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I Am My (High-Power) Role: Power and Role Identification

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Abstract

Research indicates that power liberates the self, but findings also show that the powerful are susceptible to situational influences. The present article examines whether enacting roles that afford power leads people to identify with the roles or, instead, liberates them from role expectations altogether. The results of three experiments support the hypothesis that power enhances role identification. Experiment 1 showed that enacting a particular role resulted in greater implicit and explicit role identification when the role contained power. In Experiment 2, infusing a role with power resulted in greater role identification and role-congruent behavior. Experiment 3 demonstrated that power resulted in greater role-congruent self-construal, such that having power in a close relationship caused participants to define themselves relationally, whereas having power in a group situation caused participants to embrace a collective self-construal. Implications for research on power, roles, and the self are discussed.

Keywords

power, roles, self-construal, role identification, identity

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In spite of an impressive array of research on the psychological consequences of power, little work has examined the effects of power on the self-concept (Kraus, Chen, & Keltner, 2011). Recently, however, researchers have found that power increases feelings of authenticity, suggesting that power holders behave in ways consistent with their internal states. This authentic self-expression is further associated with enhanced well-being among power holders (Kifer, Heller, Perunovic, & Galinsky, 2013; Kraus et al., 2011). These findings are consistent with research showing that power elevates perceptions of personal control (Fast, Gruenfeld, Sivanathan, & Galinsky, 2009), increases freedom from situational pressures (Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008), and fosters behaviors that stem from one's own internal goals and values (e.g., Bargh, Raymond, Pryor, & Strack, 1995; Chen, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 2001). Taken together, these findings seem to suggest that power leads people to rely on internal, rather than external, factors when defining the self.

However, power holders are not entirely free from situational demands and influences. A growing body of research suggests that having power focuses individuals on the pursuit of situationally relevant goals. For instance, in laboratory experiments, participants who were primed to feel powerful prior to imagining an event associated with either social or work activities reported a greater number of situation-consistent activities (Guinote, 2008). More recently, Guinote, Weick, and Cai (2012) found that when situational demands are made salient, the experience of power does not result in more dispositionally congruent behavior. Relatedly, Overbeck and Park (2001) showed that when power holders' attention is directed toward goals that require interpersonal attention, the powerful show less stereotyping and greater individuation than low-power actors. Power holders are also better able to focus attention toward critical aspects of tasks and ignore irrelevant details (Smith & Trope, 2006), further suggesting that they might be more willing and able to behave in ways that conform to situationally induced goals.

These seemingly inconsistent findings highlight the need for a deeper understanding of how power can facilitate situationally relevant goal pursuit and, at the same time, increase perceptions of authenticity. Guinote et al. (2012) have addressed this tension in the literature by suggesting that the powerful are most likely to be influenced by the situation when the demands of the situation are clear. In the present article, we posit a related but distinct argument, suggesting that people are more likely to define the self in line with power-providing roles, resulting in role-consistent identities and behaviors. In particular, we posit that, because power

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Priyanka Joshi, Department of Management and Organizations, Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, 3670 Trousdale Parkway, BRI 306, Los Angeles, CA 90089, USA. Email: priyankj@usc.edu. helps people to satisfy material and psychological needs, roles that afford power are more desirable than roles that lack power. Thus, individuals are more likely to identify with and seek to embody roles that afford power. If supported, this idea helps to explain how power holders might paradoxically pursue externally derived goals while experiencing high levels of authenticity. Namely, power holders are more likely than the powerless to incorporate role demands and expectations into their internal goals, values, and motives, allowing them to feel authentic while enacting their roles.

Power and Role Identification

Power is defined as the extent to which a person has disproportionate control over valued resources, leading to a state of imbalanced dependence (e.g., Emerson, 1962; Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). When people gain such control over key resources and outcomes, they often do so as a result of the roles they occupy. Yet, in spite of occasional acknowledgment of the fact that power is associated with the specific roles and contexts in which they are situated (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007; Kipnis, 1976; Tjosvold, 1985), few have examined the ways in which power interacts with role demands to influence the self. As noted, some existing research indicates that power has liberating effects on those who have it, including freeing individuals from situational demands (Galinsky et al., 2008) and increasing feelings of authenticity (Kifer et al., 2013; Kraus et al., 2011; but see Chen, Langner, & Mendoza-Denton, 2009). However, as noted, it might be that power simultaneously leads to role conformity. Based on a role-identity perspective, we note that roles that afford power are generally perceived as more desirable than low-power roles because they meet material and psychological needs and focus the role occupant on rewards (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Building on this notion, we hypothesize that high-power role holders show stronger identity convergence with their roles than others.

Roles and Role Identification

The term *role* refers to the set of behaviors and expectations that are associated with a particular social position (Biddle, 1986). Roles are useful in society because they serve to facilitate the smooth functioning of groups and organizations by clarifying responsibilities and providing role identities that can then be enacted by those who fill them (Ashforth, 2000; Biddle, 1986; Sluss, van Dick, & Thompson, 2011). A *role identity* refers to the goals, values, beliefs, norms, interaction styles, expected traits, and time horizons associated with a particular role (Ashforth, 2000; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Accordingly, when individuals identify with a role—a process referred to as "role identification" or "role internalization"— they not only see themselves in the role but also incorporate aspects of the role into their self-concept. Thus, when people

identify with a role, their conception of self as well as their behavior is modified to meet role expectations.

