

Accounting for Subordinate Perceptions of Supervisor Power: An Identity-Dependence Model

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The authors present a model that explains how subordinates perceive the power of their supervisors and the causal mechanisms by which these perceptions translate into subordinate outcomes. Drawing on identity and resource-dependence theories, the authors propose that supervisors have power over their subordinates when they control resources needed for the subordinates' enactment and maintenance of current and desired identities. The joint effect of perceptions of supervisor power and supervisor intentions to provide such resources leads to 4 conditions ranging from highly functional to highly dysfunctional: confirmation, hope, apathy, and progressive withdrawal. Each of these conditions is associated with specific outcomes such as the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship, turnover, and changes in the type and centrality of various subordinate identities.

Keywords: social power, dependence, role identity, self verification

Power is inherently socially constructed (Aguinis, Nesler, Quigley, & Tedeschi, 1994). To a great extent, it exists only because people tacitly agree to act as if it exists (Pinker, 2002). As a result, simply perceiving that an individual has power to affect oneself helps create the reality of that power, insofar as one's beliefs, intentions, and actions change as a result of that perception (Fiol, O'Connor, & Aguinis, 2001; Operario, Goodwin, & Fiske, 1998). In organizations, a great deal of power is often thought to rest with managers who have supervisory responsibility over other employees. In this context, subordinates' perceptions of managers' power are likely to influence subordinates' attitudes and behaviors (Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1994).

This article focuses specifically on subordinate perceptions of supervisor power in the context of the supervisor-subordinate relationship, possibly the most central dyadic unit in the organization (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). We present a theoretical model explaining how subordinates perceive their supervisors' power and the causal mechanisms by which these perceptions translate into subordinate outcomes. Although power as perceived by subordi-

nates in this relationship has long been considered important (e.g., French & Raven, 1959), the arguably atheoretical nature of much research on power (Berger, 1985) has not contributed to a thorough understanding of this construct. One notable gap in the literature concerns exactly how antecedents (e.g., "my supervisor's control of resources due to his or her position in the organization's formal and informal networks") result in power perceptions (e.g., "my supervisor has the ability to influence me because she or he controls resources I need"). A second major gap concerns how power perceptions (e.g., "my supervisor has the ability to influence me") result in particular subordinate outcomes (e.g., "I am very satisfied with my supervisor and not likely to leave my organization voluntarily"). In our view, these two gaps exist because theorists have devoted little attention to issues concerning what perceived power is and how these perceptions are formed and because results from empirical studies of the relationship between perceived power and outcomes are usually explained in terms of covariation and not in terms of causation (for reviews, see Carson, Carson, & Roe, 1993 and Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985). As a result, it is not surprising that it has been difficult to translate research on power into useful information for organizations and their members (Pfeffer, 1993).

Our model makes several key contributions to theory and practice. First, we describe a process specific enough to describe how subordinates form judgments of the supervisor's power to affect them. In addition, our model is flexible enough to be extended to explain how subordinates perceive supervisory power over others besides the subordinate. Second, organizational research in many areas (e.g., psychological contracts, social exchange) has stemmed from the seminal ideas of Emerson (1962) on dyadic resource dependence. Using a role identity framework (Burke, 1991, 1996; McCall & Simmons, 1978), we propose that subordinate identities determine the resource dependencies described by Emerson (1962). Integrating identity and resource-dependence theories allows us to predict the conditions under which a subordinate will ascribe power to a supervisor. Third, by incorporating the concept

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of self-verification (Swann, 1990), we explain why supervisor power is salient to subordinates and what subordinate outcomes are most likely to be affected, why, and in what ways. Fourth, our model extends identity theory in several ways: by extending the range of outcomes previously considered by identity research, by linking identity theory with ideas of dyadic resource dependency, and by complementing recent work linking identity theory with power (Hogg & Reid, 2001). Finally, if successful, we not only begin to resolve some longstanding conceptual questions about the nature of power, but in doing so we generate important insights about how leaders can affect their relationship with subordinates and important subordinate outcomes related to subordinate roles, behaviors, and identities.

Our proposed model draws on and integrates three streams of research. The first research stream involves resource dependence (Dahl, 1957; Emerson, 1962; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Pfeffer, 1981), which has long been associated with research on power. In the context of this article, we define *dependence* as the supervisor being perceived to control resources (e.g., socioemotional support, job assignments) that the subordinate values and cannot easily obtain elsewhere (Emerson, 1962). Perceived dependencies may be obvious material signs of dependency (e.g., “my supervisor can fire me, depriving me of income”). However, our model also considers the symbolic implications of dependencies that are often overlooked (e.g., “I have been fired and therefore have failed in my role as a provider for my family”). Our model posits that for subordinates to perceive their supervisors to be powerful, subordinates must believe that they have to rely on the supervisor to satisfy important needs, desires, and goals.

Our model is predicated on the assumption that individuals differ in their needs, desires, and goals, and so individual differences in perceived power exist and are meaningful. To account for these individual differences, we integrate ideas of resource dependence with a second stream of research: identity theory (sometimes called role identity theory; Ashforth, 2001; Burke, 1991; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980). Identity theory asserts that the self consists largely of the various social roles in which an individual engages (Stryker, 1980). A subordinate’s self-identification with a particular role results in a “role identity,” and it is this identity that provides a systematic organizing structure for various needs, desires, and goals associated with that identity (Callero, Howard, & Piliavin, 1987; Cropanzano, James, & Citera, 1993; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Schlenker, 1985). The more central the subordinate’s identity to the sense of self, the stronger the needs, and thus, the greater the potential dependence on the supervisor (Fiske, 1993). The extent of this dependence determines perceived supervisor power.

The third research stream we integrate into our model is self-verification theory (Burke, 1991; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Swann, 1990), which posits that needs must be satisfied for the subordinate to enact, confirm, and maintain the role identity. By drawing on self-verification theory, we help explain why dependency is salient in dyadic relations such as that between supervisor and subordinate. Besides allowing us to systematically organize power perceptions, a self-verification approach also allows us to predict what outcomes are most likely to be affected, why, and in what ways. Because subordinates, like other individuals, proactively seek out and create opportunities to verify or validate identities reflecting their sense of self (Swann, 1990), they pay

attention not only to the resources available to supervisors, but also to the intentions of the supervisor to provide those resources. We propose that the joint effect of supervisor ability to provide resources and the intention to do so affects subordinates outcomes by creating conditions that support or threaten the identity. These conditions, which we designate as apathy, hope, confirmation, or progressive withdrawal, are associated with a diverse set of interpersonal, role-related, behavioral, and identity-linked outcomes.

In the remainder of the article, we first define and discuss the importance of perceived power, the model’s central construct, and differentiate it from the related construct of leadership. Then, we describe the resource-dependency perspective and follow that with a brief overview of identity theory. Next, we describe how resource dependency and identity perspectives can be integrated. Then, we discuss our theoretical model in detail including propositions to guide future research on the processes underlying the formation of power perceptions and the effects of power perceptions on subordinate outcomes. Finally, we conclude by discussing the model’s conceptual contributions and boundary conditions, suggest research strategies to test the ideas presented, and describe some practical implications of our model.

Power and Leadership

Power has been defined in many ways, but researchers generally agree that it is the ability or potential to influence others (Folger et al., 2001; French & Raven, 1959; Nesler, Aguinis, Quigley, & Tedeschi, 1993). Leadership is often defined as a process through which power is used to direct and coordinate the activities of group members to meet a goal (Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992). Power and leadership are generally viewed as distinct constructs (e.g., Fiedler, 1970), but these definitions make clear that they are intimately related (Hollander, 1985). Leadership is a process of moving others toward a goal. Leadership uses power, but it is not power. Power reflects kinetic potential, whereas leadership enacts that potential. Leadership uses power and is presumably directed toward some organizationally sanctioned goal. Power need not be—a supervisor can wield power over a subordinate for very personal reasons, and power exists in relationships outside the employment relations considered here (e.g., between spouses, between parents and children). As a result, and unlike theories of leadership, whereas our model of perceived power is framed within the supervisor–subordinate relationship as a critical exemplar for theory building, it is not conceptually constrained to power interactions in that relationship only and has implications for dyadic relations for which leadership is not in play at all.

