

# Embedding Leader Characteristics: An Examination of Homogeneity of Personality and Values in Organizations

Tomas R. Giberson  
Oakland University

Christian J. Resick  
Florida International University

Marcus W. Dickson  
Wayne State University

The authors (a) investigated trait homogeneity in organizations by examining within-organization similarity among members' personality traits and personal values and (b) tested the relationship between the top leaders' personal characteristics and organizational profiles of personality and values. Results replicate and extend B. Schneider, D. B. Smith, S. Taylor, and J. Fleenor's (1998) hypothesis of the homogeneity of personality in organizations. Using data from CEOs and 467 employee participants from 32 organizations, the authors found evidence of within-organization homogeneity of both personality and values. Results also suggest initial empirical support for assumptions presented by E. Schein (1992) and B. Schneider (1987) about leader–follower congruence. Some implications regarding leadership and organizational behavior are discussed.

*Keywords:* leadership, values, personality, attraction selection attrition, person–organization fit

Throughout all aspects of life, people with similar characteristics tend to gather together. This similarity provides a basis for building cooperation and cohesiveness among people. For example, findings suggest a strong positive relationship between the degree of similarity among individuals on characteristics such as personality, attitudes, and demographics and the quality of their interpersonal experiences with one another (Byrne, 1969, 1971). Within organizations, personality similarity may facilitate social integration among members (O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989), reduce role conflict and ambiguity (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989; Turban & Jones, 1988), increase the likelihood that coworkers will interpret the actions of others and environmental stimuli in a similar manner (Engle & Lord, 1997; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1991), and foster trust between leaders and members (Bauer & Green, 1996).

Schneider's (1987) attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) theory discusses the important role of interpersonal similarity in organizational behavior, suggesting that, over time, organizations tend to become homogeneous in terms of the personality, values, and interests of their members. Moreover, Schneider and organizational culture theorists such as Schein (1992) contend that this homogenization process begins with founders and top leaders who embed their own characteristics into the organizations they lead

through decisions they make, particularly by selecting in their own image. In fact, Schneider, Smith, Taylor, and Fleenor (1998) found support for the notion that organizations become homogeneous in terms of the personality of their managers. In the present study we extend the work of Schneider et al. by testing within organization similarity of both personality traits and personal values using a sample of employees across organizational levels, and then examining the congruence between CEOs and their organizations' personality and values profiles.

According to ASA theory (Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995), organizations have a natural tendency to attract, select, and retain people who have similar characteristics. These three basic tenets of attraction, selection, and attrition have received strong support in the person–organization (P-O) fit literature. Specifically, researchers have found that people tend to be attracted to organizations in which they perceive a fit between their traits and preferences with the organization's culture values (e.g., Judge & Cable, 1997) or structural characteristics (e.g., Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989; Turban & Keon, 1993). From this self-selected pool of applicants, organizations then tend to select people who they believe best fit the characteristics of the organization (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1997; Kristof-Brown, 2000), and finally, those individuals who fit the environment tend to remain while those who feel they do not fit the organization tend to leave (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). The range of characteristics among members thus becomes restricted, causing the organization to become increasingly homogeneous in terms of the personality, values, attitudes, and so forth of its members (Schneider et al., 1995). Further, Schneider and colleagues (Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al., 1995, 1998) contend that this homogeneity among members results in the organization developing a unique shared personality that distinguishes it from other organizations. Schneider et al. (1998) referred to this prop-

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Tomas R. Giberson, Department of Human Resource Development, Oakland University; Christian J. Resick, Department of Psychology, Florida International University; Marcus W. Dickson, Department of Psychology, Wayne State University.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tomas R. Giberson, Department of Human Resource Development, School of Education and Human Services, 495C Pawley Hall, Oakland University, Rochester, MI 48309. E-mail: giberson@oakland.edu

osition as the homogeneity hypothesis and used the term *modal personality* to refer to an organization's unique personality.

To date, there have been few direct tests of the homogeneity hypothesis. In one related study on trait homogenization, Schaubroeck, Ganster, and Jones (1998) found that individuals are less likely to intend to leave organizations that fit their personal characteristics. Schneider et al. (1998) conducted an empirical test of the homogeneity hypothesis using an archival sample of approximately 13,000 managers in 142 different U.S. organizations. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed that the within-organization variability of personality was sufficiently small to reliably differentiate organizations (and even organizations within industries) based on managers' Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Myers & McCaulley, 1985) personality types. These results suggest that both within and across industries, organizations tend to retain managers with similar personality types, leading to the emergence of an organizational modal personality.

