REUNITED: EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF TIE REACTIVATION ON NEWCOMERS' PERFORMANCE IN INTERDEPENDENT ORGANIZATIONS

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Dissertation Abstract

Management scholars have rarely analyzed how prior social networks might help or hinder the job performance of new organizational members. However, internal and external job markets are increasingly characterized by high mobility of experienced professionals, who have extensive social networks rooted in their past collaborations and shared work experiences. Organizations rely more frequently on project teams and project-based organizing to perform interdependent tasks, so employees transition more often across project teams - and firms - in their boundary-less careers. These changes call for a better understanding of whether the reactivation of past social ties is likely to help or hinder the job performance of new employees, especially those engaged in highly interdependent tasks. The object of this study is to theorize and empirically test the mechanisms by which the reactivation of a particular social tie – shared work experience - may impact new members' performance. Using a social networks lens to study new members' organizational entries, this study not only contributes to the recent fast-growing literature on the reactivation of social ties, but also to studies on new members' performance, and has considerable relevance for enhancing an organization's performance through the better management of its expert workers' human and social capital.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Objective of the study: Analyzing Tie Reactivation

A large body of work in management and sociology supports the view that social networks strongly matter in determining individual attainment. Networks have been shown to have a relevant impact on individual productivity (Castilla 2005), salary (Burt 1997), intra-organizational careers (Podolny and Baron 1997), job seeking (Fernandez and Weinberg 1997), and the likelihood of "making the team" (Reagans, Zuckerman, and McEvily 2004). Whether analyzing relationships that are formal or informal (Fernandez 1991), instrumental or affective (Casciaro and Lobo 2008), position or person-based (Podolny and Baron 1997), the extensive body of scholarly work on social networks "has focused primarily on current ties" (Levin, Walter, and Murnighan 2011:924).

Thus, in recent years, scholars have started to analyze how networks change, looking at the emergence of new ties and the decay of old connections (Burt 2002). Network scholars have traditionally assumed that relationships may decay if not actively maintained (Coleman 1990; Burt 1992), and that the social capital - the set of "resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships […] of social units" (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998:243) - and the benefits contained therein - may simply be lost (Burt 1992). Recently, an alternative view has emerged, which posits that social connections may experience life-cycles in which 'active' and 'dormant' phases alternate (Levin, Walter, and Murnighan 2011). This argument is based on the idea that individuals' limited cognitive and physical resources constrain the number of relationships

that can be kept active at any point in time, but researchers have also shown that inactive relationships can still be reactivated and leveraged to provide benefits in the future (Pescosolido 1992; Hurlbert, Haines, and Beggs 2000). The line of work on the reactivation of social ties conceptualizes networks as two-part structures, composed of an opportunity set of potential ties and a secondary subset of active ties (Smith, Menon, and Thompson 2012).

This study extends the literature on tie reactivation by investigating whether a specific type of social tie – shared work experience, or the relational experience accumulated by two colleagues who have worked together before on interdependent tasks (Reagans, Argote, and Brooks 2005) – can be reactivated to provide performance advantages to new organizational members, and sheds additional light on important theoretical gaps that remain unexplored by the tie reactivation literature. Whereas prior researchers have shown that reactivated ties can be efficient conduits for information sharing (Srivastava 2011; Levin, Walter and Murninghan 2011), they have primarily been concerned with how *cognitive* processes affect tie reactivation – i.e. how individuals first *recall* the availability of personal contacts, and then exchange information with them through communicative acts (e.g. phone calls or e-mails). My study will instead focus on a *behavioral* reactivation process – or whether shared work experience can be reactivated when two colleagues re-engage in interdependent behaviors similar to those performed in the social context in which they originally accumulated such experience. When working interdependently, employees engage in relational forms of learning and accumulate shared work experience at the dyadic level, generating tacit rather than codified knowledge

(Reagans et al. 2005; Espinosa et al. 2007). This study explores whether such relationship-specific capital – which tend to be 'sticky' and idiosyncratic to a specific social setting – can be reactivated and transferred to a different work place, improving the individual performance of the employees involved in the reactivated tie, or whether it simply gets lost when the two co-workers cease their original collaboration.

What contributes to making tie reactivation more effective? The role of tie strength, sponsors' networks and demographic similarity.

In addition to analyzing the effect of shared experience reactivation on newcomers' performance, I also explore which factors might favor or inhibit its effectiveness, helping to clarify the scope conditions that affect tie reactivation. As explained in Chapter 2, the reactivation of shared experience may be greatly helpful in enhancing the social integration of a new organizational member, and consequently her performance. The reactivated contact inside the organization may act as a sponsor for the new employee, providing help in terms of "learning the ropes" - grasping and fully understanding the new set of routines, social norms and behavioral expectations that characterize their new working context. However, several factors can play a crucial role in enhancing or inhibiting such process. In particular, I theorize and test whether relational embeddeness moderates the benefits of such reactivations, extending the current literature by studying the effects of the larger social structure in which the reactivated dyad is embedded. I also consider how time impacts the benefits of shared experience reactivation in two distinctive ways. First, I follow Levin and colleagues

(2011) by exploring whether the passage of time hinders the reactivation of past shared experience. In other words, whereas network scholars have studied the effect of decay on 'active' ties, I explore whether the passage of time may make the effects of reactivated ties weaker. Second, I analyze whether reactivated shared experience may also enhance the speed of social integration of new members, allowing them to increase their performance earlier in their organizational life.

The effect of such sponsorship may also be enhanced or reduced depending on whether the two parties involved in the reactivated tie share demographic similarity. The dyadic nature of shared experience (Reagans et al. 2005) is well suited to isolate the effect of race similarity between the two employees involved in the reactivated tie, or whether demographic similarity may inhibit such process. Since new members often have no established networks inside their new organization except for the reactivated tie, focusing on the demographic similarity of the individuals involved in the reactivated dyad will likely isolate the effect of demographic similarity from potential alternative network explanations, allowing for a fine-grained analysis of the effect of race similarity on network benefits. In doing so, I will not only offer an empirical test on whether demographic similarity helps or constraints the effect of networks on individual performance, offering for the first time a test of how demographic similarity interacts with the reactivation of social ties, but I will additionally test how relevant moderators – such as numerical proportion and sponsors' relational embeddedness - can impact the effect of the reactivation of shared experience between members of different demographic groups.

Tie reactivation and newcomers' performance: Managerial relevance.

Studying the effect of shared experience reactivations on newcomers' performance also has important managerial repercussions. The addition of new members to a team or to an organization is arguably one of the most frequent and important events in the context of organizational life, and thus not surprisingly the socialization of new employees' has been a central question in the management field (Van Maanen and Schein 1979). The degree of socialization may dramatically vary across individuals, generating great variance in new members' performance, and understanding what factors determines why "some newcomers…[are]…placed upon a path to termination whereas other newcomers…[are]…placed on a path to organizational socialization" (Cashman et al. 1976:286) has deep and fundamental implications for organizations. Whereas multiple factors can determine the degree to which newcomers get socialized more quickly into a new social setting – for instance, psychological factors (Chen 2005), team level expectations (Chen 2005), and organizational tactics (Van Maanen and Schein 1979) – the literature has yet to examine whether social networks may inhibit or help newcomers' successful integration into a new work setting, and hence their performance. With the notable exception of Castilla (2005), the current literature on newcomers' performance has predominately assumed the newcomer as an atomistic, isolated element, who enters the new social setting in complete isolation. However, this assumption might not be true. In fact, new employees may have shared relationships in the past with one or more of his or her new colleagues – in particular, they might have been co-workers in a different

organization, or worked together on a common project in the past. Such relationships could be extremely important to facilitate newcomers' integration – but both the literatures on newcomers' performance and on social networks have yet to explore under which conditions the reactivation of these past work ties may help or hinder newcomers' performance.

The analysis of how the reactivation of shared work experience may impact new members' performance is made more relevant by the fact that current labor markets – both internal and external to organizations – have been characterized by increasingly high degrees of employee mobility (O'Mahony and Bechky 2006). Since organizations rely more frequently on project teams (Hinds and Bailey 2003; O'Leary and Mortensen 2010) and project-based organizing (Maoret, Massa, and Jones 2011) to perform interdependent tasks, employees transition more often across teams and firms (Granovetter 1983) in their boundary-less careers (Arthur and Rousseau 2001). In contrast to the focus of early organizational scholars - who analyzed labor markets characterized by relatively low mobility and actors who are independent, atomistic agents and often entering their very first job (e.g. Louis, Posner, and Powell 1983) - current new employees are not necessarily inexperienced workers, but may be highly trained professionals with wide-ranging job experience and prior social networks, and often have extensive sets of past work relationships (Somaya, Williamson, and Lorinkova 2008). Thus a new employee may have worked in the past with one or more of their new colleagues on a common project, and probably for a different organization. The reactivation of such past shared experience could be extremely important in facilitating both the social integration and the job

performance of such a new member. Thus, given the frequency of employees' transitions across organizational boundaries, it becomes imperative for organizations to facilitate an effective and quick integration of newcomers, which would lead to higher employee productivity, reducing at the same time turnover and the extremely relevant associated replacement costs (Bauer, Morrison and Callister 1997; Chen and Klimoski 2003).

Empirical setting: The National Basketball Association.

I plan on testing my hypotheses applying regression analysis on longitudinal data on basketball team membership and player individual performance. Using sport as a context for research provides scholars with several advantages, such as accurately measured data, transparency of strategy and processes, and a relatively controlled environment where all teams compete using the same rules and vying for the same goals (Wolfe et al. 2005). In particular, basketball teams are interdependent and tightly coupled systems. Many organizational teams closely resemble these systems, especially those in fast changing environments which require very frequent and close interaction among team members: good examples are consulting firms, creative advertising agencies, and cross-functional teams in general.

My sample includes data from the National Basketball Association (NBA), including game-by-game data from 1985 to 2011. I will focus on the 5,866 instances in which a player joins a new team – since each of these players joined on average 2.91 teams in the course of his career, I will be able to analyze multiple organizational transitions for each individual. Moreover, given that an NBA season includes 82 games, the analysis of

game-level performance will allow me to study the evolution of individual performance within seasons, effectively accounting for the effect of socialization, yielding a sample of 225,307 player-game observations.

Potential contributions and structure of the study.

This study will provide important contribution both to theory and practice. Theoretically, I will contribute to both the literature on social ties reactivation and newcomers' performance. So far, the literature on tie reactivation has described how social connections can switch between active or inactive (dormant) phases, and how reconnecting has profound informational advantages. Individuals can leverage dormant ties to acquire information that would not be available otherwise. However, these studies have yet to explore whether reactivation can have an effect also on the work place, in particular fostering new employees' performance. Moreover, I will also extend such literature by specifying which characteristics of the original relationship may positively and negatively moderate the effect of its reactivation on newcomers' performance. Furthermore, I will contribute to the literature on newcomers' performance by providing one of the few longitudinal tests of new members' productivity that uses an objective measure, showing how pre-existing social networks can have a deep impact on newcomers' socialization. Moreover, my data panel will allow me to analyze employees' transitioning across multiple organizations, overcoming a current limitation of the socialization literature, which tends to focus to studies of a single collective.

I will structure the rest of this document as follows. In chapter 2, I will review the current literature on network reactivation, and then introduce the type of social tie that will be the focus of this study – shared work experience. I will therefore theorize the fundamental mechanisms that will explain why the reactivation of shared experience may have a positive impact on newcomers' performance. I will then theorize the factors that may moderate the relationship between tie reactivation and performance. In particular, I will focus on three aspects: tie strength, the sponsors' relational embeddedness and the process of tie decay.

Chapter 3 will then be focused on investigating the role played by individuals' characteristics on tie reactivation. In particular, I will consider race homophily a factor that may foster or undermine social ties reactivation. The characteristics of my data sample will allow me to study, for the first time, whether homophily in race may have an effect on shared experience reactivation, and ultimately on newcomers' performance.

My methodological approach and data description will be illustrated in chapter 4. I will empirically test the hypotheses developed in my previous three chapters using a longitudinal dataset on players' membership and performance in National Basketball Association (NBA) from 1985 to 2011. I will provide extensive description of the variables used to capture my theoretical constructs, and explain the added benefits of using sports data to test the theory developed in this study.

Finally, I will illustrate my findings in Chapter 5, and provide the discussion of my findings and the concluding remarks in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2: Exploring the performance effects of newcomers' tie reactivation in interdependent organizations.

Social ties reactivation: Information vs. relationship-specific capital.

Social networks scholars interpret the nature of social ties in two distinctive ways - either as conduits of information or as sources of relationship-specific capital (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998). The former view focuses fundamentally on which structural positions maximize the transmission of valuable (i.e. non-redundant) information (e.g. Burt 1992), the latter is concerned with the question of how relationship-specific capital – e.g. tacit knowledge, trust, interdependent routines and heuristics – generate higher performance (e.g. Krackhardt 1992; Reagans et al. 2005).

The recent growing literature on social tie reactivation – which studies how such ties alternate between dormant and active phases – has primarily considered the interpretation of networks as information conduits, and so analyzed how such reactivated ties can enable communicative acts which can provide informational advantages, often under the pressure of environmental uncertainty. For instance, Srivastava (2011) has shown how top managers reactivate old connections, extending the range of their intra-organizational network across departments, when their firm undergoes significant internal restructuring, to counter the uncertainty generated by such structural overhaul. Smith and colleagues (2012) have observed a similar mechanism in the process of job search: individuals seeking new jobs reactivate old contacts in search of information about

potential work opportunities. These dormant contacts have proven to be extremely valid and efficient sources of information due to their shared perspective, to the extent that reconnected ties may be as beneficial as current ones. In their study, Levin, Walter and Murnighan (2011) asked executives to revive connections that had been dormant for several years and to rate their benefits. Their findings show, although strong dormant ties showed some evidence of decay, that levels of shared perspective and trust between the executives were comparable to those in current strong ties and - most importantly - reconnected ties were efficient in conveying relevant information about work-related projects. Nevertheless, while reactivated dormant ties have proven to be efficient conduits of information, it remains to be seen whether the relationship-specific capital such ties contain can produce higher performance when they are reactivated. The object of this study is thus to clarify under which conditions a specific type of social tie – shared work experience – can be reactivated to benefit the performance of interdependent tasks.

The reactivation of relationship-specific capital: Shared experience as a form of internal social capital.

Recent studies have highlighted the existence and the relevance of social ties that embed a relationship-specific form of capital – shared work experience. When a group of employees work together on an interdependent task, they not only become more familiar with the task itself and with the team they work for, but also accumulate experience relationally (Reagans, Argote, and Brooks 2005; Espinosa et al. 2007). By working together, co-workers accumulate valuable experience that is relationship-specific, rather

than located in a the generic, distributed "collective mind", as has been originally theorized by Weick and Roberts (1993).

Such shared experience has proved extremely beneficial for team and organizational performance, as it leads to the development of shared norms, common language, and trust (Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven 1990), which increases the likelihood of standardization of practices and cooperative behaviors (Leana and Buren 1999; Jones, Hesterly, and Borgatti 1997), both of which will positively affect coordination and performance (Taylor and Greve 2006). These beneficial effects have been found in multiple contexts. For instance, Reagans and his colleagues (2005) found that shared experience reduced completion time in surgical teams via the improved division of labor and coordination which comes from knowing "who knows what" (Wegner 1987), and studying software development teams, Espinosa and his colleagues (2007) found that common experience among team members positively impacted performance because "the coordination complexity experienced by team members when working with other members is reduced when they are familiar with each other" (2007:615).

Shared experience is a form of social capital under Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1998) general definition of social capital as being the set of "resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships […] of social units". In particular, I argue that it is a form of *internal* social capital, i.e. accumulated within a specific social context. Social capital has been generally theorized in the literature as being either 'internal' or 'external' to a given collective, which may be a specific team, department, business unit or organization (Adler and Kwon 2002; Payne et al. 2011).

Whereas external social capital maps on to the actors' structural position within a network as defined - for instance - by Burt (1992), internal social capital accumulates inside a specific collective, "as strong recursive bonds developed between actors who interact frequently" (Payne et al., 2011: 494).

The 'internal' nature of shared work experience poses a fundamental puzzle related to the possibility of its reactivation. Since this form of social capital is embedded and built into the dyads forming the underlying social structure of a specific collective, it is a very valuable resource for the organization due to it tacitness and social complexity (Coff 1997). However, since internal social capital is a resource idiosyncratic to a specific set of individuals (Barney 1996; Coff 1997), a logical consequence is that the benefits of shared experience will simply disappear when their social ties are severed. Thus, it is not surprising that the current literature suggests that "the internal social capital shared with coworkers … may simply be lost" in such cases (Somaya et al. 2008, p.940), and that "long-term performance consequences … may be attributable to…the accumulated social capital lost through voluntary turnover" (Dess and Shaw, 2001: 449).

Dyadic memory: How reactivated shared experience can enhance the performance of new organizational members.

Whereas the loss of social capital by the focal organization may be inevitable when ties are broken, the relation-specificity of shared work experience suggest that its benefits may be renewable for the two individuals originally involved in such a connection. Figure 1 illustrates the process through which the shared experience between two employees is

reactivated in a different context. Employees A and B (top left of the figure) are connected by a shared experience tie from when they originally (at *t-2*) worked together at organization Alpha. By extensively working together in the past, they accumulated relationship-specific capital: shared experience developed during the repetition of interdependent tasks which fosters the "development of relationships-specific heuristics that enhance how well people…interact with each other" (Reagans et al. 2005:872). These heuristics are part of an efficient and tacit understanding of how the two individuals work together, and are deeply engrained in the relationship-specific social capital, constituting a form of tacit knowledge. Such capital enhances how efficiently A and B perform their interdependent tasks, so giving A a direct performance advantage.

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Such advantages may disappear when employee B moves from organization Alpha to Beta at *t-1* (as the Figure shows) and their collaboration is interrupted. B is now an isolate node in the Beta network, since she has (as yet) no shared experience with their new colleagues. Thus, we might expect that (ceteris paribus) B's performance will suffer in the new social context as compared to in their previous organization Alpha, due to the lack of relationship-specific capital originally developed with her past colleague(s). Shared experience accumulates through task repetition, and it will take time for B to re-create a network of shared experience in her new work context.