Role researchers have become increasingly interested in the determinants of role identification. Most of the early research on roles assumed that normative pressures would cause individuals to behave in role-congruent ways. Role identification and conformity was believed to occur naturally so long as roles were clear and well-defined, leading to a focus on clarifying roles and avoiding role conflict and ambiguity (R. L. Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). More recently, however, researchers have conducted correlational research to identify factors that are associated with differing levels of role identification, such as role desirability (Adler & Adler, 1991), social support in the role (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), and number of relationships provided by the role (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Moreover, the extent to which roles serve to meet psychological needs is associated with greater role identification (e.g., Bettencourt & Sheldon, 2001; W. A. Kahn, 1990). Thus, given that power meets a number of universal needs, individuals may be strongly drawn toward their high-power roles, viewing these roles as desirable and, as a result, showing greater role identification. In assessing this idea, we examine a possible determinant of role identification-power-that has yet to be examined by role researchers.

Power As a Determinant of Role Identification

Drawing from the above ideas, we suggest that people identify more strongly with roles that afford power because power often helps to meet material as well as important psychological needs. For example, power provides an elevated sense of control (Fast et al., 2009) and, in so doing, meets one of the most fundamental human needs for control over life outcomes (e.g., Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Alloy, Clements, & Koenig, 1993; Bandura, 1989). Building on these ideas, we posit that when people enact roles that afford power, they tend to internalize the roles and adopt self-construals that are consistent with the role expectations. Furthermore, we suggest that social motives, such as the need for power, may further enhance the effects of role power on role identification, such that people with a high need for power may be even more likely than others to identify with the power-providing roles.

It is worth noting that the opposite prediction could also be posited. It is quite feasible to suggest that power does not increase, and perhaps even reduces, role identification. Indeed, researchers have noted that feeling powerful reduces the press of the situation (Galinsky et al., 2008), enabling individuals to behave in ways that most reflect their own preexisting values and personality traits (e.g., Bargh et al., 1995; Chen et al., 2001), rather than feeling bound by normative expectations. Power may also reduce, rather than increase, role identification due to the greater demands and stress associated with these roles (Belkin, 2003; Sellers, 2003). For example, people are less likely to find a role or situation desirable if they lack the ability to fulfill expectations associated with the role (Ashforth & Saks, 2000) and/or expect to fail (Burger, 1989). In sum, the perception that one is free from all constraints combined with the costs and demands associated with identifying with high-power roles may cause individuals to either reject or ignore the expectations associated with high-power roles.

However, given the primarily desirable state of feeling powerful, we maintain that individuals are more likely to internalize the expectations and demands inherent in their high-power roles. Existing findings offer indirect support for this idea. For example, power holders tend to view and respond to power in ways consistent with their particular cultures' conceptions of power (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010). Similarly, Tjosvold, Johnson, and Johnson (1984) found that when college students were primed to feel powerful in competitive setting, they tended to use coercion to meet goals. However, when primed to feel powerful in cooperative contexts, participants used power in more benign and subtle ways. Even in organizational contexts, supervisors tend to help subordinates, provide support, and use persuasive (rather than coercive) ways of influence in cooperative but not competitive settings (Tjosvold, 1990). Thus, there exists some support, albeit indirect, for our predictions.

Overview of the Present Research

We conducted a pilot study and three experiments to test the prediction that people are more, rather than less, likely to internalize aspects of their roles into the self when their roles contain elevated power. In the pilot study, we tested the idea that people identify more strongly with roles in which they perceive power, particularly when they have a high need for power. In Experiment 1, we manipulated the degree of power afforded in student and teacher roles to test whether participants identify more strongly with a role when the role confers power. In Experiment 2, we manipulated the level of power and the role expectations associated with a Human Resources (HR) Manager role, to examine whether power results in not only greater role identification but also rolecongruent behavioral tendencies. Finally, in Experiment 3, we examined the idea that when participants are primed to feel powerful in a close relationship role versus in a formal group role, they define themselves more relationally and collectively, respectively.

Pilot Study

To provide an initial test of our ideas, we conducted a pilot study examining whether people's perceptions of how much power various roles provide predict the degree to which they can see themselves in the role. We asked participants to consider multiple roles and rate the degree to which they personally identified with each role as well as how much power they perceived in each role. We predicted that power would be positively associated with role identification. We further tested whether individuals with a strong need for power are more likely than others to identify with powerproviding roles.

Method

Participants. Participants were 68 students (42 women, 24 men, 2 undisclosed), ranging in age from 18 to 24 years (M = 19.87, SD = 1.20) from a West Coast university who participated in a web-based study in exchange for course credit.

Materials and Procedure. Participants offered ratings for 14 different roles: teacher, administrative assistant, sports team coach, writer, field sales person, project manager, receptionist, professor, lab technician, maintenance staff, training instructor, research analyst, nurse, and student. For each role, participants indicated how much they readily identified with the role (e.g., *I can see myself as a project manager*) on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), as well as the extent to which each role provided power on a 7-point scale (1 = *has no power*, 7 = *has a great deal of power*). To define power, we provided the following instructions:

If a role is powerful, a person occupying that role controls the ability of another person or other persons to get something they want or evaluates them on a routine basis. If a role lacks power, then the person in the role is dependent on others to get something he/she wants or is evaluated by others on a routine basis.

