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Tyler B. Sabey, Jessica B. Rodell, and Fadel K. Matta

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To and Fro: The Costs and Benefits of Power Fluctuation Throughout the Day

Tyler B. Sabey
Texas A&M University

Jessica B. Rodell and Fadel K. Matta
University of Georgia

Power is a ubiquitous element of organizational relationships. Historically in the organizational and social sciences, power has most commonly been evaluated statically. Although this approach has been beneficial thus far, it may be inconsistent with the realities that most individuals face in organizations. Rather, we suggest that individuals' sense of power changes, even within a given day. Thus, we introduce the concept of power fluctuation to better explain the phenomenon that one's sense of power varies over time. We position power fluctuation as a form of micro role transition and draw from the social distance theory of power to posit that such fluctuation throughout the day has both positive and negative consequences. Specifically, we suggest that daily power fluctuation (day-to-day, within-person variance in power fluctuation) as well as general power fluctuation (person-to-person, between-person variance in power fluctuation) increase perspective taking and contribution to team performance, but those benefits come at an emotional cost (i.e., frustration and emotional exhaustion). The results of our multilevel experience sampling study of 845 matched-responses from 103 employee-coworker dyads largely support our predictions of the manifestation and consequences of power fluctuation. The implications of power fluctuation for theory and practice are discussed.

Keywords: power, power fluctuation, perspective taking, emotion, experience sampling methodology

One's sense of *power*—mental representations of asymmetric control or influence over valued resources in relation to others (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Tost, 2015)—is a pervasive component of organizational relationships, both at the individual (e.g., Emerson, 1962; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and organization levels (e.g., Fleming & Spicer, 2014; Pfeffer, 1981). Traditionally, power has been conceptualized as a static variable—an aspect of people's environment that remains relatively unchanged over time (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). Likewise, empirical examinations have either been laboratory experiments that manipulate and compare the powerful (i.e., high power) with the powerless (i.e., low power; Schaerer, Lee, Galinsky, & Thau, 2018) or field studies that rely on structural position as a proxy for power to compare higher and lower ranks (for recent reviews see Anderson & Brion, 2014; Galinsky, Rucker, & Magee, 2015; Schaerer, du Plessis, Yap, & Thau, 2018; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015)—both of which do not allow for changes over time to occur. Ultimately, much of the previous research on power has employed this paradigm without consideration of variability over time (Foulk, Lanaj, Tu, Erez, & Archambeau, 2018).

Tyler B. Sabey, Department of Management, Mays Business School, Texas A&M University; Jessica B. Rodell and Fadel K. Matta, Department of Management, Terry College of Business, University of Georgia.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tyler B. Sabey, Department of Management, Mays Business School, Texas A&M University, 4221 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843. E-mail: tsabey@mays.tamu.edu

Although this approach has been useful thus far, it also may be problematic in that it makes some assumptions that do not accurately reflect people's work experiences. Within an organization, individuals commonly interact with others of varying levels of power (Foulk et al., 2018). As an illustration, consider a common day in the life of a middle manager. The day might begin with a meeting with her team to discuss goals and expectations of the group for the day, followed by a training meeting with her regional manager, and end with an office-wide meeting in the afternoon that includes her team of salespeople and her regional manager. In some circumstances she may have more power than others, in other circumstances she may have less power than others, and still in other circumstances she may have similar levels of power to others (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Schaerer, Lee, et al., 2018). Instead of maintaining an indefinite static level of power compared with others, it is more likely that a individuals' sense of power fluctuates as they navigate their daily lives (Foulk et al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). Indeed, because individuals' sense of power is relative to the people they are interacting with in different situations (Emerson, 1962; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Tost, 2015), it is likely to fluctuate as they interact with different partners and in different circumstances. These scenarios raise the question: do people generally experience these types of fluctuations in power throughout the day? And, if so, what kind of impact—both positive and negative—might these fluctuations in power have on them?