Within-organization homogeneity likely extends beyond personality to other personal characteristics. Much of the P-O fit literature has examined the congruence between the values of individuals and the values reflected in organizational cultures, which suggests that organizations are also likely to become homogeneous in terms of the values held by individual members. Indeed, although both personality and values are relatively enduring personal characteristics, personal values are influenced by the social environment and are thus likely to change subtly over time (Rokeach, 1973), in contrast to personality traits, which are viewed as long-term, stable dispositions associated with a tendency to behave in a certain manner (McCrae & Costa, 1996). Personal values, which reflect desires or preferences (Rokeach, 1973), encourage behaviors that facilitate effective interaction with a social setting (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Rokeach, 1973; Williams, 1968). Moreover, Locke (1991) noted that values motivate action and are a link between more deeply held individual characteristics (e.g., personality traits) and behavior.

Although attraction and selection processes have been shown to lead to similar types of people joining organizations (see Kristof, 1996), additional organizational forces serve to enhance homogeneity. Specifically, socialization practices have been found to produce slight changes in personal value hierarchies to become more congruent with organizational values (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991). Although the ASA process is thought to account for the majority of the variance associated with the development of organizational modal personality, socialization also likely plays a role in this process (Schneider et al., 1998). This may be especially true regarding the development of homogeneity in characteristics such as values, which are more fluid and adaptable.

Research is now needed to examine the homogeneity hypothesis using a wider range of members' personal characteristics and also to examine these relationships using both management and non-management employees. We suggest that organizations will exhibit homogeneity in terms of both personality and personal values and offer the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1a:* There is significant between-organization variability in member personality traits.

*Hypothesis 1b:* There is significant between-organization variability in member personal values.

Decisions made by top leaders (e.g., CEO or president), particularly founders and those in the early stages of the organization's lifecycle, have a profound effect on the direction of the organization by defining the organization's strategy, structure, goals, and culture (Miller & Droge, 1986; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1987). Schneider (1987) went on to suggest that these decisions initiate the naturally occurring attraction, selection, and attrition cycle. This process begins with the goals that leaders establish for their organizations. For example, Schein (1992) suggested that "Organizations do not form spontaneously. Instead they are goal oriented and have a specific purpose" (p. 212). Schneider et al. (1995) suggested that the organization's goals are an operationalization of the founder's personality. Thus leaders, particularly founders, embed their personal characteristics into their organizations by establishing the organization's goals, which then attract people who have similar personal characteristics as the founder (Schneider, 1987). From this self-selected applicant pool, leaders choose a cadre of individuals who share this common goal and vision, and likely similar personality traits, values, and assumptions (Schein, 1992; Schneider et al., 1995). This phenomenon facilitates the organization's need to coordinate behavior toward its goals, because people who have comparable value systems tend to interpret environmental stimuli in similar ways, which enhances interpersonal communication, allows for the prediction of others' behavior, and enables the group to efficiently coordinate individual efforts (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998) toward common goals.

As such, the organizational personality and values profiles that develop within organizations are not random; they are a reflection of the characteristics of leaders and founders who transmit their personality and values into the organization through the goals they establish and the types of people the organization attracts and selects. Therefore, we offer the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 2a:* Organizations' modal personality and values profiles are congruent with their leaders' personality and values profiles.

The leader with the greatest influence over the organization's strategy, structure, and so forth is the founder, as subsequent leaders inherit an organization with an existing culture in place. Therefore, we further suggest that there will be greater congruence between leaders' and organizational modal personality and values profiles in organizations led by the original founder versus those led by subsequent leaders.

*Hypothesis 2b:* The relationship between organizational modal personality and values and leader personality and value profiles is moderated by the leader's status as founder or nonfounder, such that the relationship is stronger in organizations led by the founder.

## Method

### *Participants*

Leaders and their organizations were recruited for the study through three mechanisms: (a) one of two 15-min presentations regarding culture and leadership delivered by Tomas R. Giberson at a monthly meeting of business leaders, prepared to solicit participation in the project; (b) contacts with clients from previous consulting engagements; or (c) personal refer-

rals. A total of 53 organizations expressed interest in and were subsequently invited to participate in this study. Of these, 33 (62%) organizations consented to participate, and 32 organizations (60%) followed through with the process completely. In all cases, the organization's leader (president, CEO, or owner) was contacted and personally invited to participate. In exchange for their participation, leaders received a report summarizing the overall results of the study and his or her organization's specific results.

