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Advice giving: A subtle pathway to power

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Abstract

We propose that interpersonal behaviors can activate feelings of power, and we examine this idea in the context of advice giving. Specifically, we show (a) that advice giving is an interpersonal behavior that enhances individuals' sense of power and (b) that those who seek power are motivated to engage in advice giving. Four studies, including two experiments (N = 290, N = 188), an organization-based field study (N = 94), and a negotiation simulation (N = 124), demonstrate that giving advice enhances the adviser's sense of power because it gives the adviser perceived influence over others' actions. Two of our studies further demonstrate that people with a high tendency to seek power are more likely to give advice than those with a low tendency. This research establishes advice giving as a subtle route to a sense of power, shows that the desire to feel powerful motivates advice giving, and highlights the dynamic interplay between power and advice.

Keywords

advice giving, social power, social influence, political motivation

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In recent decades, research has uncovered an impressive catalog of ways in which feelings of power shape thoughts, feelings, and behavior. In the decision-making domain, those who feel more powerful are more optimistic (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006), overconfident (Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer, & Galinsky, 2012), and risk-seeking (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006); exhibit less loss aversion (Inesi, 2010); and are less inclined to take advice from others (See, Morrison, Rothman, & Soll, 2011; Tost, Gino, & Larrick, 2012). Moreover, feelings of power affect a wide range of interpersonal behaviors, such as verbal communication (Tost, Gino, & Larrick, 2013), emotional expression (Van Kleef, De Dreu, Pietroni, & Manstead, 2006), social evaluations (Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008), and negotiation behavior (Galinsky, Schaerer, & Magee, 2017; Schaerer, Swaab, & Galinsky, 2015). While these and related findings demonstrate important consequences of feelings of power, there has been less systematic investigation into when and how these feelings of power come about (for reviews, see Anderson & Brion, 2014; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Tost, 2015).

What makes people feel powerful? Extant research has largely presumed that feelings of power emerge from fairly stable features of the social environment (such as formal ranks in a social hierarchy) or from individual traits or abilities (such as competence in the task at hand or interpersonal dominance), and recent research has provided empirical support for this view (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). However, research has also shown that structural power and stable individual characteristics are not the only causes for feelings of power, and consequently scholars have called for more research into the antecedents of feelings of power (Anderson, Willer, et al., 2012; Smith & Hofmann, 2016; Tost, 2015). In fact, many, if not most, experimental designs studying power have operationalized power by means other than manipulating structural power or measuring individual abilities or traits (Schaerer, Lee, Galinsky, & Thau, 2018). Instead, researchers more often use psychological manipulations that prime power via recall tasks, the most common of which asks participants to write about a time they experienced high or low power (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003). The fact that such manipulations can reliably enhance the sense of power suggests that merely thinking about past behaviors can make people feel powerful. This observation, in turn, implies that specific

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behaviors may be important sources of the sense of power that have been heretofore unidentified.

The current research argues that *interpersonal* behaviors can activate feelings of power. Specifically, when an individual engages in attempts at interpersonal influence, particularly when those influence attempts are effective, the individual is likely to experience enhanced feelings of power. We examine this possibility in the context of advice giving. Advice is commonly offered in response to a problem or difficult decision another individual is facing (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997) and is defined as a recommendation regarding how to handle a situation (Gino, 2008; Harvey & Fischer, 1997; for reviews, see Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; MacGeorge, Feng, & Guntzviller, 2016; Rader, Larrick, & Soll, 2017). As such, advice is aimed at affecting the advisee's behavior. Based on these observations, we predict that giving advice makes advisers feel that they have been influential, which in turn enhances their sense of power.

If indeed advice giving makes people feel powerful, another interesting question is raised: Do those seeking power give more advice? We propose that they do. Specifically, we argue that people who desire power are more likely than others to offer advice, because advice giving offers an avenue to enact interpersonal influence.

The present research contributes to the literatures of power and advice in four ways. First, we contribute to the newly emerging stream of research aimed at understanding the antecedents of feelings of power (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012; Smith & Hofmann, 2016) by demonstrating that specific interpersonal behaviors, in this case advice giving, can activate a sense of power. Second, past advice research has primarily focused on issues such as the type of advice offered, adviser characteristics influencing advice taking, and the effects of advice on recipients (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006; MacGeorge et al., 2016), whereas research has only recently begun to examine what motivates people to give advice (Feng & Magen, 2016; Rader et al., 2017). We complement this developing research by uncovering the desire for power as a novel motivating factor. Third, our studies provide evidence for the notion that the desire for power is rooted in a need for influence and thus contributes to the ongoing discussion on whether the desire for power is driven by autonomy or control needs (e.g., Lammers, Stoker, Rink, & Galinsky, 2016). Finally, by complementing our experiments with a field study conducted in a real-world organization, we respond to a recent call to increase external validity in social power research (Schaerer et al., 2018).

Power and Advice Giving

Power is commonly defined as asymmetric control over valued resources, which affords powerholders the ability to control others' outcomes, experiences, or behaviors (Emerson, 1962; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). As such, power is a structural variable; its value is determined by the social context and the subject's position within it (e.g., What resources does this person control? To whom are these resources valuable?). However, social-psychological research on power has, in recent years, focused primarily on a different but related construct: the psychological experience of power, also commonly referred to as the sense of power (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012). The sense of power refers to one's subjective feelings of control over others' outcomes, experiences, or behaviors (e.g., "Do I feel powerful?"; "Do I believe I can exert influence over the behavior of others?").

While there has been a common assumption that structural power directly induces psychological power, there are a number of theoretical and empirical reasons to question the likelihood and reliability of such a linear and direct effect (see Tost, 2015, for a review). In particular, Tost (2015) suggested that specific interpersonal behaviors, most notably interpersonal influence attempts, may function to more persistently and reliably evoke feelings of power than any specific cues related to structural power. When one engages in interpersonal influence attempts, one usually does so with the expectation that one can affect the behavior of the target (e.g., Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). Consequently, simply engaging in an influence attempt, regardless of one's existing level of structural power, is likely to make people feel as though they have exerted some degree of influence, which is likely to enhance the sense of power. Moreover, this feeling can be reinforced when the influence attempt is clearly successful, whereas it may be diminished if the influence attempt fails.

Advice Giving as an Antecedent of Power

One way to exert interpersonal influence over others is giving advice. Specifically, because the very nature of advice involves a recommendation to another individual about how to handle a situation (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006), the act of advice giving entails the potential for the adviser to meaningfully impact the behavior of the recipient. Indeed, the most commonly used measure of advice taking is the weight-of-advice measure, which gauges the extent to which individuals incorporate their advisers' recommendations into their decisions (Harvey & Fischer, 1997; Yaniv & Foster, 1997). Numerous studies have provided empirical evidence for the idea that advice influences the decisions and behaviors of the advisee (e.g., Gino, Brooks, & Schweitzer, 2012; Harvey & Fischer, 1997; Soll & Larrick, 2009). We therefore propose that giving advice will enhance a person's sense of having exercised influence, thereby enhancing his or her sense of power.