This challenge is less problematic for A, when she moves to organization Beta at time *t*. Thanks to their past shared experience with B during their tenure at Alpha, A is not

an isolated node in their new network, but instead can begin to reactivate and leverage part of the benefits specific to their past relationship with B. In other words, A and B can reactivate the relationship-specific capital – efficient routines, heuristics, and trustworthiness – engrained in their past collaboration. Such benefits do not simply disappear when the original tie de-activates, but rather become dormant: a form of "network memory" ready to be re-enacted (Soda, Usai, and Zaheer 2004). The reactivation process is akin to the process known as 'muscle memory' by physical trainers; an extensive task repetition that allows for the formation of routines that makes the performance of collaborative tasks almost automatic and easy to recall. Internal social capital built through extensive past interaction has been shown to have long-term repercussions, "cast[ing] a long shadow into the present" (Soda et al. 2004) – so we can expect A's job performance as a new member of Beta to be higher when carrying out interdependent tasks in collaboration with B.

The positive effects of reactivated shared experience ties on new member socialization.

The positive effects of reactivated shared experience ties on new members' performance are not strictly limited to the specific situations in which the new member works interdependently with a reactivated past contact, but can also facilitate faster socialization of the new member, thus increasing their individual performance in general.

Research on new employees' socialization has found that the degree of speed of socialization of new members may vary dramatically across individuals, generating great

variance in their performance. Established organizations have distinctive sets of embedded social norms, normative expectations or roles, and institutionalized routines used to perform their tasks, so, when new members join such social settings, they are likely to experience a profound disconnect between their expectations (built on their past experience elsewhere) and the social norms that operate in their new context. Such norms can often be so novel and different to what they are used to that researchers have described this situation as producing a 'reality shock', as "[new members'] entire organizationally-based physical and social world are changed" (Louis 1980). It is important to note that it is not only inexperienced workers who face these pressures, but also experienced employees who "join a new team, even within the same organization", since every team and/or organization has idiosyncratic work procedures that determine, for instance, how they interact with clients and teammates, or how to use new technologies (Chen 2005:103).

New organizational members need to make sense of their new social worlds quickly, leveraging the available information and social cues, in order to match the performance expectations placed on them. Whereas multiple factors can determine how quickly new members become socialized into a new social setting – for instance psychological factors (Chen 2005), team level expectations (Chen 2005), and organizational tactics (Van Maanen and Schein 1979) – the socialization and social networks literatures have yet to examine whether the reactivation of prior social ties may enhance the speed and the degree of new members' integration into new work settings, which then influence their performance.

Comparing the transitions of A and B to organization Beta (Figure 1) may help to

clarify how the presence of a reactivated social tie in the new organization can provide distinct advantages for newcomers' socialization. After transitioning to their new organization, B's lack of shared experience ties with Beta's established workers ('old-timers') means she can face a 'liability of foreignness', or the risk of being marginalized or stereotyped by old-timers (Perretti and Negro 2006). B's position is particularly critical early in their socialization period, as old-timers' initial expectations and evaluations are not only one of the "key force[s] during socialization" (Jackson, Stone, and Alvarez 1993:60), but are also "particularly important *early* in a newcomer's socialization." (Chen 2005:104). In comparison to B's transition, A's organizational entry is facilitated by their ability to reactivate their tie with B, which can help them become socialized more quickly by bridging the information and social gap between the newcomer and the incumbents. The past experience and trust embedded in the past tie may help the newcomer to break this social barrier and achieve effective communication with the old-timers, and thus aligning the shared expectations of the team to the newcomers' actual behavior more quickly. The internal contact can vouch for the new person, providing detailed, fine-grained information about them, which is particularly critical, as initial expectations tend to be highly malleable (Chen 2005) and making it easier for the old-timers to accept the newcomer as part of their social group. Thus a reactivated tie makes it more likely for her to improve her performance more quickly during the initial socialization phase.

The reactivated connection can also help the new member to navigate her new environment more easily. New employees often face a feeling of "information

deprivation" (Jablin 1987:622), and need to leverage as many information sources as they can to cope with their sense of strangeness in their new environment (Miller and Jablin 1991). In such situations, a reactivated social tie can be of great help, as the relationship-specific capital embedded in a shared experience tie may make the internal contact a reliable and easy to access source of detailed information, as a target of direct, overt questions about the new context, which have been argued as greatly helping newcomers' integration (Miller and Jablin, 1991). A trusted contact is particularly important. New members tend to be extremely aware of the social costs associated with their requests, which may have negative consequences such as inhibiting newcomers from asking for information they are expected to know, annoying old-timers and generating social disapproval (Miller and Jablin, 1991).

The reactivated tie may not simply be a channel for general, publicly-available information about the new job, but also about context-specific norms and tacit knowledge that would be otherwise hard for the new member to grasp quickly, and which can often be a barrier to achieving successful integration. The reactivated internal contact may be able to provide a detailed view of the idiosyncrasies of the organizational and of new colleagues, giving the new member a "realistic job preview", which "functions very much like a medical vaccination in its attempt to deflate newcomer expectations…by presenting job candidates with a small dose of 'organizational reality'" (Popovich and Wanous 1982:571). For instance, new members often lack the ability to decode the information they gain, due to a lack of a "context-specific dictionary" (Jablin 1987). Thus, by reactivating past shared experience, the internal contact can help the new member to

interpret what they experience such as distinguishing nuances within apparently clear rules, learning the intricacies of the informal networks acting as a role-model for the new member that provides "social enrichment" (Fernandez, Castilla, and Moore 2000; Castilla 2005) through closer 'on-the-job' training and mentoring.

The expected consequences of the performance benefits provided by a reactivated shared experience tie during the socialization period are graphically displayed in Figure 2, which compares the performance patterns of a new organizational member with a reactivated tie (dashed line) to a new member who is an isolated node (in Figure 1, their network positions are exemplified by A and B, respectively). In both cases, we expect A's performance to improve during her socialization period, as they learn more about their new social environment and tasks. The rate of this improvement will marginally decrease over time – past research has portrayed socialization as an adaptation process (Chan & Schmitt, 2000) characterized by negative acceleration where "performance change is likely to be more dynamic early in a period of socialization, when newcomers must learn how to match their behavior to the demands posed by their new work environment" (Chen 2005:103). A consequence of this initial dynamism is that we expect the effect of the reactivated tie to be stronger earlier during the socialization period - hence, the dashed line in Figure 2 (which represents the performance pattern for the new member with a reactivated tie) is characterized by a steeper marginal increase earlier on. If we couple this process with the fact that the earlier socialization phase has long term repercussions on new members' performance, due to its "imprinting" nature (Jackson et al., 1993), I expect the benefits derived from tie reactivation to yield performance advantages

to new members in such situations, and that such advantage will be stronger earlier in the socialization period, i.e. immediately after they join their new team or organization. Thus:

H1a: A new organizational member reactivating a past shared experience tie with a current organizational member will achieve better individual performance than one without such reconnection.

H1b: This reactivation effect will be stronger earlier in the socialization period.

INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE

The reactivation of relationally embedded ties: Tie strength as a positive moderator of shared experience reactivation on new member performance.

Several factors can moderate the positive benefits of reactivated shared experience on new member performance. Granovetter's distinction between strong and weak ties seems to be particularly important when evaluating the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance. Strong ties have been characterized by trust (Krackhardt 1992) and shared perspective (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), making it more likely for the connected parties to cooperate effectively with each other (Granovetter 1983; Reagans and McEvily 2003) Individuals connected by strong ties "forge a common set of goals, values, language and understanding…preventing misinterpretation and misunderstanding" (Levin et al, 2011:925). We might expect new members may benefit even more from the reactivation of past strong ties, since the deeper levels of trust embedded in such ties may

make the social enrichment process more effective, and make such colleagues more willing to help one another (Reagans and McEvily, 2003). “Strong ties have greater motivation to be of assistance and are typically more easily available” (Granovetter 1982:113) which tends to be even more important when individuals are facing uncertain situations such as organizational entry (Jones 1986). Indeed, strong ties foster “inclusion, cohesiveness and group identity…[and]…facilitate socialization by reducing individuality and individual power.” (Sparrowe and Liden 1997:530). Thus, new members reactivating strong ties with organizational incumbents are more likely to rely on such connection to gather relevant information, seek help, and achieve social integration sooner (Higgins and Kram 2001). The more two employees shared relevant work experience in the past, the stronger their bond will be because tie strength grows with close interactions over extended periods of time and increases the trust between the two parties (Krackhardt 1992). The high level of trustworthiness embedded in strong ties will make it more likely that the reactivated connection becomes an active sponsor of the new member, as well as more eager to help the new employee to learn the intricacies of the new environment, facilitating their faster and more complete “assimilation” (Sparrowe and Liden 1997, 2005). Thus, I expect that:

> *H2: Tie strength will positively moderate the relationship between shared experience reactivation and new member performance.*

Sponsor's relational embeddedness as a moderator on the effect of tie reactivation on new members' performance.

The tie strength of the reactivated connection between the new member and the insider is not the only relational factor that can determine the quality of the new member's integration: the relational embeddedness of the new member's *sponsor* – i.e., of the internal contact with whom the reactivated tie is shared – can also moderate the effectiveness of tie reactivation on new members' performance. Figure 3 illustrates the importance of the sponsor's network position, comparing two settings where two new employees new to an organization (A and C) reconnect a past shared experience ties with B and D, respectively. The distinction between the two cases lies in the embeddedness of the reactivated sponsor –D's network position in Delta is characterized by stronger ties than is C's.

INSERT FIGURE 3 HERE

In order to understand why D's greater embeddedness has a positive effect on the reactivated C-D tie - and thus on the performance of the new member - it is important to highlight that it may take time for old-timers to accept a new individual as a taken-for-granted member of the organization. While the presence of a sponsor may certainly help, the new employee may still be considered a "stranger" (Simmel 1950) and remain suspect and disadvantaged in the eyes of the organizational incumbents (Sparrowe and Liden 2005), at least until they are able to prove themselves to be trustworthy to their

new colleagues. Social network scholars have found that, without such acceptance, new members are unable to reap the benefits of social networks (Burt 1992), which hurts their performance. In his analysis of managers' individual attainment, Burt (1992, 1998) has shown that individuals who are not legitimate in the eyes of organizational incumbents are not able to gain positive benefits from their social networks. It is interesting to note that this finding does not relate to new members lack of experience - as Burt's analysis focused on highly experienced top managers of a large, Fortune 100 company - but rather to them lacking trustworthiness in the eyes of incumbents. Gaining colleagues' trust can be very time-consuming, potentially hurting new employees' productivity during the initial socialization period.

However new members can offset their initial lack of trustworthiness by 'borrowing' social capital from an internal contact. As Sparrowe and Liden explain, "borrowing the social capital of well-connected sponsors overcomes shortfalls in legitimacy by endorsing an individual's participation in the inner circles of players" (2005:512). Thus a new member who reactivates a connection with an incumbent can potentially leverage the sponsor's position in the network to facilitate their social integration (Burt 1992). Since "[old-timers] develop trustworthiness through sharing trust relationships with others" (Sparrowe and Liden 2005:512), the internal contact can effectively channel trust towards the new employee by endorsing them, as long as they share strong, trusted ties with that colleague. Network scholars call this mechanism "trust transferability" (McEvily, Perrone, and Zaheer 2003; Ferrin, Dirks, and Shah 2006), noting that it works because "trust in the [incumbent's] judgment serves as the foundation

for trust in an unknown counterpart". Hence, old-timers who acts as a sponsor for a new member transfer trust from themselves to the latter. For this mechanism to work, though, the sponsor must be 'well-connected' with the other old-timers via strong ties, which are characterized by trust (Krackhardt 1992). So we can expect that the stronger the ties between the sponsor and other incumbents, the more the new member will be able to 'borrow' the sponsor's social capital; this facilitates the transfer of trust from the sponsor to themselves (Sparrowe and Liden 1997, 2005), easies their acceptance into their new setting and consequently improves their performance. Therefore:

H3: The sponsor's relational embeddedness will positively moderate the effect of the reactivation of a shared experience tie on a new member's performance.

The effect of tie decay on shared experience reactivation.

Time may also have a significant effect on shared experience reactivation, but empirical investigations of the contingency effects of time on network effects have generally been extremely limited (Burt 2000; Soda et al. 2004). Network scholars assume that active ties, if not maintained, erode over time (Coleman, 1990; Burt, 1992). For example, Burt (2002) has observed that ties that bridge separate parts of social networks tend to decay very quickly. Mariotti and Delbridge (2011) suggest that dormant ties may simply decay, when not reactivated after a long period. In the same way, we might expect that the effects triggered by tie reactivation would become weaker over time, more difficult, or even impossible. Thus:

H4a: The length of the dormancy period negatively moderates the effect of shared

experience reactivation on the newcomer's performance.

Although we might expect that the longer the dormancy period, the less effective the reactivation process will be, certain characteristics of the dormant tie may affect the rate of its decay. This implies that not all ties decay at the same rate, but that certain connections can stay dormant for longer periods. Levin and colleagues (2011) suggested that tie strength may have a positive effect on the rate of dormant tie decay. Likening strong ties to lasting first impressions, they suggest that the higher level of trust originally embedded in the strong tie would help two individuals to reconnect more easily, even to the point of creating a "permanent connection that time apart, on its own, cannot undo." (p.926) By finding that reconnected strong ties as beneficial as current ones, the authors suggest that strong ties do not seem to suffer from decay (in contrast to what earlier literature had suggested); however, their tests do not account for the actual length of the tie's dormancy period. Especially given that the form of internal social capital studied here - shared experience - is one in which the benefits are grounded on the daily interconnected routine activities of social actors, we might expect that the passage of time would erode the common trust, communication codes and efficiency in routine set embedded in the relationship. As Burt puts it, internal social capital may "die of natural causes unless an effort is made" (2002:347). In sum, although we might expect the reactivation of shared experience to be hindered by the passage of time, we can also posit that stronger ties may decay at a slower rate. Thus:

H4b: Tie strength negatively moderates the effect of the length of the dormancy period on diminishing shared experience reactivation.

Chapter 3: Exploring the moderating role of demographic similarity on the effect of shared experience reactivation on newcomers' performance

Do employees help or hinder the integration and the performance of new organizational members who are demographically similar to them? Despite the importance of this question, which may generate a deeper theoretical understanding of workplace dynamics and empirically ground effective policies to reduce workers' discrimination, answers to such inquiry have generally been assumed rather than empirically explored (Duguid, Loyd, and Tolbert 2010). As observed by Duguid and colleagues, the common and general supposition is that employees "serve as advocates for demographically similar others" (2010:1). Even if such assumption is reasonable and consistent with prior research, definitive empirical answers have rarely been given. The few empirical studies that have focused on demographic similarity have mainly focused on the evaluation of potential interviewees, showing contradictory results (e.g. Graves and Powell 1996; Goldberg 2005; Jost 2001). For instance, in the context of interviewing job applicants, Graves and Powell (1996) have found that, ceteris paribus, female interviewers rate more favorably female candidates – but at the same time, in a similar context, Sacco, Scheu, Ryan, and Schmitt (2003) have found no significant effects either for race or gender similarity. In opposition, Goldberg (2005) has demonstrated a preference for interviewees of the *opposite* sex, providing even further doubts surrounding the effects of demographic similarity.

This empirical conundrum seems to suggest not only that more empirical analysis on this issue are warranted, but that important moderating effects may be at play and have

a profound effect on the mechanisms that link demographic similarity to the individual performance of new employees. Hence, the objective of this chapter is to find whether demographic similarity amplifies or reduces the positive effect of shared experience reactivation on new members' performance – a mechanism introduced and theorized in Chapter 2 - and whether different effects may be expected for members of discriminated groups. Understanding whether employees help demographically similar others to achieve higher individual performance carries great relevance for policy-making on top of its theoretical importance. In fact, such question may be central to the understanding of the mechanisms that keep discriminated groups out of the most prestigious occupations, and in particular of their ability to use networks to their advantage. Indeed, despite a relative scarcity of studies in the area, social network scholars have empirically found that network benefits may deeply differ for gender and racial minorities. For instance, Burt (1992, 1998) has shown that whereas males enjoy better salaries and quicker promotions when placed in favorable network positions, the opposite applies for their female colleagues, who are not able to extract the same benefits from the social structure. Similarly, Ibarra (1995) showed that networks are less functional in terms of career progression for managers belonging to racial minorities than for their white counterparts, and that women receive lower network returns than men on their central network positions (Ibarra 1992). The common explanation behind these findings is built upon two overlapping processes. First, networks are bound by structural constraints. In other words, non-discriminated members usually dominate organizational networks both in terms of quantity (i.e. sheer numbers) and quality (i.e. hierarchy). The second process is

social homophily, i.e. the tendency of individuals to form strong connections with similar others. Put together, these two processes offer a plausible explanation as to why women and members of racial minorities struggle to reap network benefits: homophily reinforces differences in network positions, and therefore the benefits associated with them (Ibarra 1992). The solution proposed by scholars and policy makers is to spur diversity and increase the representation of discriminated groups in organizations by purposively recruiting their members in organizations' upper echelons (Ely 1994; Ibarra 1995). In this way, discriminated members would be able to find a higher number of demographically similar others, which would in turn reduce the structural constraints faced by new members, helping them to reduce the obstacles they face in advancing their careers. However, this solution would be favorable only to the extent that individuals belonging to discriminated social categories would actually help each other. Thus, studying whether this assumption holds is fundamental to understand whether such policy would actually be useful to reduce workplace discrimination.

The positive effects of demographic similarity on shared experience reactivation.

There are strong reasons to believe that, generally speaking, individuals in organizations may have a preference to advocate for their demographically similar new colleagues. The strongest evidence is put forward by the similarity-attraction theory originally proposed by Byrne (1971), which posits that in general individuals have a preference for interacting with others who share their values and beliefs. Without fine-

grained information about personal attitudes, individuals often use available demographic characteristics (e.g. gender, race) to approximate the underlying values. Based on this premise, multiple studies have found strong evidence for social homophily, a mechanism that predicts that individuals tend to form relations with those who are similar to them. Homophily seems to have a strong impact on a wide array of social relationships, as individuals tend to create strong bonds with similar others ranging from marriage, to friendship, to work relationships (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). These tendencies may actually be explained by two separate homophily processes (McPherson and Smith-Lovin 1987). *Induced* homophily refers to homophily created by the demographical distribution across social groups. For instance, in a completely homogeneous group, individuals will form ties with similar others simply because they have no other alternative. A second type of homophily – *choice* homophily - is instead based on individuals' preferences. In such case, individuals will form relationships with others sharing their characteristics for a specific individual choice. I will focus on the latter form of homophily as the key mechanism for expecting a positive effect of similarity.