The participant organizations consisted of small to midsize organizations, ranging in size from 8 to 1,000 employees ( $Mdn = 27$ ), with annual revenues of \$400,000 to \$310,000,000 ( $Mdn = \$13,250,000$ ). Located in four states throughout the midwestern United States, these organizations represented 10 different industries and had been in existence from 6 months to 131 years ( $Mdn = 22$  years). Thus, participants constituted a relatively heterogeneous sample, as organizations are included from a diverse range of industries, sizes, and ages.

Individual participants included the 32 organization leaders and 467 employees (255 male and 212 female) representing several organizational levels. Excluding the organization's leader, the number of participants from each organization ranged from 7 to 30 ( $M = 14.5$ ), with an average of 11% (ranging from 1% to 100%) of each organization's total population participating in this study. Each of these participants was solicited directly by the leader to participate by providing an information packet addressed jointly from Tomas R. Giberson and the leader. Leaders ranged in age categories from 25–30 years to 51 years and over, with the majority in the 41–50 years and 51 years and over categories. Nonleader participants ranged in age categories from 18–24 years to 51 years and over, with the majority of participants in the 31–40 years age category. Leaders had been with their organization from 0–0.5 years to 11 or more years, with the majority of participants in the 11 or more years range. Moreover, 18 of the 32 leaders were the actual founder of their organization. Nonleader participants had been with their organization from 0–0.5 years to 11 or more years, with the majority of participants in the 5–10 year range.

### Measures

**Personality.** Personality was measured using Goldberg's (2000) 50-item Big Five personality inventory, which contains five 10-item subscales: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect or Openness to Experience. This publicly and freely available inventory was derived from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), a pool of 1,252 English terms, and provides a short scale that addresses the Big Five markers (Goldberg, 1992, 1997). These markers provide measures of the Big Five domains and are considered criterion indicators of the five-factor model (Hogan & Hogan, 1995). Acceptable internal consistency reliabilities were reported for each of the scales, with alphas ranging from .79 to .87 (Goldberg, 2000). Responses were anchored along a 5-point

response scale of 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Descriptive statistics are reported in Table 1.

**Personal values.** Unlike personality, a generally accepted model of personal values has not yet emerged, although instruments (Hogan & Hogan, 1996; Smith, Dickson, Grojean, & Hanges, 2002) have been developed to provide similar broad classification schemes of personal values and preferences. We used a recently developed values measure (Smith et al., 2002) in the present study. The instrument assesses 10 values using 64 items (10 subscales of 5–8 items each). The 10 values include aesthetic, affiliation, benevolence, economic, hedonistic, power, security, status, theoretical, and traditional. The values measure is based on the work of Hogan and Hogan (1996) and Schwartz and Bilski (1987). Internal consistency reliabilities were reported for each of the scales, with alphas ranging from .57 to .81. As with the personality measure, responses were anchored along a 5-point response scale of 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. Descriptive statistics for the values scale are presented in Table 2, and scale definitions and sample items are presented in the Appendix.

### Procedure

Organizational leaders completed a form indicating their willingness to participate in the study, as well as an organizational background questionnaire providing information regarding the organization's size, revenues, industry classification, and the founding of the organization. Leaders were instructed to request the voluntary, anonymous participation of employees either directly hired by the leader or for whom the leader had significant influence on their selection into the organization. A participant package was then prepared for each organization containing an instruction sheet for the leader, a leader package, the requested number of employee participant packages, and a tracking sheet. Each participant and leader package included a participant demographic questionnaire, the personality measure, the values measure, and other measures that were part of a larger study on culture and leadership. Leader and employee participants first provided demographic information (to ensure completion), with the other measures included in random order to control for order effects. Those participants who agreed to participate completed their surveys, sealed them in a provided envelope, and returned them to the leader or the leader's designate to return to us.

### Results

Hypothesis 1a states that there will be significant variability between organizations regarding the personality traits of members. Hypothesis 1b states the same will be true with regard to personal values. Two separate MANOVAs were conducted, with organiza-

Table 1  
Statistical Characteristics of the IPIP Five-Factor Model (FFM) Measures

Big 5 domain	Items <sup>a</sup>	Mean IIC	Coefficient $\alpha$	Correlation with FFM markers
Extraversion	5 +, 5 -	.40	.87	.73 (.84) <sup>b</sup>
Agreeableness	6 +, 4 -	.31	.82	.54 (.66)
Conscientiousness	6 +, 4 -	.29	.79	.71 (.90)
Emotional Stability	2 +, 8 -	.38	.86	.72 (.84)
Openness to Experience	7 +, 3 -	.34	.84	.67 (.80)
Total <i>M</i>	26 +, 24 - = 50	.34	.84	.67 (.81)

Note. IPIP = International Personality Item Pool; IIC = interitem correlation.