Our reasoning suggests that the effect of advice giving on feelings of power is likely to be moderated by whether the advice is followed by the advisee. When people offer advice, they usually do so because they think they are likely to be able to influence others' behaviors; indeed, when one perceives a low probability that advice will be

followed, it is less likely to be offered (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). Consequently, there is generally a presumption that when advice is given, influence has been exercised to some degree (i.e., that the weight of advice will not be zero), and as such we expect the sense of power to be enhanced to a commensurate degree. We also expect, however, that the effect of advice giving on the sense of power will vary based on information about whether the advice was followed by the recipient. When the adviser becomes aware that his or her advice has been followed, this awareness provides direct evidence of a successful influence attempt, which should reinforce the positive effect of advice giving on feelings of having exercised influence, and thus on the sense of power. In contrast, when the adviser becomes aware that his or her advice was not followed, this awareness provides evidence of a failure to effectively influence the advisee, which is likely to lead to a sense of rejection and ineffective influence, thereby diminishing the effect of advice giving on the adviser's sense of power.

Desire for Power Fuels Advice Giving

If advice giving induces feelings of power, it may be that those who are most desiring of power are more inclined to give advice. The notion that some people may be particularly driven to pursue power has long been recognized in the social science literature. McClelland (1975) formally identified the need for power as one of the three foundational motivations driving human behavior, and his subsequent research demonstrated that individuals vary in the emphasis they place on each of the three motivations (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982). Extensive research has built upon McClelland's view by demonstrating considerable variability across individuals in the desire for power (e.g., Gino, Wilmuth, & Brooks, 2015; Mintzberg, 1983; Winter & Stewart, 1983) and in the willingness to enact the behaviors necessary to acquire power (e.g., Ferris et al., 2007; Treadway, Hochwarter, Kacmar, & Ferris, 2005). For example, there is considerable variance across individuals in the willingness to engage in social networking and other forms of political maneuvering necessary for power acquisition (Belmi & Laurin, 2016; Casciaro, Gino, & Kouchaki, 2014), and some studies have shown that some people prefer less power and status rather than more (e.g., Anderson, Willer, Kilduff, & Brown, 2012; Mast, Hall, & Schmid, 2010). In addition, recent research has sought to further examine the nature of the desire for power by exploring the variance in the goals that those seeking power wish to promote (Magee & Langner, 2008).

Given that individuals vary in their desire for power, does an individual's desire for power increase the likelihood that he or she will engage in interpersonal influence behaviors that could boost their sense of power? A positive answer to this question has at least two theoretical implications. First, it would further confirm that individuals differ in their desire for power, and that these differences in the desire for power in turn produce different interpersonal behaviors. Second, it would suggest that those who are driven toward an enhanced sense of power are consciously or unconsciously aware of an effective yet subtle route to it. Surprisingly little research has examined this issue. The most relevant work has examined the determinants of the power tactics chosen by those attempting to exert influence. For example, Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) examined the ways in which the social relationship between the agent and target of influence, as well as other aspects of the social context, affected which of eight interpersonal influence approaches were enacted. Yukl and Tracey (1992) took a similar approach, examining how the nature of social relationships affected the efficacy of those tactics. However, these and related studies are silent on whether the desire for power and the willingness to engage in the quest to acquire it actually increase the overall level of engagement in any type of interpersonal influence.

We predict that it does. Individuals who desire power want to see that they can control the behaviors and experiences of others, and interpersonal influence is one way to achieve this type of control, and so it is reasonable to expect that those desiring power would take any opportunity to exercise influence. We therefore predict that individuals who desire power and are motivated to acquire it are more likely than others to give advice.

Study Overview

We test our predictions in four studies using online, field, and classroom samples. Study 1 tests the causal effect of advice giving on feelings of power and whether this relationship is mediated by perceived influence by the adviser. Study 1 also tests whether advice giving boosts power merely because the advice is solicited or whether the effect holds for unsolicited advice. Study 2 presents field data testing whether advice giving and power are also related in a work context and whether the effect of advice giving on power is eliminated when the advice is not taken (an indicator that the attempt at interpersonal influence failed). The final two studies then test whether those individuals who are more desiring of power are more likely to give advice. Study 3 uses a measure of efforts to acquire power that are particularly salient for the sample population (political networking efforts among Master of Business Administration [MBA] students) and examines the extent to which it had a positive effect on individuals' tendencies to give advice in a negotiation context. Finally, Study 4 uses an explicit measure of desire for power and examines the full cycle of behaviors. We tested whether people's desire for power enhances their tendency to give advice, which in turn should boost their sense of power; the boost should be lost, however, if advisers are informed that their advice was not followed.

Study 1

Study 1 had two goals. First, we tested whether giving advice would lead to a sense of power and whether this effect is mediated by perceived influence. Second, we wanted to demonstrate that giving advice makes people feel powerful primarily because they *gave* advice (they could exert influence on others' actions), independent of whether they were *asked* for advice (e.g., because others admired them or valued their opinions). In other words, while being asked for advice may empower, our theorizing requires us to demonstrate that giving advice, without being asked, could independently enhance individuals' sense of power. Thus, we manipulated whether or not the advice was requested. If feelings of power are primarily driven by the status conferred upon a focal individual by *being asked* for advice, then only those individuals in the solicited-advice-giving condition should experience a power boost. If, however, the increase in power comes from *giving* advice (and thus potentially exerting influence), then individuals in both the solicited and unsolicited conditions should exhibit the effect.

Method

Participants and design. We recruited 301 individuals from Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants received US$1.00 as compensation and were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions: solicited-advice-giving, unsolicited-advice-giving, and a control condition.

Sample size and exclusion criteria were determined prior to data collection based on a pilot study and expected effect sizes. We excluded 11 participants because of duplicate IP addresses and/or because they failed our attention check (Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009). The final sample consisted of 290 participants (M age = 33.82, SD = 11.29; 48.6% women).

Procedure and manipulations. To explore whether giving advice elicits feelings of perceived influence and power, we manipulated advice giving by having participants recall a situation in which they gave advice to someone else. Recall tasks are experiential priming procedures that allowed us to activate advice-giving experiences in a way that is personally meaningful to each participant (Galinsky et al., 2003). In the *solicited-advice-giving condition*, the instructions read,

> Please recall a particular incident in which you gave solicited advice to someone. By advice, we mean a situation in which you conveyed your opinion, a recommendation, or guidance to another person. Please describe this situation in which you gave solicited advice to someone—what happened, how you felt, etc.

In the *unsolicited-advice-giving condition*, the instructions read,

> Please recall a particular incident in which you gave unsolicited advice to someone. By advice, we mean a situation in which you conveyed your opinion, a recommendation, or guidance to another person. Please describe this situation in which you gave unsolicited advice to someone—what happened, how you felt, etc.

Participants in the *control condition* were asked to recall the last time they had a conversation with someone else.

Dependent Measures

Sense of power. Participants then completed a 10-item sense of power scale (α = .85; Huang, Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Guillory, 2011). Participants indicated how powerful they felt during the recall task (e.g., "How powerful did you feel?"; "How dominant did you feel?") on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 11 (*very much*). Sense of power served as our dependent variable.

