic self-expression (e.g., high–low, low–high, low–low), the mediated relationships between self-perceived creativity and adjustment outcomes are not significant. These results support H3. Results also reveal that when supervisor support for authentic self-expression was high but supervisor trust was low, newcomer self-perceived creativity was significantly related to reduced task performance (estimate = –.10, 95% CI [–.23; –.01]), reduced job satisfaction (estimate = –.11, 95% CI [–.28; –.01]), and increased stress symptoms (estimate = .12, 95% CI [.01; .29]) via supervisor perception of newcomer creativity.

Post hoc analyses and robustness tests

To ascertain the unique moderating effects of supervisor trust in newcomer and supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression, we controlled for the interaction effect of

newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor support for authentic self-expression on supervisor perception of newcomer creativity. We also controlled for the interaction effect of supervisor perception of newcomer creativity and supervisor trust on adjustment outcomes. We also tested an alternative dual-stage moderated mediation model to screen for a different combination of the first- and second-stage moderators of the mediated relationship between self-perceived creativity and adjustment outcomes through supervisor perception of newcomer creativity. Overall, no potential combination of first-stage (supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression) and second-stage (supervisor trust in newcomer) moderators yields any significant direct and mediated relationship, while all the hypothesized interaction effects remained significant (detailed results from post hoc analyses are available upon request).

DISCUSSION

Our study aimed at addressing an unresolved question for the literatures on socialization and creativity: how can newcomers holding strong self-perceived creativity achieve better adjustment? Our findings showed that supervisors play a key role in this process. Our results suggest that to understand how newcomers who perceive themselves as highly creative can achieve desirable adjustment outcomes, it is essential to take into account supervisors' perceptions of newcomers' creativity as well supervisors' behaviors that enable such perceptions to fulfill newcomers' need for self-consistency. This carries important theoretical contributions for both literatures on socialization and creativity.

Theoretical contributions to the socialization literature

Several socialization studies have shown that newcomers' creativity expressed through innovative role orientation was an obstacle to a newcomer's adjustment (Jones, 1986; Saks et al.,

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2007) and that, on the contrary, encouraging employees' identification with organizational norms and values enhanced adjustment (Carmeli, Gilat, & Waldman, 2007). Based on these findings, most socialization studies focused newcomers' behaviors that favored newcomer's adjustment to the organizational norms and rules, even at the expense of the expression of the newcomer's authentic self. And yet, recent studies have indicated that newcomers who are encouraged by the organization to express, rather than suppress, their identity and personal characteristics (e.g., Saks et al., 2007; Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013) are more likely to adjust successfully to their new job. Our study enriches this latest research stream by demonstrating that allowing newcomers to express their true selves — also by engaging in behaviors that are not traditionally associated with a newcomer's adjustment, such as creative behaviors — can favor a newcomer's successful adjustment. Moreover, whilst many studies have already investigated the role played by the organization in order to favor newcomers' adjustment, only recently scholars have started to investigate more precisely the role of the supervisor in the newcomer's adjustment process (e.g. Ellis et al., 2017; Fang, Duffy, & Shaw, 2011; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Our paper extends these findings by underlying the crucial role of the supervisor in the newcomer's adjustment by favoring the authentic expression of newcomer's creative potential and the benefits for organizations if they invest in leveraging employee creative potential from the very beginning of the employment relationship.

Our also findings suggest that self-verifying supervisor perceptions of newcomers' creativity cannot produce successful adjustments without the reinforcement of authenticity-supportive supervisory behaviors. As such, we highlight the key role of self-verification in the socialization process of newcomers holding strong self-perceived creativity and, more precisely,

emphasize how successful verification of newcomers' self-views of their own creativity is a preliminary condition for effective adjustment. Accordingly, our results confirm the relevance of the self-verification framework in the socialization context (Cable & Kay, 2012). They also provide a unique contribution to self-verification theory by demystifying the core assumption that self-verifying perceptions from others of self-relevant attributes inevitably enhance individuals' effective functioning (Swann, 2011). Rather, we suggest that in the socialization context, when employees' self-relevant attributes (i.e., creativity) are not fully compatible with the rules and principles underlying socialization practices, others' self-verifying perceptions may not yield the work-related benefits of successful self-verification, unless they convey that such attributes are organizationally valued and encouraged.

