Fifty years of influence in the workplace

The evolution of the French and Raven power taxonomy

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Abstract

Purpose – While focusing on the renowned bases of social power put forth by French and Raven in 1959, this paper aims to address the history and future of this taxonomy within organizational settings. Topics include the evolution of the power taxonomy, the power/interaction model, and matters relevant to future research and practice.

Design/methodology/approach – First, a historical overview of the French and Raven power taxonomy is provided. Second, ways in which the taxonomy has been updated over the past several decades are discussed. Third, an overview of Raven's power/interaction model (1993) is presented. Lastly, implications for future research and practice within organizations are offered.

Findings – A review of the historic and contemporary writings dedicated to social power would indicate that the advances made to the original French and Raven power taxonomy have not been incorporated into the management and organizational behavior literatures.

Practical implications – Practitioners and scholars interested in issues related to influence in organizational settings would benefit from an understanding of the historical developments that have occurred to the power taxonomy over the past half-century, as well as the formation of the power/interaction model.

Originality/value – This paper provides readers with a historical overview of the development of the French and Raven social power taxonomy, in addition to addressing the field's more recent developments. As such, the paper will be of value to anyone interested in influence within organizational settings.

Keywords Management power, Influence, Workplace, Management history

Paper type General review

> Undoubtedly, among the most popular and widely accepted conceptualizations of social power is the five-fold typology developed by French and Raven in 1959 (Podsakoff and Schriesheim, 1985, p. 387).

In order for managers to be effective, they must be able to influence their subordinates, peers, superiors, stakeholders and many other individuals both affiliated and unaffiliated with their organizations (Elias and MacDonald, 2006; Vecchio, 2007; Yukl, 1989; Yukl and Falbe, 1990). This ability to influence is typically brought about, in large part, through the use of social power (Wilensky, 1967). The importance of possessing an understanding of power in the workplace is well-documented in the historical (Dubin, 1951) and contemporary (Farmer and Aguinis, 2005) literatures, as well as texts marketed and readily available to laypeople (Kouzes and Posner, 2002; Lee, 1997). As evidenced by the above Podsakoff and Schriesheim (1985) quotation,

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when those familiar with the literature think of social power, they typically think of the seminal five-fold typology developed by French and Raven (1959).

Given the significance of French and Raven's work, as well as the reality that their original focus was on supervisor – subordinate relationships (Raven, 1993, 1999), it is no surprise that research dedicated to the study of social power continues to be popular among management scholars. In fact, Bruins (1999) describes the state of affairs pertaining to social power research as quickly growing in force, size, and impact, while texts dedicated to the topic continue to be produced (Lee-Chai and Bargh, 2001). However, what many fail to realize is that the original five-fold taxonomy was not meant to be the all-inclusive classification for the bases of power. As French and Raven (1959, p. 150) originally proposed:

> [. . .] there is no doubt that more empirical knowledge will be needed to make final decisions concerning the necessary differentiations, but this knowledge will be obtained only by research based on some preliminary theoretical distinctions.

Indeed, the original taxonomy has been differentiated and broadened over time (Raven, 1965, 1993) to the extent that there are currently 14 bases of power and a detailed power/interaction model. However, a review of the management literature dedicated to such topics as power, influence, and leadership would indicate that with relatively few exceptions (Schwarzwald and Koslowsky, 2001; Raven *et al.*, 1998; Schwarzwald *et al.*, 2004), this development has gone undetected. As a result, the heuristic value of the advances made within the area of social power as it pertains to management and organizational behavior has gone untapped. The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the theoretical and empirical changes that have been made to the power taxonomy over the past several decades, with the hope that future research and practice will benefit from such an understanding. In addition, this paper will address how several decades of social power research has resulted in the development of the power/interaction model.