Finally, we assessed the need for power using the 20-item Power Motivation Scale (Boneva et al., 1998; $\alpha = .80$).

Results and Discussion

To examine whether participants identified strongly with roles in which they perceived power, we conducted multilevel regression analyses due to the nonindependence of the multiple ratings received from each participant. First, we examined whether perceived power in a role predicted participants' identification with the role. As expected, participants were more likely to identify with roles they perceived as affording power, B = .39, SE = .04, t(897) = 9.63, p < .001. Next, we examined whether the need for power predicted the slopes representing the participants' identification with roles as a function of the perceived role power. As predicted, the need for power was positively related to role identification with power-providing roles, B = .01, SE = .004, t(896) =5.34, p = .02, suggesting that the need for power enhanced the extent to which participants identified with roles in which they perceived power.

These results offer initial support for the idea that perceived power in a role predicts identification with the role. Furthermore, consistent with a role-desirability perspective, the need for power enhanced this effect, such that participants with a high need for power were the most likely to show this tendency of identifying with roles in which they perceive power.

Experiment I

In Experiment 1, we tested the prediction that people show a stronger tendency to identify with roles that provide power. We randomly assigned participants to either a student or a teacher role and varied which role afforded more power. The student's main task was to write an essay about a recent event-the BP Oil Spill, while the teacher read background information about the Oil Spill. The student and teacher then worked together on modifying the essay. During the studentteacher interaction, one of the two participants in each pair was assigned to the high-power position, which allowed that participant to evaluate the other participant's contributions and, based on the evaluation, decide how to distribute money. The other participant was in the low-power position. Thus, in some cases the "teacher" role afforded power and in some cases the "student" role afforded power. We chose the roles of student and teacher because the study took place in a college setting, and, thus, participants were particularly familiar with both roles. After the interaction, participants responded to implicit and explicit measures of identification with the teacher and student roles. We included an implicit measure because all participants were, in fact, students-a fact that we anticipated would affect responses on an explicit measure of role identification. In contrast, an implicit measure highlights nonconscious psychological tendencies to see a role as being a part of the global self.

Method

Participants. Participants were 98 students (59 women, 39 men), ranging in age from 18 to 27 years (M = 20.46, SD = 1.35), at a West Coast University who participated for course credit.

Materials and Procedure. We used a 2 (power: high, low) \times 2 (role: teacher, student) experimental design. Participants arrived in the lab in pairs and were assigned to either the student or a teacher role. When only one participant came to lab in a given timeslot, a confederate played the role of the second participant (four instances). Those assigned to the role of a student were requested to write an essay about the BP Oil Spill and were provided with some information on the event to help them write the essay. They were given a 20-line sheet of paper and allowed 15 min to write the essay. The participants assigned to the teacher role were given a more detailed description of the oil spill, which included the

information provided to the students. They were instructed to carefully read the information for 15 min while the student wrote the essay following which the student came to their office. The teachers were asked to read the essay written by the student and then work with the student to modify and improve the essay. During the interaction, participants were asked to limit their conversations to the essay topic, content, and suggestions. They were informed that the top three essays of the day were to receive a \$25 bonus, which would be distributed between the teacher and the student.

Power. Power was manipulated by providing one member of the teacher–student dyad control over distribution of the \$25, based on their evaluation of the other member's performance on the essay task. When the teacher had the highpower role, and the student was assigned the low-power role, participants were informed,

We are interested in the teacher's accurate evaluation of the student based on the student's writing style, essay content, and the extent to which the student is able to incorporate the teacher's suggestions in modifying the essay. The teacher will have the power to decide how the \$25 amount will be distributed between the student and the teacher, if their essay is selected among the top three essays of the day. The student has no power to decide how the money will be distributed between the student and the teacher.

When the student was assigned the high-power role and the teacher was assigned the low-power role, participants were informed that

We are interested in the student's accurate evaluation of the teacher based on the teacher's teaching style, quality of suggestions, and the extent to which the suggestions could be incorporated in modifying the essay. The student will have the power to decide how the \$25 amount will be distributed between the student and the teacher, if their essay is selected among the top three essays of the day. The teacher has no power to decide how the money will be distributed between the student and the teacher.

The student and the teacher worked on modifying the essay, following which they were again taken to separate rooms and asked to complete the role-identification measure.

Role-identification measures. Role identification was measured using the *me/not me* task (Bargh & Chartrand, 2000; Markus, 1977), a speed-based task that measures implicit self-construal. Participants were presented with role-related words and responded by pressing either the *me* or *not me* key (on a computer keyboard) as quickly as possible. Participants were presented with 30 words, one at a time, on their computer screen. The first 10 words were practice trials and included irrelevant words. Following this, participants completed the task for the remaining 20 words—5 words were associated with the role of a teacher (professor, educator, teacher, mentor, and advisor), 5 words were associated with the role of a student (student, undergraduate, learner, [name of school mascot], and pupil), and 10 irrelevant words. The reaction time (response latency) for each of the role-related words served as our implicit measure of role identification. If a participant has incorporated a role into his or her sense of self, the role should be more cognitively accessible, thus affecting response times (Bargh & Chartrand, 2000). All participants in our sample were college students and, therefore, were expected to press "me" when presented with words associated with student role and "not me" when presented with the teacher role. However, to the extent that participants identify with the role of a student, they will be quicker at pressing the "me" key, and to the extent that participants incorporate the teacher role into their sense of self, they will be slow in responding "not me" to teacher-related words.