Theoretical contributions to the creativity literature

Our study contributes to the creativity literature by proposing a new explanation for the conditions under which a positive relationship between self-perceptions and others' perceptions of creativity might exist. This helps to disentangle some mixed findings about the relationship between self-rated perceptions of creativity and supervisor ratings (Pretz & McCollum, 2014; Furnham, Zhang, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2006; Reiter-Palmon, Robinson-Morral, Kaufman, & Santo, 2012). Consistent with self-verification theory, we show that during socialization, self-perceptions of creativity are more likely to elicit matching supervisor perceptions when newcomers can make their creativity visible and recognizable by their supervisors, an opportunity that can be provided by trusting supervisors.

Prior empirical research has shown that trusting supervisors can nurture empowerment, reciprocal trust (Seppälä et al., 2011), and improve work involvement (Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999)

among subordinates, which are essential to boost performance (Logan & Ganster, 2007). We extend these findings suggesting that trusting supervisors allow newcomers to verify their self-views of creativity through matching supervisor perceptions. This finding is theoretically relevant since organizational theorists have argued that trust is crucial in times of uncertainty, such as the organizational entry period (van der Werff & Buckley, 2017). Because creativity might accentuate the uncertainty surrounding the early phases of employment, due to its inherent unpredictable nature (Harris et al., 2014), understanding the conditions that can enable employees with highly creative self-views to take the "courage" to invest in creative actions is vital in order to advance current knowledge on the determinants of creative outcomes in uncertain organizational conditions. In this respect, our study extends present-day theorizing on trust and creativity by proving that supervisors' trust plays a central role in enabling creativity among employees who perceive themselves as capable of producing creative ideas but who, at the same time, are confronted with the heightened ambiguity of the entry period.

Moreover, to date, the only study to assess the creativity-adjustment relationship (Kim et al., 2009) found that newcomers' creativity was positively associated with career satisfaction and perceived insider status. We build on this work and show that in conditions that promote authentic self-expression, creativity can contribute positively to work-related outcomes that are highly valued by both organizations and newcomers. To date, only Cable et al. (2013) have examined the role of authentic expression supporting practices in a socialization context. However, the authors did not assess how authenticity-supportive practices relate to newcomer creativity. Our study moves the creativity literature a step forward by providing empirical evidence for a positive link

between supervisor perception of newcomer creativity and newcomer adjustment outcomes in the presence of authenticity-supportive supervisory behaviors.

Managerial implications

Our findings show that it is critical for managers to identify ways to help newcomers adopt behaviors that are consistent with their creative self-views. Our findings suggest that organizations should be interested in recruiting and retaining newcomers with high creative self-views, as their self-verification needs push them to signal their creativity by striving to develop alternative solutions. To this end, organizations could administrate empirically validated self-report questionnaires on creativity to new entries in the early phases of the socialization process to survey their levels of self-perceived creativity. Our findings also stress the necessity for supervisors to adopt a trusting attitude toward newcomers. Even though supervisors cannot be fully aware of their newcomers' benevolence and integrity, they could still obtain additional data on new hires, such as verified background information and activity on social network sites, which would allow supervisors to estimate more accurately newcomers' responsibility and dependability. As a result, supervisors could be in a better position to determine the extent to which their new hires deserve to be trusted. Moreover, supervisors managing newcomers with high self-perceived creativity should help them identify and leverage their authentic best selves in their new employment setting. For example, before newcomers introduce themselves to their new work colleagues, supervisors could grant newcomers dedicated time to reflect on the attributes that best describe who they truly are and the strengths that allow them to perform well (Roberts et. al, 2005). Finally, our results emphasize the importance of monitoring newcomer creativity through supervisor evaluations, as well as the significance behind training potentially creative

newcomers to develop skills that would allow them to achieve high levels of creative performance. To this end, design-thinking (Brown, 2009) and serious play (Statler, Heracleous, & Jacobs, 2011) training programs could be implemented during the socialization process in order to develop newcomers' core creative skills.

Limitations and future research

We encourage future research to apply the self-verification framework further to provide new insights into socialization practices that promote newcomers' optimal functioning at work. For example, future studies could test self-verification assumptions on behaviors other than creativity, such as self-efficacy and organizational citizenship behavior. It would be interesting to explore how newcomers who perceive themselves as good organizational citizens could successfully obtain self-verifying perceptions from other organizational members (i.e., supervisors or colleagues) who facilitate their adjustment. For example, the difference in hierarchical levels and how this impacts the self-verification process could be explored.