Dyadic relationships with similar others has been theorized to be beneficial for individuals in the work place, one reason being the existence of categorical biases among peers and supervisors. For instance, among others, Stauffer and Buckley (2005) have shown the relevance of racial bias in supervisory ratings. Whereas the two scholars could not discern whether such bias was an outcome of conscious or subconscious discrimination, their analysis highlighted that both black and white supervisors rate their

racially similar workers more highly. However, other reasons other than categorical bias have been theorized to influence positively ties between similar others. According to Ibarra (1993), “interpersonal similarity increases ease of communication, improves predictability of behavior, and fosters relationships of trust and reciprocity.” (p. 61). This also facilitates the creation of informal ties between demographically similar others (Lincoln and Jon Miller 1979; Tsui and O'Reilly 1989), which forms the basis through which employees find support during their work. In particular, research on mentorship has found that ties between similar others create better mentor-protégé’ relationships. Racial differences have proven to be an obstacle in the identification between white superiors and black workers (Thomas 1993), and similarly differences in gender may be an obstacle for women to create and enjoy mentorship with men, due to stereotypes and norms regarding cross-gender relationships (Noe 1988). Students of relational demography posed additional attention to the effect of demography diversity on networks, specifically focusing on the demographic difference in dyads. In their seminal study, Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) moved the level of analysis from the overall distribution of demographic characteristics of the focal collective to the demographic similarity between supervisors and subordinates, thus concentrating their analysis at the dyadic level. They found evidence for lower levels of job performance and higher levels of role ambiguity the higher the demographic difference between superiors and subordinates, in particular for cross-gender dyads. In a subsequent study, Tsui, Egan and O’Reilly (1992) again found evidence for a positive effect of homophily on organizational attachment – in comparison to her organizational unit, the greater the demographic difference between an

employee, the lower the resulting organizational attachment. In sum, previous studies have proposed that demographic similarity is associated with higher effectiveness (Tsui and O'Reilly 1989) and higher levels of social support (Ibarra 1992; South et al. 1982).

For these reasons, thus, we might expect that the effect of reactivated shared experience on new organizational members' performance to positively interact with demographic similarity. As illustrated in Chapter 2, when joining a new organizational setting, employees often face a "reality shock" due to the extreme disconnect between their expectations and the need of quickly grasping a new set of work routines, social norms and the lack of work experience with their new colleagues. New members need to quickly bridge such gaps in order to be accepted as valued contributors in their new work setting, and such process may require some time as the expectations of the incumbents may be very different from those of the new members. In such cases, the reactivation of prior work experience may be of great help. The reactivated contact inside the organization can leverage his or her knowledge of the new members' skills, traits and attitudes, brokering such information to other group members, and thus enabling the new employee to be socialized more quickly into the new work context. The internal contact can also become a role-model and a mentor for the new member, a learning process known as "social enrichment" (Castilla 2005). So whereas I expect shared experience reactivation to positively influence the performance of a new organizational member, I also suggest that such process should be even stronger when triggered between demographically similar others, as according to the aforementioned research on demographic similarity I expect similar others to share a stronger sense of trust,

reciprocity, identification and easiness of communication (Ibarra 1993, Thomas 1993). Demographically similar others are more motivated to reciprocally offer help, increasing social support for the new member in her new environment (Ibarra 1992) and thus generating higher levels of effectiveness (Tsui and O'Reilly 1989). For these reasons, we might expect reactivated shared experience among demographically similar individuals to have an even stronger effect on new members performance.

H5: Demographic similarity will amplify the effect of reactivated shared experience on new members' performance.

The lower impact of shared experience reactivation on new members' performance for demographic groups under value threat.

Whereas some past studies have highlighted the positive effects that demographic similarity has on individual performance, not all empirical analyses present in the literature support this view. For instance, a study by Jost (2001) has found evidence for a negative effect of demographic similarity, and others have found no empirical support for the relationship in either direction (Sacco et al. 2003). These mixed results may hint at the fact that the similarity-attraction paradigm, although perhaps valid in many contexts, may be conditional upon contextual and specific relational factors.

In particular, researchers point at the fact that members of specific demographic groups may be less willing to offer their support and advocate for demographically similar others. For instance, in the context of law firms, Ely (1994) found that women do

not necessarily support other women. This is especially true in firms whose upper echelons were numerically dominated by males – in these contexts, women were less likely to identify with other senior women, to use their same-gender senior as role-models, and in general they perceive relations with other female colleagues as more competitive. A similar result was observed by Smith (2005) in her analysis of social capital activation among African-American urban poor. In her study a strikingly 81% of African-American potential job referrers were not willing to help demographically similar members to find a job. Such strong result seems to openly contradict the similarity-attraction paradigm, as respondents showed to be highly concerned of whether supporting a demographically similar other might affect their reputation on the job.

Duguid, Loyd and Tolbert (2010) offered a theoretical framework that may help to reconcile these counterintuitive results. They suggest that members of a demographic group may be more or less inclined to help their demographically similar others contingently upon their experience of "value threat". According to Duguid and colleagues, "value threat occurs when an individual sees himself as a potentially valuable member but perceives that others will not see him in this way" (p. 3). Thus, value threat is not caused by internal self-appraisal, but rather is a "response to perceived external appraisals" (p.3). In other words, members of a demographic group are under value threat when they perceive third parties to question their value as workers *for the specific reason of being members of their demographic group*.

The perception of value threat is context-specific. This implies that the same demographic group – for instance, women – may perceive different levels of value threat

in different professions. Duguid and colleagues (2010) identify three factors that raise the level of value threat in a given context: the presence of discriminatory beliefs, low overall numerical representation in the profession and high level of occupational prestige.

In many contexts diffuse and widespread *discriminatory beliefs* link specific observable demographic characteristics – e.g. gender or race – to specific individual abilities. These beliefs act as stereotypes, for example associating being female to the ability to perform a specific task better or worse, or to specific behavioral tendencies. It is important to note that these stereotypes are tied to specific occupations, and therefore members of a specific group associated to a demographic characteristic may be more or less discriminated in different professions. For instance, under the stereotype that women are physically weaker than men, women are more likely to perceive value threat in physically intensive jobs. Such general beliefs lower the status of a specific demographic category, discriminating between different demographical groups, and automatically placing members of discriminated groups at an initial status disadvantage (Ridgeway and Walker 1995). These stereotypes generate performance expectations not only for third parties, but also for the members of the low status categories themselves, which thus may experience higher pressure to perform and in general higher value threat, as they may face additional obstacles to prove to be worthwhile members of their collectives.

Discriminatory beliefs are even more powerful in contexts where the associated demographic group is represented in low numbers (Duguid et al. 2010). When a group tied to a demographic characteristic is present in small numbers in any given profession it may be perceived simply as being not apt to carry out the required tasks – in other words,

the small numerical representation itself may act as a discriminatory signal (Ridgeway 1988). For instance, we might expect women to perceive more value threat in professions where there are an overall smaller number of women. The imbalance in the distribution of a demographic characteristic may make it an even more salient attribute used to classify and evaluate (Cohen and Swim 1995), and thus amplify the stereotyping effects of the discriminatory beliefs associated with the group. In other words, "numeric minorities may be more prone to assume that others will call into question their value to the group" (Duguid et al. 2010:5)

Third, discriminated individuals face higher value threat in higher prestige work groups (Duguid et al. 2010). This is due to the fact that the higher the prestige of the given group, the more stereotyped members will feel pressured to demonstrate they are valuable parts of such groups. High prestige groups represent a relevant opportunity for a discriminated demographic group to disprove the status beliefs associated to their demographic category, and instead to prove they have the ability to fit in and belong to the higher prestige group. Disidentification with one's category and self-identification with the new, high-prestige group, is basic mechanism through which social mobility is achieved, allowing discriminated members to be more regarded and respected, enhancing their self-esteem (Duguid et al. 2010).

The concept of value threat is important because it may lead members of a demographic group to be less willing to support demographically similar others (Duguid et al. 2010). This preference against other members of their group will be revealed when the addition of a new member to the group will increase value threat for the incumbent

discriminated members. The addition of a demographically similar other may indeed carry some risk to strengthen the stereotypes that incumbent discriminated members have been trying to disprove. Incumbents may fear that the new member might behave in a way consistent with the stereotypes associated with their demographic characteristics; Duguid and colleagues define this risk as *collective threat*. In such case, incumbent discriminated members may withdraw their support from demographically similar others, as exemplified by Smith's analysis of whether African-American workers help black unemployed to find a job (2005). The African-American population has been often stereotyped as being lazy and thus less productive (Roberts 2005). Smith's (2005) study revealed that black workers' concern of this stereotype led them to withdraw support from their demographically similar others, fearing that the new members would strengthen rather than dissipate such beliefs.

Another potential factor that may raise value threat among members of a discriminated demographic group is an accusation of favoritism from the other group members. Extending support to demographically similar others may indeed be seen as a favor given to a new potential member that otherwise would not be able to prove his worth by himself. Such action may backfire on the referrer, as this could be seen as a reaffirmation of the negative stereotypes associated to their social category. Thus, such *favoritism threat* may lead members of group under value threat to withdraw support to a demographically similar new member of the group (Duguid et al. 2010). Lastly, the arrival of a demographically similar other may also trigger a competitive mechanism. If the new member outperforms incumbent discriminated members, they might feel their

value to be diminished in the eyes of the rest of the collective. Such *competitive threat* may thus push to withdraw support to demographically similar others (Duguid et al. 2010). This mechanism could well explain why women employed in law firms often display competitive (rather than supportive) relations against other women (Ely 1994).

Whereas in general we might expect the reactivation of shared experience to foster the socialization of new organizational members, and thus their performance, collective, favoritism and competitive threats may make members under value threat to be less willing to support their demographically similar new members. Thus:

> *H6: The effect of shared experience reactivation on new members' performance will be lower for members of a demographic group under value threat.*

The moderating impact of numeric proportion in the focal organization on the effect of shared experience reactivation between members of a demographic group under value threat.

Different elements may positively or negatively moderate the effect of shared experience reactivation between members of a demographic group under value threat. In particular, the numeric proportion between discriminated and non-discriminated employees in the focal organization may be extremely relevant. In fact, whereas Duguid et al. (2010) indicate the numerical representation in the overall profession to have a role in determining the perceived level of value threat by a specific demographic group, such representation may proportionally change from organization to organization. Hence, for instance, even if women on average may face a high level of value threat in a profession

over-represented by men, those who work in organizations where female numbers are relatively higher will be better off than those who are not.

The importance of proportions – as defined as the relative numbers of demographically different people in an organization – was first theorized by Kanter (1977) in her study of "tokenism" in firms. She suggested that male-female interactions were dependent upon the proportion of members of both genders in the *specific* collective. Particularly in skewed groups, where discriminated members find themselves relatively isolated, individuals become "tokens" – in other words, they become stronger symbols of the social category they represent, capturing higher awareness from the other group members. Such higher awareness is connected to higher pressure for performance, as their behavior becomes more public, and in general more attention is put on the tokens' discrepant characteristic and the associated beliefs. Together, these two factors may raise value threat for the members of the demographic group under value threat. The smaller the group, in relation to the larger organizational collective, the more the discriminated members may be conscious of their demographic characteristic – and its associated performance expectations - to be the defining factor to be used as the basis for their evaluation. As suggested by Duguid and colleagues (2010), "group members are more likely to become conscious of [the demographic characteristic] as a distinguishing attribute of individuals and to use it as a basis for categorization and evaluation" (p.5). Thus, as the numerical proportion of the group under value threat decreases, the more salient the associated demographic traits become, and the higher value threat gets perceived by its members. In such case, as previously discussed, employees under value

threat may perceive higher degrees of collective, favoritism and competitive threats, and thus be even less willing to offer support to demographically similar new organizational members. We might therefore expect the effect of tie reactivation between members under value threat to be stronger the higher the numerical representation of their group is in the focal organization.

H7: The proportion of demographically similar others in the focal collective will positively moderate the effect of shared experience reactivation on new members' performance under value threat.

The moderating impact of relational embeddedness on the effect of shared experience reactivation between members of a demographic group under value threat.

As previously theorized, shared experience reactivation between members of a demographic group under value threat has a greater impact on the new member performance the less the sponsor perceives value threat. We might expect the level of threat perceived by the sponsor to decrease the longer the history of interactions between the sponsor and the rest of the members of the collective, i.e. the more the sponsor is relationally embedded with the rest of the team. This is due to the fact that, as shown by prior research, the stereotyping that fuels value threat is stronger during the very initial interactions, whereas it tends to weaken with time. Indeed, a story of multiple interactions allows for the acquisition of finer-grained information about the other parties, realigning initial expectations with actual individuals' skills and abilities (Harrison, Price, and Bell

1998), thus making the stereotyping less prominent as individuals rely on their own direct experience rather than on generic status beliefs. Chatman and Flynn (2001) have similarly found that, even if demographic differences initially lead to non-cooperative norms, repeated interactions help groups to get rid of those negative norms. In the context of resident surgeons, Kellogg (2009) has found that higher levels of familiarity between group members is functional to overcome potential biases related to their status category and thus allowing members who would otherwise face discrimination to feel valued parts of their collectives.

For these reasons, I expect a higher level of relational embeddedness between the sponsor and the rest of the members of the collective to facilitate the process of tie reactivation. The greater sense of familiarity and trust between the sponsor and the rest of the group - granted by the higher embeddedness - will allow him to face less pressure related to how his performance is judged in relation to his categorical status. Thus, he will be more motivated to actively help the new organizational member he is sponsoring through the reactivated tie. Consequently, I expect that:

> *H8: Sponsors' relational embeddedness will positively enhance the effect of shared experience reactivation on new members' performance between members of a demographic group under value threat.*

Chapter 4: Methods

Data Sources: The National Basketball Association.

I test my hypotheses using longitudinal data on basketball teams' membership and performance. Using sport as a context for research provides scholars with several advantages, such as accurately measured data, transparency of strategy and processes, and a relatively controlled environment where all teams compete using the same rules and vying for the same goals (Wolfe et al. 2005). Scholars have leveraged similar advantages to study many organizational phenomena, such as organizational loyalty (Adler and Adler 1988), the relationship between pay distribution and performance (Bloom 1999), strategy and performance (Wright, Smart, and McMahan 1995), the effect of managerial succession on organizational performance (Eitzen and Yetman 1972; Allen, Panian, and Lotz 1979; Pfeffer and Alison Davis-Blake 1986), and the contribution of tacit knowledge to sustainable competitive advantage (Berman, Down, and Hill, 2002).

Since sports teams represent a microcosm of society and mirror the world of work (Keidell 1987), they "can serve as a heuristic to guide researchers in analyzing, and managers in running, organizations" (Wolfe et al., 2005: 184). Teams in organizations have many similarities with sport teams (Katz and Koenig 2001; Keidell 1984; Wolfe et al. 2005): they both strive for high performance, have crises, rely on various types of resources (i.e., financial, human, social) to achieve their goals, and share a concern for cooperating internally and competing externally, for managing human resources strategically and developing appropriate systems and structures (Keidell, 1984; Wright, Smart, and

McMahan, 1995). In particular, basketball teams are characterized by strong reciprocal task interdependence and high degree of coordination between team members (Thompson 1967; Berman, Down, and Hill 2002; Keidel 1984). Players continually interact on offense, as demonstrated by the continuous back-and-forth flow of the ball among them, with the goal of getting it to a teammate who is in a position to score. They also coordinate their actions while defending, such as when double-teaming an offensive player and covering for each other on defensive breakdowns. Further, offense and defense are completely overlapping, and may transition into each other instantaneously. Players are usually involved in every play (offense, defense, and transition) and are all in continuous movement. These characteristics make a basketball team a tightly coupled system, in which each player is coupled to all their teammates in a "fluid, unfolding manner" (Keidel, 1984: 9), Many organizational teams closely resemble these systems, especially those in fast changing environments which require very frequent and close interaction among team members: good examples are consulting firms, creative advertising agencies, but also firefighting and SWAT teams, and cross-functional teams more generally. Members of such teams do not have all the knowledge required to perform complex tasks, which requires them to coordinate their actions and mutually adjust to be able to perform their collective tasks effectively. Similarly, because of the nature of the tasks performed, the flow of information in basketball teams is constant and cooperation widespread (Katz and Koenig 2001). All these characteristics make basketball teams a suitable setting for testing my hypotheses.

Ethnic composition of the National Basketball Association

The demographic composition of the NBA makes it a particularly suitable context for investigating the role of demographic similarity on tie reactivation. In general, the literature on demographic similarity and social discrimination has focused on three main demographic characteristics – gender, age and race. Since the NBA is a male basketball league, discriminatory biases based on gender may not be present in this context. Additionally, the vast majority of the players are in the age range 25 to 35, and such restricted span makes age an unlikely candidate for demographic discrimination. The absence of discriminatory mechanisms based on age and gender makes race a particularly interesting element to focus on, especially considering an almost feature of American professional basketball – in opposition to most high-status professional settings, in the NBA the Caucasian (white) group is the one facing discrimination. The overwhelming presence of African American players in the NBA creates an association in the general public between players' ethnic and social origins and their success (Dubrow and Adams, 2010; May 2009), and creates a discriminatory belief that associates Caucasians' physical abilities with inferior performance on a basketball court. In his analysis of televised sports, Bruce (2004) suggests that "in its visual and narrative representations, mediated sport naturalizes the popular fascination with and common-sense acceptance of black athleticism" (p. 861). It is important to note that these discriminatory beliefs do not simply exist among the general population/sports' audience, but also in the population of white athletes (Azzarito and Harrison, 2008). The existence of negative racial stereotypes in sports (and in basketball, specifically) has been document though lab experiments in

multiple occasions (Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling and Darley, 1999; Stone, Perry and Darley, 2010), and such stereotype threat among Caucasian players may well be at the base of a general value threat. The presence of race-based stereotypes has made American basketball a relevant context where to study race discrimination (e.g. Johnson and Marple, 1973; Kanazawa and Funk 2001; Gius and Johnson, 1998), particularly in relation to salaries (Hamilton, 1997). However, discriminatory dynamics *between* players have rarely been analyzed, especially in relation to their socialization and performance, even if lately a racial bias has been found between referees and players (Price and Wolfers, 2010).

Sample description

The NBA is the world's most famous and competitive basketball league, and currently comprises 30 clubs (or 'franchises') and several hundred players. Publicly available game-level data start in 1985, and so my sample is composed of player-game level data gathered over a 26 year period (1985-2011). Since this study is primarily concerned with the performance of new organizational members, my analysis focuses on the 5,866 instances in which a player joined a new team in that time. An important property of this sample is that, on average, NBA players experienced three (2.91) such transitions during the course of their careers, allowing me to analyze multiple organizational transitions for each individual player while controlling for individual constant unobservable characteristics by including players' fixed effects in my estimation strategy. Moreover, given that an NBA season includes 82 games, the analysis of game-level performance allows me to study the

evolution of individual performance within seasons, effectively accounting for the effect of socialization (Chen 2005). Thus, over the 26 seasons, my total data sample includes 225,307 player-game observations.