Perceived influence. Participants then reported their perceived influence. Perceived influence is a well-established construct which captures how much input people feel they have into the decisions of others (Janssen, 2005; Skinner, Donnelly, & Ivancevich, 1987; Spector, 1988). Our measure included three items ("I was able to induce a change in the actions of others," "I was able to control the actions of others," "I was able to predict what others were going to do next," 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). A factor analysis confirmed that all three items loaded highly onto a single factor (loadings > 0.77). The three items were collapsed to a single perceived influence scale (α = .79), which served as our mediating variable.

Advice taking. We included three items to control for any differences in the extent to which participants' advice was taken in the solicited- and unsolicited-advice-giving conditions ("In the situation you described in the recall task, to what extent did someone take your advice?"; ". . . to what extent did someone put your advice into action?"; ". . . to what extent did someone implement your advice?"; 1 = *not at all*, 7 = *to a great extent*; α = .98).

Finally, participants encountered an attention check and reported their demographics.

Results

Manipulation check. To make sure that participants understood the subtle difference between solicited- and unsolicited-advice giving, two coders (α = .95; discrepancies resolved through discussion) blind to the experimental conditions coded participants' written statements in the advice conditions for whether the advice was solicited or unsolicited, or whether it was unclear. The manipulation was successful, as the vast majority of participants (84.4%) recalled the correct type of advice. In the remaining cases (15.6%, eight in the solicited condition and 22 in the unsolicited condition), the nature of the advice was unclear or the

Table 1. Study 1: Means and Standard Deviations by Condition (N = 290).

Dependent measures	Control condition (neutral conversation)	Solicited-advice-giving condition	Unsolicited-advice-giving condition
Perceived influence	3.63_{a} (1.46)	4.74_{b} (1.14)	4.09_{c} (1.41)
Sense of power	6.72_{a} (1.87)	7.56_{b} (1.88)	7.34_{b} (1.73)
Advice taken	NA	5.66_{a} (1.64)	4.33_{b} (2.22)

Note. Standard deviations are reported in parentheses below the condition means. Means with different subscripts are significantly different at the $p < .05$ level (within the same row).

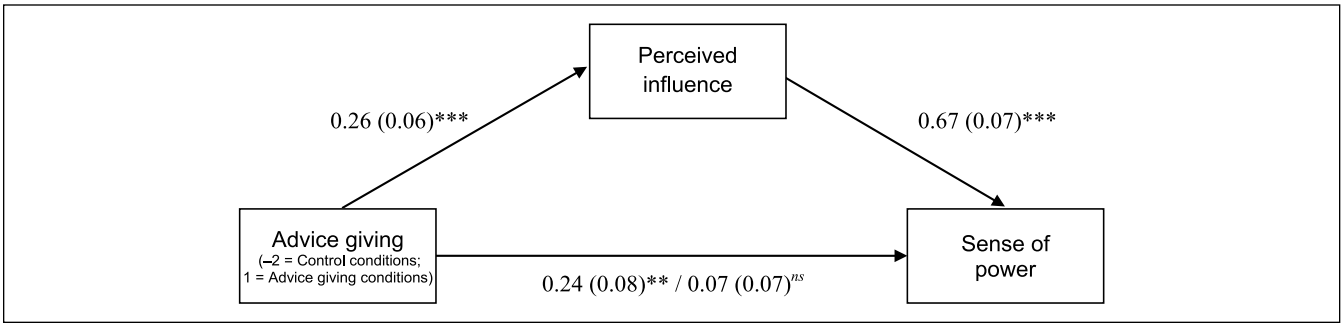

Figure 1. Study 1: Perceived influence mediated the causal relationship between advice giving and sense of power.
Note. Coefficients unstandardized and *SE*s in parentheses.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

instructions were otherwise violated. Because we did not a priori decide to exclude such cases, we report the results including these observations. However, all predicted effects remain significant when they are excluded (all ps < .037).

Perceived influence. Our manipulation had a significant effect on perceived influence, $F(2, 287) = 16.56$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$. Participants in the solicited-advice-giving condition ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.14$, 95% confidence interval [CI] = [4.51, 4.98]) felt that they had more influence than those in the control condition ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.46$, 95% CI = [3.34, 3.92]), $t(287) = 5.73$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.85$. Similarly, participants in the unsolicited-advice-giving condition ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.41$, 95% CI = [3.81, 4.38]) reported higher levels of perceived influence than those in the control condition, $t(287) = 2.40$, $p = .017$, $d = 0.32$ (Table 1). Thus, these results support our prediction that giving advice increases people's perceived influence irrespective of whether the advice was solicited or not.

Reported influence in the solicited-advice-giving condition was also higher than in the unsolicited-advice-giving condition, $t(287) = 3.36$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.51$. We suspected that this difference emerged because solicited advice would more likely be taken by a recipient than unsolicited advice. Indeed, participants in the solicited-advice-giving condition reported that their advice was taken to a greater extent ($M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.64$, 95% CI = [5.32, 5.99]) than those in the unsolicited-advice-giving condition ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 2.22$, 95% CI = [3.88, 4.77]), $t(287) = 4.83$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.68$. Thus, we also compared perceived influence in the two advice conditions while controlling for advice taking and found that they were no longer different ($p = .56$).

Sense of power. The manipulation also had a significant effect on sense of power, $F(2, 287) = 5.51$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Participants in the solicited-advice-giving condition ($M = 7.56$, $SD = 1.88$, 95% CI = [7.18, 7.95]) felt more powerful than those in the control condition ($M = 6.72$, $SD = 1.87$, 95% CI = [6.34, 7.09]), $t(287) = 3.19$, $p = .002$, $d = 0.45$. Similarly, participants in the unsolicited-advice-giving condition ($M = 7.34$, $SD = 1.73$, 95% CI = [6.99, 7.69]) felt more powerful than those in the control condition, $t(287) = 2.37$, $p = .019$, $d = 0.34$ (Table 1). There were no significant differences between the two advice-giving conditions irrespective of whether we controlled for advice taking ($p = .54$) or not ($p = .40$).

Mediation analysis. We further predicted that perceived influence would mediate the relationship between advice giving and sense of power. We designated a contrast as the independent variable (–2 = control condition, 1 = advice condition), perceived influence as the mediator, and sense of power as the dependent variable. Figure 1 illustrates the regression coefficients. As predicted, a process analysis using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 iterations (Hayes, 2013) demonstrated that there was a significant indirect effect, 95% CI = [0.0944, 0.2677]. We also found mediation when we dropped one of the three conditions and simply compared the

control condition with the solicited-advice-giving condition, 95% CI = [+0.2740, +0.6157], or the unsolicited-advice-giving condition, 95% CI = [+0.0420, +0.5508].

Discussion

Study 1 supports advice giving as an antecedent of power, with perceived influence as the underlying mechanism. In addition, participants who gave unsolicited advice experienced a significant boost in power, whereas the experience of being asked for advice did not seem to provide additional increase beyond this effect. This suggests that the increase in power advisers experienced was primarily driven by the act of advice *giving* (i.e., the possibility of influencing the advisee's outcomes) rather than by being *asked for* advice.

Study 2

The purpose of the second study was twofold. First, the study aimed to replicate the effect of advice giving on power in a field setting to establish the external validity of our findings. Second, we also wanted to test the hypothesized boundary condition of whether the advice is taken or not. To do so, we administered a survey to the staff of a university library and asked them about their advice-giving behavior and perceived power at their workplace.