Defining social power

According to Cartwright (1965), the defining characteristic of an organization is its state of being organized. This state of being organized typically depends on the exertion of some form of influence or social power (Gilman, 1962). However, even though power is commonplace within organizations, as well as society in general, defining social power is not an easy task. Cartwright (1959a) himself presents seven independent definitions for the construct while expressing what would seem to be frustration at how authors typically "invent" their own definitions to suit their needs. Nevertheless, after taking Lewinian field theory (Lewin, 1951) into account, Cartwright (1959a, p. 188) settled on the definition of power as, ". . . the induction of (psychological) forces by one entity *b* upon another *a* and to the resistance to this induction set up by *a*." For example, in a situation where a manager uses his or her expertise to persuade a subordinate to comply with a request, even though the subordinate may initially resist complying, social power is said to be at use. Given the early difficulty and apparent frustration associated with defining social power, readers may be surprised to discover that more recent explanations of power (Fiol *et al.*, 2001) are comparatively consistent with that of Cartwright.

French and Raven (1959) quantify a powerholder's capability to persuade a target as being the maximum possible influence he or she can exert, although he or she may not

use all of his or her power in a given situation. Therefore, while a manager may have great power in that he or she can potentially terminate an individual's employment for non-compliance, he or she need not resort to such an extreme measure in order to make use of power. Also noteworthy is the fact that power and influence do not only occur in situations where the powerholder possesses a higher status or rank than the target of the influence attempt. For instance, Yukl and colleagues (Yukl and Falbe, 1990, 1991; Yukl and Tracey, 1992) have differentiated between upward (e.g. a subordinate influencing a supervisor), downward (e.g. a supervisor influencing a subordinate), and lateral (e.g. peers influencing one another) influence attempts.

The historical development of the social power taxonomy

Although social power was a central topic of discussion during Tuesday evening seminars at the University of Michigan's Research Center for Group Dynamics (RCGD) in the late-1950s (Raven, 1993), it was still considered to be an under researched topic (Cartwright, 1959b). This is not to say social power in the workplace was not being investigated, because it was the topic of numerous studies. For example, after studying the staff of a Naval Command unit, Stogdill and Shartle (1948) concluded that a leader's power usage would have the greatest impact on his or her immediate subordinates, rather than on other people within an organization. Pelz (1952) demonstrated the relationship between first-line supervisors' power usage and such issues as job satisfaction and morale among manufacturing employees. Based on research conducted at a motor-truck manufacturing plant, Fleishman *et al.* (1955) demonstrated the importance of taking an organizations power structure into account when devising supervisory training programs. Founded on results from the Ohio State Leadership Studies, Stogdill (1950) demonstrated how one's position in an organization dictates whether or not he or she has power over other employees. While examining issues pertaining to unequal power in groups, Hurwitz *et al.* (1953) shed light on how a supervisor can frame his or her influence attempts in such a way as to justify these attempts. Upon conducting an experiment at a pajama production plant, Coch and French (1948) demonstrated how resistance to influence attempts could be reduced by allowing employees to have input in decision-making processes. However, even when taking these varied studies into account, a consistent theory of social power had not yet been developed.

In an attempt to integrate these diverse research findings, French (1956) set out to put forward a formal theory of social power that would allow for the generation of testable hypotheses. This theory was based on the research cited above, as well as the prior and simultaneous work of such notables as Kurt Lewin, Solomon Asch, Carl Hovland, Leon Festinger, Dorwin Cartwright, Stanley Schachter, Herbert Kelman, and Musafer Sherif, several of whom were affiliated with the RCGD. Interestingly, Raven (1993) would later write that while Lewin's name is not typically associated with social power, his insights on power and power fields had a most important impact on the subject matter. Reinforcing Raven's belief is the fact that within their author note, Coch and French (1948, p. 512) acknowledge drawing "repeatedly from the works and concepts of Kurt Lewin for both the action and theoretical phases of this study."

While French's (1956) theory included several postulates, the first postulate revolved around interpersonal power and the potential bases of such power. Drawing from the work of such individuals as Back (1951), Moore (1921) and

Hovland and Weiss (1952), French believed such characteristics as the attractiveness, expertness, and legitimacy of an influencing agent would impact these bases of social power. As a result of these beliefs, shortly after beginning his quest to develop a formal theory of power, French co-authored a chapter (French and Raven, 1959) that not only identified specific bases of power, but also became the most frequently utilized model of social power in general (Northouse, 2007), as well as in the workplace (Mintzberg, 1983).