Our goal in conducting this study was to examine the phenomenon described earlier and build theory surrounding power fluctuation. The idea of transcending a static view of power has gained some traction in recent years (Foulk et al., 2018; Schaerer, Lee, et

al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). To extend this emerging notion, we introduce the psychological concept of power fluctuation, which represents the extent to which individuals' power relative to others is inconsistent. Nascent empirical work suggests that an individual's perception of power is likely to oscillate from high to low (as well as from low to high) throughout the course of one's day (Foulk et al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016), demonstrating the existence of variation in power. Indeed, Smith and Hofmann (2016) found that nearly 58% of the total variance in power occurred at the within-person level. Yet, despite that past work suggests this variability exists, we still do not know the potential ramifications of experiencing many or few divergent experiences of power over time. Power fluctuation captures the possibility that power level is not static, but instead can fluctuate over time—in ways that are meaningful for employees' experiences and outcomes at work. Therefore, we discuss the importance of studying power fluctuation and argue that changes in power can have important consequences for individuals, both positive and negative, that diverge from what we already know about levels of power (i.e., the exclusive focus of extant work).

We position power fluctuation as a form of micro role transition (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Ashforth, Kreiner, Fugate, & Johnson, 2001) and draw on the social distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013) to create a theoretical model that examines the effects of power fluctuation. Using the mechanisms described by the social distance theory of power, we hypothesize dual-valenced outcomes of power fluctuation. We argue that power fluctuation can produce benefits (i.e., perspective taking that enhances contribution to team performance), but that those outcomes may come at a cost (i.e., emotional exhaustion brought on by the frustration of the fluctuation). In addition to drawing on the social distance theory of power, we also advance and extend this theoretical perspective. Specifically, whereas the social distance theory of power presents its propositions in accordance with the "power as a static variable" school-of-thought (i.e., examining power only at high and/or low levels at a given time; Magee & Smith, 2013), we broaden the theory by considering the transition between different power levels—leaving room for individuals to experience the consequences of both high and low power, changes from high to low power and vice versa, or anywhere in between, over time. In doing so, we create a comprehensive theoretical model (see Figure 1) that helps explain the potentially positive and negative outcomes that are associated with power fluctuation.

We contribute to the power literature and extend theory in several ways. First, we introduce the concept of power fluctuation and provide one of the first investigations of the actual variability of power (for rare exceptions see Foulk et al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). In doing so, we help to shift the consensus that power ought to be studied only as a static variable, thereby answering the call from Anicich and Hirsh (2017) to examine the middle ground between high and low power in individuals. Integrating temporal perspectives and constructs can significantly change scholarly understanding of phenomena, pushing research literatures in new directions (George & Jones, 2000). In our analysis, we demonstrate that—controlling for level of power (which is the most common focus of the power literature)—power fluctuation displays incremental validity. Second, much of the research in the power literature utilizes laboratory studies, which most commonly isolate power to a specific time period and assume power is stable or fixed. Clearly, these studies have yielded invaluable findings due to their study design; however, recent concerns have been raised about the validity and generalizability of these techniques (Flynn, Gruenfeld, Molm, & Polzer, 2011; Schaerer, Lee, et al., 2018). We therefore extend research on power by employing a field study to examine the effects of power fluctuation across time and multiple interactions, which we argue may help alleviate some of the common concerns of lab studies. Finally, we extend the social distance theory of power by expanding its scope to include power fluctuation and elements of micro role transitions along with its original set of constructs. Most theories in the power literature propose relationships that occur only at a static level of power (i.e., high or low; for examples see Guinote, 2007; Keltner et al., 2003). With the inclusion of power fluctuation to the literature, we demonstrate the utility of examining power beyond its common conceptualization for both the individual and organization.