<sup>a</sup> Goldberg (2000); "+" and "-" under the Items column indicate positively and negatively worded items, respectively, in the measure. <sup>b</sup> Values in parentheses are correlations corrected for unreliability.

Table 2  
Statistical Characteristics of the Values Measure

Value	Items <sup>a</sup>	Coefficient $\alpha$
Aesthetic	6 +	.69
Affiliation	5 +	.63
Benevolence	6 +	.82
Economic	6 +	.85
Hedonistic	5 +	.73
Power	7 +	.76
Security	6 +, 2 -	.81
Status	5 +	.72
Theoretical	8 +	.57
Tradition	8 +	.79
Total <i>M</i>	64	.74

<sup>a</sup> The “+” and “-” under the Items column indicate positively and negatively worded items, respectively, in the measure.

tional membership entered as the fixed variable and either the personality or values scores entered as multiple dependent variables. Support for these hypotheses would be demonstrated if the overall MANOVA results indicate a significant main effect for organizational membership. Using the Wilks’s lambda multivariate criteria, we found an overall significant result for both personality ( $\lambda = .588, p < .001$ ) and values ( $\lambda = .306, p < .001$ ). Next, we examined main effects for the personality traits and found significant variability between organizations for three of the five personality traits: Agreeableness,  $F(31, 467) = 2.74, p < .001$ ; Extraversion,  $F(31, 467) = 2.64, p < .001$ ; and Emotional Stability,  $F(31, 467) = 1.38, p < .10$ . Regarding effect sizes, adjusted  $R^2$  ( $\eta^2$ ) were .10 ( $p < .001$ ) for Agreeableness, .09 for Extraversion ( $p < .001$ ), and .02 ( $p < .10$ ) for Emotional Stability (refer to Table 3 for all effect sizes in this analysis). Regarding values, all main effects for organizational membership were significant at the

$p < .05$  or greater level. Thus, partial support was found for Hypothesis 1a, and full support was found for Hypothesis 1b. A summary of the results is presented in Table 3.

Next, we examined the level of within-organization agreement for each of the personality traits and personal values using the index  $r_{wg(j)}$  statistic and intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs). Index  $r_{wg(j)}$  (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984, 1993), which “compares the observed within-group variability to the within-unit variability expected from a hypothetical distribution—that is, an expected variance” (Klein et al., 2000, p. 514), was calculated across items and by trait for each organization. Larger  $r_{wg}$  values are found when the observed within-unit variability is substantially smaller than the expected variability (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). Across organizations, the mean  $r_{wg(j)}$  scores for the 15 trait and values fell between .91 and .95. By using the .7 or greater rule of thumb as suggested by Klein and Kozlowski, substantial within-organization agreement regarding members’ personality and values was found in the vast majority of organizations. On an individual trait by organization basis,  $r_{wg(j)}$  scores were at or above .70 for all 32 organizations across all 15 traits, with one exception. One organization’s hedonistic  $r_{wg(j)}$  score was .69, which is roughly equivalent to the .70 rule of thumb (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000).

We also calculated ICC(1) and ICC(2) to provide additional statistical evidence of within-organization agreement. ICC(1) is estimated from the ratio of between-group variance to total variance (Bliese, 2000) and has been interpreted as the portion of total variance in a variable that may be explained by membership in a group (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1982), as well as an index of interrater reliability indicating the extent to which raters from a group are interchangeable (James, 1982). ICC(2) indicates the reliability of the group (i.e., organization) means (Bliese, 2000). Intraclass correlation results ranged from .01 to .05 for ICC(1), and from .16 to .63 for ICC(2), across four of the five personality traits, with  $F$  statistics from the analyses of variance (ANOVAs) used to calcu-

Table 3  
Hypotheses 1a and 1b: Between-Organization Effects for Modal Personality and Values