French and Raven's (1959) original power taxonomy was comprised of five types of power: reward, coercive, legitimate, expert, and referent power. Reward power is said to be at use when a powerholder promises some form of compensation to a target in exchange for compliance. For instance, a supervisor may provide a monetary incentive to a subordinate in exchange for the subordinate completing a task that is not part of his or her job description. Coercive power is at use when the threat of punishment is made in order to gain compliance. For example, a manager may threaten a subordinate with termination should he or she not comply with a certain request. Legitimate power stems from one having a justifiable right to request compliance from another individual. For instance, subordinates may comply with a supervisor's request simply because the supervisor has a right to ask them to do their work in a certain way. Expert power is at use when one relies on his or her superior knowledge in order to gain compliance. For example, management may follow the advice of consultants because those consultants are perceived as possessing a high-level expertise in their field. Referent power is at use when a target complies with the request of a powerholder due to his or her identifying with the influencing agent. For instance, an employee wishing to move up the organizational hierarchy will likely comply with requests made by managers due to his or her wanting a similar position as those managers in the future.

Although many academics and practitioners may be under the impression that informational power (i.e. explaining to a target why compliance is desired) was included in the original power taxonomy, this is not the case. French (1956, p. 184) originally surmised that expert power was driven by a powerholder's "superior knowledge and information." In essence, this combined expert and informational power into one base, even though Raven suggested that informational power should be separate from expert power. While Raven (later citing his lack of informational power at the time; Raven, 1993) was unable to convince French on the matter prior to the publication of their 1959 chapter, he eventually did distinguish informational power as a sixth power type (Raven, 1965).

While several researchers (Bass, 1981; Kipnis, 1984) have described the six bases of power in terms of being either "harsh" (i.e. punitive and overt) or "soft" (i.e. subtle and positive), as previously noted, the taxonomy that included the six bases of power became the dominant means by which individuals would classify potential sources of influence. However, researchers such as Kipnis *et al.* (1980) began to question whether six bases of power were sufficient to encompass all influence attempts in the workplace. Through their research with lower-level managers, Kipnis *et al.* were able to identify eight means of influence in the workplace (assertiveness, ingratiation, rationality, sanctions, exchange, upward appeals, blocking, and coalitions). Using data obtained from volunteers attending a management development workshop, Yukl and Tracey (1992) examined the effectiveness of each of nine power tactics (rational persuasion, inspirational appeal, consultation, ingratiation, exchange, personal appeal,

coalition, legitimating, and pressure). While French and Raven's (1959) assertion that the original taxonomy was meant to be a starting point for classifying bases of power went ignored for decades, it was becoming apparent that the taxonomy was in need of further development.

The contemporary development of the social power taxonomy

In response to the call for the power taxonomy to be updated, rather than starting anew, Raven decided to differentiate the six bases of power that had become foremost in the literature. Interestingly, in order to do this, he relied rather heavily on the literature produced by his predecessors and his colleagues working at the RCGD in the 1950s. Distinctions were made between personal and impersonal forms of reward and coercive power, while legitimate power was partitioned into four types (i.e. position, reciprocity, equity, and dependence). Positive and negative forms of expert and referent power were identified, while informational power was partitioned into direct and indirect forms.

Personal versus impersonal reward and coercive power

In their original power taxonomy, French and Raven (1959) conceived of reward and coercive power as involving the ability of a supervisor to manipulate objects and events of relevance to employees (e.g. increased pay or termination). While issues pertaining to a supervisor's personal approval and/or disapproval had previously been thought of as a component of referent power, this categorization was latter determined to be inappropriate (Raven, 2001). This conclusion was based on the contention that personal approval from another individual can be a very strong reward, while the threat of rejection can be a very strong form of coercion. Support for this contention can be obtained from the University of Michigan studies on the "employee orientation" leadership style, which places a strong emphasis on the relationships that exist between supervisors and subordinates (Bowers and Seashore, 1966). As a result, reward and coercive power are now treated as taking either personal (i.e. interpersonal factors) or impersonal (i.e. positive or negative valences) forms.