We acknowledge that there are alternative definitions of *leadership* that tend to obscure the differences between leadership and power. For example, *leadership* has been defined as “a social perception, grounded in social–cognitive psychological theory that produces an influence increment for the perceived leader” (Lord, Brown, & Harvey, 2001, p. 283). This definition does not clearly discriminate between power and leadership, and it is largely based on the idea that subordinates perceive someone as a leader. However, whether or not a follower perceives a supervisor to be a leader, that supervisor may still wield power over that subordinate. That ability to influence—regardless of whether it is seen as leadership—is the construct we address in this article. Our model of power has clear implications for leadership, but is not limited by

it, especially because our model is potentially applicable to non-leader relationships.

Power and Resource Dependency

Power is based on resource dependency because it derives from having what someone else wants or needs. Emerson (1962, p. 32) defined the dependence of Actor A (e.g., subordinate) on Actor B (e.g., supervisor) as “(1) directly proportional to A’s motivational investment in goals mediated by B, and (2) inversely proportional to the availability of those goals to A outside the A–B relation.” Although discussions of power almost always revolve around an actor’s dependencies, the link between power and dependencies has usually not been made explicit (e.g., Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). We believe that a major reason for the lack of understanding of perceived power is that dependencies are actor-specific and based on individual differences, a point to which researchers have paid little attention. The conceptualization of dependencies as stemming from individual needs suggests a view of dependency pregnant with identity implications. Specifically, consider that an individual’s needs, goals, and resulting motivation are organized hierarchically as a result of the salience of the individual’s relevant identities: The more salient an identity is to the individual, the more the individual’s goals and needs relevant to this identity motivate the individual’s behavior (Cropanzano et al., 1993). In the following sections, we develop our case for a dependency–identity linkage as the basis for understanding perceived power. Before integrating these two perspectives, however, we offer a brief description of identity theory.

Identity Theory

A role identity is a self-view or sense of meaning attributed to oneself in relation to a specific role (Burke & Tully, 1977). Role identities are generated through one’s perceived appearance to oneself or others, self-judgment of that appearance, and affect based on that judgment (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

The self is multidimensional (Markus & Wurf, 1987), so a person can have as many role identities as roles played in distinct sets of social relationships (Stryker, 1980, 1987). These identities may concern a current role or self-view (“who I am”) or a desired identity image or possible self (“who I want to be”; Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Schlenker, 1985). The importance or centrality of a given identity for an individual is determined by the social and personal costs involved in no longer fulfilling a role (for the case of current selves) or in giving up a role aspiration (for the case of possible selves; Stryker, 1980).

Individuals calculate the cost of no longer fulfilling a role or giving up a role aspiration in an interpretative process of sense-making referred to as *self-verification* (Swann, 1983, 1990). Self-verification is a process through which an individual reconciles the views of him- or herself and perceived views that others hold of him- or herself in ongoing attempts to verify, support, and validate the identity (Riley & Burke, 1995; Swann, 1985). When an individual perceives that others’ perceptions of him or her fall below his or her own identity standards, the individual is likely to feel distressed—especially if the specific identity standards in question are highly central to the individual. Although even positive departures from an individual’s identity standard can be distressing

(Burke, 1991), a perceived lack of role support or, worse, actively negative support can be even more stressful because individuals are motivated to protect core identities from perceived threats (Farmer, Tierney & Kung-McIntyre, 2003; McCall & Simmons, 1978).

Integrating Dependency and Identity Perspectives: The Role of Resource Needs

In organizational and other settings, individuals are generally motivated to seek out opportunities for self-verification (Burke, 1991), which creates a virtually unavoidable dependency on important social others for material and psychological resources that can satisfy self-verification needs. In other words, identity enactment, verification, and maintenance are based on dependencies on others.

Recent work in identity theory has explicitly conceptualized that the satisfaction of self-verification needs occurs through resource flows in interpersonal interaction (Burke, 1997; Burke & Stets, 1999; Freese & Burke, 1994). This work proposes that self-verification resources take two forms: current and potential. Current resources concern actual resource transfers and can have both material and psychological meaning. Emerson (1962) explicitly chose the term *dependency* because it could reflect various motivational bases, such as material dependence or psychological dependence. For example, one’s salary is an example of a current resource. This type of resource has material meaning because keeping food on the table sustains health, but it may also have psychological meaning because it may confirm an individual’s identity as a provider. Potential resources are as-yet-unrealized resource transfers. For example, a possible salary bonus for next year is an illustration of a potential resource.

The implications of resource flows for perceived power, identity, and outcomes are nicely captured by Burke’s (1996) description of a woman executive who,

... fails to perceive herself (as an executive) in a situation as being as powerful ... as her identity standard indicates. ... She is viewed as ineffective, or she cannot control the situation or modify the flow of resources in the situation (all of which have meaningful implications for her “powerfulness”). Her identity processes fail or are interrupted. ... social stress results. (p. 148)

This short vignette illustrates our point: Dependency has meaningful identity implications. In the workplace, valued identities are particularly likely to involve roles (e.g., lawyer, teacher, engineer, nurse) or aspects of roles (e.g., the research component of a professor’s role) that require sustained resources to be enacted, verified, and maintained. For subordinates, the key conduit for self-verification resource flows is the supervisor (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). The resources controlled by supervisors often concern material rewards or threats such as advancement or demotion, increased or decreased pay, employment or termination, enriched or oversimplified work duties, increased or decreased budget, and increased or decreased staffing. In addition, resources controlled by the supervisor can include less tangible resources such as delegation and job latitude; opportunities for reciprocal influence, mentoring, and advocacy; and personal support. For instance, the perceived—and anticipated—potential ability of a supervisor to alter a subordinate’s job design to allow more autonomy can be

considered a salient resource for a subordinate with a strong creative role identity. Actual provision of such a job change has both material and psychological consequences insofar as it confirms and strengthens the creative identity by allowing role-consistent performances. The supervisor's ability to enhance or interrupt the resource flows that are the basis for employee self-verification determines the degree of supervisor power as perceived by the subordinate.

In the remainder of the article, we first describe the underlying processes leading to the formation of subordinate perceptions of supervisor power. As previewed above, we do so by integrating identity, dependency, and self-verification research streams. Following that, we use a self-verification lens to describe how subordinates' perceptions of supervisor power interact with subordinates' perceptions of supervisor intentions to offer identity-supporting resources in causing interpersonal, role-related, behavioral, and identity-related subordinate outcomes.

A Model of Perceived Power and Resulting Outcomes

The basic components of our model are shown in Figure 1. Beginning on the left side, it proposes that subordinates—like any other individual—possess, and desire to possess, various role-based identities, with some identities being more important or central to the subordinate's sense of self (see box labeled *Subordinate Identity-Supporting Resource Needs*). For example, a professor may have an identity as a teacher, but being a researcher

may be much more central to the professor's sense of self. These subordinate role identities are potentially maintained, enhanced, or devalued by identity-specific resources, and supervisors are key potential providers of these identity-verifying resources (see box labeled *Supervisor Resources*). For example, a department chairperson can provide course release time, recognition, and other material and psychological resources needed to enact, confirm, and maintain the professor's researcher identity. The interaction between the subordinate's need for resources to support an identity and the resources the subordinate perceives available to the supervisor affects subordinate judgments of the supervisor's power (see box labeled *Supervisor Power*). In our example, if the department chairperson is perceived as having the ability to provide resources to support the valued researcher identity, then he or she will be perceived as being powerful for the subordinate, contingent on the availability of alternative sources for these resources (see box labeled *Alternatives*). For instance, perceived power of the department chairperson for this professor would be lower to the extent that the professor perceives that the dean could provide these resources.