Dependent variable

Individual performance. The availability of precise measurements of players' performance is one the most valuable factors in using sports data. In most other settings, detailed objective measures of individual performance are very rare (Castilla, 2005). Basketball leagues keep detailed accounts of a variety of players' statistics, including shots taken, points scored, rebounds, steals, blocks and turnovers, and the NBA includes such statistics in a single index called *NBA efficiency*, which summarizes players' performance. This index provides an accurate estimation of a player's productivity when on court, and has the added advantage that their performance can be calculated for each stint, game or season, hence providing a measure of performance in various time-spans. It is important to note that, despite its name, *NBA efficiency* is not standardized by the number of minutes each player spends on the court – in other words, this indicator is highly correlated with the time players are deployed on the court for. Whereas this could be seen as a limitation, the allocation of the minutes on the court is a decision made by the head coach. Since the number of playable minutes per game is fixed, a coach's decision to allocate minutes parallels the resource allocation processes that are usually present in most hierarchical organizations. Therefore, "receiving" more playing time can be itself considered a measure of performance, as we should expect coaches to deploy their best players for the longer

periods possible. Hence, I also considered *minutes played per game* as an alternative measure of individual performance,

Independent Variables

Shared experience reactivation. The focal point of this study is to examine the effects to shared experience reactivation. In order to measure shared experience, I look at whether two players were employed in the same club for a whole season during a moving window of ten years preceding the focal observation. Thus, if player A joins club Alpha in 2006, I calculate if he shared a common playing season with at least one of his new team members during the period 1996-2005. If so, the dummy variable *tie reactivation* takes a value of 1, and 0 otherwise. While this dichotomous operationalization captures the presence of at least one reactivated tie, a new team member may have the opportunity of reactivating several shared experience ties during his socialization. For instance, player A might have shared a common work experience with player B in team Beta in 2000, and another one with player C in team Charlie in 1998. To capture the magnitude of this phenomenon, I additionally use a continuous version of my tie reactivation indicator (*tie reactivation continuous*) that counts the number of ties a newcomer reactivates when joining a new club. Additionally, players might reactivate ties with coaches as well, as they might have worked under their current new coach under different circumstances. To capture this effect, I also consider re-activation between players and coaches in my operationalization, and add a dummy *coach reactivation* to indicate whether the reactivated tie is between player and coach.

Strength of tie reactivation and tie dormancy. My longitudinal sample and the consistency of its measurement allow to operationalize the passage of time and its impact in terms of tie strength and tying dormancy. Figure 4 graphically represent different reactivated ties, and the role of time in determining their effect.

INSERT FIGURE 4 HERE

Figure 4 illustrates the past life-spans of four different shared experience ties that get reactivated at time t. In order to account for their effect at time t, it is important to account for both their past activity and dormancy period. Solid lines in the Figure 4 represent periods in which the ties were active (i.e. when sponsor and newcomer were playing together in their previous team), while dotted lines times when the two players were not in the same team. For instance, the two players composing Tie A played together for the same amount of time as Tie B players, but interrupted their collaboration earlier in time, and hence their tie remained dormant for a longer period. Differently, Tie B and C have remained dormant for the same amount of time, but Tie C player had a longer collaboration beforehand. Tie D players, instead, reactivated their tie twice during their careers. These simplified examples denote the importance of independently operationalizing three different time-based effects – a) tie strength, in terms of how long the two players played together in the past for; b) tie dormancy, as the period in which the tie has not been active; and c) potential career-based effects, that indicate whether reactivation earlier in the players' career may be more or less beneficial. Thus, in order to test the effects of tie strength on shared experience reactivation, I count the number of

seasons the new team member and the 'sponsor' played together in the past. If players A and B shared four seasons in common between 1996 and 2000, the variable *strength of tie reactivation* is given the value four. This measure follows similar approaches adopted in the literature on shared experience (by, e.g., Reagans et al., 2005; Espinosa et al, 2007). In a similar fashion *tie dormancy* is measured as the sum of the number of seasons in which the two players have not played together since their tie was last active. So in the previous case, if the reactivation occurs in 2006, tie dormancy will have a value of six, as 2000 was the last year in which the two players were playing together. It is important to note that, in the occurrences when multiple tie reactivations happen, each reactivated tie potentially has different values of *strength of tie reactivation* and *tie dormancy.* In such case, I adopt the highest value of tie strength, and the lowest value of tie dormancy, under the assumption that the newcomer will utilize the most recent and strongest tie to maximize his benefits.

Finally, in order to control for potential career-based effects, I include *tenure in the NBA* as an indicator capturing the number of seasons spent in the NBA by the newcomer. Controlling for the career trajectory of players is particularly critical as, mechanically, more experienced newcomers are more likely to reactivate a tie, due to the fact that they have been exposed to a higher number of teams and colleagues over their career.

Sponsors' relational embeddedness. Chapter 2 investigates the theoretical mechanisms that may enable highly embedded sponsors to have a greater impact on newcomers' performance. Thus, I define *sponsors' relational embeddedness* as the average tie strength of the shared experience ties between the sponsor and the other old-timers. Tie strength is operationalized as the number of seasons each dyad has spent together in the

previous 10 years. More formally:

$$RE_i = \sum_j (1-\alpha)^{(\beta-1)} \qquad [1]$$

where RE_i represents the value of relational embeddedness for sponsor *I, j* represents any possible dyad of players (including the coach) who played at least one season together in the past 10 years, α is a time discount factor (10%), and β represents how many seasons ago the players in the dyad played together. Time discount α accounts for the fact that we could expect older shared experiences to have less impact than newer ones (i.e., having played together ten years ago should have less impact than having done so during the last season). α acts as a compound discount factor for every season past the current one. Thus, in an imaginary Club Alpha with only three members (A, B and C) who have played together before - A and B for the last three seasons, with C joining only one year ago – A would have a relational embeddedness of 2.71 ($A\text{-}B_{t-3} = .64$, $A\text{-}B_{t-2} = .80$, $A\text{-}B_{t-1} = 1$, and $A\text{-}C_{t-1} = 1$).

Race and demographic indicators. I followed recent studies in the operationalization of demographic characteristics. Price and Wolfers (2010) use skin complexion as a visual determinant for operationalizing race, subdividing the NBA players' population into black and white players. Asian and Hispanics and other non-white, non-black racial groups are not highly represented in the NBA, and will be imprecisely considered as "white" in my analysis (for a similar operationalization, see Price and Wolfers, 2010). Data on players' race was obtained from www.databasebasketball.com, with the addition of manual coding based on players' and coaches' images collected from

www.nba.com and www.google.com.

Control variables

Human capital. Another benefit of using sports data is the possibility of adopting a clearer distinction between human and social capital, the lack of which has plagued current research on social capital (Payne et al., 2011). Since human capital is considered relatively constant over time, I employ player-level fixed effects to control for the effects of talent as an alternative strategy. However, in order to account for fluctuations in skills and talent, I also include the prior season *Player Efficiency Rating* (PER) in my regressions as a control for human capital. Inspired by sabermetrics and created by statistician John Hollinger (Hollinger, 2005), PER provides a more precise view of players' performance. The PER does not simply add or subtract individual statistics, but weights them, standardizing them by minutes played and controlling for different team strategies (which might affect the number of opportunities each player has to score).

Time. Game-level data allows me to explore how the effects of tie reactivation change during the socialization period. Since the NBA season consists of 82 games, I included the following two variables to account for the passage of time. *Games played* represents the total of actual games played by the focal newcomer during the current season, and indicating the unfolding of the socialization period of the player. *Game number* is a numerical progressive indicator of the match under analysis, and so indicates whether it is played early or late during the season.

Age and individual experience. I used other individual control variables to account

for potential confounding effects. It was particularly important to include players' age and experience in the league, as both variables are likely to be correlated to the likelihood of reactivating a tie. In fact, older players, as well as players that have longer careers, are more likely to have played with a higher number of other players in the past. Since the NBA is a closed system, it then becomes more likely for them to reactivate one or more ties when they transition to a new team. Controlling for these two factors is thus very important for the reliability of my analysis.

Team size and past team performance. Two team-level variables are likely to be correlated with the chance of reactivating a tie. The first is *team size* – measured as the total number of players in the team. Bigger teams create more opportunities for tie reactivation, for the simple reason of having more players. Since I investigate tie reactivation as past shared experience between a newcomer and an incumbent, a higher number of incumbents makes it more likely for a tie to be reactivated. At the same time, larger teams might be characterized by a higher degree of internal competition, creating an additional hurdle for newcomers to perform at higher levels.

In a similar vein, I control for the focal *team performance in the previous year*. Team that perform worse are more likely to change their roster composition, hence increasing the overall number of newcomers (and, consequently, internal competition) and decreasing the chance for a tie to be reactivated, due to incumbents' turnover. Moreover, change in the roster is likely to affect the level of sponsors' relational embeddedness, which is likely to go down with increased turnover. I control for both potential confounding effects by including *team size* and *team performance in the previous year* in all my

regression models.

Empirical strategy

I employed multivariate regression analysis to test my hypotheses, adopting different estimation procedures to ensure the robustness of my findings. My main models adopt an Ordinary Least Square (OLS) approach, including individual-level fixed effects (Greene 2008, Castilla 2007). Employing individual fixed-effect estimations in my context leverages important characteristics of my data, in particular the fact that players often experiences multiple transitions over their careers. This allows me to control for all the constant individual-level effects, including individual experience before the NBA, coaching exposure during high school and college, physical characteristics and overall level of basketball talent. A statistically significant Hausman test ($p < .001$) reveals fixed-effects to be preferable to random-effects, due to the systematic difference in their estimated coefficients. Standard errors were adjusted by introducing clustering-correction at the level of the players', and using Huber-White estimators of variance (White 1980). Results also proved to be robust when including autoregressive disturbances of order one. I employed the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) to evaluate model fit. BIC can be used to compare model fit across different regression models, where lower values of BIC should be preferred over bigger ones.

My empirical strategy analyzes newcomers' performance at the game (match) level. This allows me to compare, within newcomers, matches in season in which the newcomer does not reactivate a shared experience tie with matches in seasons where such tie does

exist. Figure 5 depicts an graphical representation of my data.

INSERT FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

Figure 5 presents an illustration of an exemplified career of a generic player and his team affiliation over three years (from the left to the right). Each year is subdivided into 10 games (G1-G10). For the sake of simplicity, we will assume that our generic player is employed in every single game. My level of analysis is at the game – in other words, I estimate a players' performance in each single game.

In my example, the focal player is a newcomer in every single year, as he moves from Team Alpha to Team Beta at his second year, and over to Team Delta on his third year. Moreover, he experiences a transition to a new organization in the middle of his second year, when he switches to Team Gamma. His tenure at Team Gamma is characterized by a tie reactivation (signaled by an "R" in Figure 5). Thus, I am interested in understanding if the reactivated tie experienced when at Team Gamma has a positive effect on his performance. The estimated coefficients for tie reactivation will then explain by how much reactivation impacts his performance in comparison to games played in situations where such tie did not exists (Team Alpha, Team Beta and Team Delta). I present my results in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Statistical Analyses and Results

This chapter illustrated my statistical analysis and presents my regression models. I will start by briefly presenting the descriptive statistics of my sample and proposing some initial considerations. The rest of the chapter is divided in two major sections, following the two theoretical frameworks proposed in chapter 2 and chapter 3, respectively. Tables 2 through 5 contain the results of my regression models used to empirically investigate the first set of hypothesis presented in chapter 2 (H1-H4b), which focus on studying the effects of tie reactivation and exploring several moderators, including tie strength, the sponsors' relational embeddedness and tie dormancy. I then shift the focus on exploring the role of demographic similarity in tables 6 to 10, where I try to understand which factors lead members of discriminated groups to help each other or not. Table 1 reports descriptive statistics and the bivariate correlation table for the main variables.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The average age of newcomers is 26.15 years, and their average tenure in the NBA is about 4 seasons. Newcomers play on average 30 games for their new team. The correlation matrix reveals an unexpected initial finding. The tie reactivation seems not to be significantly correlated with individual performance, casting doubts on the relationship between tie reactivation and performance. I will introduce my multivariate analysis to explore further this initial finding.

Testing the effects of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance

Basic performance effect, and socialization trajectory (H1a and H1b)

The multivariate regression analysis presented in Table 2 explores these preliminary results further, providing statistical support for Hypotheses H1a and H1b.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

The first model (2A) reports the estimation of a controls-only model. The coefficients of the control variables generally behave according to expectations. The indicator for human capital (PER previous season) is statistically significant ($p < .001$) and positively related to players' performance in the current year. As expected, more talented players tend to perform better when joining a new team. It is important to note that such effect is netted of player-level unobserved heterogeneity. This implies that all my statistical analysis account for both dispositional talents (i.e. innate abilities) and acquired talent (i.e. the change in skill level over one's career). The positive and significant coefficients for *number of games played in season* suggests new organizational members undergo a learning process – as expected, the more games they play with their new team, the better they perform, although their abilities seem to decline during the season ($p < .001$), perhaps due to deterioration in their levels of physical fitness, or perhaps because coaches tend to give newcomers less playing time as the season approaches its end. Age also seems to have a negative effect on performance, which becomes statistically significant ($p < .01$) only in

those models that additionally consider my explanatory variables (from 2C to 2G). The effects of *team size* and *team performance (prior season)* also merit attention. Team size is positively related to newcomers' performance ($p < 0.001$), and effect that could potentially be explained by the lower degree of competition. Teams that acquire more players tend to be worse, and in such conditions newcomers are more likely to emerge as substantial contributors to the team. A similar explanation can be given to the negative coefficient for *team performance (prior season)* ($p < 0.001$). Since we might expect team performance to be autocorrelated, the coefficient seems to point at the fact that it is harder for newcomers to play significant amounts of minutes in better teams.

Model 2B incorporates the main explanatory variable *tie reactivation (dichotomous)* to test my first hypothesis (H1a). Such operator is an indicator variable that assumes the value of 1 when the newcomer reactivates at least one tie with his new team members. In opposition to my theoretical expectations, the effect for reactivated past shared experience seems not to be statistically different from zero ($p > .05$). To further explore this unexpected result, I have investigated whether the effect of tie reactivation may be dependent on the value of other covariates. The introduction of an interaction effect between *tie reactivation* and *experience in the NBA* reveals to be significant and negative ($p < 0.001$), and drastically improves the overall model fit (a drop of 1,532 points in BIC). These results seem to suggest that tie reactivation does indeed matter (H1a), but mostly for newcomers that are early in their careers. An explanation may be the existence of a learning process through which players, throughout the evolution of their career, acquire knowledge and skills that enable them to transition more easily into new working environments, even

without the help of an organizational sponsor. This seems to be an even stronger proof of the theoretical mechanisms on which hypothesis 1a is based.

Models 2D-2G provide empirical support for H1b, which posited that the effect of tie reactivation would dwindle along the socialization period. The socialization period can be measured by two different indicators – either by operationalizing it with *time (within season)* or with *# of games played in season*. Whereas the two variables are highly correlated (.71), they indicate two slightly different processes. The former is an absolute metric of time – which indicates at what point in time the game under consideration is played. The latter counts the number of games played by the newcomer. So, for instance, a for player who joins the team mid-way through the season the *time* indicator might be high, but *the number of games played* indicator may be low. Thus, I decided to test H1b considering both specifications, selectively entering interaction terms with both variables and tie reactivation in Models 2D and 2E. Both terms are negative and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), suggesting empirical evidence for H1b. However, it is theoretically relevant to determine which time-based process better captures the socialization effect. I thus enter both interaction terms in Model 2F. The interaction term between *tie reactivation* and *time (within season)* seems to provide a better explanation of the variance, while the interaction term between *tie reactivation* and *number of games played* loses statistical significance. I will discuss this finding in my conclusions.

Finally, in order to relax the assumption of linearity of the effect of time, I split the *tie reactivation* dummy into three components, depending on when the focal game is played in the season. This allows me to directly compare the strength of the tie reactivation

effect between the first and second halves of the season, as well as with playoff games. As expected, a comparative F-test shows that the effect of tie reactivation is stronger in the first half of the season in comparison to the second ($p < 0.01$), as suggested by H1b. However, by comparing the tie reactivation effect between playoff time and the second half of the season, it is worthwhile noting that the former is higher than the latter ($p < 0.01$). I will comment on this finding in my conclusions.

Testing the moderation effects of tie strength and tie decay

The regression analyses presented in Table 3 present empirical evidence for hypotheses H2, H4a and H4b. Since H2 and H4b both revolve around the effects of tie strength, I decided to group and present the results of these hypotheses together.

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Hypothesis 2 posits that the performance effect of a reactivated tie is proportional to its past strength. In order to test such hypothesis, I include two dummy variables for tie reactivation in Model 3A, differentiating them on the basis of tie strength. *Tie reactivation (high tie strength)* assumes a value of 1 when the tie strength of the reactivated tie is above average, while *Tie reactivation (low tie strength)* represents activations of below-average strength. A comparison of the BIC criterion between Model 3A and the baseline model indicates a noteworthy increase in model fit, indicating that differentiating tie reactivation by tie strength greatly increase the model's explanatory power. As expected, the two effects

are positive and significant ($p < 0.001$), and a statistical comparison between their magnitude reveals that high strength reactivations have a bigger impact on newcomers' performance than low strength reactivation. The difference between the two coefficients is statistically significant (F-test: $p < 0.01$), thus statistically supporting my second hypothesis.

Models 3B and 3C present the effects of time on the tie reactivation process. First, I investigate the role of tie dormancy on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (H4a). This hypothesis posits that ties that remained dormant for a shorter period should experience less decay in their embedded social capital, and thus provide stronger effect on performance when reactivated. Similarly to what I have done for H2, I introduce in Model 3B two dummy variables for tie reactivation, differentiating between reactivated tie with below average dormancy period (*low tie dormancy*) and above average dormancy (*high tie dormancy*). As expected, the two types of reactivation have a positive effect on performance ($p < 0.001$). A comparison between the two effects is required in order to find evidence to support H4a. Low dormancy reactivation displays a higher coefficient than high dormancy reactivation, as proposed by H4a, but such difference is not statistically different ($p > 0.05$). Moreover, in comparison to the baseline model, Model 3B does not provide a better fit, as displayed by the higher BIC score. Thus, despite going in the expected direction, the magnitude of the difference between high and low dormancy reactivation does not provide statistical evidence to support H4a.