Four forms of legitimate power: position, reciprocity, equity, and dependence

Legitimate power was initially said to be at use when a powerholder had a genuine right to ask a target to comply with a request. For example, some subordinates will comply with a supervisor's request simply because they believe the supervisor has a right to make requests of them. However, important differentiations have been made between this initial form of legitimate power (legitimate position power) and other forms of legitimate power that are based on several social norms. Legitimate reciprocity power is at use when the powerholder has previously done something for the target, and in essence, calls in a favor (e.g. I let you leave work early yesterday, so today I need for you to stay late). This reliance on reciprocity is directly linked to one of the most basic social obligations to return to others what they have given to you (Gouldner, 1960; Levine, 2003).

Similar to legitimate reciprocity power is legitimate equity power. The key difference between these two bases of power is in terms of how much the powerholder has previously done for the target. With reciprocity power, the powerholder is asking the target to do something similar to what the powerholder has done for the target in

the past (e.g. stay late today because I let you leave early yesterday). With equity power there is a substantial difference in terms of what the powerholder has done for the target in the past and what is now being asked of the target in return (e.g. stay late today because for years I fought to provide you with adequate work resources). Legitimate dependence power stems from the social norm that we should help those who are dependent upon us (Berkowitz, 1972; Batson and Powell, 2003). Therefore, any time a powerholder lets it be known that his or her ability to do something depends upon a target's compliance (e.g. I cannot meet this deadline without your help), legitimate dependence power is at use.

Positive versus negative expert and referent power

In the original power taxonomy (French and Raven, 1959), both expert and referent power were thought of in terms of being positive bases of power. With positive expert power, a subordinate complies with the request of a supervisor because the supervisor knows best. With positive referent power, a subordinate complies with the request of a supervisor because the subordinate identifies with the supervisor. However, there are situations in which expert and referent power can take negative forms. For example, while a supervisor may possess superior knowledge about a certain facet of his or her job, possessing such knowledge does not necessarily mean that it will be put to use in a way that will benefit his or her subordinates. On the contrary, that supervisor's knowledge may be used in such a fashion (i.e. negative expert power) that strictly benefits him or herself, resulting in resistance to the influence attempt. Negative referent power is said to occur when a supervisor who is disliked or not identified with by his or her subordinates attempts to utilize social power. In such situations, reactance or doing the opposite of what the supervisor requests is likely to occur given his or her subordinates view him or her as being unattractive or unappealing (Raven, 1992, 1993).

Direct versus indirect informational power

Recall that informational power involves providing a rational explanation as to why compliance should occur. However, information is not always presented in a direct fashion. For example, rather than directly confronting the issue, it may be more appropriate, effective, and less intimidating for a subordinate to hint or suggest to his or her supervisor that improvements can be made in the workplace. While some have put forward that indirect influence is more effective than direct influence (Dunlap, 1934), others have empirically demonstrated this claim in relation to what can best be described as informational power (Hovland and Mandell, 1952). Based upon a review of the literature at the time, Hovland *et al.* (1953) concluded that certain variables would impact the effectiveness of direct and indirect persuasion (i.e. kind of powerholder, kind of target, and kind of issue). When considering this historical research, as well as more contemporary research examining the effect of gender on the effective use of informational power (Johnson, 1976), it became clear to Raven (1992) that informational power needed to be thought of in terms of being either direct or indirect.

Alternative taxonomies and theories of social power

While the French and Raven (1959) taxonomy is arguably the most popular and utilized conceptualization of social power, numerous other power taxonomies and theories can be observed in the management literature. However, many of these

taxonomies and theories can either have their roots traced to, or have a considerable amount in common with, the French and Raven nomenclature. For example, while emphasizing the importance of power to organizational affairs, Morgan (1997) distinguishes among 14 sources of power. Parallels can be drawn between many of these sources of power and the broadened French and Raven taxonomy. For example, formal authority, control of scarce resources, and the control of knowledge and information can, respectively, be thought of as alternative forms of legitimate position, impersonal reward, and informational power (direct or indirect). Furthermore, consistent with the writing of Morgan is that numerous studies making use of the original, as well as broadened, French and Raven taxonomy have demonstrated the role gender plays in one's ability to use social power (Elias, 2004; Elias and Cropanzano, 2006; Elias and Loomis, 2004).