We also included an explicit measure of role identification. Participants completed a nine-item measure of their self-definition in terms of the student role ($\alpha = .87$) and another nine-item measure of their self-definition in terms of the teacher role ($\alpha = .91$) role using a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Items included "I see myself as a student (teacher)," "Learning from others (Teaching others) is an important part of who I am," and "Throughout my life, I will always seek to learn from (teach) others." The measures of student and teacher role identification were counterbalanced. Using a 7-point scale, participants also completed six items measuring partner liking, which included items such as "My partner was cooperative," "I liked working with my partner."

Results and Discussion

Responses from three participants who failed to follow instructions were excluded from analyses. The "me/not me" task provided reaction times for each of the words associated with *teacher* and *student* role. Following guidelines for reaction time data, three extreme outliers (i.e., 3 SDs above the mean) were removed (see Ratcliff, 1993). Reaction time data for the student role were combined by averaging the response latencies for each *me* response given by the participants for words associated with student (participants pressed the me key 96% of the time). For the teacher role, average response time for pressing not me in response to words associated with teacher was computed (participants pressed the not me key 73% of the time). Reaction time data were computed for the teacher role for participants who responded with not me on at least 3 of the 5 trials associated with the teacher role. The results were the same even when a measure of partner liking was included as a covariate in the analyses.

To examine whether participants implicitly identified with roles that afforded power, we conducted a 2 (power: high, low) \times 2 (role: student, teacher) \times 2 (response time measure: student *me*, teacher *not me*) repeated measures

ANOVA, yielding a main effect of response time measure, F(1, 82) = 5.15, p = .03, such that participants were faster at responding *me* to the student role than responding *not me* to the teacher role. The interaction of power and role was significant, F(1, 82) = 7.54, p = .008. As hypothesized, for identification with the student role, a 2 (power: high, low) \times 2 (role: student, teacher) ANOVA on reaction time resulted in an interaction of power and role, F(1, 91) = 10.52, p = .002, such that among participants assigned to the student role, those whose roles afforded power were faster at responding to student-related words with me (M = .80 s, SD = .32) than participants whose student roles did not afford power (M =1.02 s, SD = .28), t(1, 43) = 2.13, p = .02. Among participants assigned to the teacher role, those whose roles afforded power (M = .97 s, SD = .28) did not differ in their implicit identification with the student role than those who lacked power (M = .85 s, SD = .22).

For implicit role identification with the teacher role, there was a marginally significant interaction of power and role, F(1, 82) = 2.87, p = .09, such that participants assigned to the low-power teacher role (M = .87 s, SD = .24) were faster at responding *not me* to words associated with the teacher role (M = 1.08 s, SD = .27), high-power student role (M = 1.02 s, SD = .28), and low-power student role (M = 1.03 s, SD = .35), post hoc contrasts (comparing high-power teacher condition vs. other three conditions), t(1,81) = 2.53, p = .01.

For our explicit measure of role identification, a 2 (power: high or low) \times 2 (role: teacher or student) \times 2 (explicit identification measure: student, teacher) repeated measures ANOVA yielded a significant three-way interaction effect, F(1, 89) = 8.83, p = .004, indicating that participants in the teacher condition were more likely to identify with their role when the role afforded power, but similar effects were not obtained for the student role. For identification with the student role, the interaction of power manipulation and role was not significant, F(1, 89) = .003, p = .96, and there were no differences between conditions (means ranged from 5.87 to 6.11). This is not a surprising pattern of results, given that all participants were, in fact, students. For identification with the teacher role, there was no main effect of the assigned role or power manipulation. However, we found a significant power \times role interaction, F(1, 89) = 6.35, p = .01. Participants assigned to the high-power teacher condition showed stronger identification with the teacher role (M =5.26, SD = 1.11) than participants in the low-power teacher condition (M = 4.34, SD = 1.10), high-power student condition (M = 4.27, SD = .81), and low-power student condition (M = 4.67, SD = .99).

These results offer further support for the idea that infusing a role with power increases the likelihood that people will identify with that role. Participants assigned to the teacher role were more likely to implicitly and explicitly identify with the role, but only when it afforded power. Participants assigned to the high-power student role did not show greater role identification on the explicit role identification measure, likely because participants were all students. However, as expected, findings using the implicit measure of role identification supported our hypothesis; participants, even though they were all students in reality, were more likely to identify with student-related words when their student role in the study afforded power than when it did not afford power.