Introducing Power Fluctuation

By definition, power is an inherently social construct (Anderson & Brion, 2014; Magee & Galinsky, 2008) that involves the interaction with or comparison to others. Said differently, individuals' sense of power is relative to those whom they compare themselves

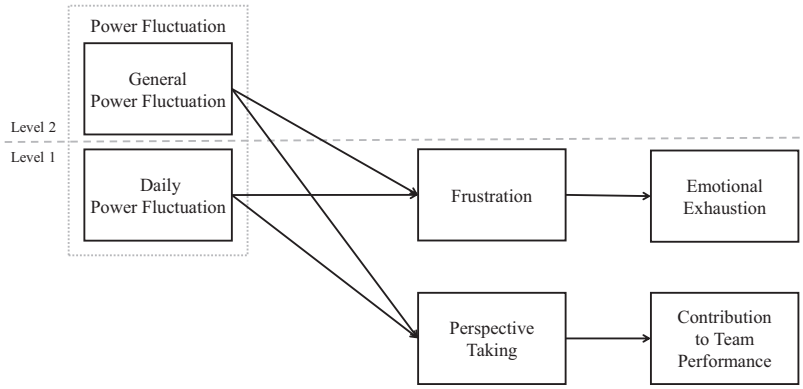

Figure 1. Hypothesized model.

to (Emerson, 1962). Most employees in organizations have some sort of interaction with others (coworker, boss, subordinate, etc.) on a regular basis. These interactions commonly induce comparisons (Festinger, 1954), even of one's power relative to others. Assuming individuals interact with others of varying levels of power or have shifts in control over valued resources with the same interaction partner(s) over time, they are likely to experience varying levels of power in relation to others (Foulk et al., 2018; Schaerer, Lee, et al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). Herein lies the necessity of conceptualizing and operationalizing this phenomenon, *power fluctuation*. Although fluctuations in power presumably occur—and can be studied—across many different time periods (across years, across weeks, across days, etc.), we believe that power fluctuation will be particularly impactful within a given day. Indeed, daily power fluctuation (i.e., power fluctuation within/throughout a day) is particularly relevant to our study because variations in power within a single day should be more salient, easy to perceive and process, and likely to drive discrete emotions than fluctuations over longer durations (Beal, 2015). Therefore, we focus our examination on power fluctuation throughout the day.

Returning to the example of the middle manager, the inconsistent nature of power in her hypothetical day is quite evident. If she were surveyed about her personal sense of power during each of the specified events using a Sense of Power Scale ranging from 1 (*low power*) to 5 (*high power*), it would likely start at a "5" while meeting with her team, then go to a "1" during the training meeting with her regional manager, and then go to a "3" while attending the office-wide meeting. Aggregated to the day level, she would have an average power score of "3" for that day. This experience of power fluctuation would likely differ from a day in which she would rate three separate events throughout the day as a "3" for each event, resulting in an average power score of "3" for that day. Though her power scores for both days would be equal (i.e., an average power score of "3," when aggregated to the day level), these daily experiences would have drastically different power fluctuations and outcomes.

Power fluctuation is distinct from other power-related constructs. First, one can easily differentiate power fluctuation from the static view of power, or level of power. Using our hypothetical Sense of Power Scale, the static view of power would only allow for ratings of "1" (i.e., low power) and "5" (i.e., high power) for the entire day, whereas the power fluctuation construct is not limited to binary ratings throughout the day. Second, power fluctuation is distinct from *middle power,* defined as "the subjective sense that one's power is neither consistently higher nor lower than the power of one's interaction partners" (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017, p. 659). To demonstrate, consider this question: Would the average power score of "3" from the middle manager's example have different consequences from someone who rated each of those three experiences with a "3," resulting in an average power score of "3" for that day? We suggest that it does. Though both examples have an average power score of "3," their standard deviations are drastically different—"2" for the first example and "0" for the second example. The former is an example of power fluctuation, whereas the latter is an example of middle power. In theory, one can have middle power without power fluctuation, as alluded to in this example. Finally, power fluctuation is distinct from *power (in)stability*, which refers more to the stability of the formal structuring of social hierarchies—a more macro view (Jordan, Sivanathan, & Galinsky, 2011; Maner, Gailliot, Butz, & Peruche, 2007)—than to the inconsistency of one's social power over time—a more micro view.