The right hand side of the model shows that judgments of the supervisor's perceived power and intention to provide resources interact to affect a diverse set of subordinate interpersonal, role-related, behavioral, and identity outcomes. In our model, these outcomes are organized according to conditions we label as *apathy, hope, progressive withdrawal, and confirmation*. Progressive

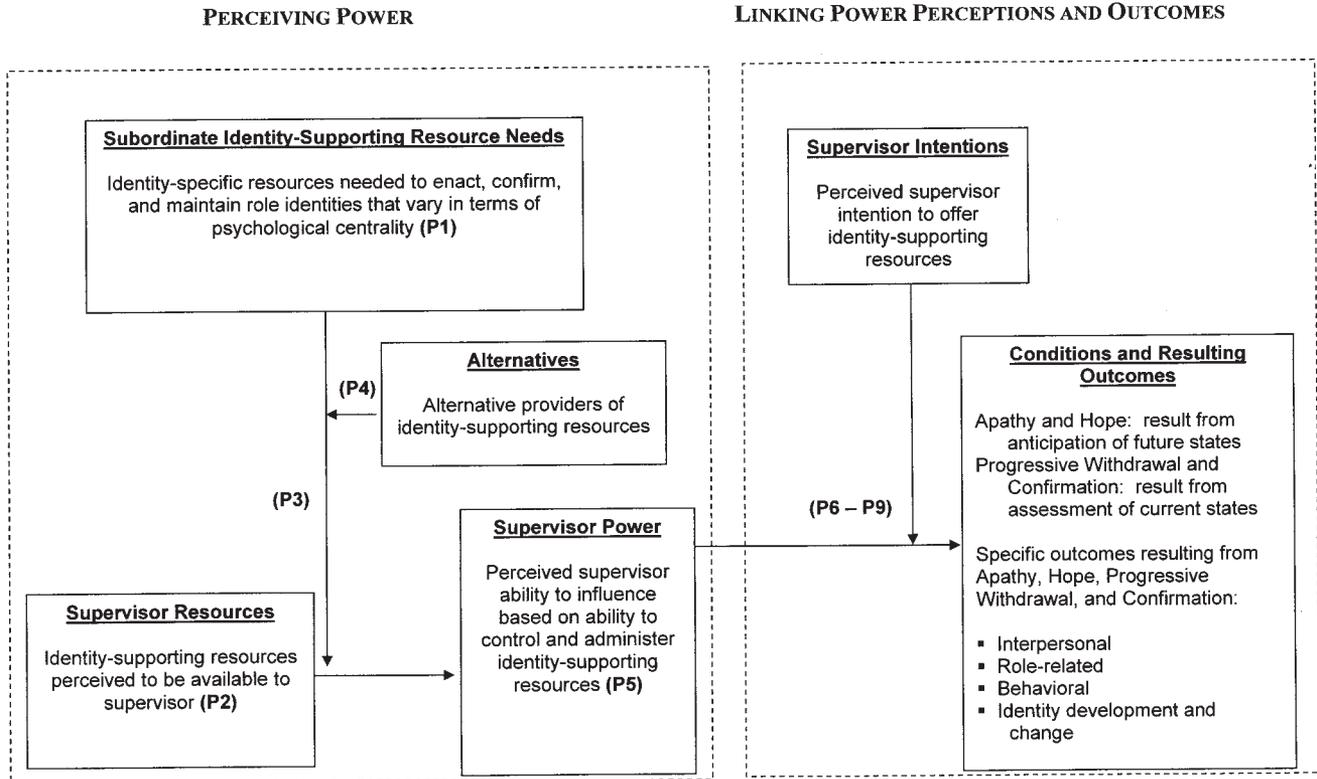


Figure 1. General model of formation of subordinate perceptions of supervisor power and resulting subordinate outcomes.

withdrawal and confirmation reflect an assessment of what is going on now, whereas apathy and hope reflect the subordinate's anticipation of what may happen in the future. For example, if the chairperson is perceived to be able (*Supervisor Power* box) and willing (*Supervisor Intentions* box) to verify the professor's researcher identity, the situation is likely to fall in the confirmation category, and we should see positive outcomes in several areas: interpersonal (e.g., a good relationship with the department chairperson), role-related (e.g., good role fit and high role-specific self-efficacy), behavioral (e.g., low propensity to leave the university voluntarily), and identity-related outcomes (e.g., the professor's identity as a researcher is likely to become even more central to sense of self). Next, we describe our model in more detail, together with testable propositions to guide empirical research.

Perceiving Power

For subordinates to maintain specific role identities in the workplace, they require particular resources. The more psychologically central the identity is to the subordinate's sense of self, the stronger the need for these resources (Burke, 1997; Burke & Stets, 1999; Stryker & Serpe, 1994). Further, because subordinates generally pay a great deal of attention to their immediate supervisors (Fiske, 1993), they will very likely form an assessment of the resources seen as available to or under the supervisor's control.

The relative importance of identity-related needs determines the degree of dependency of a given subordinate. Accordingly, an interaction effect of resources perceived to be available and resources needed determine the extent to which the subordinate perceives the supervisor to have power over him or her. As an example, consider a subordinate with three core identities of a fairly similar and high degree of centrality for her or his sense of self: a role identity as a creative person, a role identity as an achiever, and a role identity as an environmentalist. What determines whether the subordinate considers the supervisor to be powerful? It is unlikely that the subordinate will expect the supervisor to be a potential source of self-verification for the environmentalist persona (Swann, 1983). In other words, resources and resource flows seen as being under the control of the supervisor likely do not match the needs specified by the environmentalist role. This applies to both material resources (e.g., knowledge about environmentalism) and to psychological resources (e.g., support from respected others in the movement). Unless the supervisor is also an environmentalist, the supervisor is much more likely to be seen as a potential source of resources and self-verification for the creative and achiever identities because creativity and achievement roles are more likely to be socially shared in workplace contexts.

Our description of supervisor power is similar in meaning to the terms *perceived power* or *social power*, as they are commonly used in the behavioral science literature (i.e., ability to influence). However, whereas we share the general definition of power as ability to influence, we also propose that perceived power is a second order judgment (Brown & Lord, 2001) because this ability to influence results from a combination of particular identity needs and supervisor resources. As with any other individual, a subordinate's identity needs will be specific to the identities held by that person. On the other hand, roles represent a stable and recurring pattern of social relationships (Stryker, 1980), and they tend to be socially shared and broadly understood. As such, there will likely

be at least some overlap in the resource needs of different individuals holding the same role, although individuals do not merely accept identities as a given but negotiate their meaning with others (Ashforth, 2001; Cast, Stets, & Burke, 1999; Swann, 1983, 1985, 1987). Considering these ideas together, our formulation can account for the effects of social (i.e., organizational) structures on power perceptions (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1980), while still recognizing that individual differences in power perceptions exist.

Our finer-grained analysis of the power construct provides a theoretical mechanism for prediction of perceived power based on combinations of identity needs and resources. As an example, consider the situation of a department chairperson (i.e., supervisor) and his or her department faculty (i.e., subordinates). Our model allows us to frame the situation as follows: Over what issues, for what individual faculty members, and to what degree does the chairperson have power? An empirical investigation may lead to the conclusion that a newly hired assistant professor with a strong research identity has a corresponding set of strong material and psychological needs for resources that the chairperson is perceived to have available (e.g., rewards for research activity, teaching loads). On the other hand, a more senior and tenured professor who has a central identity as an external consultant may see the chairperson as having few resources that can support or threaten that identity. Thus, our conceptualization of power allows an understanding of why and how the supervisor is seen as able to influence the various subordinates to different degrees. In sum, the discussion thus far leads to the following propositions:

Proposition 1: A subordinate's content and psychological centrality of current and desired role identities will dictate the types of resources needed to enact, confirm, and maintain such identities.