Experiment 2

In Experiment 2, we examined role identification and rolecongruent behavior to test our hypothesis that people identify more strongly with a role if it affords power, as well as show behavioral tendencies that are consistent with the expectations of their high-power roles. We manipulated the level of perceived power in the role as well as the role expectations to test the idea that participants would conform to, rather than be liberated by, their high-power roles. Specifically, all participants were assigned the role of an HR Manager. Power was manipulated by providing participants with a high-power description of an HR Manager role or a low-power description of an HR Manager role. Role expectations were manipulated by informing participants in the experimental condition that their role demanded high warmth, whereas participants in the baseline condition read that their role demanded high competence, which is a typical expectation associated with high-power roles (Fast & Chen, 2009; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011).

We chose to manipulate role attributes in terms of competence and warmth because they are two critical dimensions of social judgment (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005). The dimension of competence is clearly associated with agency and independence, which parallels the lay conception of most highpower organizational role attributes (Koenig et al. 2011). However, the dimension of warmth is associated with interdependence and communion, which are not the predominant attributes associated with high-power roles.

We assessed the effects of the manipulated role expectations on participants' levels of interpersonal sensitivity using Diagnostic Analysis of Nonverbal Accuracy (DANVA-2, Nowicki & Carton, 1993). We suggest that the effects of power on interpersonal behavior are moderated by the role expectations associated with the power-providing role. To the extent that participants with high-power roles internalize their role expectations, they will be more likely to score higher on interpersonal sensitivity (i.e., a warmth-related trait) when the role is characterized as demanding attributes of warmth, but not when it is characterized as demanding competence (baseline condition). Based on this reasoning, we predicted that participants in the high-power/warmth condition would score higher on the measure of interpersonal sensitivity than participants in the low-power/warmth condition, indicating stronger role identification. In contrast,

in the baseline condition, we predicted that high-power participants would show lower levels of interpersonal sensitivity, consistent with previous findings (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006).

We also measured participants need for power, predicting that participants who have a high need for power are more likely than others to exhibit interpersonal sensitivity in the high-power/warmth condition, but not in the high-power/ baseline condition.

Method

Participants. Participants included 145 students (90 women, 55 men) ranging in age from 18 to 36 years (M = 20.40, SD = 1.93) at a West Coast University who participated in the study for course credit.

Materials and Procedure. Participants were assigned to the high-power or low-power HR Manager role under the cover story that "we were interested in the functioning of virtual organizations." They then read that their roles required either high warmth or high competence, creating a 2 (power: high, low) \times 2 (expectation: warmth, baseline) experimental design. After reading the job description of the HR Manager role and writing a few statements about their role, participants completed measures of explicit role identification, interpersonal sensitivity, and need for power.

Power. Participants in the high-power HR Manager condition were informed that they would have power over others, control their coworkers' abilities to make decisions and undertake tasks, and evaluate their coworkers' performances. They were additionally instructed that their HR role responsibilities involved common high-power behaviors such as negotiating and resolving conflicts between employees and determining hiring and recruitment policies. Participants in the low-power HR Manager condition were informed that their role would require them to take instructions from others. In addition, they learned that others would have power over them, control their ability to make decisions and undertake tasks, and evaluate their performance. They were additionally instructed that the HR role responsibilities included typical low-power tasks, such as taking directions from team leaders and top-level management to negotiate and resolve conflict between employees and following hiring and recruitment policies.

Role expectations. Role expectations were manipulated by informing participants in the experimental condition that their role demanded high warmth. In the *experimental* (i.e., warmth) condition, participants were informed that the desired qualities of their role included being compassionate and understanding of others, having good communication and negotiation skills, being loyal to the organization, and being flexible and adaptable. In the *baseline* (i.e., competence) condition, participants were informed that the desired qualities of the role included attention to detail, good decision-making ability and assertiveness, analytical ability, and time-management skills. To reinforce the manipulation, participants were asked to write a few statements about their role in the virtual organization and their role expectations. Participants then completed a 15-min distracter task, following which they completed measures of role identification.

Role identification. Participants completed eight items assessing the degree to which they identified with the HR Manager role (e.g., "I can see myself as an HR Manager," "Being an HR Manager feels natural to me," "It is easy for me to think about myself as an HR Manager"). Answers were given on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Interpersonal sensitivity measure. Interpersonal sensitivity was measured using the DANVA-2 (Nowicki & Carton, 1993). Participants were presented with images of adult faces expressing emotions and were requested to identify the specific emotion displayed to them. This instrument is used to measure how accurate people are at recognizing social cues and is associated with effective interpersonal interaction (Nowicki & Duke, 1994), social effectiveness (Hall, Andrzejewski, & Yopchick, 2009), emotional quotient (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990), prosocial orientation (Hall et al., 2009), and perspective-taking ability (Galinsky et al., 2006).

Need for power scale. The Power Motivation Scale used in the pilot study was included.

Results and Discussion

Two-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine the role of power and role expectations in predicting identification with the HR Manager role. As predicted, power manipulation mainly affected identification with the HR Manager role, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26.83, p < .001, but not role expectations, F(1, 144) = 26144) = 1.18, p = .27; see Table 1. Participants in the highpower condition scored higher on the role-identification measure than participants in the low-power conditions. Consistent with the results from our pilot study, multiple regression analysis revealed that the need for power interacted with power manipulation to predict role identification, B = .18, SE = .09, t(144) = 2.01, p = .02, showing that participants with a high need for power were more likely to identify with the HR Manager role in the high-power condition than participants with a low need for power.