Method

Participants. The survey was taken by 94 employees of a library at a university in the Midwest (M age = 46.41, SD = 11.37; 72.6% women, 26.3% men, 1.1% not reported). Participation was voluntary and the response rate was 20%. Participants had an average of 17.26 years (SD = 11.27) of professional experience.

Procedure. Library employees were contacted via email and completed the survey at their work computer. The email message was sent by a member of the library's advisory committee, composed of library employees chosen by their peers to advise the library's dean, and contained a link to a survey with our measures.

Measures

Advice giving. Employees indicated how frequently they give advice to others in general ("How often do you proactively give advice to others at work?") on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*very frequently*).

Advice taken. To capture whether others generally follow their advice, employees answered the question, "Generally speaking, people at work tend to heed my advice" (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Sense of power. To measure employees' feelings of power, we administered the Personal Sense of Power Scale (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012). The scale included eight items (α = .94; for example, "I think I have a great deal of power") and was measured on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Control variables. To ensure that our findings were robust to other factors, we controlled for structural power by accounting for whether participants were part of university leadership (0 = no, 1 = yes), by including the number of direct reports participants oversaw (M = 2.61, SD = 4.30, minimum = 0, maximum = 20), and by including a dummy variable for whether participants serve as chairperson on a library committee (0 = no, 1 = yes). We also controlled for expert power by including participants' number of years of work experience, the number of committees participants served on (M = 2.61, SD = 4.30, minimum = 0, maximum = 20), and a dummy for whether participants were in a librarian role (0 = no, 1 = yes). Finally, we included participants' age and gender (0 = women, 1 = men).

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations are summarized in Table 2.

Effect of advice giving on sense of power. We first tested the influence of advice giving on employees' sense of power. The more employees gave advice to others, the more powerful they felt, b = 0.75, SE = 0.13, 95% CI = [+0.49, +1.01], $t(93)$ = 5.70, $p < .001$ (see Table 3, Model 1). This effect remained robust when we included the control variables, b = 0.64, SE = 0.14, 95% CI = [+0.37, +0.92], $t(64)$ = 4.67, $p < .001$ (Table 3, Model 3).

Moderation by advice taken. Next, we included the variable that measured whether employees' advice was taken. We predicted an interaction effect between advice giving and advice taken such that advice giving would be associated with a greater sense of power but that this effect would be eliminated if advice was not taken. This is what we found, b = 0.23, SE = 0.10, 95% CI = [+0.04, +0.42], $t(91)$ = 2.34, p = .021 (Table 3, Model 2). More specifically, there was a significant and positive conditional effect of advice giving on power for high levels (+1 SD) of advice taking, b = 0.57, SE = 0.16, 95% CI = [+0.26, +0.87], $t(91)$ = 3.62, $p < .001$, but not for low levels (−1 SD) of advice taking, b = 0.11, SE = 0.18, 95% CI = [−0.25, +0.46], $t(91)$ = 0.60, p = .55.

The interaction remained robust when we included the control variables, b = 0.21, SE = 0.10, 95% CI = [+0.51, +1.13], $t(62)$ = 2.16, p = .034 (Table 3, Model 4; Figure 2). Again, there was a significant conditional effect of advice giving on power for high levels (+1 SD) of advice taking,

Table 2. Study 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables (N = 74).

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Power	4.17	1.42										
2. Advice giving	4.35	1.64	.57***									
3. Advice taken	4.78	1.34	.64***	.53***								
4. Leadership role	0.04	0.20	.28*	.17	.19							
5. Direct reports	2.76	4.46	.20	.25*	.26*	.05						
6. Committee chair	0.26	0.44	.41***	.29*	.12	.35**	.16					
7. Number of committees	2.16	2.04	.36**	.23*	.16	.22	.18	.53***				
8. Professional experience	18.11	11.62	− .09	−.02	−.24*	−.03	−.00	.02	− .09			
9. Librarian role	0.55	0.50	.13	−.06	.02	−.23*	−.05	.03	.19	− .21		
10. Age	47.24	11.56	.05	.08	−.11	.02	.14	.13	.03	.86***	−.09	
11. Gender	0.27	0.45	.05	.07	.12	.03	.28*	−.01	.03	.21	−.25*	.15

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 3. Study 2: Linear Regression Predicting Sense of Power.

Predictor variables	Advice giving (Model 1)	Interaction (Model 2)	Advice giving + controls (Model 3)	Interaction + controls (Model 4)
Advice giving	0.75*** (0.13)	0.34* (0.14)	0.64*** (0.14)	0.31* (0.13)
Advice taken		0.85*** (0.15)		0.82*** (0.16)
Interaction		0.23* (0.10)		0.21* (0.10)
Leadership role			1.15 (0.74)	0.41 (0.64)
Direct reports			0.00 (0.03)	−0.02 (0.03)
Committee chair			0.50 (0.38)	0.66* (0.32)
Number of committees			0.05 (0.08)	0.06 (0.07)
Professional experience			−0.02 (0.03)	0.00 (0.02)
Librarian role			0.49 (0.30)	0.45† (0.25)
Age			0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
Gender			0.21 (0.32)	0.06 (0.28)
Intercept	4.09*** (0.13)	4.01*** (0.12)	3.12*** (0.79)	3.25*** (0.66)
Observations	94	94	74	74
R^2	.26	.46	.45	.62
F statistic	32.53***	25.35***	5.84***	9.32***

Note. Regression coefficients are unstandardized. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. The number of observations is lower in Models 3 and 4 due to missing values for the control variables.
†p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

b = 0.53, SE = 0.16, 95% CI = [+0.20, +0.86], $t(62)$ = 3.22, p = .002, but not for low levels (−1 SD) of advice taking, b = 0.08, SE = 0.17, 95% CI = [−0.28, +0.43], $t(91)$ = 0.43, p = .67.

Discussion

The second study provides additional support for our theoretical model by surveying employees of an actual organization about their advice-giving habits and sense of power. Our field data confirmed the findings from Study 1 that advice giving is associated with higher sense of power. In addition, the moderation by whether the advice was taken or not supports our theorizing, indicating that the effect is eliminated when influence attempts fail.[1]

In the remaining two studies, we test the prediction that if advice giving leads to a boost in power, then those individuals who have a need to accumulate and exercise power should be more likely to engage in advice-giving behaviors if given the opportunity to do so. In Study 3, we indirectly measured power-seeking tendencies by examining the inclination to engage in a common power-acquisition practice and investigated whether it predicted advice giving in a negotiation setting. In Study 4, we used an explicit, generalized measure of desire for power and gave participants the opportunity to advise a peer with a personal dilemma.

Study 3

In the next study, we sought to examine the possibility that individuals interested in seeking power give more advice. To do so, we began by measuring the power-seeking tendency of a sample of experienced professionals pursuing an MBA.