Proposition 2: Subordinates will attend to and form perceptions of the types of resources supervisors have available to enact, confirm, and maintain subordinates' current or desired role identities.

Proposition 3: A subordinate's perceptions that the supervisor possesses resources will have a positive effect on judgments of supervisor power, but this effect is moderated by a subordinate's identity needs. Specifically, the positive effect of perceived supervisor resources on perceived supervisor power will be reduced when resources do not match identity needs.

The interactive effect of subordinate identity needs and supervisor resources on perceived power described in Proposition 3 needs to be qualified. Specifically, Emerson (1962) pointed to dependency as being inversely related to the availability of alternative avenues of goal achievement outside the particular dyadic relationship in question. Thus, a supervisor's control of identity-supporting resources will be less salient to a subordinate if he or she perceives that those resource needs might be satisfied by others in the workplace (e.g., other coworkers or the employee's team; Cole, Schaninger, & Harris, 2002). Even work-related identities are not completely bound to the workplace, so there are exchange alternatives outside the organization that may be added to the list. For example, an achiever identity may be verified through volun-

teer work. In short, the interactive effect of subordinate identity needs and perceived supervisor resource control on perceived supervisor power depends on whether the subordinate believes that verification for an identity may potentially be obtained outside the supervisor–subordinate dyadic relationship. In sum,

Proposition 4: The interactive effect of subordinate identity-supporting resource needs and perceived supervisor resources on perceived supervisor power will be moderated by the subordinate's perceived availability of identity-supporting resources outside of the subordinate–supervisor relationship. Specifically, the greater the perceived availability of such resources, the smaller the interactive effect of identity needs and supervisor resources on perceived supervisor power.

What is the nature of judgments of perceived power? Do subordinates create a global or overall perception of supervisor power (Nesler, Aguinis, Quigley, Lee, & Tedeschi, 1999) or, instead, multifaceted perceptions (e.g., French & Raven, 1959)? Our model explains why both overall and specific power perceptions can coexist. Power judgments can result from specific identity needs resulting in as many power judgments as identities exist. So, returning to a previous example, a supervisor may be perceived as having high power vis-à-vis a subordinate's creative identity, moderate power vis-à-vis a subordinate's achiever identity, and low power vis-à-vis a subordinate's environmentalist identity. In addition, we propose that subordinates also form cumulative or overall judgments of supervisory power, similar to how an overall assessment of the work environment may be captured by the construct of psychological climate (James, Joyce, & Slocum, 1988). When such generalized judgments occur, we posit that they are formed through summation of the identity-specific power judgments, with each identity-specific judgment weighted according to the centrality of the particular identity to the sense of self. Thus, we offer the following proposition:

Proposition 5: Overall judgments of supervisor power reflect a weighted additive function of power judgments made in response to specific identity needs, with the weights determined by the relative centrality of a given identity vis-à-vis other identities.

To summarize, in this section we established bridges among resource dependency, identity, and self-verification theories to provide a useful foundation for understanding why subordinates need certain resources (i.e., material and psychological) and how the ability of others (especially supervisors) to potentially provide those resources shapes judgments of power. Next, we extend our analysis to explaining the link between perceived power and subordinate responses and outcomes.

Linking Power Perceptions With Outcomes

The power literature is generally silent regarding the processes that link perceived supervisor power with subordinate outcomes. To address this gap, we draw extensively on recent advances in our understanding of the nature of identity verification processes.

The identity standard or content of the identity comprises the meanings an individual holds for a given identity (Burke, 1991). Identity verification is a self-regulating process in which self-

views of role performances and reflected appraisals of others (i.e., “how I see others seeing me”) are compared with the identity standard. Congruence of meanings in this comparison reflects positive self-verification and will tend to strengthen both the content of the identity and its prominence in an individual's identity hierarchy (Stryker, 1987). On the other hand, a discrepancy—even a positive one—leads to feelings of distress (Swann, 1983) that the individual is highly motivated to avoid or reduce. Accordingly, individuals seek to create situations that will confirm their valued identities (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Swann, 1987; Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004). For instance, a subordinate for whom being creative is highly important to sense of self may attempt to display this creativity at work by offering suggestions and finding new ways to enact a work role (this is known as *role innovation*; West, 1987). If the supervisor ignores the subordinate's attempts to create a situation supporting the creative identity or, worse yet, demeans them, self-verification theory indicates that the subordinate may attempt to control symbolic meanings (e.g., by displaying interpersonal prompts such as exaggerated role-consistent behaviors to cause others to behave toward him or her in a manner more consistent with identity meanings). If that subordinate still feels he or she cannot engage in adequate creative performances because of material constraints such as a narrow job description, one likely response to the identity interruption will be attempts to control resources that enable role-consistent performances (Burke & Stets, 1999; e.g., by seeking an expanded job definition).

Self-verification processes are driven by the individual's basic desire to predict and control her or his environment (Swann, 1990). Framed within our model, subordinates are motivated not only to understand whether the supervisor controls identity-supporting resources (i.e., supervisor power), but also whether these resources will in fact be offered. Without this information, it would be difficult for subordinates to successfully create a situation to elicit identity-verifying resources. Stated differently, subordinates would have a very limited basis on which to anticipate how the supervisor might react to identity displays, role performances, and other means of eliciting self-verification (Swann, 1987). Put in terms of self-verification theory, the self-regulating process that underlies how subordinates respond to discrepancies between supervisors' reflected appraisals and their own identity standards would break down. Consequently, our model proposes that it is the combined assessment of both *ability* and *intention* to provide identity-supporting resources that causes key subordinate outcomes.

Accordingly, the right side of Figure 1, labeled *Linking Power Perceptions and Outcomes*, shows a moderating effect of perceived supervisor intentions on the relationship between supervisor power (i.e., perceived ability to influence due to the availability of identity-supporting resources) and various interpersonal, role-related, behavioral, and identity outcomes. Figure 2 breaks out the specifics of this interaction into four basic quadrants reflecting the possible combinations of high or low supervisor power with high or low perceived supervisor intention to provide identity-supporting resources. Both supervisor power and intention are continuous variables, so the four quadrants described in Figure 2 describe combinations of the extreme high and low ends of the continua.