Salancik and Pfeffer's (1977) strategic-contingency model of power distinguishes between two forms of power frequently observed within organizations: political and institutionalized. Political power is obtained when an individual or sub-unit is best able to cope with the critical problems confronting an organization at a particular point in time. Institutionalized power is said to be in use when individuals or sub-units take steps to legitimize their power while reducing the power of others. An emerging trend in the management literature is the examination of managerial power in terms of restrictive versus promotive control (Elias, 2008; Elias and MacDonald, 2006; Scholl, 1999). Restrictive control refers to situations in which a manager relies on his or her organization's power structure in order to influence subordinates. Promotive control refers to situations in which a manager attends to his or her subordinates opinions and provides them the opportunity to have input during decision-making processes. Interestingly, neither political power, institutionalized power, restrictive control, or promotive control is linked to any specific means of implementation. However, of each of these methods of influence can be implemented through the use of one or more of French and Raven's bases of power. For example, political power can be exerted through the use of positive expert and/or informational (direct or indirect) power. Institutionalized power and restrictive control can be implemented through the use of legitimate position power. Promotive control can be implemented through positive referent and, potentially, personal reward power.

In terms of the power process, Pfeffer and Fong (2005) have written that in order for one to acquire more power and influence in an organization, he or she must attract allies and supporters. While discussing the social psychology of organizations, Baron and Pfeffer (1994, p. 192) indicate "... social relationships at work represent a major source of satisfaction and are an important reward and preoccupation for individuals in the workplace." Given the importance of social relationships to the workplace in general, and to the acquisition of power in particular, one can see how the use of personal forms of power (reward and coercive) can either enhance or inhibit one's influence. Since personal reward power relies on positive interpersonal interactions, the use of such power will likely be associated with positive outcomes (e.g. the attraction of allies and supporters). Contrarily, because personal coercion relies on negative interpersonal interactions that do little to attract allies and supporters, such power usage would likely be deleterious. Indeed, Elias (2007) has observed that in academic settings, the use of personal coercion on the part faculty members is perceived by students as being highly inappropriate.

While an attempt has been made to differentiate the French and Raven power taxonomy from other power classifications and theories, the breadth and scope of the alternative classifications and theories presented should not be considered exhaustive. For example, while vastly different from the types of power addressed above, there is a substantial and sophisticated critical management studies literature dedicated solely to organizational power (Clegg *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, other scholars have attempted to differentiate the French and Raven taxonomy from additional taxonomies not presented here. For example, Vecchio (2007) has differentiated the French and Raven taxonomy from the classifications of power proposed by Kelman (1961) and Etzioni (1975). Pfeffer (1992) has done an outstanding job of exploring, for example, sources of power, methods of utilizing power, and means by which power may be lost. In essence, the hope is that by presenting alternative categorizations of power, readers will be able to situate the French and Raven taxonomy within the broader literature addressing issues of power in the workplace.

The power/interaction model

Based on several decades of research, Raven (1992) came to appreciate that social power was far more complex than a powerholder simply utilizing one or more forms of power in order to gain compliance from a target. As a result, he developed the power/interaction model (Figure 1), which offers a theoretical perspective on several factors that, in combination, help determine what means of social power an individual will use when attempting to influence another person. What follows is an overview of the model from the perspective of a supervisor influencing a subordinate.