Finally, Model 3C empirically explores hypothesis 4b, which suggests that stronger ties should decay at a slower rate than weaker ties. Whereas reactivated ties on average do

not show decay (as discussed in the previous paragraph), it may still be possible that strong and weak ties may differently be affected by the passage of time. In order to empirically test for such possibility, I introduce four dummy variables in Model 3C, covering all the possible combinations between high and low strength and high and low dormancy. For the sake of clarity, I will refer to the numbers placed next to the coefficients when discussing their effects (for instance, (1) refers to *high-strength high-dormancy tie reactivation*). As we should expect, all the coefficients are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that all reactivated ties have, in absolute, a positive effect on newcomers' performance. In order to test for H4b, we have to investigate their relative magnitude. In particular, H4a predicts that the effect for tie dormancy will be stronger for weak ties, in comparison to strong ones. In terms of my analysis, this means that the difference between (4) and (3) should be positive and greater than the one between (2) and (1) – in other words, dormancy should be more relevant for weak ties. Yet again, preliminary evidence seem to suggest that this may be the case – the coefficients do indeed behave in the expected manner – but fail to provide statistical evidence. In fact, there is no reliable statistical difference between (4) and (3) and between (2) and (1) – so they are both not distinguishable from zero. The analysis of model fit via BIC scores seem again to prove the same result. While the BIC for Model 3C is smaller than the baseline model (-31), it is not smaller than model (3A). This implies that splitting the tie strength-based dummies into high and low dormancy does not add any additional specification to my analysis. In synthesis, I could not find any statistical evidence for hypothesis 4b.

Testing the moderation effect of sponsors' relational embeddedness

I investigate the empirical support for hypothesis 3 (H3) in the following table (Table 4). Hypothesis 3 concerns the role of the sponsors' relational embeddedness on the performance of the newcomer.

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

My approach to test H3 is similar to what I employed for H2 and H4a. Model 4A included two dummies for tie reactivation, separated by the relative value of the sponsors' relational embeddedness. *Tie reactivation (sponsors' high embeddedness)* indicate reactivations characterized by an above-average value of sponsors' relational embeddedness, while *tie reactivation (sponsors' low embeddedness)* capture the effects of reactivations below-average in sponsors' relational embeddedness. Both indicators are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), as expected. Model 4A also displays a significant improvement in model fit in relation to the baseline model (difference in BIC: -41). Comparing the magnitude of the two coefficients will prove whether reactivations characterized by high sponsors' embeddedness have a stronger effect than the lower counterpart. Indeed, the former has a bigger effect than the latter, with the support of a comparative F-test ($p < 0.001$), providing statistical support for the role of the relational embeddedness of the sponsor. H3 is thus supported.

The following models 4B and 4C explore whether the effect of relational embeddedness of the sponsor is dependent upon the internal structure of the team

network. In particular, I decided to explore whether the embeddedness in a specific subpart of the network matters more or less in terms of newcomers' performance. I thus decided to alternatively consider the relational embeddedness with the core and the periphery of the network. I operationalized the two subsections based on the average minutes played by the team members in a game during the focal season. If a team member played more than 26 minutes per-game was considered a member of the core, or of the periphery otherwise (a sensitivity analysis revealed no major discrepancies when alternative cut-offs where considered). Thus, I have calculated the sponsors' relational embeddedness by core and periphery only, and then included dummy variables for high and low relational embeddedness with core and periphery in Models 4B and 4C. In both models, the dummies for tie reactivation at various levels of relational embeddedness had positive and significant effects ($p < 0.001$). However, the difference between high and low sponsors' relational embeddedness was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) only when the core of the network was considered (Model 4B), while it was not dissimilar in the case of the periphery (Model 4C). The implications will be discussed in the conclusion section.

A potential confounding factor of the effect of the sponsors' relational embeddedness could be the sponsors' tenure. The two variables are highly correlated, and it is easy to understand why – members who spend more time with a team are more likely to be more relationally embedded. Despite being numerically similar, the two variables have distinctive theoretical implications. Tenure captures seniority, and thus is likely to indicate social status. Instead, relational embeddedness is an indicator of social capital

and trust. To examine whether the effect of the latter is separate from the former, I first explore the role of sponsors' tenure on the performance effects of tie reactivation (Model 4D). Similarly to the previous models, I introduce two dummy variables to capture sponsors' high and low tenure (in relation to the mean). The coefficients for the two indicators are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), in line with the prior results. An analysis of their coefficients reveal that reactivations made possible by high tenured sponsors' have a stronger effect than those featured by low tenured sponsors, but the difference between the two coefficients is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Moreover, the overall model fit is comparable to the baseline model (BIC difference: +1), indicating that including indicator variables based on the sponsors' tenure does not improve the descriptive power of our model. Tenure does not seem to have a relevant impact on the effects of tie reactivation.

While Model 4D suggest that tenure does not play a major role, the final model of Table 4 (Model 4E) tests the effect of the sponsors' relational embeddedness by controlling for their tenure. In order to achieve this, I introduced four indicator variables in Model 4E, for each combination of sponsors' high and low relational embeddedness and tenure. Hypothesis 3 would be confirmed if a positive difference in the magnitude of the coefficients exists across different levels of relational embeddedness, while keeping tenure constant. In other words, coefficient (1) should be bigger than (2), and (3) bigger than (4). Indeed the results hold, even if only the latter difference carries statistical reliability ($p < 0.08$). On the other hand, tenure seems not to have an effect. Coefficients (1) and (3) are virtually identical, and (2) and (4) only slightly different, showing that

changes in tenure – while keeping relational embeddedness constant - do not have an impact on newcomers' performance. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the additional specification – while better than the baseline model – does not advance model fit in comparison to Model 4A (BIC: +30). In sum, the data provides sufficient statistical evidence for supporting hypothesis 3.

Robustness tests: Multiple tie reactivations

I ran additional regression models to strengthen the evidence provided in the previous sections. In particular, I was interested in investigating the role played by multiple tie reactivations, and further explore the relation between tie reactivation and experience in the NBA. Table 5 presents such analyses.

INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

The analyses presented in Tables 2 to 4 used a dichotomized operationalization of tie reactivation, using a dummy variable that indicated the presence of at least one reactivated tie. However, multiple ties can be reactivated at the same time for any specific newcomer. A descriptive analysis reveals that 25% of the overall instances of tie reactivation are indeed multiple. Whereas I did not explicitly theorized the performance effect of multiple ties vis-à-vis a single one, there is no reason to believe that the reactivation of multiple ties may indeed prove to be more effective than a single instance. Thus, in Model 5A I introduce a continuous operationalization of tie reactivation – a

variable that counts the number of reactivated ties that are present in the team. The coefficient for this alternative specification is positive and significant ($p < 0.001$), proving that the effect on newcomers' performance of ties in addition to the first substantially stack up.

The following question regards the rate of returns of multiple reactivated ties. Depending on alternative theoretical explanations (which I will consider in the discussion section), the marginal rate of returns of additional reactivated ties could be constant, positive or negative. I empirically explore this question in Model 5B, where I include a quadratic term for the continuous operator of tie reactivation. Such coefficient proves to be positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), revealing that tie reactivation has a positive marginal rate of return, as shown by Figure 6:

INSERT FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE

Figure 6 displays the relationship between tie reactivation (continuous) and performance. The quadratic effect is not particularly strong, but it is important to note that its inclusion substantially increases model fit (BIC: -53), revealing that the quadratic specification of the model indeed provides a better description of the relationship between tie reactivation and performance. I will discuss the theoretical relevance of such finding in the next chapter.

In Model 5C I further discriminate between types of ties by looking at reactivation with the coach vs. reactivation with other players. Coach-players relations

are substantially different from the one between peers (player-to-player), the former being more hierarchical and defined by a formal role structure. Thus, I explore whether reactivating the two have differing effects on newcomers' performance. I do so by including two new explanatory variables in Model 5C – *tie reactivation (sponsor is coach)* and *tie reactivation (sponsor is player)*. The former is a dummy variable that assumes the value of 1 if the current head coach of the team reactivated a tie with the focal newcomer. The latter is akin to the continuous operationalization of tie reactivation, but only considers those sponsors' that are players (not coaches). Model 5C shows that both coefficients for coaches and players sponsors' are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) – as expected, both kinds of reactivations provide performance benefits. A comparative analysis of the magnitude of the two coefficients reveals that the effect of reactivations with players' is stronger than the one with coaches, albeit without statistical support ($p > 0.05$). Still, I consider the result to be noteworthy, as there are reasons to believe that reactivations with coaches might be worth more. Again, I will discuss this finding in my concluding chapter.

Hypothesis H1b posited that the effect on performance of tie reactivation should be stronger earlier in the socialization period. The dichotomous analysis presented in this chapter provided support for such hypothesized relation, which was additionally explored in Model 5D by using the continuous version of the operationalization for tie reactivation. I did so by including an interaction term between *tie reactivation (continuous)* and *time within season*. Such coefficient proved to be statistically significant and negative ($p <$

0.05), yet again confirming that the effect for tie reactivation is stronger earlier in the basketball season. The interaction effect is displayed in Figure 7.

INSERT FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE

The interaction between tie reactivation (continuous) and time within season displays an interesting pattern. Whereas the effect of multiple reactivations stack up, becoming stronger as the number of ties increases, the overall time trend tends in the opposite direction. In other words, the higher the number of reactivated ties, the stronger the effect at the beginning of the season, but also the smaller the marginal effect as the season progresses.

Exploring the effects of demographic similarity on tie reactivation

Testing the effect of demographic similarity

Tables 6 to 10 report my statistical analyses on the effects of demographic similarity on the performance outcomes of tie reactivation. I present some initial exploratory models in Table 6, together with evidence to evaluate hypothesis 5.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

First, I am interested in understanding – in general - whether white or black players benefit more from tie reactivation. Despite not explicitly hypothesizing a race-based effect, my assumption on the stronger degree of discrimination faced by white players leads me to expect that white newcomers would benefit more from the presence of a sponsor during their socialization than black newcomers. Thus, in Model 6A I introduced two dummy variables based on the race of the newcomer. *Tie reactivation (white newcomer)* takes a value of 1 when the newcomer reactivating a tie is white, and 0 if not. Similarly, I introduce an indicator for black newcomers (*tie reactivation – black newcomer*). It is important to note that this initial analysis does not discriminate between the sponsors' race. As expected, both white and black players benefit from tie reactivation ($p < 0.001$). A differential F-test between the magnitude of the two coefficients reveals that white players tend to benefit more, on average, from tie reactivation ($p < 0.05$), confirming that my initial assumption related to their greater integration difficulties holds.

My second exploratory analysis moves the focus on the race of the sponsors. I apply the same approach seen in Model 6A to Model 6B, where I investigate whether black or white sponsors' have a greater impact on newcomers' performance. Three indicator variables individually capture whether the sponsors' are white, black or mixed. The third category captures those instances in which multiple tie reactivations occurred, but the set of sponsors' were not homogeneous. Sponsors of different races seem to equally impact newcomers' performance, as revealed by a comparative F-test between

the magnitudes of the three positive coefficients ($p > 0.05$). Thus, at least on average, race seems not to affect the role played by the sponsors' in the tie reactivation process.

After investigating the role of race separately, in Model 6C I move on to analyze whether reactivated dyads of the same race (homophilous ties) tend to produce higher performance outputs than dyads of different races (heterophilous ties), as predicted by hypothesis 5 (H5). Once again, in order to clearly separate and compare the effect of homophilous vs. heterophilous ties, I decided to introduce a third category (mixed tie) in those instances where the set of sponsors' was not completely white or black. Model 6C does not provide empirical support for H5. In fact, while both indicators for homophilous and heterophilous reactivated ties are positive and significant ($p < 0.001$), the difference of their coefficients is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Hence, the notion that homophilous ties produce higher outputs finds no empirical evidence.

Testing the role of value threat, and tie reactivation between members of the discriminated group

With Table 6, my analysis on demographic similarity began by considering the role played by race on newcomers and sponsors. Then I moved to investigating whether reactivations between players of the same race had a bigger effect on performance, but without discriminating by race, i.e. without testing whether reactivations between black players have a stronger effect than reactivations between white players. This will then be my focus on the following analyses. Results illustrated by Table 7 are based not simply

based on race similarity, but distinguish between newcomers and sponsors' membership in the discriminated group.

INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

Table 7 specifies tie reactivation effects within and across race groups. I introduced a dummy variable for each possible race-based combination between newcomer and sponsor(s). As discussed before, I specify the sponsors as being "mixed" when multiple activations occur, with sponsors' of difference race. This allows me to more distinctively isolate effects across demographic groups. Model 7A estimates such indicators. All the tie reactivation variables are statistically significant and with a positive effect ($p < 0.001$), as expected. The fact that tie reactivations help newcomers, independently from their race and from their sponsors' race, is consistent with my overall theorization. Defining reactivations by race drastically improves the model fit (BIC: -131), an initial indication that specifying differences in race improves our understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Hypothesis six (H6) posits that, due to value threat, sponsors' of the discriminated group are lest vested in helping other members of their group. In order to statistically test such hypothesis, I would expect white newcomers to have stronger benefits when their reactivated sponsor is black rather than white. Indeed, the effect for the white-black dyad is stronger than the one for the white-white dyad. The difference, however, is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), thus failing to find initial support for H6.

However, the white-white reactivations may be strongly influenced by the number of other white players present in the team, as suggested by hypotheses 7. Sponsors integrated in a team with a higher number of demographically similar others may be less prone to face value-based threats. I thus introduce in Model 7B an interaction between the number of white players in the team and the effect for the white-white tie reactivation. Despite improving my overall model fit (BIC: -76), such interaction is not significant. Again, there seem to be no support for H7.

Considering that perception of value-threat is due to the incumbents' scrutiny and judgments, an additional analysis is warranted. Instead of considering the totality of the white players' population, the white-white reactivation might depend on the number of white *veterans* that are present on the teams. Veterans are more likely to be more judgmental, and impose a higher pressure on one's value-threat. Thus, in model 7C I introduce an interaction term between white-white tie reactivations and the number of white veterans. The inclusion of such term substantially improves model fit (BIC: -203), again demonstrating the added informational value of this latter model specification. The interaction term is positive and significant ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that the number of white veterans has a deep impact on the effect that white-white reactivations have. The higher the number of veterans, the safer white sponsors' feel when helping a demographically similar other, and hence the stronger the effect on performance that gets produced. Moreover, the inclusion of the interaction term has a deep impact on the base effect of the white-white reactivation, as predicted by H7. In comparison to the previous model, the effect drops significantly, and its difference with the white-black coefficient becomes

statistically significant, providing evidence for H6. Therefore, when considering the role played by veterans, both H6 and H7 find empirical support.

Testing the moderating effect of sponsors' relational embeddedness in the discriminated group

Finally, I will explore how relational embeddedness impacts the effect of value-threat. Hypothesis 8 posits that highly embedded white sponsors should experience less value-threat, and thus the white-white tie reactivations should be stronger where sponsors' are more embedded.

INSERT TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE

I incorporate sponsors' relational embeddedness in Model 9A, where I separate high and low levels of embeddedness for each of the pair-wise dyads based on racial similarity/dissimilarity. The introduction of relational embeddedness improves model fit, demonstrating that the inclusion of relational embeddedness provides meaningful information to the regression models. Hypothesis 8 assumes that players that are more embedded in the network should perceive lower levels of value threat, and thus should be more helpful towards demographically similar others. In regression terms, I should thus expect that white sponsors with high embeddedness should have a stronger impact on white newcomers' performance than white sponsors' that are less embedded. A comparison between the magnitude of the effects of the coefficients for *white-white reactivation (sponsors' high embeddedness)* and *white-white reactivation (sponsors' low*

embeddedness) seems to provide such evidence. In fact, the magnitude of the former is higher than the latter, and a comparative F-test proves that the difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, Model 8A provides evidence to support H8.

As discussed for H3, the sponsors' tenure could be a confounding factor of their levels of relational embeddedness, as the two constructs are likely to be correlated. To investigate this potential problem, I run an analysis similar to Model 8A in the following table, dividing my effects by high and low levels of sponsors' tenure.

INSERT TABLE 9 ABOUT HERE

Table 9 reports such analysis. The focus in Model 9A is on the difference between the coefficients *white-white reactivation (sponsors' high tenure)* and *white-white reactivation (sponsors' low tenure).* Unexpectedly, the latter is higher than the former, with their difference being substantial and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that while *more embedded* discriminated sponsors' are more likely to have a deeper impact on demographically similar newcomers' performance (Model 8A – Table 8), the same happens for sponsors that have a *lower tenure* (Model 9A – Table 9) – in other words, highly tenured white sponsors are less likely to help a newcomer to perform better.

A final test is required to jointly consider the dynamics of sponsors' tenure and relational embeddedness of white sponsors. The regression model presented in Table 10

estimates the effect of both high and low levels of white sponsors' tenure and relational embeddedness.

INSERT TABLE 10 ABOUT HERE

Model 10A, presented in Table 10, includes four dummy variables for white-to-white reactivations (i.e. both the newcomer and the sponsors' are white). These variables distinguish between the four possible combinations of high and low sponsors' tenure and relational embeddedness. In order to provide empirical evidence for supporting hypothesis 8, the difference in magnitude between coefficients of high and low relational embeddedness should be positive and statistically significant, across levels of sponsors' tenure. Thus, both differences between coefficients (1)-(2) and (3)-(4) should be relevant and significant. Comparative F-tests support this view ($p < 0.05$). Hence, this stringent test of H8 provides further empirical evidence for the hypothesis.

A similar comparison can be done to confirm the negative effect of white sponsors' tenure on white-to-white reactivations. An analysis of the differences between coefficients across levels of relational embeddedness (i.e. (1)-(3) and (2)-(4)) once again confirms the negative association between white sponsors' tenure and white newcomers' performance. Both differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), showing that highly tenured sponsors' are less likely to be associated with higher newcomers' performance. The most interesting cases are the ones featuring white sponsors' with high tenure but low embeddedness (coefficient 2). Such coefficient is not statistically different from zero

($p > 0.05$), which implies that on average these sponsors are not helpful. Vice versa, the most productive sponsors are those highly embedded but with low tenure (coefficient 3). These findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this study was to analyze the extent to which the reactivation of past work relationships may enable new organizational members to achieve higher performance. To do so, I analyzed a large longitudinal dataset (1985-2011) of basketball players of the National Basketball Association (NBA), focusing on shared experience, a social tie that embeds an internal form of social capital. My results not only provided empirical support for the role of reactivated shared experience in generating higher performance for the newcomers, but also explored and found how relevant factors – including internal organizational structure, tie strength, tie dormancy and demographic similarity – impact the magnitude of the effect of shared experience reactivation on newcomers' performance. My findings contribute to the management literature and have practical repercussions.