		Perceived Supervisor Power: SUPERVISOR CAN	
		Low	High
Perceived supervisor intention to offer identity-supporting resources: SUPERVISOR WILL	Low	<p>“Apathy” Irrelevance per core role identities</p> <p><i>Interpersonal outcomes:</i> Low LMX quality, limited LMX development, low trustworthiness and satisfaction with supervisor</p> <p><i>Role-related outcomes:</i> Poor role fit and low role-specific self-efficacy; little psychological role withdrawal</p> <p><i>Behavioral outcomes:</i> Physical disengagement from the supervisor-subordinate relationship; role-consistent performance displayed to potential alternative verification sources; little role innovation; high levels of absenteeism and turnover</p> <p><i>Identity outcomes:</i> Small identity effects</p>	<p>“Progressive Withdrawal” Hazard to core role identities</p> <p><i>Interpersonal outcomes:</i> Very low LMX quality, little LMX development, very low trustworthiness and satisfaction with supervisor</p> <p><i>Role-related outcomes:</i> Very poor role fit, decreasing role-specific self-efficacy over time, potentially leading to psychological role withdrawal</p> <p><i>Behavioral outcomes:</i> Initially, exaggerated role-consistent performance displays and role innovation, followed by search for alternative verification sources, reduction of role-consistent performance displays, disengagement from the relationship, absenteeism, and turnover</p> <p><i>Identity outcomes:</i> Potential changes in current identity content and salience if alternative search not satisfactory</p>
	High	<p>“Hope” Potential self-verification per core role identities</p> <p><i>Interpersonal outcomes:</i> Moderate LMX quality, LMX development, satisfaction with supervisor, and trustworthiness</p> <p><i>Role-related outcomes:</i> Moderate role fit and role-specific self-efficacy, little psychological role withdrawal</p> <p><i>Behavioral outcomes:</i> Role-consistent performance displayed to both supervisor and other potential identity verification sources; little role innovation; low levels of absenteeism and turnover</p> <p><i>Identity outcomes:</i> Small identity effects</p>	<p>“Confirmation” Positive self-verification per core role identities</p> <p><i>Interpersonal outcomes:</i> Very high LMX quality, LMX development, trustworthiness, and satisfaction with supervisor</p> <p><i>Role-related outcomes:</i> Very high role fit and role-specific self-efficacy, very low psychological role withdrawal</p> <p><i>Behavioral outcomes:</i> Personalized role-consistent performance as role innovation occurs, low propensity for absenteeism and turnover</p> <p><i>Identity outcomes:</i> Validated identity becomes more central</p>

Figure 2. Illustrative outcomes for combinations of high and low values for perceptions of supervisor power and intention to offer identity-supporting resources. LMX = leader-member exchange.

When perceived supervisor power is low, the supervisor is seen as having little ability to offer resources to verify identities central to the subordinate. In such situations, the supervisor’s behaviors and communication may receive somewhat less scrutiny from subordinates than they might otherwise, and subordinates are likely to seek identity verification elsewhere. However, even when perceived power is low, we maintain that supervisor intentions—reflecting a possible future state of identity-supporting resource control—do not necessarily go unnoticed. We argue that those intentions remain salient to subordinates because the supervisor is a key verification source for workplace identities, and shifts in resources available to the supervisor are not uncommon. Thus, the labels for the two quadrants in the left column of Figure 2 denoting low supervisor power reflect anticipation of possible future states. Therefore, we use the overarching connotations of either apathy (in

the case in which little intention to provide any possessed resources is ascribed to the supervisor) or hope (in the case in which perceived intention to provide resources is high).

The two quadrants in the right column in Figure 2 show high power—perceptions that supervisors do have the ability to influence because they control identity-supporting resources—paired with attributions of either low or high intention to offer these resources. The confirmation quadrant indicates that, from a self-verification perspective, the provision of identity-salient resources is confirming to the identity and will encourage the subordinate toward higher levels of interaction with someone the subordinate sees as an identity-resource reservoir (Swann, 1987). In contrast, a situation of progressive withdrawal will take place when the supervisor is seen as having the needed resources but not being willing to provide them. In such situations, initial subordinate

reactions center around attempts to obtain resources that are available from the supervisor, but as the supervisor's intention to not provide such resources becomes clear, the subordinate will engage in progressive withdrawal from the situation, the identity itself, or both.

Our theoretical model provides us with a coherent conceptual framework within which to describe a diverse set of subordinate outcomes likely to occur in the apathy, hope, progressive withdrawal, and confirmation conditions described in Figure 2. Some of the outcomes included in this figure have been examined by previous research on power (e.g., satisfaction with the supervisor), but our new conceptualization gives a better understanding of under which conditions (i.e., combinations of ability and intention) various outcomes are more likely to occur. Other outcomes included in Figure 2 are yet to be studied empirically (e.g., changes in subordinate role identities). Rather than listing individual outcomes, in Figure 2 we emphasize four different types of outcomes, with the understanding that additional individual outcomes exist within each of the four categories.

The first type of outcome is interpersonal. Interpersonal outcomes concern identity-salient aspects of the supervisor-subordinate dyad, as considered from the subordinate's point of view because our concern in this article is with subordinate perceptions. These outcomes include perceptions of the supervisor that may be affected by self-verification, including trustworthiness (e.g., Aguinis, Nesler, Quigley, Lee, & Tedeschi, 1996; Burke & Stets, 1999), satisfaction with the supervisor (e.g., Schriesheim, Hinkin, & Podsakoff, 1991), and role theory-based concepts of leader-member exchange (LMX) quality and development (e.g., Dienesch & Liden, 1986). The second type of outcome is related to the role itself. Role-related outcomes concern perceptions of role fit, role-specific self-efficacy, and psychological role withdrawal, all of which have been implicated as verification process outcomes by identity theorists (Stryker & Burke, 2000; McCall & Simmons, 1978). The third set of outcomes we label *behavioral*. These include role-consistent performances, role innovation, search for alternative sources of verification, and behavioral displays of psychological withdrawal, including absenteeism and turnover. Finally, although it has rarely been recognized (see Lord & Brown, 2001, 2004; Lord, Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2001, for exceptions), perceived supervisor power can have both subtle and dramatic effects on both the content and psychological centrality of the various identities held by the subordinate. We are concerned with (a) changes to the meaning and/or salience of a given role identity; (b) conflicts between different role identities, whether current or desired selves; and (c) development of new identities. Next, we describe each of the four conditions shown in Figure 2 in more detail.

Apathy. Apathy reflects perceptions of a supervisor who lacks both power and goodwill to provide identity-supporting resources. The operative ideation of the subordinate might be, "my supervisor cannot give me resources and would not give them to me if she or he had them." Apathy is marked by the perceived inability of the supervisor to significantly support or threaten central identities in the present, with little hope of identity support in the future. Role support for current, core identities must come from other sources, whether alternative sources of external verification or self-views of role performances (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Petkus, 1996). LMX quality and level of development (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)

will be low not only because the supervisor does not have the ability to offer resources but also because the subordinate sees little hope for establishing a strong relationship should the supervisor's resource situation change. Accordingly, low levels of trustworthiness and satisfaction are likely to result. Perceived role fit will be poor, because resources connoting fit are not available (although self-views of fit may provide some role support; Petkus, 1996). Low role-specific self-efficacy is likely to result from poor role fit (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Because of the lack of identity verification from the supervisor, the subordinate's motivation to search for alternative verification sources will be high, but because the role itself remains relatively valued, it is less likely that psychological withdrawal from the role itself will occur. Instead, physical withdrawal from the relationship (e.g., seeking a transfer or leaving the unit or organization) is more likely.

As a subordinate attempts to strategically choose interaction partners (including self-interaction) in an effort to ensure that they provide self-confirming feedback (Swann, 1987), role-consistent performances will occur to maintain consistent self-views. One likely response is that role innovation (West, 1987) will not be publicly displayed. Instead, the role will be played out largely by the socially shared role script with little personalization, because the subordinate is not yet sure what the reaction of potential verification partners might be. Finally, supervisor power is likely to have little impact on subordinate identities because identity displays are oriented to other verification sources. In sum,

Proposition 6: A condition of "apathy" (low supervisor power and low perceived supervisor intention to offer identity-supporting resources) will result in the following:

6a: negative interpersonal outcomes (low LMX quality, limited LMX development, low trustworthiness and satisfaction with supervisor);

6b: negative role-related outcomes (poor role fit and low role-specific self-efficacy), but little role withdrawal;

6c: little emphasis on the supervisor as a source of resources to confirm central role identities, paired with physical disengagement from the relationship;

6d: search for alternative sources of identity verification, with attendant identity cue and performance displays for those sources, showing little role innovation;

6e: high levels of absenteeism and turnover; and

6f: small identity effects (i.e., little identity change or development).