Studying the existence and effects of power fluctuation has important implications both empirically and theoretically. Investigating the extent to which power changes over time can provide important insights that are overlooked by focusing solely on static levels of power. We see this as particularly important because scholars often pursue phenomena in a static manner that ignores the role of time (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010), yet integrating temporal perspectives and constructs, like power fluctuation, can enhance our understanding of the phenomena, extending research in new directions (George & Jones, 2000). Additionally, considering fluctuations in power gives scholars a more accurate representation of what most of the population in organizations experience on a day-to-day basis. One would be hard-pressed to find employees who do not experience some sort of fluctuation in their power over time. Indeed, the vast majority of employees in an organization are neither the CEO nor the new intern indefinitely, therefore we ought to study those employees that reside in this middle space (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017). Finally, the study of power fluctuation is important because it broadens the potential nomological network of constructs relevant to the power phenomenon. Indeed, many constructs that are directly relevant to fluctuations in power (e.g., perspective taking—as we posit subsequently) hold less relevance or differ in their relationships compared with extant perspectives of power (that focus on static levels).

Differentiating "Day-to-Day" and "Person-to-Person" Power Fluctuation

Before proceeding, it important to specify two forms of power fluctuation. First, "day-to-day" power fluctuation is a within-person phenomenon. For example, an individual may experience more power fluctuation on a given day than other days. We refer to this type of power fluctuation as *daily power fluctuation.* However, there also exists another type of power fluctuation, specifically between-person or "person-to-person" differences in power fluctuation. In this case, some individuals generally (i.e., on average) experience more or fewer power fluctuations compared with other individuals. We refer to this type of power fluctuation as *general power fluctuation.*

To illustrate the difference, we return to our middle manager example. On the hypothetical day we described, she experiences high levels of power fluctuation (i.e., her power relative to others is inconsistent throughout that day). If this experience deviates from her typical baseline level of power fluctuation (i.e., her general power fluctuation is typically low), this discrepancy would represent day-to-day power fluctuation. Yet, if her typical baseline level of power fluctuation was similarly high, it would not. Alternatively, one could also compare power fluctuation on a more general, "person-to-person" basis. In this type of power fluctuation, one might investigate whether the middle manager's power fluctuation—averaged across an extended period of time—is greater or less than the average power fluctuation experienced by other individuals. Though both day-to-day and person-to-person deviations depict power fluctuation, they are different in that one depicts deviations over a shorter period of time relative to one's

baseline and the other depicts deviations in one's baseline over an extended period of time relative to other people.

We do not necessarily assume—nor is there theoretical rationale to demonstrate that—there will be predictive differences between daily (day-to-day) and general (person-to-person) power fluctuation. Gabriel et al. (2019) suggest that the most stringent test of relationships that are not theoretically assumed to differ between day-to-day and person-to-person levels is to model them at both levels. Accordingly, we include both levels of analysis for our power and power fluctuation variables in our model. In the sections that follow, we draw on and extend the social distance theory of power to discuss both the costs, as well as the benefits, of (daily and general) power fluctuation.

Theory and Hypotheses

Largely based on construal level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010), Magee and Smith proposed the social distance theory of power as a means to better explain the dynamics between individuals with high and low power. Their overarching assertion is that "asymmetric dependence between individuals (i.e., power) produces asymmetric social distance, with high-power individuals feeling more distant than low-power individuals." (Magee & Smith, 2013, p. 158). They argue that the differences in power that individuals experience in relation to others create a social separation among them. This separation, or *social distance* (i.e., the subjective perception or experience of distance from another person), is experienced most saliently by those in high- and low-power positions because of their increased distance from others, compared with individuals within symmetrically dependent relationships (Magee & Smith, 2013). Moreover, Magee and Smith suggested that for various reasons associated with asymmetric dependence (motivation for affiliation with others, expectations of counterparts interest, etc.), low-power individuals feel less social distance than high-power individuals (but still more social distance than symmetrically dependent relations).

The theory suggests that high-power individuals are less likely to attend to the thoughts and feelings of others due to their perception of greater social distance from others (Magee & Smith, 2013). Several studies have corroborated this proposition (e.g., Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006; Woltin, Corneille, Yzerbyt, & Förster, 2011). Alternatively, those with low power are more likely to attend to the thoughts and feelings of others (De Dreu & Van Kleef, 2004; Woltin et al., 2011), presumably due to their weaker perception of social distance from others, compared with high-power individuals (Magee & Smith, 2013). For instance, people are more likely to help others that are more similar to them and with which they have closer relationships (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997; Maner & Gailliot, 2007).