Next, we examined the interpersonal sensitivity measure, which served as an implicit measure of role identification in the warmth condition. We predicted that, among participants whose roles afforded power, those in the warmth condition (but not baseline condition) would show greater levels of interpersonal sensitivity. There was no main effect of power

Table I. Effects of Power and Role Expectations on Identification With the HR Manager Role (Experiment 2).

	High power M (SD)	Low power M (SD)
Warmth condition Baseline condition	4.71 (1.19) 4.91 (1.27)	3.52 (1.51) 3.81 (1.25)

Note: HR = human resources.

Table 2. Effects of Power and Role Expectations on Interpersonal Sensitivity Scores (Experiment 2).

	High power M (SD)	Low power M (SD)
Warmth condition Baseline condition	20.19 (2.15) 19.45 (2.17)	19.26 _b (2.09) 20.74 _c (2.56)

Note: Means with different subscripts differ at the .05 level as determined by an independent samples t test.

or role expectation, but the predicted interaction of power and role expectation manipulations emerged, F(1, 142) =9.42, p = .003; see Table 2. Participants in the high-power/ baseline condition scored lower on the interpersonal sensitivity measure (M = 19.45, SD = 2.17) than participants in the low-power/baseline condition (M = 20.74, SD = 2.56), t(1,63) = 2.42, p = .01. This replicates past findings related to power and interpersonal sensitivity (Galinsky et al., 2006). In contrast, in the warmth condition, high-power participants (M = 20.19, SD = 2.15) scored marginally higher on the measure of interpersonal sensitivity than participants in the lowpower condition (M = 19.26, SD = 2.09), t(1, 76) = 1.89, p = .06.

Additional tests revealed a significant interaction of the need for power with the power and role expectation manipulation in predicting interpersonal sensitivity, B = -.05, SE = -.02, t = -2.02, p = .04, such that there was an interaction of need for power and power manipulation, B = .06, SE = .02, t = 2.54, p = .01, in the warmth condition, but not in the baseline condition, B = -.01, SE = .05, t = -.15, p = .98. As shown in Figure 1, among participants in the high-power/warmth condition, the need for power was associated with higher interpersonal sensitivity scores. In contrast, participants who had a high need for power but were in the low-power HR Manager role showed *lower* levels of interpersonal sensitivity.

These results provide further support for our hypothesis that power increases role identification. By manipulating power and role expectations while holding the role constant, we were able to show that power not only leads people to identify with their roles but also to internalize expectations associated with their roles, even if these expectations are not typically associated with power (i.e., warmth). In the baseline condition, participants primed to feel powerful showed

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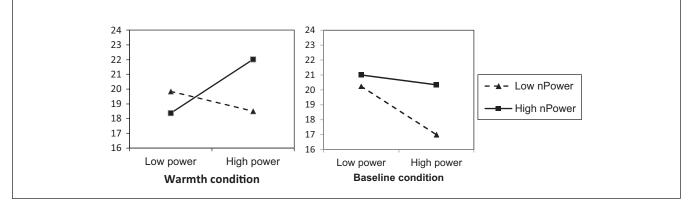


Figure 1. Effects of role power and need for power on interpersonal sensitivity scores (Y-axis) for participants in the warmth and baseline conditions (Experiment 2). Note: nPower = need for power.

lower levels of interpersonal sensitivity than their lowpower counterparts. However, when the role demanded high levels of warmth, high-power participants showed higher levels of interpersonal sensitivity than low-power participants, an effect that could be explained by participants' tendency to identify strongly with power-providing roles. Finally, need for power interacted with power manipulation to predict greater identification with the HR Manager role, supporting the notion that people identify with roles containing power because such roles help them to fulfill psychological needs.

Experiment 3

In Experiment 3, we examined the degree to which power would lead to the internalization of roles that participants actually enacted in their daily lives. Participants were requested to recall an event in which they had high or low power in either a close relationship role or a formal group role, following which they completed the 20 statement test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954) as a measure of relational and collective self-construal. We hypothesized that power would lead participants in the close relationship condition to define themselves more relationally than other participants, whereas participants in the formal group condition would define themselves more collectively than others.

Interestingly, previous research has distinguished between relational and collective self-construal as the two forms of interdependent self-construal, which predict different styles of interacting with the social world (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Gabriel & Gardner, 1999). Relational self-construal involves defining oneself in terms of close relationships (e.g., in relation to one's child, parent) and is associated with greater perceived similarity with close others (Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002), greater perspective taking (Cross et al., 2002), willingness to pursue relational goals, and stronger motivation to maintain interpersonal relationships (Gore & Cross, 2006). Collective self-construal involves defining oneself in terms of membership to large groups (e.g., in relation to a soccer team or fraternity to which one belongs) and is linked to greater awareness about membership to groups of self and others and greater willingness to sacrifice self-interest to pursue group goals (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999). The 20 statement test has been frequently used to measure relational and collective self-construal. Thus, in the present research, we predicted that when participants experience power in a close interpersonal relationship, they define themselves relationally, whereas when they experience power in a formal group context, they define themselves more collectively.

Method

Participants. Participants consisted of 115 (64 women, 51 men) undergraduate students ranging in age from 18 to 38 years (M = 22.15, SD = 1.93) at a West Coast University who participated in the study for course credit.