Hope. Hope reflects a subordinate's attribution of goodwill regarding the supervisor and the belief that if the supervisor did control identity-supporting resources, they would indeed be provided. The difference between apathy and hope is that for hope there is an expectation of potential identity support and, although the supervisor is currently perceived as controlling few identity-supporting resources, there is the potential for self-confirmation in the future. Anticipation of such support may lead to liking within the dyad (Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993) and foster interpersonal

trust and some satisfaction, but the resources required to support current or desired identities will not be currently available. Thus, LMX quality and development, and interpersonal affect toward the supervisor, will only be of moderate magnitude, as will role-related perceptions of role fit and role-specific self-efficacy, which depend on these resources. As with apathy, motivation to search for alternative verification sources will be high, but neither role withdrawal nor relational withdrawal are likely because resources would be provided if available. Instead, role-consistent performances with little role innovation will continue, being displayed both to alternative audiences to attempt to create self-confirming situations and to the supervisor in hope that this will encourage supervisor verification should the supervisor's control over resources change. As with apathy, little potential for identity change exists. In sum,

Proposition 7: A condition of "hope" (low supervisor power and high perceived supervisor intention to offer identity-supporting resources) will result in the following:

7a: moderate interpersonal outcomes (moderate LMX quality, LMX development, trustworthiness, and satisfaction with supervisor);

7b: moderate role-related outcomes (moderate levels of role fit and role-specific self-efficacy), but little role withdrawal;

7c: emphasis on the supervisor as a potential source of resources to confirm central role identities;

7d: search for alternative sources of identity verification, with attendant identity cue and performance displays for those sources, showing little role innovation;

7e: low levels of absenteeism and turnover; and

7f: small identity effects (i.e., little identity change or development).

Progressive withdrawal. A situation in which supervisor power is high but intention to provide identity-supporting resources is low is intrinsically damaging and devaluing to a subordinate's identity. In effect, the message sent to the subordinate is "You are not who you think you are" or "You cannot be who you want to be," which threatens even internal self-views. In such situations, which we label *progressive withdrawal*, subordinate initial reactions will focus on attempts to manipulate the situation with the supervisor. Behaviorally, there will be initial attempts to bring supervisor resource provision in line with identity needs (Swann, 1987) through exaggerated role performances and some role innovation.

For instance, consider a professor with a strong research record who holds a very core and central identity as a researcher. This professor is aware of a prestigious and well-funded endowed chair, the assignment of which is controlled by the department chairperson. The professor's identity standard for the researcher role identity indicates he or she ought to merit this endowed chair, and failure to obtain it may generate self-questioning about the professor's identity as a researcher. If the professor perceives that the department chair's intention to provide this resource (which has

both material and psychological meanings) is low, then he or she may step up attempts to highlight the research identity to improve the chances of receiving the endowed chair and avoiding this painful self-devaluation. This resource has no obvious alternative source, so the professor will heighten identity cue displays (e.g., ensuring the chairperson receives laudatory information about her or his research achievements) and research role performances (e.g., put on a research seminar for other faculty and be sure the chairperson is aware and attends), perhaps engaging in displays intended to distinguish the professor from other good researchers (i.e., role innovation).

If the endowed chair is ultimately granted to someone else, LMX quality and development will naturally suffer along with perceptions of trustworthiness and supervisor satisfaction. In this case, role-fit perceptions will be very low and ensuing role-specific self-efficacy will decrease. Seeking identity equilibrium by altering the department chairperson's feedback becomes less viable for the professor, and a search for alternative verification sources will intensify. Because strongly held role identities are core to an individual's sense of self, and the individual has a commitment to protect that sense of identity (Burke, 1991), in this scenario the professor may tend to refrain from role-consistent action, at least initially. More guarded displays of researcher identity cues and a reduction of role-consistent performances may ensue, as the professor attempts to protect the core but threatened identity (Farmer et al., 2003) by disavowing the relevance of her or his actions for the identity being claimed (Burke & Stets, 1999; McCall & Simmons, 1978). Withdrawal from the relationship with the department chairperson is possible, but if satisfactory alternative sources of verification cannot be found, turnover becomes more likely. If continuance commitment is high and the endowed chair resource is perceived as a particularly critical identity marker, reestablishing identity equilibrium may require some change in the identity standard. This may include the professor's psychological withdrawal from the role identity (e.g., making the researcher role less psychologically central; Burke & Stets, 1999; McCall & Simmons, 1978) or altering the content of the identity (i.e., the identity standard; Burke, 1991; Large & Marcussen, 2000). In sum,

Proposition 8: A condition of "progressive withdrawal" (high supervisor power and low perceived supervisor intention to offer identity-supporting resources) will result in the following:

8a: extremely negative interpersonal outcomes (very low LMX quality and level of LMX development, very low trustworthiness and satisfaction with supervisor);

8b: extremely negative role-related outcomes (very poor of role fit and very low role-specific self-efficacy) and high propensity for role withdrawal;

8c: initial exaggerated displays of identity cues, role performance, and role innovation to supervisor, and subsequent disengagement from the relationship if unsuccessful in altering the possibility of receiving identity-supporting resources;

8d: search for alternative sources of identity verification;

8e: very high levels of absenteeism and propensity for turnover; and

8f: potential changes in current identity content and salience if the alternative search is not satisfactory.

Confirmation. When supervisors possess identity-supporting resources and willingly provide them to a subordinate, the subordinate's identity is confirmed and validated. This will result in highly positive emotional and cognitive ascriptions to the supervisor (trustworthiness and satisfaction) and high LMX quality and development. Because feedback from self and critical others is consistent with the identity standard, there will be good role fit for the subordinate, high role-specific self-efficacy, and little propensity for role withdrawal. Significant role innovation may take place as the subordinate feels safe in putting a personal stamp on the role. Role performances will be consistent with this personalized role identity, and there will be little propensity for voluntary absenteeism or turnover as the self is regularly verified. In sum,

Proposition 9: A condition of "confirmation" (high supervisor power and high perceived supervisor intention to offer identity-supporting resources) will result in the following:

9a: highly positive interpersonal outcomes (very high levels of LMX quality, development, trustworthiness, and satisfaction with supervisor);

9b: highly positive role-related outcomes (very high levels of role fit and role-specific self-efficacy), and very low propensity for role withdrawal;

9c: continued emphasis of the supervisor as an ongoing source of resources to confirm central role identities;

9d: little search for alternative sources of identity verification and, as role innovation occurs, personalized role consistent performances;

9e: low propensity for absenteeism and turnover; and

9f: strengthening of the role identity.

Conceptual Contributions

Testing the propositions based on our model will allow for a better understanding of how power perceptions are formed and the mechanisms linking perceived supervisor power with subordinate outcomes. In addition, our model has several conceptual implications for the study of power as it relates to other constructs and research areas. We discuss these contributions next.

Power, Dependency, and Identity Theories

Because power is relational (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980), we grounded our model explicitly in the notion of resource dependency (Emerson, 1962). Research on perceived power has not adequately integrated notions of resource dependency to explain the effects of perceived power. For example, French and Raven's (1959) power base of expertise rests on a subordinate's assessment of supervisor control and possession of superior knowledge, skills,

or abilities (p. 163). Our model clarifies that a supervisor's perceived possession of expertise is not enough to affect the subordinate unless one considers the extent to which a subordinate requires that particular resource to satisfy current or desired identity needs.

Our model suggests systematic ways in which dependencies can be assessed, potentially explaining conflicting research findings. Schriesheim et al. (1991) found expert power to be related to organizational commitment in a sample of research scientists, but not in a sample of restaurant employees. Whereas identities are personal constructs, the distribution of role-based identities ought to vary according to the prevalence of particular roles in particular organizations. Role identities in play in the samples described above are likely to differ markedly, and thus, possession of certain resources such as expertise may or may not relate to a supervisor's perceived power, depending on subordinates' identity needs. We might further examine the possibility that the relationship between perceived power and the outcome organizational commitment is affected by the perceived intentions of supervisors to provide resources associated with, for example, expertise. In short, the inclusion of dependency and identity theories in our model of power provides a potential explanation of inconsistencies in published research as well as guidance regarding the design of future studies that hopefully will contribute to a better understanding of the processes leading to power perceptions and resulting outcomes.