Theoretical contributions

Contributions to the socialization literature

Although traditional management and organization scholars have devoted much attention to analyzing employees' socialization and organizational entry (Louis 1980; Louis, Posner, and Powell 1983), the topic has received less attention in the last decade, in stark contrast with the greater mobility that characterized contemporary internal and external labor markets (O'Mahony and Bechky 2006). This study contributes to this long-standing tradition of scholarship. Past shared experience has been proven to have a relevant impact on newcomers' socialization and performance, particularly early in employees'

careers, and this offers a novel theoretical insight to the socialization literature, which has rarely demonstrated how the effects of different factors may enhance or slow newcomers' performance contingent on their prior experience. I argue that this finding may open a fruitful research stream, highlighting the need for further theoretical explanations and empirical validations of how socialization processes may have various levels of effect for more or less experienced professionals. Moreover, the effect of the reactivation of social ties also provides not only a theoretical but also an empirical contribution. Given the increasing mobility of labor markets, it is becoming more common for employees to join teams and organizations where prior colleagues work (Somaya, Williamson, and Lorinkova 2008).

In particular, this study demonstrates the importance of considering not only the current network structure when analyzing socialization, but also how newcomers' relational history may have significant effects on their performance. Sharing experience with co-workers proves to have a relevant impact on the socialization of newcomers, and my results hint at how peer co-workers may actually be more relevant than hierarchical relationships during the socialization process. Moreover, this study highlights the relevance of career stage during socialization. Indeed, basketball players seem to leverage their networks less and less as they become more experienced, showing a learning process through which they learn how to transition from organization to organization more easily. The socialization literature has rarely taken such factors into consideration, given the major focus on newcomers' that are early in their careers. However, whereas this study mainly focuses on past shared experience, future research could also consider the potential effects of other

types of prior social ties (such as communication, friendship, or knowledge transfer).

Contributions to the social network literature

My study also provides contributions to two different sub-streams of the network literature. The first is the literature on the reactivation of social ties (Levin et al. 2011). By focusing on a *behavioral* reactivation – in comparison to the previous studies, which focused on *cognitive ones* – I was able to explore whether the idiosyncratic social capital contain in network relations and developed in specific organizational settings can be reactivated in different ones. Such focus is particularly relevant as previous studies have primarily focused on network benefits that are structural and informational (e.g. Srivastava 2011). Reactivated ties have been interpreted similarly to the re-instantiation of network bridges (Burt 1992), without taking into consideration the potential social capital embedded *within* the tie. I shed light on this issue not only by showing that the reactivation of shared experience does indeed matter, but also by illustrating how it depends on characteristics of the tie itself (i.e. tie strength). I am also able to contribute to the debate on the nature of social networks – which are either considered informational mechanism or sociological process (Castilla 2005). Under this light, the positive, quadratic effect of the reactivation of multiple shared experience ties is particularly interesting. Given the fixed amount of information about a potential new organizational member, if the benefit deriving from networks was primarily informational we would expect reactivated ties to have decreasing returns. On the other hand, empirically finding *increasing* returns shows that there are positive externalities from multiple reactivated ties, as we would expect from a social enrichment effect. The addition of extra trusted contacts and multiple mentors should (and

does) indeed facilitate the integration of a new member in a group. Although such finding does not discount the informational role of networks, it also highlights that the primary role of social ties is not of conducts of information, but also carriers of socially embedded knowledge and trust.

Moreover, past analyses that have focused on the informational advantages of reactivated communication ties (e.g. Srivastava 2011) suffer from the impossibility of disentangling the effects of time from those of the network structure has limited the value of such analyses. In fact, although scholars have criticized traditional social network studies for their inability to account properly for the passage of time (Levin et al. 2011), they often ignore that time is embedded in how networks form, and hence in their cross-sectional structure. It is easy to see why: since ties that are less frequently active tend to be network bridges (Granovetter 1983), reactivated ties are generally connections that span structural holes – and hence provide informational advantages. Thus, when studying reactivated ties there is always a risk of theoretically and empirically confounding the effects of network reactivation with those emanating from social structure. This research leverages the analysis of newcomers' organizational entry to avoid such bias. A new organizational transition can be compared to an exogenous shock on an ego network's social structure – when a new member joins an organization, they needs to rebuild their personal network from its foundations. Analyzing the contribution of network reactivation to this process is particularly important, as it isolates the reactivation itself from the prior social structure (compare the transitions of A and B in Figure 1 for a graphical and intuitive illustration of this point).

This approach also allows me to orthogonally disentangle tie strength from tie dormancy and from other time-based effects (like employees' tenure). My large-scale statistical analysis of the effects of dormancy and tie strength provides, for the first time, support for the independent effects of dormancy and relational embeddedness. It shows that the rate of decay of shared experience seems to be independent from tie strength, in contrast to what previous scholars' findings (Levin et al. 2011); this counter intuitive finding calls for a better understanding of the process of tie decay, perhaps by examining different types of ties.

Finally, my analysis of the role of demographic similarity in contributing to the tie reactivation process provides relevant contributions to the literature on homophily and performance. Whereas homophily is taken-for-granted phenomenon by the managerial and sociological literatures, much is still to be understood as to whether homophilous ties improve individual performance. My study advances the current literature by finding, for the first time, empirical evidence for theories based on value-threat, a mechanisms that takes place among discriminated groups. Empirical evidence shows that tie reactivation has a lower effect between members of discriminated groups, and that numeric representation and sponsors' relational embeddedness play a role in determining the magnitude of the beneficial network effect. The analyses of both moderators revealed fine-grained effects. In the case of numerical representation, it appears that being represented in the higher status strata matters the most. This finding is justifiable along the lines of value-threat based mechanisms – veterans are more likely to add pressure and form expectations on the newcomer's and on the sponsor's behavior, and thus numerical representation is more

likely to play a major role in that group. Moreover, a comparative analysis of the effects of sponsor's relational embeddedness and tenure revealed the oppositional nature of these two moderators. Despite their relatively high correlation – incumbent with higher tenure are more likely to develop stronger ties with the rest of the organization – I find that sponsors' tenure (which I interpret as status in the internal hierarchy) has a negative impact on the effects of tie reactivation. The interpretation that follows is that sponsors in the discriminated group with a higher status have more to lose when helping similar newcomers, and thus are less likely to help them. At the same time, however, when they develop a sense of trust with the rest of the incumbents (signaled by a high relational embeddedness) they are able to offset the perceptions of value-threat, and thus are more willing to help out.

An important characteristic of my study is the analysis of a white population as the discriminated group. To my knowledge, the NBA is one of the rare settings in which the discriminated group does not overlap with a discriminated social minority (e.g. African-American, women, etc.). This is important as it acts as a setting in which value-threat theories can be tested independently from discrimination that became institutionalized in societal strata.

Managerial contributions

This study has also several implications for practice. By considering the relevance of reactivated social ties on new organizational members' performance, this paper offers managers a different perspective on hiring practices. Whereas generally a major emphasis

is placed on human capital during hiring and staffing decisions (Huselid et al. 1997), the importance of prior social networks shows an additional, low-cost factor that can enable teams and organizations to fully take advantage of prior network structures (Reagans et al. 2004).

Change is intrinsic to organizational life, and managing employee turnover and staffing decisions is fundamental to sustaining performance in the long run. In this perspective, two of my findings are particularly important. First, reactivated ties are more relevant for younger, less-experienced workers. So when deciding how to staff a specific project-team, or evaluating a young candidate, managers should particularly pay attention to extant social networks. In contrast, my findings seem to suggest that reactivated ties may be detrimental for more experienced workers: this might be due to problems of over-embeddedness (Uzzi 1997), where trust may reach levels that are too high and create a sense of comfort that might not align with the competitiveness between employees required to maximize performance. The second relevant managerial implication concerns the length of the project/task. Again, network reactivation has a greater impact early in a socialization period, and hence is more important in contexts where short-term performance is paramount, or where projects/tasks are not expected to last very long. Whereas in the long run newcomers reach approximately the same level of performance, managers should bear in mind that the strongest impact of ties reactivation occurs earlier in the process.

Limitations and conclusions

All studies have limitations, and this study is no exception. The greatest potential

concern lies in the generalizability of the results – using sports data analyses to make inferences about other organizational settings always calls for caution. However, I believe that such concerns are limited, given the nature of my study. Specifically, my study's focus is on the process by which newcomers learn the set of routines and social norms that characterize their new social setting. Basketball teams are good examples of organizations with strong norms and culture, but they are not particular in how these elements are embedded to their organizational structures. In other words, I believe them to be good representations of settings where idiosyncratic social norms are at play, but how they operate is not substantially different than in other, more traditional organizations - such as firms.

Another limitation of this study lies in how I consider past shared experience to generally carry a positive effect. Indeed, network scholars have recently shown that not all social ties carry such positive attributes, but can also have quite negative consequences (Labianca and Brass 2006). However, I have reasons to believe this potential bias may not be relevant enough to significantly alter the results of my study. First, the analysis of the frequency of negative ties reveals that only one social connection out of 10 has negative repercussions (Labianca and Brass 2006), and that their presence is even less likely in settings characterized by high task interdependence and network density (Labianca and Brass 2006). Moreover, I assume that positive ties tend to self-select in a high-mobility market, as negative ties tend to be broken off, either by the parties involved or by management (this is especially true in the case of sport clubs, when team performance suffers from bad player relationships). Thus, in general I assume my analysis to be robust

against the potential presence of negative ties, although future studies should consider the different effects of positive, neutral and negative ties on new employees' socialization and performance.

In conclusion, my analysis of the effects of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance has revealed how past social networks can deeply influence the career trajectories of high status professional, providing theoretical contributions to the socialization literature, as well as the literature on demographic similarity and social tie reactivation. Studying the dynamic nature of social networks proved to be a fruitful avenue for managerial research, and hopefully this study will be a stepping stone for future investigations aimed at clarifying how social networks form, activate and dissolve, and how such processes impact the performance of individuals in organizations.

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Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Example of tie reactivation between newcomer and sponsor.

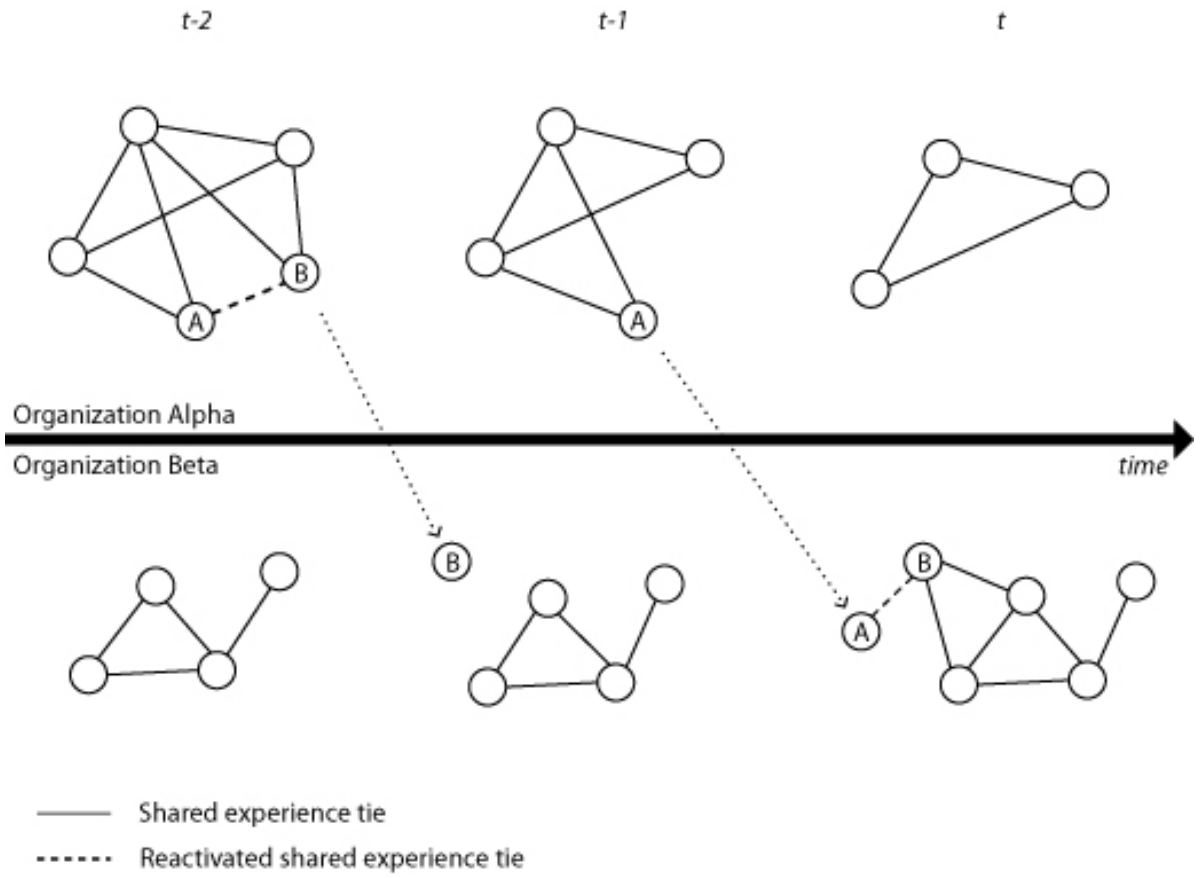

Figure 2. Expected effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' socialization trajectories

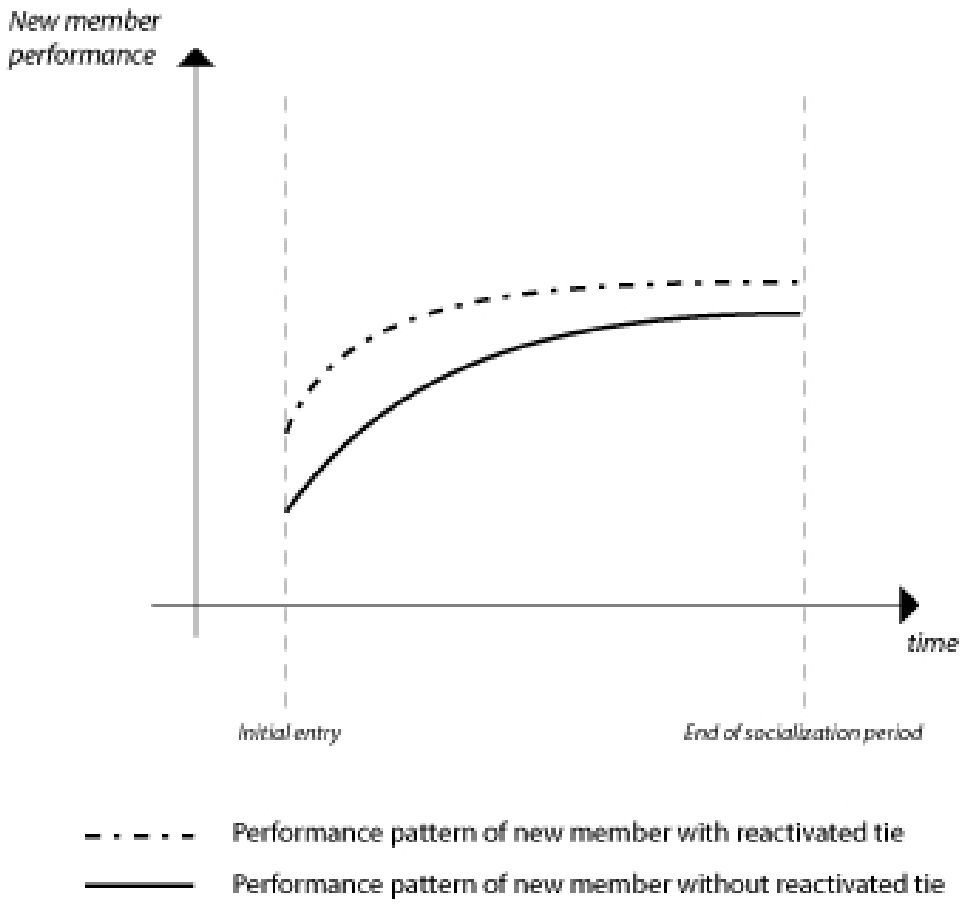

Figure 3. Example of the role of sponsors' relational embeddedness

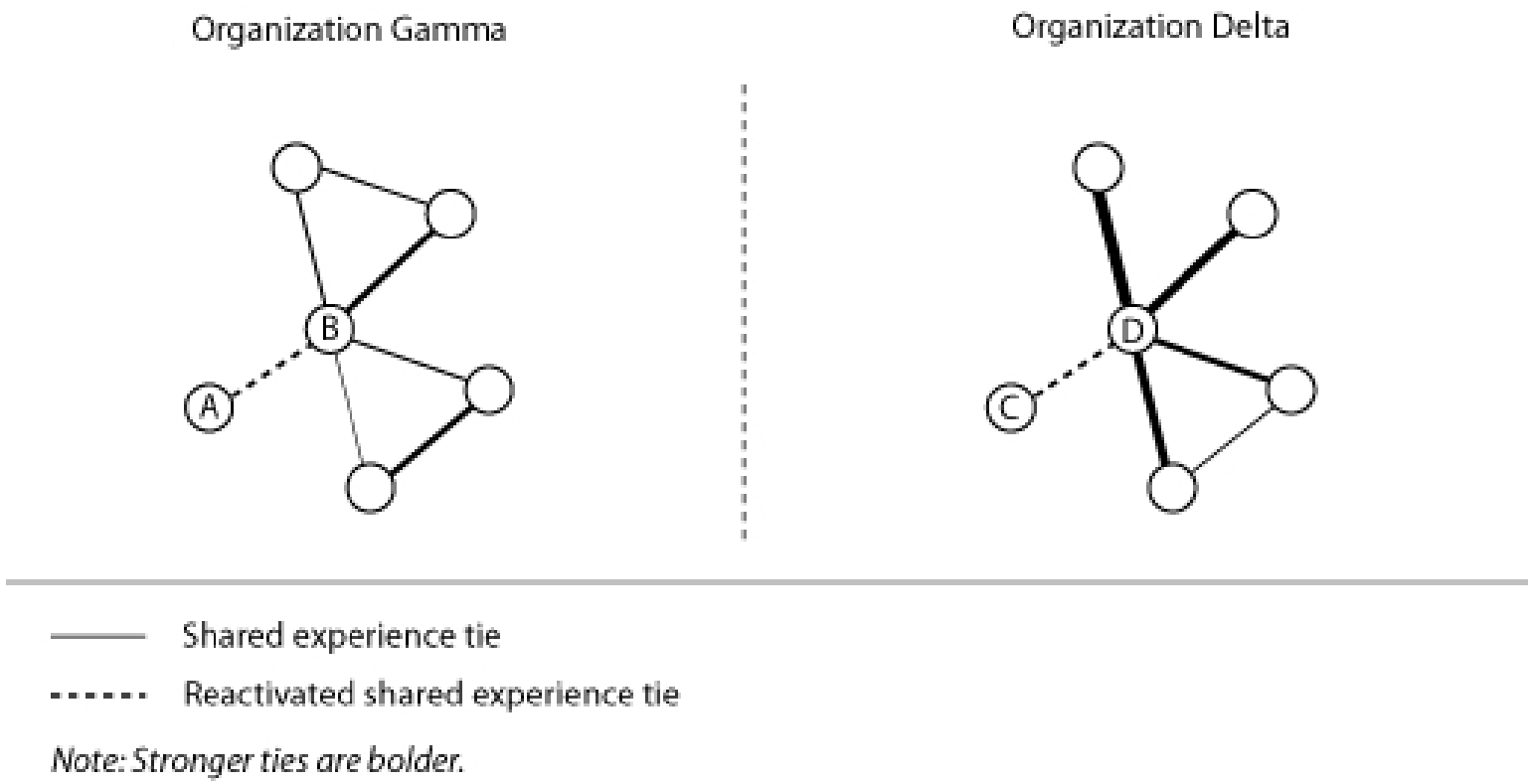

Figure 4. An example of differing time-based effects on tie reactivation.