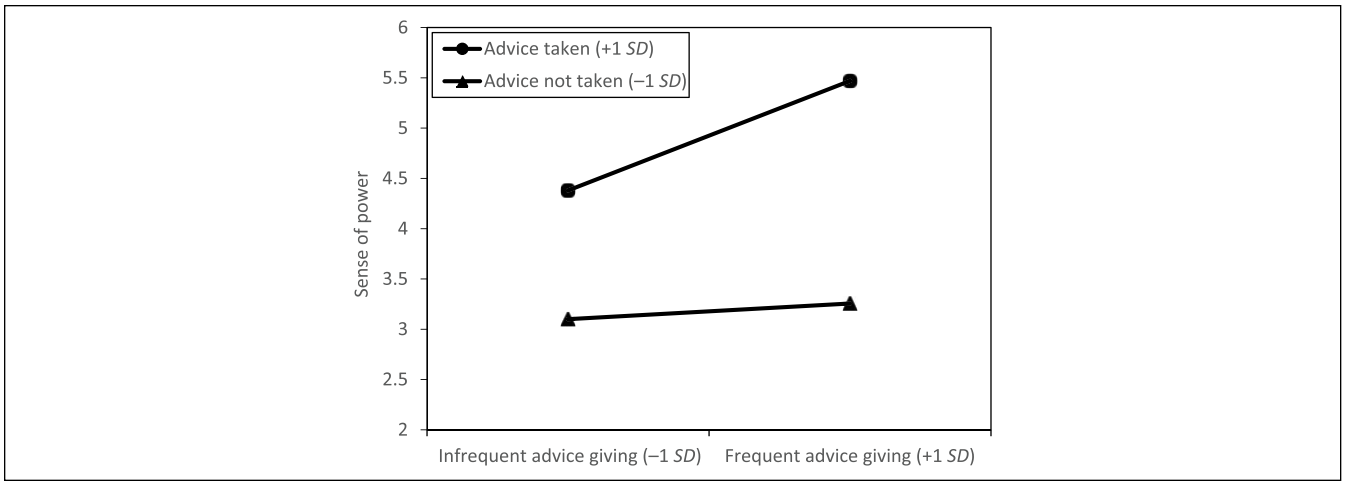

Figure 2. Study 2: Sense of power as a function of advice giving and advice taken.

Then, several days later, we provided them with an opportunity to give advice to a counterpart in a classroom-based negotiation simulation.

Method

Participants. Participants were 124 MBA students at a Midwestern university (M age = 28.85, SD = 5.54; 32.3% women). Participants had an average of 5.28 years (SD = 4.86) of full-time work experience prior to joining the program.

Procedure. The study was part of a negotiation class. One week before the negotiation, participants were provided with a link to a survey that measured our independent variable (i.e., use of networking efforts to gain influence). Participants were required to complete the survey at least 24 hr prior to coming to the next class session.

During the first half of the class, participants engaged in the Synertech-Dosagen negotiation exercise. The negotiation involved a buyer and a seller negotiating the sales price of a pharmaceutical plant. Participants were randomly assigned to the buyer or seller role. Dyads were given 20 min to complete the negotiation. After all dyads completed their exercise, the negotiation was debriefed in class.

In the second part of the class, each dyad was given 10 min to discuss their performance together and to subsequently complete a postnegotiation questionnaire. This questionnaire contained our advice-giving measure.

Impasses. Eight dyads did not reach a deal. In these cases, we followed the recommendation by Tripp and Sondak (1992) and assigned each negotiator his or her best alternative specified in the role instructions (sellers = US$17 million, buyers = US$25 million). However, to test the robustness of our results, we also ran all analyses below excluding dyads with an impasse and found identical results (all ps < .05).

Measures

Power-seeking tendency. Our aim was to capture people's motivation to seek power and the willingness to enact behaviors needed to acquire it. One such behavior is people's tendency to engage in politically oriented networking behavior, defined as the deliberate construction of social network structures to create opportunities for influence and take advantage of them (Ferris et al., 2005; Pfeffer, 1992). Specifically, the end goal of political networking behavior is "to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives" (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004, p. 311). As such, the proximate motive of this behavior is to gain power (and the ability to influence), making it a relevant manifestation of power-seeking tendencies. Political networking is also an ideal measure for our sample of MBA students and the business school context in which students know one another and have relationships relevant to their careers (e.g., Pfeffer & Fong, 2002). Thus, we used a six-item political networking scale (α = .92) developed by Ferris and colleagues (2005). Example items are as follows: "I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others" and "I am good at using my connections and network to make things happen at work." The scale ranged from 1 (*does not describe me well*) to 7 (*describes me very well*).

Advice giving. To measure advice giving, we asked the negotiation partners to what extent the focal negotiators gave them advice during the debriefing session. Advice giving included two items ("To what extent did your negotiation counterpart give you advice?" and "To what extend did your negotiation counterpart share his or her thoughts about how you could improve your negotiation performance?"; α = .89), and the scale ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much so*).

Table 4. Study 3: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables (N = 124).

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Advice giving	4.16	1.61							
2. Political networking	2.78	1.26	.18*						
3. Negotiation role	0.50	0.50	.03	−.07					
4. Negotiation outcome	22.63	3.90	.06	.05	.06				
5. Impasse	0.06	0.25	−.01	.20*	−.13	−.21*			
6. Age	28.85	0.54	.06	.05	−.12	−.16	.13		
7. Gender	0.67	0.47	.11	−.09	.04	−.11	−.03	.19	
8. Work experience	5.28	4.86	.03	.06	−.07	−.13	.12	.94***	.22*

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 5. Study 3: Linear Regression Predicting Advice Giving.

Predictor variables	Political networking (Model 1)	Political networking + controls (Model 2)
Political networking	0.23* (0.11)	0.25* (0.12)
Negotiation role		0.15 (0.30)
Negotiation outcome		0.03 (0.04)
Impasse		−0.17 (0.62)
Age		0.09 (0.08)
Gender		0.48 (0.32)
Work experience		−0.10 (0.09)
Intercept	3.53*** (0.35)	0.27 (2.18)
Observations	124	124
R^2	.02	.07
F statistic	3.94*	1.15

Note. Regression coefficients are unstandardized. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Control variables. To ensure that our findings were robust to other factors, we controlled for the focal participant's role (0 = seller, 1 = buyer), negotiation outcome, whether they reached an impasse (0 = no impasse, 1 = impasse), their age, gender (0 = women, 1 = men), and full-time work experience (in years).

Results and Discussion

Means, standard deviations, and correlations are summarized in Table 4.

As predicted, participants' power-seeking tendency significantly predicted advice giving, b = 0.23, SE = 0.11, 95% CI = [+0.001, +0.45], $t(122)$ = 1.98, p = .049 (see Table 5, Model 1). This effect remained robust when we included the control variables, b = 0.25, SE = 0.12, 95% CI = [+0.02, +0.48], $t(116)$ = 2.11, p = .037 (Table 5, Model 2).

Study 3 provides evidence that a manifestation of power-seeking tendency (political networking) predicts advice giving using multisource data in the context of a social interaction. These results provide initial support for our prediction that those who have a stronger need for power give more advice and that giving others advice may be a subtle way for individuals who have a particularly strong need to exert influence on others to achieve a sense of power.