Power Beyond the Subordinate-Supervisor Relationship

Another conceptual contribution of our model is that it is not bound to perceived power within the subordinate-supervisor relationship. Other organizational actors may be potentially affected by the supervisor, including entire work groups and on up to the entire organization. Individuals can also make third-party judgments of the power of an individual (whether supervisor or not) to affect some other individual or group by assessing how well the supervisor's perceived resources match with the third party's perceived identity needs. In such a case, we believe individuals obtain information about this match observationally, from social information, and by scripted information about normative role-based actions. In fact, such third-party judgment is what Fiol et al. (2001), following terminology introduced by Aguinis et al. (1994), labeled a reputation *power mental model* (PMM). In deciphering perceived power, our model extends Fiol et al.'s (2001) notion of reputation PMM by describing the contents and the formation process leading to such judgment. Thus, a subordinate might perceive that the supervisor is powerful for others, but not for him or her. The ability to handle different forms of power perceptions within the same model (i.e., power to affect me vs. power to affect someone else) provides a close theoretical linkage between our work and that of Fiol et al. (2001). For example, judgments of supervisor power with self as the referent can describe what Fiol et al. referred to as identity PMMs. Although Fiol et al. (2001) did not attempt to describe the content of PMMs, doing so was one of the goals of our article; we therefore see our article as extending the ideas of Fiol et al.

Power, Identity, and Leadership Reconsidered

Until recently, identity theory has had limited application in workplace settings, but the importance of social identity (e.g.,

Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) in power processes (Hogg & Reid, 2001) and leadership (Lord & Brown, 2004) is being increasingly recognized. Our integration of identity and dependency theories within the context of a particular role relationship (subordinate–supervisor) complements and extends this work. The view of leadership based on a social identity perspective sees leaders and followers as interacting roles within a social system defined by group and/or category membership (Hogg & Reid, 2001), and so leadership dynamics are significantly affected by the social–cognitive processes associated with group membership. Also, it maintains that because leaders come to be perceived as prototypical of the group, such leaders do not need to exercise power, but instead can gain influence through holding the structural position of “leader.” Essentially, because the leader represents the in-group prototype, members self-categorize accordingly and assimilate their behaviors and cognitions to those of the leader. This social identity-based perspective of leadership, however, does not explain how power judgments are formed but focuses on leader abuse of power as the main outcome. A value-added contribution of our model is that it defines more clearly how judgments of supervisor power are formed and it predicts subordinate outcomes.

Lord and Brown (2004) proposed a model of leadership and follower self-identity based on an idea very similar to that put forward in the current article—that leaders can affect subordinate identity and—through that process—other outcomes. Our conceptualization differs significantly from theirs, however, in several important ways concerning how that occurs and what outcomes are most affected. Lord and Brown’s (2004) theorizing is grounded in cognitive research on the self-concept. It is broad in its sweep, focusing on multiple identity levels: collective (defined in terms of group membership), relational (based on relations with specific individuals), and individual (self views without referent to others). Ultimately, it is intended as a heuristic framework in which to place midrange theories. Our conceptualization is grounded in multiple research streams (dependence, identity theory, self-verification), is specific to role-based identities, and is midrange in that it focuses on a single level and the single context of supervisor and subordinate relations. The outcome focus is also somewhat different between the two approaches. Lord and Brown are most concerned with identity activation, change, and creation and pay limited attention to other subordinate outcomes. Whereas identity change and creation is one of the types of subordinate outcomes we consider, neither it nor identity activation by a proactive leader is our prime focus.

Interestingly, Lord and Brown’s (2004) work highlights how leaders can prime subordinate identities to make them salient by activating and bringing an identity into the working self-concept. Our focus is on identity strength or centrality—the level of self-identification with a particular role. On the basis of the model we have presented, this means that the salience or ease of activation of a particular identity is a function of its strength. Although subordinates may respond to priming as Lord and Brown noted, they also negotiate desirable identities through self-verification processes designed to elicit leader confirmation of the identity. One particular area of useful integration of the two approaches would be to focus on how leader priming—through action, behaviors, rhetoric, feedback, rewards, and so forth—may activate particular

subordinate identities by making identity-supporting resources more salient to subordinates.

Because our approach focuses mostly on how subordinates proactively seek to verify identities and Lord and Brown (2004) focused on how leaders may inhibit, change, or develop them, an integration of these two approaches might bring a more complete framework to study leadership and power. Despite the differences in scope in the two approaches, it is likely that individual identities exist in a salient hierarchy regardless of level (see Lord et al.’s, 1999, discussion of inhibitory relations). Because what matters in our model is whether supervisors can provide meaningful resources for important identities within the supervisor–subordinate relational context, there is nothing inherent in our relational approach that would preclude its extension to the other two identity levels (i.e., individual and collective). Likewise, Lord and Brown’s focus on the various ways that leaders can prime and affect subordinate identities are not incompatible with identity theory. We encourage conceptual and empirical work reconciling these two positions in the hope of generating a more complete understanding of how leadership and power processes work together in the supervisor–subordinate relationship.

The inclusion of identity theory in our model also has implications for other leadership perspectives concerning power in the supervisor–subordinate relationship. Hinkin and Schriesheim (1990, p. 222) concluded that “empirical research on possible linkages between perceived leader behavior and attributions of power does not exist.” Our model implies that the structural, behavioral, and personal factors often linked to power (cf. Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; House, 1988; Tedeschi, 1990) are inputs to what resources the supervisor is seen to have available and as supervisor resources change, so should perceived power. However, our model goes beyond that. Specifically, even if a supervisor’s “objective” power (i.e., job title, budget allocation) remains the same over a period of time, a subordinate may develop different identities over the same time period (e.g., a research-oriented assistant professor may turn into a consulting-oriented tenured professor), and so perceived power will change, as will the resulting outcomes of that power. This point has meaningful implications for LMX theory (Dienesch & Liden, 1986) given its origins in role theory and social exchange models. LMX models generally assume that leaders have the ability to offer exchange elements that are desired. Our model offers two conceptual contributions in this regard. First, it helps specify, on the basis of identity needs, exactly what exchange elements may be desired. Like other social exchange formulations, LMX theorists have paid little attention to how subordinates differ in their needs for resources, yet recent work suggests that the relationship between LMX and supervisor power bases exists as an individual difference effect (Cogliser & Schriesheim, 2000). Second, it has been suggested that leader power is a necessary prerequisite for leader differentiation between subordinates (Erdogan & Liden, 2002). Our model suggests that leader power (conceptualized as control of identity-supporting resources) will have differential effects on LMX quality and development, depending on the supervisor’s perceived intention of providing resources.

Research Implications: Testing the Model

An important outcome of our conceptual model is that it provides specific avenues regarding future research on perceptions of

power. However, given that the model includes nine propositions, it may not be practically feasible to conduct a study that tests all of these propositions simultaneously. Instead, it is more realistic to adopt a paradigmatic approach to theory testing in which several studies are conducted, each addressing one section of the model only. Eventually, combining results deriving from each of these separate studies would allow for an assessment of the validity of the model as a whole. This paradigmatic bottom-up approach to theory testing has been followed successfully to investigate similarly complex constructs such as perceptions of aggression. In the case of aggression, a set of propositions was first put forward (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994). Then, several separate studies were conducted to test the various portions of the model (e.g., Tedeschi & Quigley, 2000).