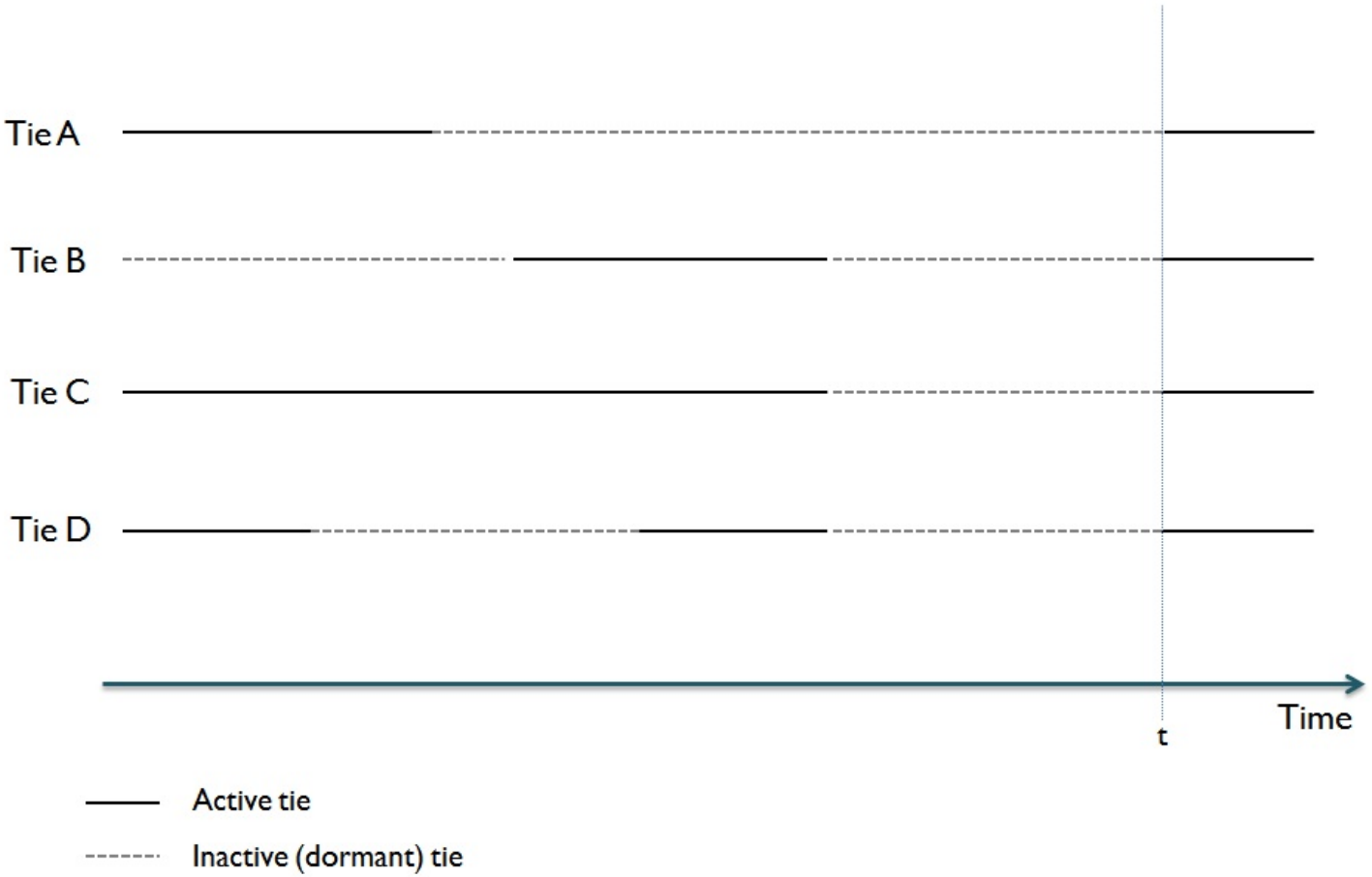

Figure 5. Example of data structure.

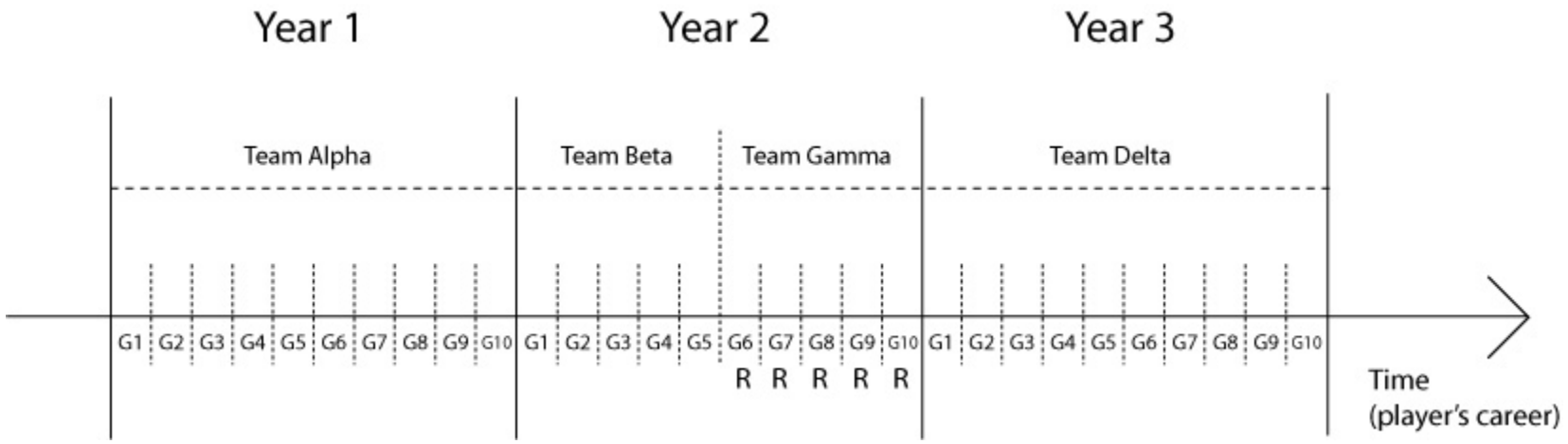

Figure 6. Predicted effect of multiple tie reactivations.

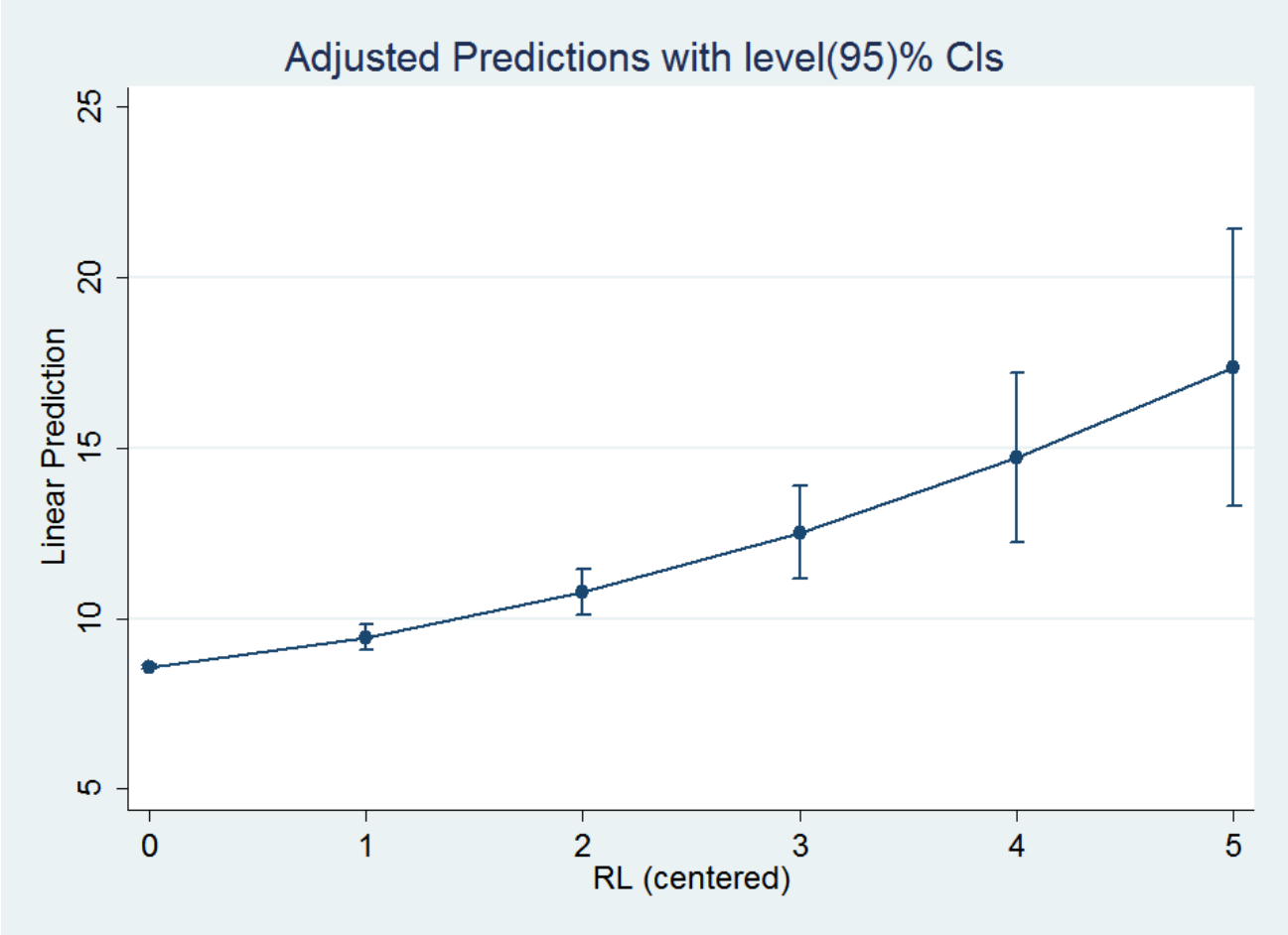

Figure 7. Moderating effect of socialization time on multiple tie reactivations.

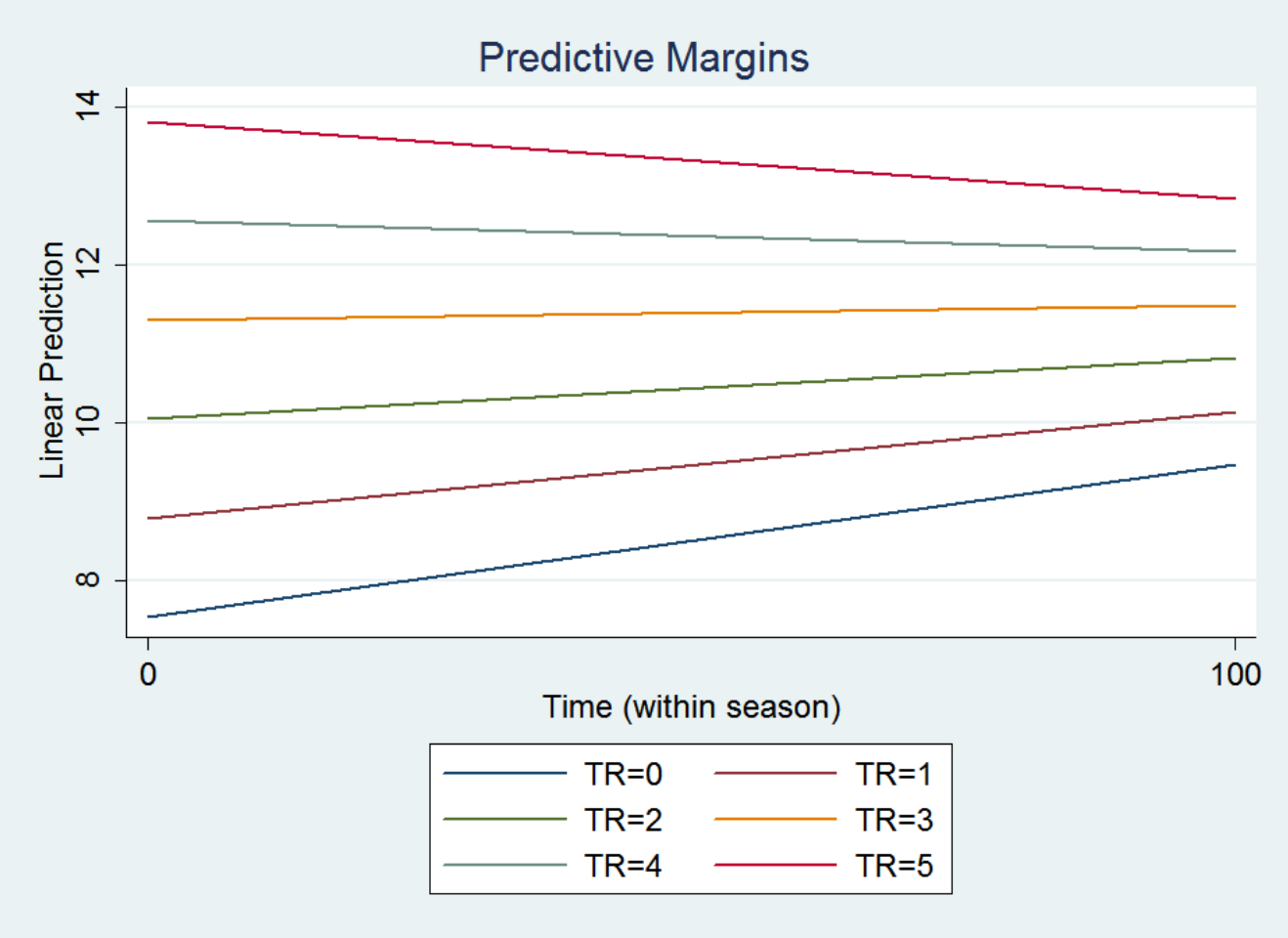

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Individual performance	8.43	8.19	-13.00	63.00										
2. Human capital (PER previous season)	12.48	4.29	-48.60	90.30	0.35									
3. Team size	16.87	2.44	11.00	20.00	0.03	-0.01								
4. Team performance (prior season)	0.48	0.16	0.13	0.88	-0.07	0.01	-0.17							
5. # of games played in season (cumulative)	30.78	22.18	1.00	102.00	0.17	0.13	-0.11	0.03						
6. Time (within season)	44.65	25.07	1.00	108.00	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.71					
7. Age	26.15	4.38	17.21	39.65	0.01	0.07	-0.01	0.19	0.00	0.02				
8. Experience in the NBA	4.09	4.16	0.00	20.00	0.07	0.15	0.00	0.18	0.02	0.03	0.92			
9. Is playoff game (1 = yes)	0.04	0.21	0.00	1.00	-0.02	0.03	-0.04	0.13	0.29	0.37	0.08	0.08		
10. Tie reactivation (dichotomous)	0.19	0.39	0.00	1.00	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.01	0.39	0.40	0.03	
11. Tie reactivation (continous)	0.25	0.60	0.00	5.00	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.12	0.00	0.01	0.37	0.37	0.03	0.88

Table 2. Regression analysis of the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

Model	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E	2F	2G
Human capital (PER previous season)	.367***	.368***	.344***	.343***	.343***	.344***	.344***
	(-11.28)	(-11.31)	(-10.95)	(-10.92)	(-10.93)	(-10.92)	(-10.95)
# of games played in season (cumulative)	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***	.056***	.053***	.055***
	(-15.54)	(-15.54)	(-15.94)	(-15.82)	(-16.09)	(-13.96)	(-15.83)
Time (within season)	- .018***	- .018***	- .019***	- .017***	- .019***	- .015***	- .017***
	(-6.608)	(-6.608)	(-6.880)	(-5.879)	(-6.935)	(-5.038)	(-5.945)
Team size	.199***	.2***	.205***	.205***	.205***	.205***	.204***
	(-7.178)	(-7.186)	(-7.716)	(-7.692)	(-7.711)	(-7.685)	(-7.684)
Team performance (prior season)	-3 .285***	-3 .301***	-3 .253***	-3 .249***	-3 .25***	-3 .251***	-3 .252***
	(-7.743)	(-7.774)	(-7.834)	(-7.818)	(-7.830)	(-7.818)	(-7.826)
Age	- .2	- .209	- .4**	- .404**	- .403**	- .403**	- .406**
	(-1.191)	(-1.232)	(-2.320)	(-2.341)	(-2.337)	(-2.331)	(-2.343)
Experience in the NBA	.038	.042	.304*	.308*	.307*	.306*	.309*
	(-0.216)	(-0.241)	(-1.69)	(-1.707)	(-1.708)	(-1.694)	(-1.715)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)	-2 .46***	-2 .46***	-2 .461***	-2 .428***	-2 .449***	-2 .428***	-2 .652***
	(-20.14)	(-20.14)	(-20.59)	(-20.12)	(-20.33)	(-20.12)	(-19.06)
H1a: Tie reactivation (dichotomous)		.111	3 .43***	3 .435***	3 .43***	3 .438***	
		(-0.618)	(-10.61)	(-10.59)	(-10.57)	(-10.62)	
H1a: Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA			- .47***	- .47***	- .471***	- .469***	- .474***
			(-11.31)	(-11.29)	(-11.29)	(-11.27)	(-11.39)
H1b: Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Time (within season)				- .011***		- .016**	
				(-3.724)		(-2.561)	
H1b: Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x # of games played in season					- .006*	.007	
					(-1.689)	(-0.99)	
H1b: Tie reactivation (first half of season)							3 .751***
							(-11.02)
H1b: Tie reactivation (second half of season)							3 .143***
							(-9.705)
H1b: Tie reactivation (playoffs)							3 .824***
							(-9.248)
Player-level fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant	7.230*	7.421*	11.58**	11.70**	11.64**	11.67**	11.73**
Observations (player-year)	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC	1,588,659	1,588,666	1,587,134	1,587,093	1,587,133	1,587,097	1,587,087
Difference in BIC with previous nested model	-	7	-1,532	-41	-1	-36	-47