Trait	Type III SS	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$	ICC 1	ICC 2
Personality						
Agreeableness	21.860	0.705	2.738	.10**	.05	.63
Conscientiousness	9.412	0.304	0.909	.00	-.01	-.10
Emotional Stability	20.124	0.649	1.380	.02†	.01	.28
Extraversion	39.711	1.281	2.642	.09**	.05	.62
Openness to Experience	9.631	0.311	1.184	.01	.01	.16
Values						
Aesthetic	18.082	0.583	1.807	.05**	.03	.44
Affiliation	21.113	0.681	2.037	.06**	.03	.49
Benevolence	17.323	0.559	2.399	.08**	.04	.57
Economic	24.807	0.800	2.282	.07**	.04	.57
Hedonistic	16.624	0.536	1.787	.05**	.03	.46
Power	16.599	0.535	1.980	.06**	.03	.50
Security	9.018	0.291	2.111	.07**	.03	.53
Status	20.272	0.654	2.292	.08**	.04	.57
Theoretical	17.888	0.577	1.595	.04*	.02	.38
Tradition	25.423	0.820	2.662	.09**	.05	.62

Note. For each analysis,  $n = 32, df = 31, 467$ . ICC = intraclass correlation coefficient.

†  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

late the ICCs significant at  $p < .10$  for three of the five traits (results for Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience were not significant). For the trait of Conscientiousness, within-organization variance was slightly higher than between-organization variance, resulting in small negative ICC(1) and ICC(2) values. Negative ICC values may be obtained when little variance exists between group means but some variance exists within groups (Bliese, 2000). Across the 10 personal values, the ICC(1) results ranged from .02 to .05, and ICC(2) results ranged from .38 to .62 with the  $F$  statistics from the ANOVAs used to calculate the ICCs all significant at  $p < .05$ . While the analysis of within-organization agreement based on the index  $r_{wg(j)}$  indicated a substantial level of within-organization agreement across all traits and values, this index is calculated exclusively on within-organization factors and does not take into account the relative variability between groups (i.e., organizations) in a sample. When between-group variance was taken into account in the ICC analyses, within-organization agreement was again demonstrated for 13 of the 15 traits and values. However, the ICC analyses also indicated that less agreement within organizations existed for Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience when variability between organizations was taken into account.

Hypothesis 2a stated that organizations' modal personality and value profiles are congruent with their leaders' personality and value profiles. Hypothesis 2b stated that this relationship will be stronger in organizations that are led by the founder. First, we created an organizational profile of personality and values, or *modal* personality and values, by aggregating the personality and values scores of individual members by computing the within-organization mean. Next, we calculated 15 one-tailed Pearson product-moment correlations (10 values, 5 personality) between leader and respective modal organizational trait, *across* organizations to assess the relationship between leader and modal traits on a characteristic-by-characteristic basis. Regarding personality, a significant relationship between leaders and organizational modal personality traits was found for Agreeableness ( $r = .35, p < .05$ ), Conscientiousness ( $r = .35, p < .05$ ), and Extraversion ( $r = .34, p < .10$ ). Significant correlations between leader and organizational modal scores were found across two of the values, aesthetic ( $r = .35, p < .05$ ) and benevolence ( $r = .42, p < .05$ ). Table 4 summarizes these results.

We then used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM; Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) analyses to further analyze Hypotheses 2a and 2b. In this study, we first used HLM to determine the amount of variance in the organizational personality and values profiles accounted for by the leaders' profiles across organizations. Next, HLM tested the null hypothesis that there are no significant differences in the slopes between organizations. Finally, to test the hypothesis that this relationship differs significantly on the basis of the leader's standing as founder/nonfounder, we regressed the slope established from the Level 1 analysis onto the founder/nonfounder variable. Thus, HLM enables simultaneous evaluation of the unique relationship between each organization's leader's characteristics (as a profile of the 15 traits and values) and the employees' modal characteristics (as a profile of 15 traits and values), as well as whether these relationships differ significantly for those organizations led by the founding leader versus those organizations led by a nonfounding leader. The HLM procedure therefore is analogous to profile similarity indexes (Edwards,

Table 4  
*Correlations Between Leader and Modal Organizational Personality and Values Scores*

Trait	$r$
Personality	
Agreeableness	.35*
Conscientiousness	.35*
Emotional Stability	-.10
Extraversion	.34†
Openness to Experience	-.25
Values	
Aesthetic	.35*
Affiliation	.17
Benevolence	.42*
Economic	.28
Hedonistic	.21
Power	.13
Security	.26
Status	-.13
Theoretical	.26
Traditional	.04

Note.  $N = 32$  for each analysis.