A few limitations of this study also point to some directions for future research. First, we collected our data at two points in time, from two different sources, yet we cannot draw conclusive statistical inferences about causality. To account more precisely for our conditional mediating process, continued research might measure each variable at subsequent points in time and adopt longitudinal estimation methods. Second, because the newcomers participating in our survey all had the same limited work experience with the organization, the generalizability of our findings is limited. Additional studies might attempt to replicate our results with a more heterogeneous population that includes newcomers with a variety of organizational tenure. Third, despite providing new knowledge about how to enhance creativity and adjustment among

newcomers with high self-perceived creativity, we cannot comment on these important outcomes for newcomers who do not view themselves as creative, as newcomers in our study displayed relatively high levels of average self-perceived creativity (M = 5.40, SD = .77). Further research should address this important question by identifying situational contingencies that enable newcomers with low self-perceived creativity to bring out their creative potential and use it to adjust to their new work environment.

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Table 1

Fit Indices for Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta \chi^2$	Δdf	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Hypothesized six-factor model	350.90*	231	–	–	.94	.06	.06
Six-factor models							
Combining STN and SSNA	610.77*	237	259.87*	6	.81	.10	.09
Combining STN and SPNC	476.42*	237	125.52*	6	.86	.08	.08
Combining SSNA and SPNC	480.18 *	237	129.28*	6	.87	.08	.07
Combining task performance and job satisfaction	656.75*	237	305.85*	6	.78	.11	.09
Combining task performance and stress symptoms	442.41*	237	91.51*	6	.89	08	.08
Combining job satisfaction and stress symptoms	415.62*	237	64.72*	6	.91	.07	.07
Five-factor models							
Combining supervisor-rated variables (STN, SSNA and SPNC)	701.77*	242	350.87*	11	.76	.11	.09
Combining Time 2 variables (task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms)	720.58*	242	369.68*	11	.75	.12	.10
Three-factor model (combining STN; SSNA and SPNC; and task performance, job satisfaction, and stress symptoms)	1062.66*	249	711.76*	18	.58	.15	.11
One-factor model (combining all variables)	1733.18*	252	1382.28*	21	.24	.20	.17

Notes. N = 146. CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean residual; STN = supervisor trust in newcomer; SSNA = supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression; SPNC = supervisor perception of newcomer creativity.

*p < .01.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Newcomer self-perceived creativity	5.40	.77	(.70)						
2. Supervisor perception of newcomer creativity	4.39	.78	−.03	(.73)					
3. Supervisor trust in newcomer	5.86	.80	−.13	.40**	(.79)				
4. Supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression	5.97	.84	−.13	.33**	.35**	(.88)			
5. Newcomer task performance (T2)	5.34	.85	−.01	.21*	.14	.11	(.92)		
6. Newcomer job satisfaction (T2)	5.30	1.42	−.09	.00	.04	.03	.48**	(.96)	
7. Newcomer stress symptoms (T2)	3.85	1.20	−.06	−.10	−.05	.05	−.10	−.27**	(.70)

Notes. N = 146. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) appear along the diagonal in parentheses.
p < .05; **p* < .01.

Table 3

Hierarchical Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses of Newcomer Adjustment Outcomes

Variables	Supervisor perception of newcomer creativity			Newcomer task performance			Newcomer job satisfaction			Newcomer stress symptoms		
	$M1$	$M2$	$M3$	$M4$	$M5$	$M6$	$M7$	$M8$	$M9$	$M10$	$M11$	$M12$
Newcomer self-perceived creativity (NSPC)	0.02	0	–.01	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Supervisor perception of newcomer creativity (SPNC)	–	–	–	0.05	0.1	0.12	–.01	–.09	–.12	–.13	–.08	–.04
Supervisor trust in newcomer (STN)	.41**	.37**	.38**	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression (SSNA)	–	–	–	.19*	0.12	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.09	0.09	–.05	0.01
NSPC × STN	–	.20*	.22*	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
SPNC × SSNA	–	–	–	–	.25**	.27**	–	.29**	.31**	–	–.21*	–.22*
Controls [1]	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.16	0.2	0.25	0.04	0.1	0.26	0	0.08	0.17	0.02	0.06	0.12
ΔR^2	–	0.04	0.05	–	0.06	0.16	–	0.08	0.19	–	0.04	0.06
F	13.83**	11.83**	2.72**	3.57*	5.46**	3.55**	0.06	3.93*	2.15*	1.33	3.04*	1.38
ΔF	–	6.66*	0.7	–	9.05**	2.77**	–	11.65**	1.57	–	6.36**	0.89

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. N = 146.