Study 4

The purpose of the final study was threefold. First, the political networking measure used as a manifestation of power seeking in Study 3 may have also captured additional goals beyond satisfying one's need for power. Thus, in Study 4, we wanted to replicate the effect of desire for power on advice giving using a more direct and explicit measure of people's tendency to seek power. Second, Study 1 asked participants to recall advice episodes from their past. In this study, participants had the opportunity to *spontaneously* give advice to one of their peers about a personal dilemma. This also allowed us to measure changes in power more thoroughly by comparing participants' felt power before and after advice giving. Third, we wanted to replicate the effect found in Study 2 in which the power boost of advice giving is lost when the advice is not taken. Therefore, in this study, after reporting their desire for power a week before the experiment, participants reported their sense of power, had the opportunity to give advice to another person, indicated their sense of power for a second

time, received bogus feedback about whether their advice would be taken by the other person or not, and then indicated their sense of power for a final time.

Method

Participants. Participants were 188 students at a university in the Midwest (*M* age = 21.46, *SD* = 3.23; 75% women) who were recruited for a two-part study in exchange for US$8.00. Sample size was determined based on a pretest and anticipated effect sizes. Only participants who completed both parts were included in the study.

Procedure. Participants were invited via email. They first completed a short questionnaire that contained our desire for power scale and demographic questions.

One week later, participants were invited to the main study. Participants first indicated on a list of 11 adjectives how they felt at that very moment. This list contained our first power scale consisting of four items (Power 1). Next, participants read a cover story that indicated that the study was about understanding how people react to learning about other people's personal experiences or challenges and that half of the participants would be writing about a personal experience or challenge, while the other half would be reading the experiences of another participant. After reading the cover story, participants were then shown a waiting page with a "spinning dial" symbol, indicating that the system was matching them with another participant's submission. In reality, after the "matching procedure," all participants read the same personal experience in which another student was having difficulties deciding on a major (see Supplemental Online Material for the full scenario).

After reading about their "partner's" challenge, participants were prompted to type any thoughts they would like to share with their partner. They were told that their thoughts would then be transmitted to their partner. Upon completion of the writing exercise, participants again encountered a list of adjectives containing our power scale (Power 2).

Then, participants were informed that their partner was ostensibly asked whether or not he or she would like to read what, if anything, the participant wrote. We then manipulated advice taking by randomly providing participants with feedback from their partner. In the *advice taken condition*, participants read.

> Yes, I'd definitely like to read the response—I think it will be helpful to learn what other people suggest—I will be eager to take their advice.

In the *advice not taken condition*, participants read,

> Thanks for offering, but I really think I should figure this out on my own, so I'm not going to read any messages until after I make my decision—I don't want to be influenced by anyone else's suggestion.

Finally, participants completed for a third time the list of adjectives containing our final power scale (Power 3).

Measures

Desire for power. In the previous study, we used a measure of power-seeking behavior to capture professional students' inclinations to pursue power. In the present study, we sought to use a more generalized measure of psychological desire for power, which is better suited to undergraduate students who are less experienced in the realm of political networking. We therefore measured people's generalized desire for power using the six-item scale developed by Lammers and colleagues (2016). Example items included the following: "I would like to have more power" and "I would like to have more control" (α = .73).

Advice giving. Advice giving was operationalized in two ways. First, two coders indicated on three items (intraclass correlation coefficients [ICCs] ranged from .72 to .96) how much advice participants gave to the fictitious student. Specifically, they coded, "How much advice did the person give to the student?" (1 = *very little advice*, 7 = *a lot of advice*), "How extensive was the advice to the student?" (1 = *not at all extensive*, 7 = *very extensive*), and "How much effort did the person put into giving advice?" (1 = *very little effort*, 7 = *a lot of effort*; α = .93). Second, coders also counted the number of pieces of advice participants gave to the student (ICC = .84). For example, if the advice mentioned "talk to a career adviser" and "consider doing a double degree," it was counted as two pieces of advice.

Power. To measure feelings of power, we included the same list of adjectives at several stages during the study and asked participants to indicate how these adjectives accurately describe their feelings "right now" (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *a great deal*). To measure power, we used a four-item power scale, including the items "powerful," "in control," "strong," and "influential" (see Schaerer et al., 2015). Reliability was high (αs ranged from .85 to .93), and the items were combined to the three corresponding power scales (Power 1 to Power 3). To disguise the purpose of the study, we also included unrelated adjectives (nervous, anxious, happy, exhausted, confused, tired, and energetic). Item presentation was always randomized.

Control variables. We also asked participants to indicate their age, gender (0 = men, 1 = women), and the number of years of work experience.

Results

Table 6 reports the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations of all measures.

Table 6. Study 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Variables (N = 188).

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Desire for power	5.05	0.90								
2. Power (Time 1)	3.93	1.17	.15*							
3. Power (Time 2)	4.34	1.19	.16*	.74***						
4. Power (Time 3)	4.11	1.33	.07	.71***	.70***					
5. Advice giving (composite)	3.52	1.25	.15*	.02	.14	.04				
6. Advice giving (No. of pieces)	1.83	0.85	.22**	.03	.14*	.05	.70***			
7. Age	21.46	3.23	.02	.03	−.04	.03	−.10	−.01		
8. Gender	0.75	0.43	−.05	−.19*	−.17*	−.19	.12	−.01	−.12	
9. Work experience	2.88	2.91	.09	.09	−.03	.11	−.01	−.06	.55***	−.04

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 7. Study 4: Linear Regression Predicting Advice Giving.

Predictor variable(s)	Desire for power (Model 1)	Desire for power + controls (Model 2)	Desire for power (Model 3)	Desire for power + controls (Model 4)
Dependent measure	Advice-giving composite		No. of pieces of advice	
Desire for power	0.21* (0.10)	0.22* (0.10)	0.20** (0.07)	0.21** (0.07)
Age		−0.04 (0.03)		0.01 (0.02)
Gender		0.35 (0.21)		0.00 (0.14)
Work experience		0.02 (0.04)		−0.03 (0.03)
Intercept	2.46*** (0.52)	3.03*** (0.89)	0.80* (0.35)	0.66 (0.60)
Observations	188	188	188	188
R^2	.02	.05	.05	.05
F statistic	4.37*	2.34†	9.02**	2.58*

Note. Regression coefficients are unstandardized. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.
†p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Desire for power predicts advice giving. We first tested our hypothesis that desire for power positively influences the extent to which people give advice. As predicted, participants' desire for power significantly predicted advice giving, b = 0.21, SE = 0.10, 95% CI = [+0.01, +0.41], t(186) = 2.09, p = .038 (see Table 7, Model 1). This effect remained robust when we controlled for age, gender, and work experience, b = 0.22, SE = 0.10, 95% CI = [+0.01, +0.42], t(183) = 2.14, p = .033 (Table 7, Model 2). We found the same results when using the number of pieces of advice as the dependent measure excluding controls, b = 0.20, SE = 0.07, 95% CI = [+0.07, +0.34], t(186) = 3.03, p = .003 (see Table 7, Model 3) and including controls, b = 0.21, SE = 0.07, 95% CI = [+0.08, +0.35], t(183) = 3.08, p = .002 (Table 7, Model 4).