The first component of the power interaction model (motivation to influence) revolves around motivational factors that impact a supervisor's choice of influence strategies. While it was not uncommon for philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and Friedrich Nietzsche to write that humans have a universal motive for power, philosophers with a specific interest in social power (Russell, 1938) came to realize that one's motivation to utilize power can be either instrumental or intrinsic. For example, a supervisor with a strong, rather than weak, power motive (i.e. an intrinsic need to seek power or a strong concern with having influence over others (Winter, 1973; McClelland, 1985)) will be more likely to desire influence over subordinates and will

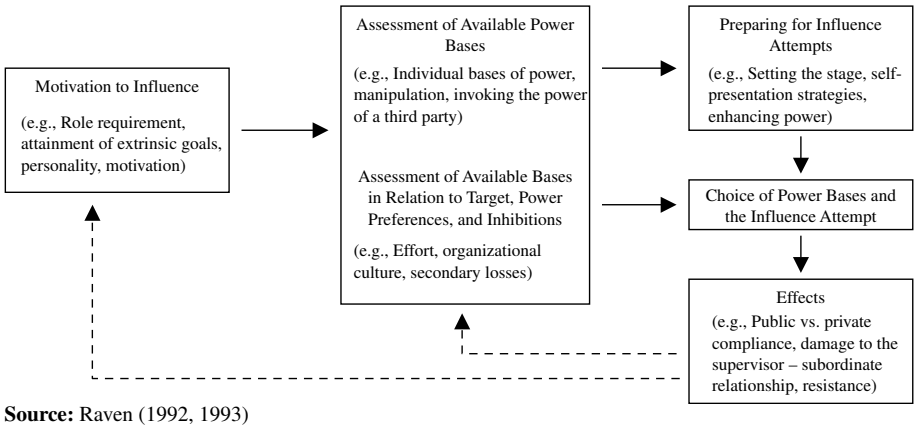

Figure 1.
The power interaction model

Source: Raven (1992, 1993)

attempt to use a wider variety of power bases (Frieze and Boneva, 2001). Contrarily, a supervisor who uses power only when he or she must attain certain organizational objectives is likely to rely primarily on the legitimate forms of power associated with his or her supervisory position (Cartwright, 1965). In a similar manner, a supervisor's role requirements or display rules (e.g. service with a smile) may motivate him or her to only utilize those bases of power that will conform with his or her organization's standards and be perceived of in a positive light.

The second component of the model (assessment of available power bases) addresses the specific types of power a supervisor may have available to him or her, as well as the possible outcomes associated with using each tactic. For instance, while some supervisors may feel they have substantial direct informational power at their disposal, they may refrain from using it due to the perceived effort that would go into logically explaining their requests. Likewise, a supervisor may know that he or she possesses impersonal coercive power (e.g. the ability to terminate employment at will), but does not wield it frequently because such actions run counter to the organizations culture and can result in a backlash. Hogg and Reid (2001) address the selection of power bases from a social identity perspective. Specifically, when a leader possesses a strong in-group identification with his or her subordinates, he or she is unlikely to use coercive or caustic forms of power because such negative behavior directed at in-group members is, in effect, also directed at oneself. In addition, the appraisal of potential outcomes associated with power usage is consistent with classic research (Hovland *et al.*, 1953) indicating an influencing agent should estimate the intelligence of his or her audience in order to determine whether a direct or indirect persuasive message would be most effective.

The third component of the model (preparing for influence attempts) involves a supervisor setting the stage for his or her use of power. Typically, this would involve supervisors doing certain things or presenting themselves in certain ways that remind or reiterate to employees that they possess social power. For instance, physicians enhance their positive expert power by prominently displaying their degrees and certifications. One may enhance his or her ability to use legitimate reciprocity power by offering another individual unsolicited favors ahead of time (Raven, 2001). Johnson and Lennon (1999) have edited a text with the primary purpose of informing readers as to how their attire can be used to increase their ability to effectively use social power. For example, research based on interviews of female employees indicates that if females want to project a powerful image in the workplace, they should wear jewelry made from expensive materials such as gold, diamonds, and pearls (Rubinstein, 1995; Rucker *et al.*, 1999).