[1] Controls include: firm size, firm sector, supervisor age, gender, education and tenure, and newcomer age, gender, job role, job function, GPA and self-monitoring.

Table 5

Conditional Mediated Relationships between Newcomer Self-Perceived Creativity and Newcomer Adjustment Outcomes via Supervisor

Perception of Newcomer Creativity

First-stage moderator	Second-stage moderator	Newcomer task performance		Newcomer job satisfaction		Newcomer stress symptoms	
		Estimate	*95% confidence interval*	*Estimate*	*95% confidence interval*	*Estimate*	*95% confidence interval*
High STN	High SSNA	.11*	(.01, .26)	.12*	(.01, .31)	−.12*	(−.31, −.01)
High STN	Low SSNA	−.02	(−.09, .03)	−.14*	(−.37, −.01)	.03	(−.05, .20)
Low STN	High SSNA	−.10*	(−.23, −.01)	−.11*	(−.28, −.01)	.12*	(.01, .29)
Low STN	Low SSNA	.02	(−.02, .09)	.13	(.00, .37)	−.03	(−.20, .05)

Notes. N = 146; Confidence intervals are based on 5,000 bootstrapping samples (using PROCESS, Hayes, 2013). STN = supervisor trust in newcomer; SSNA = supervisor support for newcomer authentic self-expression.
*p < .05.
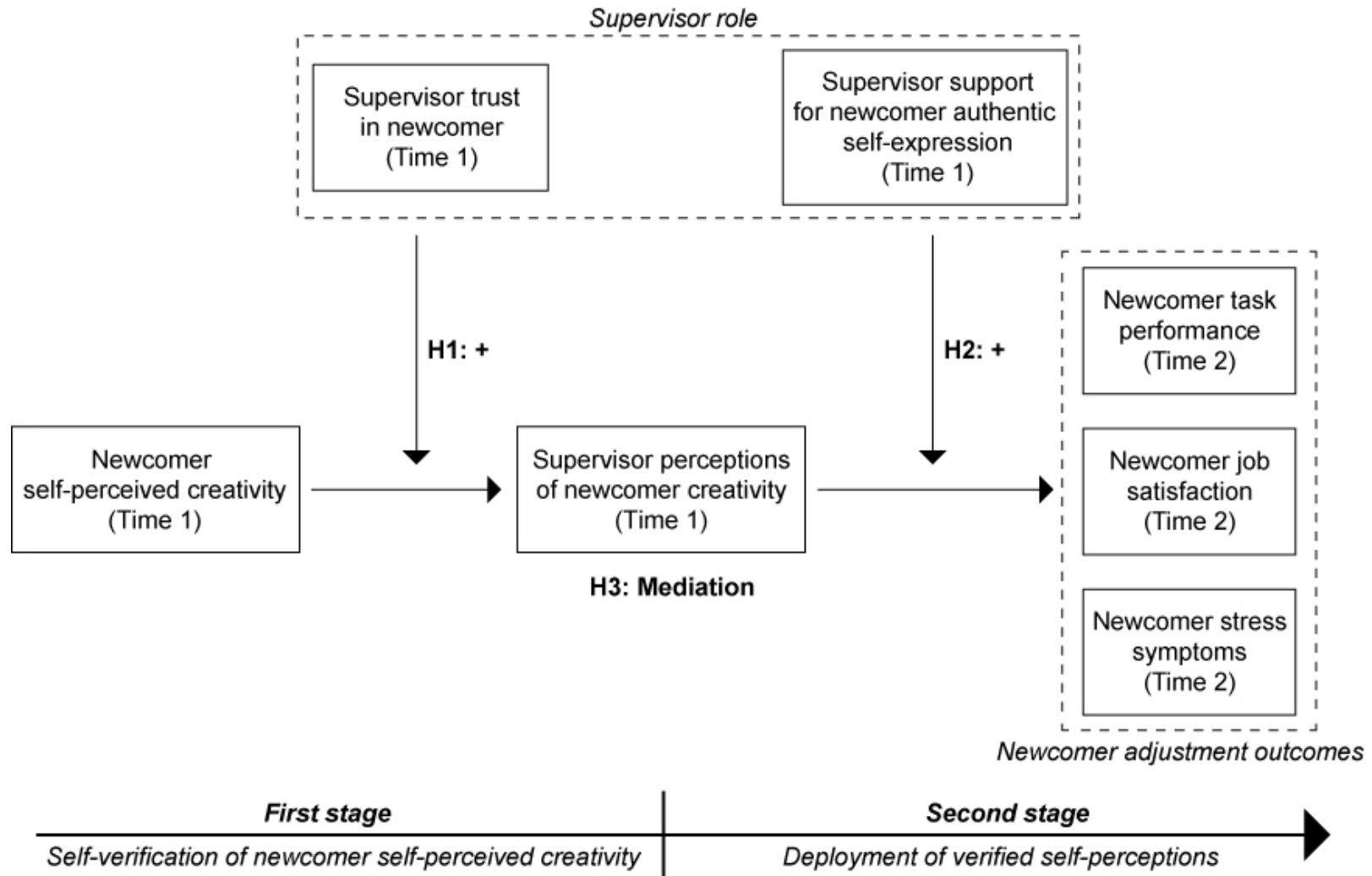
Figure 1