Advice giving increases sense of power. We next tested the prediction that advice giving would be positively associated with an increase in individuals' sense of power from before giving advice (Power 1) to after giving advice (Power 2). Indeed, more advice led to a power boost, b = 0.11, SE = 0.05, 95% CI = [+0.02, +0.21], t(186) = 2.34, p = .021 (see Table 8, Model 1). This effect remained robust when we controlled for initial power (Power 1), age, gender, and work experience, b = 0.12, SE = 0.05, 95% CI = [+0.03, +0.21], t(182) = 2.63, p = .009 (Table 8, Model 2). We found identical results when we used the number of pieces of advice as the predictor variable excluding controls, b = 0.16, SE = 0.07, 95% CI = [+0.02, +0.30], t(186) = 2.20, p = .029 (see Table 8, Model 3) and including controls, b = 0.16, SE = 0.07, 95% CI = [+0.03, +0.30], t(182) = 2.40, p = .017 (Table 8, Model 4).

Power boost of advice giving is contingent on advice taking. Finally, we tested whether the power boost was contingent on whether the advice was taken or not. Specifically, we predicted that those high in need of power would be more likely to give advice and that this advice would result in higher feelings of power, but that advice giving would only lead to a power boost when advice is taken. We thus tested a second-stage moderated mediation model (Hayes, 2013; PROCESS Model 14) with need for power as the independent variable, advice giving as the mediator, advice taken as moderator, and sense of power (Power 3) as dependent measure (see Figure 3). As predicted, there was a positive conditional indirect effect from need for power to sense of power via advice giving when the advice was taken, b = 0.042, SE = 0.034, 95% CI = [+0.0001, +0.1513], but not when the advice was

Table 8. Study 4: Linear Regression Predicting Power After Advice Giving (Power 2).

Predictor variable(s)	Advice-giving composite (Model 1)	Advice-giving composite + controls (Model 2)	No. of pieces of advice (Model 3)	No. of pieces of advice + controls (Model 4)
Advice-giving composite	0.11* (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)		
No. of pieces of advice			0.16* (0.07)	0.16*(0.07)
Age		−0.01 (0.02)		−0.01 (0.02)
Gender		−0.14 (0.14)		−0.10 (0.14)
Work experience		−0.03 (0.02)		−0.03 (0.02)
Initial power (Power 1)		0.75*** (0.05)		0.75*** (0.05)
Intercept	0.01 (0.18)	1.30* (0.54)	0.12 (0.15)	1.51** (0.52)
Observations	188	188	188	188
R^2	.03	.58	.03	.58
F statistic	5.46*	49.92***	4.83*	49.39***

Note. Regression coefficients are unstandardized. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

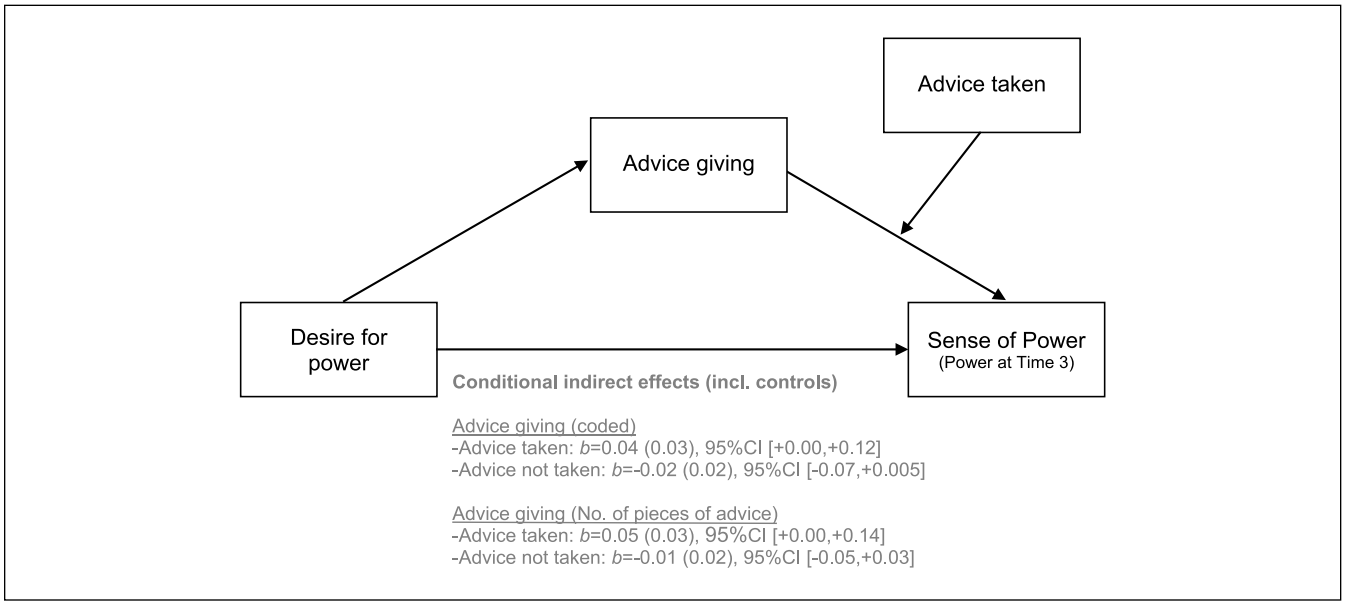

Figure 3. Study 4: Second-stage moderated mediation model suggesting that desire for power predicts advice giving, which in turn predicts a heightened sense of power—but only when the advice is taken by the recipient.
Note. CI = confidence interval.

not taken, $b = -0.027$, $SE = 0.030$, 95% CI = [−0.1119, +0.0103]. The same patterns emerged when the control variables (age, gender, work experience, Power 1) were included; a positive conditional indirect effect emerged when the advice was taken, $b = 0.035$, $SE = 0.028$, 95% CI = [+0.0001, +0.1185], but not when the advice was not taken, $b = -0.016$, $SE = 0.017$, 95% CI = [−0.0690, +0.0047].

We also replicated the same analyses using the second operationalization of advice giving (i.e., number of pieces of advice given). When the control variables were not included, we found a marginally positive conditional indirect effect when the advice was taken, $b = 0.049$, $SE = 0.039$, 90% CI = [+0.0011, +0.1309], but not when the advice was not taken, $b = -0.001$, $SE = 0.033$, 90% CI = [−0.0658, −0.0415]. We also found a significant effect when controls were included; a positive conditional indirect effect emerged when the advice was taken, $b = 0.050$, $SE = 0.034$, 95% CI = [+0.0016, +0.1436], but not when the advice was not taken, $b = -0.006$, $SE = 0.020$, 95% CI = [−0.0506, +0.0290].

Discussion

The final study integrated and replicated the findings from our previous studies using two different operationalizations of advice giving. Specifically, a moderated mediation model showed that (a) people high on desire for power were more

likely to give advice to others, (b) increased advice giving leads to a boost in power, and (c) this power boost was contingent on the advice being taken.