†  $p < .10$ , one-tailed test. \*  $p < .05$ , one-tailed test.

1993) in that we assessed the contribution of the profile of characteristics rather than the unique contribution of each trait individually.

For the Level 1 analysis, we regressed the organizational modal personality and values onto the leaders' personality and values across organizations. The estimated intercept was significant ( $\beta_0 = 3.60$ ),  $t(31) = 218.73, p < .01$ , as was the slope coefficient for the leaders' (predictor) scores ( $\beta_1 = .23$ ),  $t(478) = 7.196, p < .01$ , suggesting that organizational modal scores were related to leaders' scores. To calculate an effect size for the Level 1 analysis, we computed an  $r^2$  (Kreft & De Leeuw, 1998), and the results suggest that the leaders' score accounted for 21% of the explainable variance in the organizational personality and values scores. In addition, significant variance ( $\sigma^2 = .013, \chi^2 = 57.98, p < .01$ ) across the slopes was found, suggesting that there were differences in the relationship between leaders' scores and organizational modal scores across organizations. We then conducted a Level 2 analysis using a slopes-as-outcome approach to determine if the differences in the Level 1 slopes were due to the top leader being the organization's founder. We regressed the Level 1 slope coefficients onto the founder/nonfounder variable. Results were not significant, suggesting that the leader-organizational modal personality and values relationships did not differ significantly across organizations in which the top leader was the founder versus a nonfounder ( $\gamma_{11} = -.03$ ),  $t(30) = -.49, ns$ . Results of the Level 1 and Level 2 analyses are summarized in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

We conducted two additional analyses to more fully examine the relationship between leader and organizational modal scores. First, we conducted separate analyses for personality and values. Findings indicated that organizational modal personality was significantly related to leaders' personality ( $\beta_1 = .21$ ),  $t(158) = 7.196, p < .01$ , and modal organizational values were significantly related to leaders' values ( $\beta_1 = .23$ ),  $t(318) = 8.452, p < .01$ . It

Table 5  
Level 1 Analyses of the Relationship Between Leader Personality and Values and Organizational Modal Personality and Values

Variable	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>	Variance <sup>a</sup>
Personality and values				
$\beta_0$	3.60	.016	218.73	.002
$\beta_1$	0.23	.032	7.20	.013
Effect size (%) <sup>b</sup>			21	
Personality only				
$\beta_0$	3.71	.023	159.79	.000
$\beta_1$	0.21	.050	4.22	.034
Effect size (%) <sup>b</sup>			10	
Values only				
$\beta_0$	3.54	.020	162.79	.009
$\beta_1$	0.23	.030	8.45	.004
Effect size (%) <sup>b</sup>			25	

Note. For all  $\beta_0$ , *t* test *df* = 31; for all  $\beta_1$ , *t* test *df* = 30.

<sup>a</sup>Variance in Level 1 parameter estimates and chi-square test of significant variance. <sup>b</sup>Percentage of explainable Level 1 variance in the modal organizational scores accounted for by the leader scores.

is interesting to note that a larger effect was found for the relationship between leader and modal organizational values ( $r^2 = .25$ ) than for leader and modal organizational personality ( $r^2 = .10$ ). Significant variance across the slopes was found for personality ( $\sigma^2 = .034$ ,  $\chi^2 = 49.78$ ,  $p < .01$ ) but not values ( $\sigma^2 = .004$ ,  $\chi^2 = 40.29$ ,  $p > .05$ ), suggesting that there were differences in the relationship between leaders' scores and organizational modal scores across organizations for personality traits. At Level 2, we regressed the Level 1 slope coefficients for personality onto the founder/nonfounder variable and again found the results to be nonsignificant. Results of the Level 1 and Level 2 analyses are summarized in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. On the basis of the above set of analyses, we concluded that Hypothesis 2a was supported whereas Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

## Discussion

Scientific knowledge is built on the replication and extension of findings, particularly through conceptual rather than exact repli-

cation studies. Krueger (2001) noted, "Researchers gain more confidence in the robustness of a phenomenon after successful conceptual replication than after an exact replication" (p. 23). The present study contains a conceptual replication and extension of Schneider et al.'s (1998) work, providing further support for the robustness for the ASA phenomenon. First, we provide further support for the homogeneity hypothesis and do so using the more widely accepted Big Five model of personality rather than the MBTI, and then we demonstrate organizational homogeneity in terms of the personal values of members. Second, our findings also suggest that the homogeneity phenomenon occurs across organizational levels. Finally, we demonstrate congruence between top organizational leaders' unique profile of personality and values and the profile of personality and values that is unique to an organization, which suggests that top leaders play a critical role in shaping the environments of their organizations. This provides some initial support for Schneider's (1987) and Schein's (1992) contentions that leaders embed their personality into the organizations they lead by surrounding themselves with individuals who are similar to themselves.