The fourth component of the model (choice of power bases and the influence attempt) involves a supervisor deciding on which base or bases of power to use, and then carrying out the attempt to influence a subordinate. The final component of the model (effects) serves as a feedback loop that has the potential to impact a supervisor's future influence attempts. Specifically, the outcomes associated with an influence attempt will have an effect on the supervisor's future motivation to influence, and his or her assessment of available power bases. For example, if a supervisor associates the use of personal reward power with increased productivity from his or her employees, that supervisor's motivation to use such power in the future will be strengthened. In this instance, it can be said that the outcome associated with the influence attempt

has served to reinforce or fortify (Skinner, 1953) the supervisor's motivation. Similarly, if personal coercion is associated with a great deal of resistance and discontent on the part of an employee, a manager may no longer assess personal coercion as being an effective means of influence in relation to this worker. In this instance, it can be said that the outcome or effect associated with the influence attempt has served to weaken the supervisor's ability to use personal coercion.

Future research and practice

Because of the advances that have been made to the power taxonomy over the past 50 years, as well as the development of the power/interaction model, there is a great deal of potential knowledge for researchers and practitioners alike to discover and apply. From an empirical standpoint, perhaps the most pressing need is a methodologically sound measure of the broadened power taxonomy. Currently, there is but one measure of the broadened taxonomy, the interpersonal power inventory (Raven *et al.*, 1998), but this measure does not assess each of the 14 power bases. Specifically, indirect informational, negative expert, and negative referent power are not measured by this questionnaire, leaving important information pertaining to these tactics unexamined (see Schwarzwald and Koslowsky (2001) for a review of studies that have made use of the interpersonal power inventory).

It is likely that social power is at use any time two or more individuals are interacting with one another in the workplace. However, given leadership is typically described as a social influence process (Bryman, 1996; Avolio *et al.*, 2003; Northouse, 2007), scholars and practitioners in the field of leadership stand to benefit from an understanding of the broadened power taxonomy and the power/interaction model. At this point, it is important to note that leadership and power are separate, albeit-related, variables. However, according to Zaleznik (1998, p. 63), "Leadership inevitably requires using power to influence the thoughts and actions of others." That being said, leadership involves getting followers to pursue your vision for the organization, while power involves getting individuals to comply with your requests, even if they are reluctant to do so (Hogg, 2005). While this distinction is common place in the contemporary power and leadership literatures, the differentiation dates back to Barnard (1938), who distinguished between authority based on one's leadership skills versus authority based on one's position within an organization.

Important information would be obtained from examining the relationships that likely exist between the 14 bases of power and perceptions of leadership in terms of being either transactional or transformational, a distinction that is currently a major focus in the leadership literature (Lowe and Gardner, 2000). Transactional leadership focuses on the exchanges that occur between a supervisor and a subordinate, while transformational leadership focuses on the connection between the supervisor and the subordinate, which can serve to elevate both individual's motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). Given transformational leadership is associated with such issues as trust and increased organizational citizenship behavior (going beyond the call of duty to better the organization (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990)), knowledge of which power bases foster perceptions of transformational leadership would be of importance to both researchers and practitioners.

It is likely that specific forms of social power are related to the leader-member exchange (LMX) that exists between a supervisor and his or her subordinates.

LMX theory views leadership as hinging upon the quality of the interactions that occur between a leader and an individual follower (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). In a high-LMX relationship, a good amount of reciprocity occurs between the leader and the follower, while in a low-LMX relationship, subordinates typically come to work, do their job, and go home (Northouse, 2007). Furthermore, subordinates that are part of high-LMX relationships tend to receive more personal (e.g. confidence and concern) and impersonal (e.g. information and influence) benefits from their supervisors than do those involved in low-LMX relationships. When considering the benefits associated with a high-LMX relationship, it becomes apparent that there are likely links between the development of high LMX and legitimate reciprocity, personal and impersonal reward, personal and impersonal coercive, and positive referent power. Similar to the concept of LMX is a variable known as team-member exchange (TMX). TMX refers to the extent to which a team member works effectively with his or her team members, as well as, the level of reciprocity that occurs between the team member and his or her peers (Seers, 1989). Given the differences that exist in the outcomes associated with upward, downward, and lateral power usage (Yukl and Tracey, 1992), researchers may wish to examine how the various types of power used within a workgroup impact TMX quality.