Theoretical model

Figure 2

Interaction of newcomer self-perceived creativity and supervisor trust in newcomer (STN) for predicting supervisor perception of newcomer
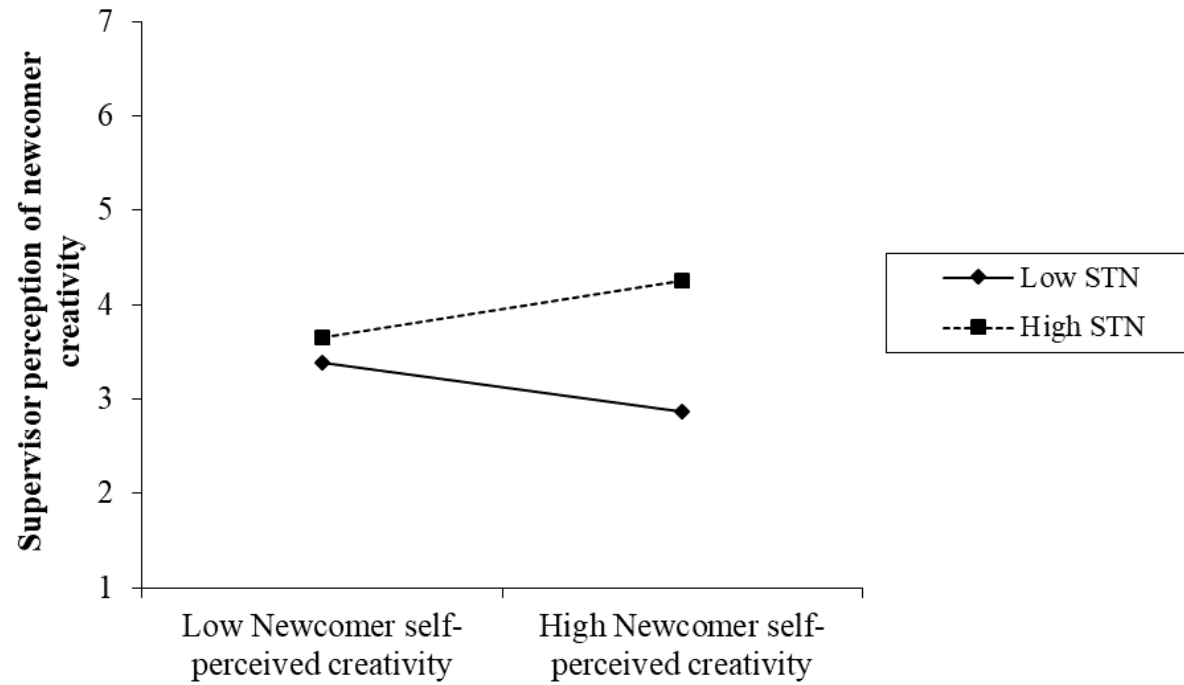
creativity

Figure 3

Interactions of Supervisor Perception of Newcomer Creativity (SPNC) and Supervisor Support for Newcomer Authentic Self-Expression

(SSNA) for Predicting Newcomer Task Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Stress Symptoms