Results indicated that substantial agreement existed within organizations regarding both personality and values and that organizations could be differentiated from each other in terms of these traits. It is interesting that there appeared to be greater within-organization agreement among member values, which also appeared to be somewhat better discriminators of organizations than personality traits. Personality traits are believed to be relatively enduring personal characteristics, and recent findings by Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, and Barrick (1999) demonstrated high correlations for Big Five traits across individual life spans. Given that values are a product of social phenomena (Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973), with environmental forces such as organizational socialization practices influencing individually held values (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991), perhaps homogeneity of personality is more directly a result of the ASA cycle, whereas homogeneity of values is a combination of the ASA process and the socialization process. The effects of the ASA cycle and socialization processes in the environment may combine to increase the

Table 6  
Level 2 Analyses of the Moderating Role of Founder/Nonfounder

Variable	Coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>
Personality and values			
$\gamma_{10}$	.28	.043	6.40
$\gamma_{11}$	-.02	.015	-1.55
Personality only			
$\gamma_{10}$	.27	.140	0.87
$\gamma_{11}$	-.04	.090	-0.43
Values only			
$\gamma_{10}$	.28	.076	3.63
$\gamma_{11}$	-.04	.052	-0.70
Revised personality and values <sup>a</sup>			
$\gamma_{10}$	.28	.095	2.97
$\gamma_{11}$	-.03	.058	-0.49

Note. For all  $\gamma_{10}$ , *t* test *df* = 31; for all  $\gamma_{11}$ , *t* test *df* = 30.

<sup>a</sup>Analyses exclude Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience.

within-organization similarity of values, making values a particularly important set of personal characteristics on which to study homogeneity in organizations. Thus a more complete view of organizational homogeneity is gained by examining homogeneity of both personality and values.

Next, we found that organizational modal personality and values were congruent with the personality and values of the organization's top leader. These findings provide some evidence that top organization leaders tend to surround themselves with individuals who have similar characteristics as themselves. Moreover, the finding that leaders' scores accounted for approximately 21% of the explainable variance in modal organizational scores may suggest the ASA cycle and homogenization process initiates with top leaders, and the organizational modal characteristics that emerge are a reflection of the leader's personal characteristics. When relationships regarding personality and values were examined separately, leader values alone accounted for 25% of the explainable variance in modal organizational scores, whereas personality alone accounted for 10% of the explainable variance. Schneider (1987) suggests that organizational goals are an operationalization of the leader's personality and that organizational goals are what attract individuals to organizations through the ASA cycle. This finding suggests that organizational goals also reflect leader values, perhaps to an even greater extent than personality, which is consistent with much of the research examining the role of values in organizational behavior. For example, Schwartz and Bilski (1987) defined values in part as "an individual's concept of a transsituational goal" (p. 553), and Locke (1991) suggested that the goals that people pursue are a reflection of the things they value.

On a characteristic-by-characteristic basis, there were significant correlations between leader and modal organizational scores for three of the personality traits and two of the values. The fact that all leader-modal characteristic correlations were not significant may suggest that leaders consciously or unconsciously selected others on the basis of similarity with certain salient characteristics of their own personality and values. For example, agreeableness and openness personality traits, and affiliation and tradition values, may be highly salient to one leader, who then seeks to bring in new members with those similar characteristics. Collectively, these traits distinguish the organization from others, which results in a unique underlying pattern of homogeneity. The findings from the Level 1 HLM analyses suggest that there is utility in examining similarity in the overall pattern of characteristics between leaders and followers. This analytical approach is not without limitations, however, as the Level 1 analyses are conceptually similar to profile similarity indices, which conceal the unique contribution of each element (personality trait or value in the present study) in the profile (Edwards, 1993, 1994). Future research could focus on examining the patterns of personality traits and values that differentiate organizations as well as investigating Schein's (1992) and Schneider's (1987) suggestions that leader personality and values influence organizational-level variables such as structure and culture.