While the potential studies alluded to above are important, they are only scratching the surface in terms of the ways in which the broadened power taxonomy and the power/interaction model can be applied to organizational research and the management literature. For example, important information can be gleaned from projects investigating the links between the differentiated bases of social power and such variables as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, absenteeism, burnout, turnover intentions, *locus* of control, self-efficacy, productivity, mentor-mentored relationships, and any number of other important constructs. Furthermore, it is worth reiterating the fact that the power interaction model offers a theoretical perspective as to how several variables interact to influence the ways in which we use social power. While numerous studies have been cited as evidence for the veracity of certain components of the model, confidence in the model will be greatly enhanced once research has been completed that examines and supports the model as a whole.

Given the popularity of continuing education workshops, in-service trainings, and leadership development programs, practitioners stand to benefit from an understanding of the broadened power taxonomy and the power/interaction model. Perhaps, one the most widely read texts among practitioners in the area of leadership is *The Leadership Challenge* (Kouzes and Posner, 2002), which offers countless pieces of advice on how to be an effective leader. A fair amount of this advice can be thought of in terms of how a leader utilizes his or her power when interacting with subordinates. For example, according to Kouzes and Posner (2002, p. 255), "It's absolutely essential that every leader keep the norms of reciprocity and fairness in mind." This suggestion is due to the belief that when leaders utilize reciprocity within their organizations, they develop cooperative relationships among their employees. It is likely that such a belief has implications for the ways in which leaders make use of legitimate reciprocity and legitimate equity power.

In terms of what employees look for in leaders, Kouzes and Posner (2002) contend that employees want leaders who express caring attitudes towards their

subordinates, a desire that can likely be fulfilled through the use of personal reward and positive referent power. Similarly, employees want leaders who are competent, which is demonstrated through expertise. However, leaders need to be aware of the fact that the use of expertise solely as a means to achieve their personal goals (i.e. negative expert power) can result in resistance and resentment rather than perceptions of competence. Leaders should also be aware that the ways in which they present information (e.g. directly or indirectly) might very well be linked to such issues as whether an organizations vision is understood and whether employees are growing and learning in their jobs. Understanding the organizations vision, in addition to employees becoming more knowledgeable about their jobs, are essential to an organizations success at both the micro and macro levels (O'Reilly and Pfeffer, 2000; Collins and Porras, 2002).

Practitioners working in the areas of leadership emergence and development stand to benefit from an understanding of the broadened power taxonomy and the power/interaction model. For instance, when an employee is perceived as possessing a great deal of social power, he or she may exhibit emergent leadership even though he or she has not been assigned a leadership role within the organization (Northouse, 2007). According to Kouzes and Posner (2002), one of the most important aspects of leadership development is self-development. While this self-development involves many facets, one of the issues that must be addressed revolves around an understanding of issues pertaining to one's own power. Certainly, having a current understanding of the power literature, as well as the most frequently utilized social power taxonomy, can only help practitioner's foster self-development among leaders.

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to illuminate both the historical and the contemporary developments that have occurred to the French and Raven (1959) social power taxonomy. As mentioned earlier, research pertaining to power in the workplace is popular and increasing in its force, size, and impact. However, this research typically fails to take the evolution of the French and Raven (1959) power taxonomy into account. While the current taxonomy houses 14 bases of power, and a power/interaction model has been developed, a review of the management literature would indicate that these advances have not yet taken root. This is unfortunate not only because of the rich history of social power in the workplace, but also because the French and Raven taxonomy has influenced, complements, and/or is directly applicable to each of the alternative power taxonomies and theories addressed above. If there is an up-side to management scholars and practitioners having missed the development of the French and Raven power taxonomy it is that once the developments do take root, we will likely see an even greater amount of interest in a topic that has been extremely important to the workplace for well over half a century. Practitioners will have at their disposal a greater cache of power bases to coach others to put into practice in the most appropriate fashion. Scholars will have a consistent taxonomy to utilize when it comes to operationalizing their conceptualizations and theories pertaining to social power at work. Lastly, the heuristic value of the updated taxonomy is immense give the number of potential investigations that can be completed so as to assess and expand the power/interaction model.

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