Furthermore, Magee and Smith (2013) suggested that power increases at the construal level. They argue that individuals in high-power positions engage in higher level construal of targets than those in low-power positions. In essence, they posited that high-power individuals focus more on abstract processing to get the gist of a situation while focusing on the most important aspects of the target. In contrast, low-power individuals focus on more concrete processing to extract specific details of the target (Smith & Trope, 2006; Trope & Liberman, 2010). Previous research largely supports the relationship between power and construal level (e.g., Huang, Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Guillory, 2011; Magee, Milliken, & Lurie, 2010; Smith & Trope, 2006). For example, Magee et al. (2010) found that in coding verbatim reactions to the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, those with greater power were more likely to use more abstract (i.e., high construal) language in discussing those events compared with those with less power.

Costs of Power Fluctuation

Individuals that experience power fluctuations might shift from high power to low power, from low power to high power, and anywhere in between. In addition to social distance fluctuating because of these shifts in power, it is likely to incite a varied level of perceived control over valued resources in each environment. These fluctuations can be considered *micro role transitions* because they inherently involve "frequent and usually reoccurring transitions" between role identities (Ashforth et al., 2000, p. 472). Ashforth and colleagues (2000) referred to these types of transitions that occur at work as "work–work or at-work transitions (e.g., between one's roles of subordinate, peer, superordinate, and organizational representative)" (p. 473). When individuals' power fluctuates at work, they experience these work–work or at-work transitions in their role identities of having high, middle, or low power. Drawing on the logic of micro role transition theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001), transitioning between higher and lower power compared with those around them is likely to create a feeling of psychological strain for individuals as to their roles while their power is fluctuating (see also Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). Ashforth et al. (2000) noted (specifically referencing highly integrated roles) that, ". . . it [is] difficult for one to decouple the roles psychologically, fully disengaging from one in favor of another" (p. 481). Indeed, with each micro role transition, employees must cross certain role boundaries and reorient themselves with the different tasks, features, requirements, norms, and so forth of their new position.

Fluctuations may vary in terms of complexity and even referent. Though individuals' power may fluctuate in reference to multiple people (i.e., subordinates, peers, boss) and/or in reference to one person in particular, they both clearly experienced the transitions (and downstream consequences) of power fluctuations. Indeed, in describing the nature of such transitions, Ashforth et al. (2000, p. 473) use the example of a manager who, "may enact the 'subrole' of boss vis-a-vis her subordinates [multiple referents], of subordinate vis-a-vis her own boss [one single referent], and of coworker vis-a-vis her peers [multiple referents]." As Ashforth et al. (2000) do not distinguish the types of transitions in relation to number of referents according to their outcomes, nor do we distinguish power fluctuations in relation to number of referents.

Transitioning from low to high power (or vice versa) changes one's perceived role, which micro role transition theory posits will be taxing (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001). Although transitions may vary in terms of complexity and even referent, such fluctuation between roles is likely to come at a cost to employees. According to Ashforth and colleagues' (2000, 2001; see also Williams, Suls, Alliger, Learner, & Wan, 1991) theorizing, employees may experience a variety of negative consequences, such as interrole conflict, anxiety, confusion, and negative moods. Furthermore, research has shown that individuals who

engage in boundary spanning—bridging the gap between divisions or functions in an organization, which likely encapsulates shifts in power—have a greater tendency to feel role conflict (Friedman & Podolny, 1992; Miles, 1976; Miles & Perreault Jr., 1976; Van Sell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981).