The relationships between leaders' and modal organizational scores did not differ significantly between organizations led by the original founder and subsequent leaders. The failure to find significant differences could be due to several reasons. For example, perhaps the nonfounders in this sample "brought their own team" and thus were able to include employee participants who were

hired fully based on their own criteria. Alternatively, perhaps many of these leaders were promoted from within the organization and included employee participants whom they had selected in their former roles in the organization. Finally, the lack of significant results may be due to our sample size, as there were 18 founders and 14 nonfounders included in the sample.

The nature and size of the sample are perhaps the most explicit limitations of this study. The volunteer sample used in this study may limit the generalizability of results because of the lack of random sampling procedures at the organizational and participant level. The nature of the project required that a request be made of organization leaders to solicit their participation. To address speculation that leaders select in their own image, it was important that leaders request the participation of members for whom the leader had played a role in their hiring. Although this procedure may have created a more liberal test of the hypotheses, it was theoretically important to sample this way. As a result, it is unclear whether the findings are generalizable to a sample in which employees were randomly selected to provide personality and values data. Future efforts could address this issue by collecting two samples of employee participants—one handpicked by the leader and one of randomly sampled employee participants. Researchers could then compare the relationships between leader personality and values and employee responses aggregated from each of the two groups. Additionally, although data were compiled based on 499 individual participants, only 32 separate organizations were represented, resulting in examining Hypothesis 2 using a relatively small sample size ( $N = 32$ ) and thus limiting power.

The results of this study provide some evidence regarding the leader's role in establishing organizational homogeneity (at least in terms of personality and values homogeneity). As such, findings suggest an underlying process but not the steps contained in this process. As organizations develop and change over time, longitudinal research is needed to investigate how homogeneity arises over time, including the emergence of specific trait and value patterns, the leader's role in the *process* of organizational homogenization, and its impact on the organization's effectiveness. Researchers could empirically track the steps organizational founders and leaders take to transmit their personality and values into their organizations. Moreover, Schneider (1987) cautioned that homogeneity is a force potentially detrimental to long-term organizational survival. An organization's lifecycle stage likely plays a key role in determining the ideal balance between heterogeneity and homogeneity of personality and values. For example, it could be that in the early stages of the organizational lifecycle (i.e., during startup periods) a homogeneous workforce is beneficial to the organization. When members hold similar characteristics and similar views, few rules, regulations, and formal decision-making processes are needed to get work done. During more advanced lifecycle stages, this same homogeneity could hinder the organization's ability to adapt to changing external demands. Research could address the processes organizations use to achieve a balance between the need for internal integration (assumed to require homogeneity) and external adaptation (assumed to require heterogeneity). Research could also address the ideal balance of homogeneity and heterogeneity needed for organizational success. Findings also demonstrate the multilevel nature of organizational phenomenon, highlighting the need for organizational researchers

to consider the influences of leaders, members, and groups on both individual and organizational behavior.

Finally, this study provides some initial support for the often-made, yet untested assumption that organizations are in some ways a reflection of their top leaders. Results provide some indication of how the “people make the place” (Schneider, 1987), suggesting that “leaders choose the people who make the place.”

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## Appendix

### Value Scale Definitions and Sample Items

Value	Definition and sample item
Aesthetic	Associated with an interest in art, literature, music, and other creative outlets. —Appreciating art, music, and literature.
Affiliation	Associated with a need for frequent social contact, and a lifestyle organized around close friendships and interaction with others. —Being with others rather than being alone.
Benevolence	Associated with a desire to help others, improve society, and a lifestyle organized around donating time and money to make the world a better place. —Providing aid to the needy or less fortunate.
Economic	Associated with an interest in earning money, realizing profits, and a lifestyle organized around gaining wealth and financial planning. —Being financially successful.
Hedonistic	Associated with a desire for pleasure, excitement, variety, and a lifestyle organized around having fun and entertainment. —Enjoying life to its fullest.
Power	Associated with a desire for control, influence, and being in charge of others. —Increasing your social status.
Security	Associated with a need for structure, order, predictability, and a lifestyle organized around planning for the future and minimizing risk, uncertainty, and criticism. —Receiving recognition for accomplishments.
Theoretical	Associated with an interest in new ideas, new technology, an analytical approach to problem solving, and a lifestyle organized around learning, exploring, and understanding how things work. —Satisfying curiosity about how things work.
Tradition	Associated with concern for morality, high standards, appropriate social behavior and a lifestyle guided by specific, established principles. —Being respectful of authority figures.

*Note.* Each item is rated on a scale of importance ranging from 1 (*very unimportant*) to 5 (*very important*).

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