Materials and Procedure. We employed a 3 (power: high, low, neutral) \times 2 (role: close relationship, formal group) experimental design, measuring participants' relational and collective self-construal.

Power and role manipulations. We assigned participants to high-power, low-power, or neutral-power conditions by asking them to recall and write an event in which they had power over someone, someone else had power over them, or a neutral situation (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003). Participants assigned to the close relationship role were asked to recall an experience from an interpersonal close relationship, whereas participants assigned to the formal group role were asked to recall an event in a group setting. To illustrate, participants in the high-power close relationship (formal group) condition read the following prompt: Please recall a particular incident in which you had power over someone in the context of a personal relationship (in the context of a group situation). This person (Those) over whom you had power could be a friend, relative, parent, romantic partner, child, sibling, or spouse (could be your co-worker/s, boss, team member/s, study group member/s, sorority member/s, school, other institutions etc.). By power, we mean a situation in which you controlled the ability of this person (a group or its members) to get something he/she (they) wanted, or were in a position to evaluate that individual (the group or its members). Please describe this situation in which you had power: events, feelings, thoughts, etc.

Participants in the low-power conditions read similar prompts differing only in the power manipulation. Participants in the neutral condition recalled their last encounter with others in the context of a personal relationship or a group situation. They were presented the following prompt:

Please recall the last incident in which you had an encounter with others in a group situation. The group could involve organizations, sorority groups, church groups, school, work groups, school, other institutions, etc. Please describe this situation: events, feelings, thoughts, etc.

Participants in the neutral close relationship role were presented the following prime:

Please recall the last incident in which you had an encounter with someone in the context of a personal relationship. This person could be a friend, relative, parent, romantic partner, child, sibling, or spouse. Please describe this situation: events, feelings, thoughts, etc.

Role identification. After completing the manipulation task, participants completed a 15-min distracter task to prevent participants from ascertaining the real purpose of the study. They then completed the 20 statements test by finishing 20 statements beginning with I am while providing information about themselves. Participants responses to the 20 statements test were coded in terms of four categories by two independent coders (k = .93): independent, relational, collective, and unrelated to self (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999). The independent category consisted of statements that referred to the person's own traits, cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors (e.g., I am tall/smart/hardworking). The relational category included all statements that indicated belonging in a close personal relationship (e.g., I am a mother/sister/husband). The collective category involved statements indicating membership in groups and institutions (e.g., I am a psychology major Caucasian/sorority member). Occasionally, participants also provided statements that were unrelated to the self and these were excluded from analyses. For each participant, independent, relational, and collective self-construal ratios were computed based on the total number of relevant selfconstruals and were arcsine transformed due to nonnormality of distribution (see Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).

Results and Discussion

Data of five participants who failed to follow instructions were excluded from analyses. Participants did not differ in their level of independent self-construal as a result of the experimental manipulation, F < 1.40. To examine whether participants' self-construal is influenced by the extent to which they have power in a close relationship or formal group context, we conducted a 3 (power: high, low, neutral) \times 2 (role: close relationship, formal group) \times 2 (type of self-construal: relational, collective) repeated measures ANOVA, yielding a significant three-way interaction effect, F(2, 108) = 4.10, p = .02, suggesting that participants' self-construal is determined by their assigned role as well as the extent to which they have power in the role.

Next, we examined the three-way interaction by breaking down the analysis separately for the measure of relational and collective self-construal. We conducted a 3 (power: high, low, neutral) \times 2 (role: close relationship, formal group) ANOVA on the relational ratio scores. There were no main effects of manipulated power or role, $F_{s} > .55$, $p \ge .54$. However, we observed the predicted interaction of power and role on relational self-construal ratio, F(2, 108) = 3.03, p = .02. As hypothesized, participants in the high-power/close relationship condition scored higher on the measure of relational self-construal (M = .17, SD = .08) compared with participants in the low-power/close relationship condition (M =.09, SD = .08) and participants in the baseline/close relationship condition (M = .09, SD = .08), t(1,54) = 2.54, p = .01. For participants in the formal group condition, there were no differences in relational self-construal scores based on power manipulation, F(2, 53) = 1.01, p = .37.

Furthermore, we assessed collective self-construal ratio. There was no main effect of power manipulation, F(2, 108) = .10, p = .90, and a marginal effect of role, F(1, 109) = 2.63, p = .08 on collective self-construal. However, this was qualified by the predicted interaction of power and role, F(2, 108) = 3.01, p = .05. Linear contrasts indicated that participants in the high-power/formal group condition scored higher on the measure of collective self-construal (M = .18, SD = .10) than participants in the low-power/formal group condition (M = .13, SD = .09) and participants in the baseline/formal group condition (M = .10, SD = .08), t(1,54) = 2.06, p = .04. Participants in the close relationship condition did not differ in their scores on collective self-construal as a function of manipulated power, F(2, 53) = .23, p = .79.

These findings build on our previous studies to suggest that participants incorporate aspects of their high-power roles into the self. As expected, when participants were primed to feel powerful in a close relationship role, they defined themselves more relationally. Likewise, when participants were primed to feel powerful in a formal group role, they defined themselves in terms of groups and social categories. This indicates that our findings are not limited to occupational roles, but can be generalized to broader relational and collective roles as well.