Likewise, we suggest that micro role transitions from power fluctuation, which potentially incite interrole conflicts and other negative consequences, may come at an emotional cost for the individual. Inconsistencies in expectations of one's role can produce tension within the individual experiencing these discrepancies (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Indeed, Williams et al. (1991) found that juggling multiple roles (i.e., transitioning back and forth or across roles) leads to negative effects on mood. Eaton's (1952) seminal paper on frustration in the workplace theorized that a lack of defined roles and an overabundance of alternatives available at work give rise to employees' frustration—the feeling of being upset or annoyed from the interference of goal attainment (Berkowitz, 1962; Spector, 1978). Work on frustration in the workplace indirectly supports this argument. For example, Spector and colleagues have theorized and found support for the relationship between common workplace stressors and frustration (Fox & Spector, 1999; Meier & Spector, 2013; Spector, 1978). This notion is directly applicable to power fluctuation—an experience laden with the strain of role transitions (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017). On this point, variation in one's workplace experiences has been shown to be a stressful and potentially frustrating experience for employees (Matta, Scott, Colquitt, Koopman, & Passantino, 2017). Indeed, Ashforth et al. (2001) suggested that overlap in role boundaries—what they referred to as *role blurring*—(e.g., power fluctuation), "can result in inter-role conflict and anxiety for the individual straddling ostensibly separate worlds" (p. 275). As such, we hypothesize that fluctuations in power (both daily and generally) increase individuals' frustration.

Hypothesis 1a: Daily power fluctuation is positively associated with frustration.

Hypothesis 1b: General power fluctuation is positively associated with frustration.

Ultimately, we theorize that the frustration of fluctuating between levels of power throughout the day over time will lead to emotional exhaustion. The frustration felt when shifting between higher and lower power will likely take a toll on the individual experiencing these fluctuations. Specifically, experiencing negative emotions—like frustration—is known to be especially emotionally taxing (Gaines & Jermier, 1983; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The primary indicator of such resource loss is *emotional exhaustion* (Baer et al., 2015; Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014; Kammeyer-Mueller, Simon, & Judge, 2016; Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016), defined as feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional resources (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Indeed, research on negative workplace emotions (frustration, anxiety, etc.) has consistently demonstrated the detrimental effects of such emotions on indicators of employee well-being, including emotional exhaustion (Fox & Spector, 1999; Harold, Oh, Holtz, Han, & Giacalone, 2016; Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986; McCarthy, Trougakos, & Cheng, 2016; Spector, 1978). For instance, using a sample of New Hampshire school teachers, Jackson et al. (1986) demonstrated that the frustration teachers felt from role conflict led to an increase in emotional exhaustion.

Moreover, work on fluctuation in general—regardless of the specific varying feature—supports the taxing nature of such fluctuations (Scott, Barnes, & Wagner, 2012), even specifically noting emotional exhaustion as a result (Matta et al., 2017). It is easy to see how the power fluctuation individuals experience throughout their day (e.g., going from a low [high] power context to a high [low] power context) and/or in general (e.g., power fluctuations over an extended period of time) might incite some level of frustration which may lead them to feel emotionally exhausted. Though they may be aware of and able to anticipate the power fluctuation they experience, they will likely still feel the negative effects of having to transition from role to role (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001; Williams et al., 1991). As such, we hypothesize an indirect effect of power fluctuation on emotion exhaustion through frustration.

Hypothesis 2a: Daily power fluctuation has a positive indirect effect on emotional exhaustion via frustration.

Hypothesis 2b: General power fluctuation has a positive indirect effect on emotional exhaustion via frustration.

Benefits of Power Fluctuation

Despite the potential costs of power fluctuation, the social distance theory of power hints at potential benefits associated with such variation as well. Magee and Smith (2013) theorized that high power is associated with higher level construal (i.e., more abstract thinking) and low power is associated with lower level construal (i.e., more concrete thinking; see also Magee et al., 2010; Smith & Trope, 2006; Stel, Dijk, Smith, Dijk, & Djalal, 2012). Oscillating between high and low levels of power and, accordingly, high- and low-level construal, allows individuals to interact with and interpret others of various power levels in relation to their own. This creates a unique opportunity for individuals to experience the cognitive effects of high power, low power, and middle power. Vacillating between high and low levels of construal as a consequence of power fluctuation, individuals transition back and forth between focusing on abstract processing to concrete processing that follows high and low levels of power, respectively (Magee & Smith, 2013). Having experienced power fluctuation, individuals are then equipped with both the more general/crucial aspects of the situation and the more detailed/specific aspects of the situation (Smith & Trope, 2006; Trope & Liberman, 2010). According to Trope and Liberman (2010), "[p]ower-related construal may expand people's mental horizons, enabling them to transcend the immediate circumstances and take into account the past, future, a broad range of people, and unlikely possibilities" (p. 456). Thus, we theorize that being exposed to both the abstract and concrete details of situations that flow from power fluctuation may lead individuals to engage in more perspective taking.