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 3. Regression analysis of the moderating role of tie strength and dormancy on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

	Baseline	3A	3B	3C
Human capital (PER previous season)	.344***	.343***	.343***	.343***
	(-10.95)	(-10.96)	(-10.93)	(-10.94)
# of games played in season (cumulative)	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***
	(-15.94)	(-15.93)	(-15.9)	(-15.88)
Time (within season)	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***
	(-6.880)	(-6.847)	(-6.874)	(-6.837)
Team size	.205***	.203***	.205***	.204***
	(-7.716)	(-7.663)	(-7.721)	(-7.68)
Team performance (prior season)	-3 .253***	-3 .253***	-3 .241***	-3 .244***
	(-7.834)	(-7.853)	(-7.789)	(-7.818)
Age	- .4**	- .395*	- .396*	- .393*
	(-2.320)	(-2.293)	(-2.297)	(-2.277)
Experience in the NBA	.304*	.298*	.3*	.296*
	(-1.69)	(-1.661)	(-1.67)	(-1.647)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)	-2 .461***	-2 .459***	-2 .461***	-2 .459***
	(-20.59)	(-20.63)	(-20.59)	(-20.63)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)	3 .43***			
	(-10.61)			
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA	- .47***	- .493***	- .462***	- .486***
	(-11.31)	(-11.97)	(-10.45)	(-11.03)
H2: Tie reactivation (high tie strength)		3 .942***		
		(-10.94)		
H2: Tie reactivation (low tie strength)		3 .288***		
		(-9.973)		
H4a: Tie reactivation (high tie dormancy)			3 .263***	
			(-7.442)	
H4a: Tie reactivation (low tie dormancy)			3 .421***	
			(-10.58)	
H4b: Tie reactivation (high strength - high dormancy) (1)				3 .846***
				(-7.576)
H4b: Tie reactivation (high strength - low dormancy) (2)				3 .909***
				(-10.41)
H4b: Tie reactivation (low strength - high dormancy) (3)				3 .131***
				(-6.753)
H4b: Tie reactivation (low strength - low dormancy) (4)				3 .298***
				(-9.638)
Player-level fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant	11.58**	11.52**	11.50**	11.45**
Observations (player-year)	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC	1,587,134	1,587,080	1,587,143	1,587,103
Difference in BIC with previous nested model	-	-54	9	-31

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] p < 0.1, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 4. Regression analysis of the moderating role of sponsors' relational embeddedness on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

	Baseline	4A	4B	4C	4D	4E
Human capital (PER previous season)	.344***	.344***	.345***	.343***	.344***	.344***
	(-10.95)	(-11)	(-11.01)	(-10.95)	(-10.94)	(-11)
# of games played in season (cumulative)	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***
	(-15.94)	-15.94	(-15.95)	(-15.95)	(-15.92)	(-15.9)
Time (within season)	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***
	(-6.880)	(-6.841)	(-6.845)	(-6.885)	(-6.849)	(-6.821)
Team size	.205***	.208***	.206***	.204***	.206***	.208***
	(-7.716)	-7.81	(-7.727)	(-7.651)	(-7.75)	(-7.809)
Team performance (prior season)	-3 .253***	-3 .319***	-3 .326***	-3 .246***	-3 .265***	-3 .315***
	(-7.834)	(-7.938)	(-7.949)	(-7.805)	(-7.869)	(-7.950)
Age	- .4**	- .402**	- .4**	- .399**	- .406**	- .403**
	(-2.320)	(-2.328)	(-2.321)	(-2.317)	(-2.350)	(-2.327)
Experience in the NBA	.304*	.307*	.305*	.303*	.31*	.307*
	(-1.69)	-1.703	(-1.695)	(-1.686)	(-1.72)	(-1.702)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)	-2 .461***	-2 .46***	-2 .463***	-2 .461***	-2 .46***	-2 .459***
	(-20.59)	(-20.59)	(-20.64)	(-20.59)	(-20.60)	(-20.59)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)	3 .43***					
	(-10.61)					
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA	- .47***	- .483***	- .481***	- .467***	- .474***	- .483***
	(-11.31)	(-11.48)	(-11.49)	(-11.02)	(-11.32)	(-11.46)
Tie reactivation (high sponsors' embeddedness)		3 .822***				
		(-10.03)				
Tie reactivation (low sponsors' embeddedness)		3 .281***				
		(-10.07)				
Tie reactivation (high sponsors' embeddedness - core only)			3 .811***			
			(-9.977)			
Tie reactivation (low sponsors' embeddedness - core only)			3 .273***			
			(-10.03)			
Tie reactivation (high sponsors' embeddedness - periphery only)				3 .339***		
				(-8.931)		
Tie reactivation (low sponsors' embeddedness - periphery only)				3 .461***		
				(-10.6)		
Tie reactivation (high sponsors' tenure)					3 .673***	
					(-9.095)	
Tie reactivation (low sponsors' tenure)					3 .37***	
					(-10.47)	
(1) Tie reactivation (sponsors' high tenure - high embeddedness)						3 .843***
						(-8.755)
(2) Tie reactivation (sponsors' high tenure - low embeddedness)						3 .428***
						(-6.734)
(3) Tie reactivation (sponsors' low tenure - high embeddedness)						3 .81***
						(-9.35)
(4) Tie reactivation (sponsors' low tenure - low embeddedness)						3 .264***
						(-9.996)
Player-level fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant	11.58**	11.59**	11.59**	11.58**	11.71**	11.60**
Observations (player-year)	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC	1,587,134	1,587,093	1,587,099	1,587,144	1,587,133	1,587,123
Difference in BIC with baseline model	-	-41	-35	10	-1	-11

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

# $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 5. Regression analysis of the effect of multiple tie reactivations on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

	5A	5B	5C	5D
Human capital (PER previous season)	.35***	.35***	.35***	.349***
	(-11.02)	(-11.07)	(-11.03)	(-10.99)
# of games played in season (cumulative)	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***
	(-15.56)	(-15.67)	(-15.54)	(-15.48)
Time (within season)	- .018***	- .019***	- .018***	- .018***
	(-6.635)	(-6.710)	(-6.627)	(-6.585)
Team size	.204***	.204***	.204***	.204***
	(-7.53)	(-7.528)	(-7.566)	(-7.517)
Team performance (prior season)	-3 .277***	-3 .294***	-3 .283***	-3 .274***
	(-7.811)	(-7.859)	(-7.823)	(-7.801)
Age	- .365*	- .357*	- .366*	- .369*
	(-2.108)	(-2.073)	(-2.114)	(-2.124)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)	-2 .457***	-2 .458***	-2 .46***	-2 .44***
	(-20.39)	(-20.46)	(-20.42)	(-20.10)
Experience in the NBA	.181	.179	.181	.184
	(-1.01)	(-1.002)	(-1.013)	(-1.026)
Tie reactivation (continous)	1 .982***	1 .702***		1 .982***
	(-8.127)	(-6.436)		(-8.112)
Tie reactivation (continous) - squared		.223*		
		(-2.101)		
Tie reactivation (continous) x Experience in the NBA	- .244***	- .259***	- .243***	- .243***
	(-8.480)	(-8.774)	(-8.456)	(-8.438)
Tie reactivation (sponsor is coach)			1 .622***	
			(-4.28)	
Tie reactivation (sponsor is player)			2 .045***	
			(-8.265)	
Tie reactivation (continous) x Time (within season)				- .004*
				(-1.982)
Player-level fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant	11.33**	11.07**	10.85**	11.42**
Observations (player-year)	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC	1,587,742	1,587,689	1,587,739	1,587,737
Difference in BIC with baseline model	-	-53	-3	-5

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] p < 0.1, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 6. Regression analysis of the moderating role of demographic similarity on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

	Baseline	6A	6B	6C
Human capital (PER previous season)	.344***	.344***	.344***	.343***
	(-10.95)	(-10.94)	-10.94	(-10.91)
# of games played in season (cumulative)	.055***	.055***	.055***	.055***
	(-15.94)	(-15.86)	-15.93	(-15.96)
Time (within season)	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .019***
	(-6.880)	(-6.826)	(-6.876)	(-6.884)
Team size	.205***	.205***	.205***	.205***
	(-7.716)	(-7.723)	-7.716	(-7.727)
Team performance (prior season)	-3 .253***	-3 .222***	-3 .251***	-3 .248***
	(-7.834)	(-7.769)	(-7.824)	(-7.829)
Age	- .4**	- .399**	- .399**	- .398**
	(-2.320)	(-2.312)	(-2.312)	(-2.311)
Experience in the NBA	.304*	.301*	.303*	.302*
	(-1.69)	-1.673	-1.682	-1.68
Is playoff game (1 = yes)	-2 .461***	-2 .457***	-2 .461***	-2 .46***
	(-20.59)	(-20.56)	(-20.61)	(-20.60)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA	- .47***			
	(-11.31)			
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)	3 .43***			
	(-10.61)			
Tie reactivation (white newcomer)		4 .112***		
		(-9.661)		
Tie reactivation (black newcomer)		3 .214***		
		(-9.489)		
Tie reactivation (white sponsor(s))			3 .393***	
			-8.618	
Tie reactivation (black sponsor(s))			3 .453***	
			-10.51	
Tie reactivation (mixed sponsors)			3 .339***	
			-7.175	
H5: Tie reactivation (homophilous tie)				3 .325***
				(-9.909)
H5: Tie reactivation (heterophilous tie)				3 .643***
				(-9.902)
Tie reactivation (mixed tie)				3 .327***
				(-7.16)
Player-level fixed effects	Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant	11.58**	11.54**	11.56**	11.54**
Observations (player-year)	236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC	1,587,134	1,587,090	1,587,158	1,587,145
Difference in BIC with baseline model	-	-44	24	11

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 7. Regression analysis of the moderating role of numeric representation of the discriminated group on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

					Baseline	7A	7B	7C
Human capital (PER previous season)					.344***	.344***	.344***	.341***
					(-10.95)	(10.92)	(10.87)	(11.01)
# of games played in season (cumulative)					.055***	.055***	.055***	.054***
					(-15.94)	(15.86)	(15.85)	(15.59)
Time (within season)					- .019***	- .019***	- .019***	- .018***
					(-6.880)	(-6.827)	(-6.802)	(-6.487)
Team size					.205***	.206***	.182***	.201***
					(-7.716)	(7.721)	(6.449)	(7.655)
Team performance (prior season)					-3 .253***	-3 .219***	-3 .292***	-2 .201***
					(-7.834)	(-7.763)	(-7.913)	(-4.681)
Age					- .4**	- .397*	- .379*	- .41**
					(-2.320)	(-2.305)	(-2.231)	(-2.375)
Experience in the NBA					.304*	.3*	.286#	.311*
					(-1.69)	(1.666)	(1.620)	(1.726)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)					-2 .461***	-2 .459***	-2 .458***	-2 .449***
					(-20.59)	(-20.59)	(-20.57)	(-20.48)
Number of white players							.138***	
							(3.291)	
Number of white veterans								- .243***
								(-3.219)
Number of veterans								- .005
								(-0.0949)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA					- .47***	- .459***	- .458***	- .46***
					(-11.31)	(-10.94)	(-10.82)	(-10.93)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)					3 .43***			
					(-10.61)			
	Newcomer	*Sponsor(s)*						
H6: Tie reactivation:	White	White				3 .802***	3 .8**	2 .074*
						(5.765)	(2.318)	(2.107)
H6: Tie reactivation:	White	Black				4 .257***	4 .297***	4 .281***
						(8.987)	(9.064)	(9.062)
Tie reactivation:	White	Mixed				3 .847***	3 .794***	3 .829***
						(4.854)	(4.840)	(4.849)
Tie reactivation:	Black	White				3 .108***	3 .112***	3 .202***
						(6.207)	(6.212)	(6.320)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Black				3 .238***	3 .14***	3 .249***
						(7.701)	(7.373)	(7.775)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Mixed				3 .213***	3 .245***	3 .239***
						(9.331)	(9.395)	(9.420)
H7: Tie reactivation:	White	White	x	# of white players			.003	
							(-0.008)	
H7: Tie reactivation:	White	White	x	# of white veterans				.954*
								(1.659)
Player-level fixed effects					Included	Included	Included	Included
Constant					11.58**	11.51**	11.75***	11.88***
Observations (player-year)					236,505	236,505	236,505	236,505
Number of players					1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943
BIC					1,587,134	1,587,003	1,586,927	1,586,800
Difference in BIC with baseline model					-	-131	-76	-203

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 8. Regression analysis of the moderating role of discriminated sponsors' relational embeddedness on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

				Baseline	8A
Human capital (PER previous season)				.344***	.345***
				(-10.95)	(-11)
# of games played in season (cumulative)				.055***	.055***
				(-15.94)	(-15.9)
Time (within season)				- .019***	- .018***
				(-6.880)	(-6.806)
Team size				.205***	.211***
				(-7.716)	(-7.914)
Team performance (prior season)				-3 .253***	-3 .269***
				(-7.834)	(-7.854)
Age				- .4**	- .397*
				(-2.320)	(-2.292)
Experience in the NBA				.304*	.299*
				(-1.69)	(-1.657)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)				-2 .461***	-2 .462***
				(-20.59)	(-20.65)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA				- .47***	- .474***
				(-11.31)	(-11.20)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)				3 .43***	
				(-10.61)	
	Newcomer	*Sponsor(s)*	*Sponsors' embeddedness*		
H8: Tie reactivation:	White	White	High		4 .808***
					(-5.589)
H8: Tie reactivation:	White	White	Low		2 .762***
					(-3.349)
Tie reactivation:	White	Black	High		4 .593***
					(-4.733)
Tie reactivation:	White	Black	Low		4 .286***
					(-8.933)
Tie reactivation:	Black	White	High		3 .404***
					(-6.772)
Tie reactivation:	Black	White	Low		3 .261***
					(-6.468)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Black	High		3 .902***
					(-8.637)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Black	Low		2 .998***
					(-8.633)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Mixed	Not split (average)		3 .213***
					(-6.395)
Tie reactivation:	White	Mixed	Not split (average)		3 .924***
					(-4.959)
Player-level fixed effects				Included	Included
Constant				11.58**	11.40**
Observations (player-year)				236,505	236,505
Number of players				1,943	1,943
BIC				1,587,134	1,587,098
Difference in BIC with baseline model				-	-36

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] p < 0.1, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 9. Regression analysis of the moderating role of discriminated sponsors' tenure on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

				Baseline	9A
Human capital (PER previous season)				.344***	.344***
				(-10.95)	(-10.87)
# of games played in season (cumulative)				.055***	.055***
				(-15.94)	(-15.78)
Time (within season)				- .019***	- .018***
				(-6.880)	(-6.760)
Team size				.205***	.206***
				(-7.716)	(-7.735)
Team performance (prior season)				-3 .253***	-3 .242***
				(-7.834)	(-7.825)
Age				- .4**	- .394*
				(-2.320)	(-2.284)
Experience in the NBA				.304*	.296*
				(-1.69)	(-1.647)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)				-2 .461***	-2 .46***
				(-20.59)	(-20.62)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA				- .47***	- .463***
				(-11.31)	(-10.94)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)				3 .43***	
				(-10.61)	
	Newcomer	*Sponsor(s)*	*Sponsors' tenure*		
Tie reactivation:	White	White	High		.984*
					(-1.685)
Tie reactivation:	White	White	Low		4 .003***
					(-5.982)
Tie reactivation:	White	Black	High		3 .656***
					(-4.352)
Tie reactivation:	White	Black	Low		4 .406***
					(-8.593)
Tie reactivation:	Black	White	High		3 .238***
					(-4.855)
Tie reactivation:	Black	White	Low		3 .282***
					(-7.548)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Black	High		3 .737***
					(-7.543)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Black	Low		3 .072***
					(-8.851)
Tie reactivation:	Black	Mixed	Not split (average)		3 .126***
					(-6.238)
Tie reactivation:	White	Mixed	Not split (average)		3 .882***
					(-4.873)
Player-level fixed effects				Included	Included
Constant				11.58**	11.43**
Observations (player-year)				236,505	236,505
Number of players				1,943	1,943
BIC				1,587,134	1,587,139
Difference in BIC with baseline model				-	5

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

[#] p < 0.1, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.

Table 10. Regression analysis of the moderating role of discriminated sponsors' relational embeddedness and tenure on the effect of tie reactivation on newcomers' performance (NBA efficiency)

			Baseline	10A
Human capital (PER previous season)			.344***	.343***
			(-10.95)	(10.95)
# of games played in season (cumulative)			.055***	.055***
			(-15.94)	(15.96)
Time (within season)			- .019***	- .019***
			(-6.880)	(-6.902)
Team size			.205***	.207***
			(-7.716)	(7.764)
Team performance (prior season)			-3 .253***	-3 .254***
			(-7.834)	(-7.814)
Age			- .4**	- .396*
			(-2.320)	(-2.294)
Experience in the NBA			.304*	.3*
			(-1.69)	(1.663)
Is playoff game (1 = yes)			-2 .461***	-2 .46***
			(-20.59)	(-20.59)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous) x Experience in the NBA			- .47***	- .469***
			(-11.31)	(-11.24)
Tie reactivation (dichotomous)			3 .43***	
			(-10.61)	
Tie reactivation (non white-to-white)				3 .413***
				(10.46)
	Sponsors' tenure	*Sponsors' embeddedness*		
(1) Tie reactivation: White-to-white	High	High		2 .779***
				(4.812)
(2) Tie reactivation: White-to-white	High	Low		.583
				(1.208)
(3) Tie reactivation: White-to-white	Low	High		4 .648***
				(5.307)
(4) Tie reactivation: White-to-white	Low	Low		2 .805***
				(3.251)
Player-level fixed effects			Included	Included
Constant			11.58**	11.48**
Observations (player-year)			236,505	236,505
Number of players			1,943	1,943
BIC			1,587,134	1,587,147
Difference in BIC with baseline model			-	13

[a] Unstandardized coefficients are reported; robust t-scores are in parentheses.

# $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; one-tailed tests for hypothesized effects.