General Discussion

Our findings provide support for the idea that advice giving is a politically motivated and subtle pathway to power. Specifically, Studies 1 and 2 support the notion that advice giving is an antecedent to feelings of power and provide evidence that this effect is mediated by perceived influence (Study 1) and moderated by whether or not the advice is followed by the recipient (Study 2). Studies 3 and 4 provided evidence that the desire for power predicts the tendency to give advice to others. Study 3 measured the desire for power by assessing participants' efforts to build a politically effective social network (a common endeavor for those desiring of power) and examining the association between that practice and advice giving in a negotiation context. Study 4 examined and replicated the full cycle of behavior, showing that the desire for power increased advice giving, which in turn enhanced the sense of power. Study 4 also once again demonstrated that the positive effect of advice giving on the sense of power is eliminated if the advice is rejected.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

We wish to highlight three theoretical contributions of this research. First, while scholars have long examined the foundations of structural power (e.g., Emerson, 1962; French & Raven, 1959), they are just beginning to study the antecedents of the sense of power (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012; Huang et al., 2011; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). Our research contributes to this emerging endeavor. Our findings support the notion that interpersonal behaviors have significant influence on feelings of power (Tost, 2015) and establish advice giving as a driver of the psychological experience of power. In this way, our findings further highlight that structural power is not the only antecedent of psychological power and that the sense of power may emerge from the influence behaviors that individuals engage in to varying degrees throughout their days (see also Smith & Hofmann, 2016). In addition, our work complements French and Raven's (1959) notion of expert power. French and Raven argued that individuals' abilities to provide others with needed information, knowledge, or expertise increase their social power. Because their focus was on power as opposed to the sense of power, their research primarily took the perspective of the advisee (i.e., Does the advisee believe the adviser provided needed advice?). We complement their work by demonstrating that, regardless of whether the advice is solicited or unsolicited (i.e., regardless of whether the advisee considers the adviser to have superior knowledge in a given domain), from the adviser's perspective, the mere act of giving advice is sufficient to instill them with a sense of power.

Second, we contribute to ongoing research on the psychology of advice by providing evidence that the desire for power motivates advice giving. Advice research has focused predominantly on the effects of advice on recipients (MacGeorge et al., 2016), the factors affecting adviser selection and advice utilization (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006), and how advice networks develop and evolve (Carpenter, Li, & Jiang, 2012). However, little research has explored the factors that induce the motivation to give advice in the first place or the nature of the psychological effects of advice giving on the *adviser* (Feng & Magen, 2016; Rader et al., 2017). Our research provides evidence that the desire for power predicts advice giving and highlights that the act of giving advice can enhance advisers' sense of their own power, particularly when that advice is followed. In this way, we also contribute to the growing stream of research that explores the relationship between power and advice (See et al., 2011; Tost et al., 2012). While previous work has explored the effect of power on advice taking, we shift the focus to power as a motivator and consequence of advice *giving*.

Finally, we contribute to research on the psychological nature and the behavioral effects of the desire for power. In particular, recent research has examined whether the desire for power is driven primarily by a need for autonomy or a need for influence (Lammers et al., 2016). Lammers and colleagues (2016) provided evidence that the need for autonomy is a stronger predictor of the desire for power, but the studies we report here suggest that even if the desire for power is rooted in a need for autonomy, the desire still manifests in a motivation to enact influence behaviors. Moreover, we show that the desire for power not only prompts engagement in influence in the form of advice giving, but further that those behaviors enhance feelings of power. One implication of these findings is that, regardless of the psychological roots of the desire for power (i.e., autonomy vs. influence), the desire for power prompts behaviors that enhance feelings of social power.

There are also important practical implications of this research. For example, scholars have raised the possibility that some forms of counseling and psychotherapy that involve advice giving may lead the therapist to feel powerful (Silver, 1991; Veach, LeRoy, & Bartels, 2003), with some suggesting that these types of helping professions attract individuals with an enhanced desire for power (e.g., Thomas & Sosin, 2011). Given the ways in which the experience of, and desire for, power can lead to ethical compromises (e.g., Boles, Croson, & Murnighan, 2000; Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010), this is indeed a troubling possibility, and our findings suggest that it is one that may merit further research.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Future Directions

There are a number of strengths to the present studies. We used a mixture of highly powered online experiments,

interactive classroom studies, and field data from an organization. This multimethod approach allowed us to both examine the causal mechanisms underlying our effects and enhance the generalizability of our findings. We also used multiple approaches to examining the causal role of interpersonal influence, establishing its role in promoting advice giving through statistical mediation, as well as by showing that the effect advice giving on the sense of power is moderated by whether the advice is taken. Finally, we also collected data that helped us to rule out alternative causal mechanisms for our effects.

There are also several limitations that present opportunities for future research. For example, Study 1 relied on recall tasks that may have led participants to focus on instances of advice giving that are unique in their vividness and may differ from instances where advice is given spontaneously such as in Study 4. In addition, Study 1 measured perceived power retrospectively and leaves unclear whether the sense of power associated with past advice episodes is the same as the feeling of power experienced in the moment the advice is actually delivered. Study 2 involved only a single-item measure of advice taking; future research may find more nuanced ways to capture advice taking in the field. Study 2 also relied on single source data—a shortcoming which we address in Study 3 where the measurements of the independent and dependent variables were drawn from two different sources. Finally, Study 4 involved giving text-based advice to a stranger without actual face-to-face contact (although Studies 1 and 3 did involve advice giving in face-to-face contexts). Thus, future research could more systematically examine how various communication channels differentially affect interpersonal influence behaviors such as advice giving. Finally, research could examine temporal issues, such as when advice leads to an enduring or briefer shifts in power.

We would also like to note that we do not take a theoretical stance on whether the psychological processes we examine emerge on a conscious or intentional basis, nor do we empirically examine that issue. It may be the case that politically motivated individuals are nonconsciously inclined to give advice (and subsequently experience an enhanced sense of power), or instead it may be that politically motivated individuals strategically use advice giving to achieve the boost in felt (and possibly perceived) power. This issue represents an important area for future research.

Finally, by highlighting the dynamic interplay between power dynamics and advice giving, we open the door for new research that links advice giving and advice taking more directly to a broader range of power-based organizational behaviors. In particular, if power and advice are as tightly enmeshed as our theorizing and findings suggest, there is a promising but unexplored opportunity for research examining how advice giving and taking can play a political role in organizations. For example, do individuals strategically use advice giving as a mechanism of social influence and impression management with the intent of making themselves appear more powerful at the expense of advice takers (see also Gilbert & Silvera, 1996)? Do individuals vary their willingness to take and give advice depending on how publicly visible these acts may be (with more visibility leading to less taking and more giving)? These and related questions can form the foundation to a greater integration of advice research with research on organizational politics.

Conclusion

Advice is an important and common mechanism by which information, knowledge, and expertise are exchanged. Moreover, power, and the power motive, is an omnipresent force in social and organizational dynamics. By highlighting the interplay between power and advice giving, we hope we have laid the groundwork for further investigation of the ways in which power and its pursuit influence advising, information exchange, and knowledge flows across levels of social and organizational hierarchies.

Authors' Note

Michael Schaerer and Leigh P. Tost shared first authorship.

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Note

1. Please see the Supplemental Online Materials for a study not included in the article that conceptually replicates how advice taken moderates the effect of advice giving on sense of power.

Supplemental Material

Supplementary material is available online with this article.

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