General Discussion

A pilot study and three experiments using a variety of methods, manipulations, and measures demonstrated that having power in a role causes people to identify more strongly with the role as well as define themselves in role-consistent ways. Experiment 1 built on the findings in our pilot study to show that experimentally manipulating whether a role affords power influenced implicit and explicit role identification, such that participants showed stronger identification with roles that afforded power relative to roles that did not. Experiment 2 showed that participants were more likely to identify with a role and internalize role expectations when the same role (HR Manager) was framed as a high-power, rather than low-power, role. Furthermore, the need for power increased the tendency to identify with the highpower role. Experiment 3 provided further support for the hypothesis that people internalize their high-power roles, showing that participants define themselves relationally when experiencing power in a close relationship role, but define themselves collectively when experiencing power in a formal group role.

The present research contributes to research on power, roles, and the self. First, our findings indicate that people identify more strongly with roles that provide power than those that do not. In contrast to the idea that power simply frees people to be whoever they already are, the present findings indicate that, in the context of a role, self-construal and behavior may often be determined by the expectations associated with high-power roles. Thus, occupants of high-power roles have the interesting potential to simultaneously be more influenced by external factors (i.e., role expectations) while feeling more authentic than occupants of low-power roles.

The role-identity perspective on power is consistent with the goal-orientation approach (Guinote, 2007a, 2007b; Overbeck & Park, 2006) to power. However, our findings extend previous work by suggesting that roles inform what goals a power holder is likely to pursue. The role-identity perspective is also compatible with the cultural perspective on power (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010), which suggests that cultural conceptions of power may explain why individuals from different cultures behave differently when experiencing power. In addition, the role-based perspective on power helps to explain some of the seeming contradictions in power research by indicating that the effects of power may be moderated by role expectations associated with the power-providing role (Experiments 2 and 3). For instance, some researchers have found that power increases interpersonal sensitivity (Schmid Mast, Jonas, & Hall, 2009), particularly among individuals who are prosocially oriented (Coté et al., 2011), whereas others have found that power decreases interpersonal sensitivity (Galinsky et al., 2006) and empathy (van Kleef et al., 2008). Such contradictory findings may be resolved, in part, by attending to

individuals' perceptions of high-power role expectations. Some individuals may associate power with responsibility and warmth, thus experiencing higher levels of interpersonal sensitivity when primed with power. In contrast, others may associate power with independence and agency and may thus score lower on interpersonal sensitivity in response to power. Thus, priming power may result in different role expectations as a result of one's personality, life experiences, and culture.

Our findings also contribute to research on roles. Previous work on role identification has typically taken a correlational approach. Such an approach has some benefits, but it includes the limitation that causality cannot be examined. In contrast, we established causal relationships through experimental manipulations, showing that whether a role affords power is a critical determinant of role identification. Moreover, our findings offer support for a human needs approach to understanding role identification in that power, which satisfies material and psychological needs, increases identification. To the degree that a role serves to fulfill one's basic needs, then, it may increase identification with that role. Future work could explore additional needs as well as pit them against each other to determine the strongest determinants of role identification.

The present findings are also important for research on the self, as roles are a central facet of the human experience. People tend to enact, or "play," multiple roles throughout any given day, often switching rapidly from one role to the next (Ashforth, 2000). However, this multiplicity of roles can result in challenges to the self when they are at odds with each other or when one must transition from one role to another (Ashforth & Johnson, 2001). These and related challenges are often resolved by the relative level of person-role congruence, defined as the degree to which a role identity is congruent with people's own self-identities and traits (e.g., DeRue & Morgeson, 2007). For example, when two roles come into conflict, it is easier to decide which to favor if one of the roles is more integrated into one's sense of self. Our findings indicate that power is a key factor that causes this to occur. The ability to predict whether people will identify with their roles is also important because it is associated with a number of key factors such as increased commitment to the role, superior performance in the role, and greater personal satisfaction (DeRue & Morgeson, 2007).

Our findings offer possible practical applications, particularly in organizational settings. Identifying with organizational roles increases commitment, performance, and dedication to organizational goals and values (Meyer, Becker, & Van Dick, 2006). Organizations could, thus, profit by infusing power in organizational roles in various ways to enhance role identification. For instance, implementing routine experiences of power such as bidirectional performance evaluations may help to give low-power individuals a sense of power and, in so doing, increase role identification. However, our results indicate that managerial practices that reduce control, such as micro-managing, may reduce role identification and the organizational benefits that come with it.

Future work could extend and clarify the present findings by examining implicit role expectation associated with highpower roles, when examining the effects of having power on behavior. It is also important to identify variables that moderate the effects reported here. For example, personality variables such as social dominance orientation (Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1994) and relational orientation (Cross et al., 2002) may moderate the effects of power on role identification. Cultural factors may also predict the extent to which individuals desire to seek power and identify with power-providing roles.

Conclusion

The present findings indicate that people identify more strongly with roles that confer power than those that do not, above and beyond any other differences associated with the roles. We have outlined a number of possible next steps as well as possible applications of the present findings, and it is our hope that future research will extend these findings to help illuminate the interrelated nature of power, role identification, and the self.

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