Following a paradigmatic approach to theory testing, many of the propositions derived from our model could be investigated within a controlled laboratory or simulation setting. Similar to previous published work investigating perceptions of power, research participants could be exposed to actors interacting in particular settings, and participants would then be asked to provide their assessment regarding the situation. Media could include videotapes (e.g., Aguinis & Adams, 1998) or written vignettes (e.g., Aguinis & Henle, 2001; Aguinis, Simonsen, & Pierce, 1998). Manipulated factors could include, for example, the actors' desired role identities (e.g., "Hannah sees herself as a high-performing employee and a rising star in the organization"), and dependent variables could include, for example, perceived power (e.g., "how much power does Hannah's supervisor have over her").

One threat to the construct validity of studies in which participants observe actors and provide their assessments is the extent to which particular identities (or any identity) may be salient given the artificial nature of the setting. So, additional studies should also be conducted in less controlled field settings in which participants and actors are the same, and therefore, participants would be asked to provide assessments about themselves as opposed to assessments regarding actors they observe in videotapes or read about in vignettes. This additional strategy would first include exploratory research assessing the role identities that are particularly prevalent in a given setting and then generate a protocol to measure identity content and needs, possibly based on self-attribute questionnaires (Pelham & Swann, 1989) or measures of role identity salience (Burke, 1980; Callero, 1992). This exploratory work would also elicit information about meaningful sources of identity verification in the organization per those salient identities. Researchers would measure perceived availability of resources from these sources, including the supervisor, along with salient identities, and then assess whether the interaction of these variables affects perceived power.

Regardless of the type of research design used, measurement of supervisor power can involve an assessment of the supervisor's ability to influence (e.g., Hinkin, & Schriesheim, 1989; Nesler et al., 1999). When participants and actors are the same, an alternative strategy would include assessing changes in identities at several points in time as a function of identity need-power dimension matches (see Cast et al., 1999). Measurement of intentions to provide resources and of the outcomes listed in Figure 2 is fairly straightforward given the existence of scales available to measure most of these constructs, although these too ought to be assessed at different points in time.

Boundary Conditions and Future Model Extensions

We readily acknowledge several boundary conditions and needed extensions in our model. First, our model includes an interaction between subordinate identity-supporting resource needs and supervisor resource control on supervisor power (cf. Proposition 3). This raises some questions that have not been fully addressed. For example, we did not closely examine exactly how perceptions of resource control form. Organizational newcomers may not have adequate information to differentiate various material and psychological resources a supervisor may control. Such perceptions may stem from a variety of supervisor characteristics or situational cues (Lord & Maher, 1991) and likely will become more accurate with greater organizational tenure, as both opportunities for observation and for obtaining social information accrue. One could envision a sequence of events in which a subordinate mistakenly assesses supervisor resource availability and thus generates a power assessment concerning resources that are not in fact actually controlled by the supervisor. Later, the inability of the supervisor to provide these resources may be attributed to lack of intention instead. This suggests the need for future research to incorporate information-processing errors and biases that could serve as boundary conditions for our model.

A second issue that deserves further scrutiny concerns the extent to which workplace events and individuals (such as the supervisor) can actually affect identities. We believe the workplace is a setting in which identities are enacted, confirmed, and maintained for the simple reason that people spend so much time at work—arguably more waking hours than are spent in any other setting. However, the model does make an assumption that a relatively central identity is in play in the workplace, and this may not always be so. Some identities are peripheral or lower in the salience hierarchy and, consequently, need strength to satisfy associated motives will be lower. For instance, a college student may adopt a "waiter" role at a restaurant job, along with its attendant behaviors, but may not develop an associated "waiter"-role identity. Role-related motives in this case will tend to be more instrumental or economic in nature, and corresponding supervisor ability to provide resources to satisfy such motives may have a more constrained effect on the range of subsequent self-concept, attitudes, behavior, and workplace outcomes for the subordinate. This is consistent with the ideas of Lord and Brown (2004), who argued that leaders may have temporary effects on subordinate identities through factors that can increase leader salience to subordinates, including both leader attributes and behavior (e.g., symbolic verbal imagery and nonverbal messages) and follower attributes (e.g., self-monitoring).

Third, we have argued that sources of verification for a given role identity tend to be role specified and that supervisors are critical sources of workplace identity verification. Our model does account for other sources of verification as alternatives, but it is somewhat limited in its discussion of the particulars of these alternative relations. Sense of identity is particularly sensitive to face-to-face interaction (Oyserman & Packer, 1996) and so, in the workplace, social others ought to be important sources of identity information. One might argue that the professor described earlier who greatly desired an endowed chair as identity confirmation might in fact be able to find alternative providers of resources that would still provide adequate identity support. One such alternative

source is, Farmer et al. (2003) found, coworker effects on workplace role identity maintenance. Coworkers may have a more constrained set of psychological resources available to them, and it is unlikely that the supervisor as a source of verification would be entirely insignificant for an individual with identity needs in play. In short, an additional extension of our model could entail a conceptual and empirical investigation on whether, and to what extent, alternative verification sources may compensate for a supervisor's failure to provide support to confirm desired identities.

Practical Implications

Our model has a number of practical implications for subordinates; for supervisors, leaders and aspiring leaders; and for organizations in general. Although identity can be a powerful driver of role-consistent behavior, the relevance of the workplace setting to various core role identities (e.g., as a creative person or as an achiever, to use our previous examples) means these identities are continually at risk, requiring ongoing support for their maintenance. Given that severe identity interruptions can have very negative effects (e.g., progressive withdrawal in Figure 2) and subordinates often have little control over hierarchical superiors, a useful coping or prevention strategy for such interruptions would involve proactively generating multiple alternative identity verification venues (e.g., coworkers, support groups). In fact, our model helps explain the success of corporate programs, such as General Electric's Hispanic Forum, that encourage the formation of employee networks that share core identities.

In addition, our model specifies how supervisor power can affect identities, not all of which are ultimately positive for the subordinate or even for the organization. We believe that such identity reinforcement, or lack thereof, is a constant feature of the workplace and that supervisors change, build up, or tear down subordinate identities whether they mean to or not (e.g., see Lord and Brown's [2004] discussion of the effects of inappropriate role models on subordinate identity). Leaders and aspiring leaders clearly need to be cognizant of this phenomenon because the identity fostered may not be one that is aligned with organizational goals.

On a more positive note, leaders may be able to take advantage of existing subordinate role identities that are reasonably congruent with organizational values (e.g., a role identity as a good citizen) to foster an organization-specific version of that self-concept (e.g., a role identity as a good citizen for Organization X). Establishing such an organization-specific role identity (Ashforth, 2001; Van Dyne & Farmer, 2004) has advantages for the organization, as identification with the organization should be related to subordinate efforts on behalf of the organization and directed toward organizationally sanctioned goals.

Finally, we touch on additional practical implications of the model relative to the four quadrants in Figure 2. What kinds of combinations of supervisor power and perceived intention are required for good leadership across the organization? We might speculate that if all leaders in an organization were perceived according to the archetype in each quadrant, the organization might range from being high performing (confirmation quadrant) to highly dysfunctional (progressive withdrawal quadrant). The figure shows a continuum of outcome quality that is highest in the confirmation quadrant and progressively diminishes as one pro-

ceeds through the other quadrants in a clockwise fashion. It is interesting that supervisor power to provide identity-supporting resources leads to both the best and the worst outcomes, suggesting that providing leaders with additional resources and resulting power is not enough to produce high levels of individual performance.

Closing Comments

Over 6 decades ago, Bertrand Russell (1938) observed that "the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics" (p. 10). Unfortunately, decades of ensuing research on dyadic power seem to have increased, not decreased, the fragmentation of our understanding of power and its effects. In writing this article we have attempted to provide a coherent theoretical basis for future research that will hopefully extend our vision into how power is perceived and the consequences of such perceptions.

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