Perspective taking is viewed as a cognitive process that enables individuals to imagine the world from another's vantage point or adopt another's viewpoint in an effort to better understand their thoughts, motives, and/or feelings (Galinsky, Ku, & Wang, 2005; Parker, Atkins, & Axtell, 2008; Parker & Axtell, 2001). Prior research suggests mixed results for the relationship between power

and perspective taking variables (Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). Although some research has demonstrated a negative relationship (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2006), other work has suggested a positive relationship (e.g., J. A. Hall, Coats, & LeBeau, 2005; Schmid Mast, Jonas, & Hall, 2009).

Power fluctuation, by definition, involves interacting with others of varying levels of power. These interactions enable individuals that experience power fluctuation to learn more about those with whom they interact, and in doing so, increase their understanding of others (Parker & Axtell, 2001). Power fluctuation allows individuals to understand the perspectives of low-, middle-, and high-power interaction partners because their own experiences align with the experiences of those others. Indeed, previous research in this domain suggests that environments that support a more relational orientation increase the likelihood that perspective taking will occur (Brickson, 2000; Parker et al., 2008). We suggest that the varied social distances that are experienced because of power fluctuation allow individuals to more frequently imagine the world from another's vantage point. Thus, we hypothesize that those whose power fluctuates (day-to-day and person-to-person) will be more likely to engage in perspective taking.

Hypothesis 3a: Daily power fluctuation is positively associated with perspective taking.

Hypothesis 3b: General power fluctuation is positively associated with perspective taking.

Extant research on perspective taking has demonstrated its positive link with team-related performance behaviors. Specifically, perspective taking has been argued to increase team creativity (Grant & Berry, 2011; Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2012), cooperative behaviors (Parker & Axtell, 2001), organizational innovation (Dougherty, 1992), tacit coordination (Rico, Sánchez-Manzanares, Gil, & Gibson, 2008), and team effectiveness (Boland Jr. & Tenkasi, 1995), as a few examples. Perspective taking, especially in the context of power fluctuations, which inherently involve social interactions with others, implicates working and interacting with others of various levels of power—a situation likely to occur in team situations. Accordingly, we posit that perspective taking will have positive downstream consequences on team member behaviors (i.e., behaviors that contribute to team effectiveness; Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). In particular, we theorize that perspective taking will help individuals broadly contribute to team performance and interpersonal relationships through coordinating work with other team members (which Griffin et al., 2007 posits parallels helping behavior), responding constructively to team changes, and taking a proactive approach to team performance.

Perspective taking enriches interpersonal relationships and promotes prosocial behaviors like helping and cooperation (Parker & Axtell, 2001). We theorize that these types of behaviors will increase individuals' capacity to strengthen their team. Seeing the world from the eyes of others creates a synergistic effect in teams that allows for more than just individual helping, but also group-oriented information sharing and interpersonal relations (Galinsky, Magee, Rus, Rothman, & Todd, 2014). In reference back to the middle manager example, one can envision this process in practice. Her power fluctuates going from leading a sales meeting, to meeting with the regional manager of the company, to an office wide meeting with other employees. She can connect with other employees of varying power levels, giving her the opportunity to engage in perspective taking by, for example, focusing on both the abstract (high construal) and the concrete (low construal). Ultimately, then, perspective taking from such fluctuation in power creates the opportunity to enhance her contributions to her team's performance. As such, we suggest that the ability to take others' perspectives induced by power fluctuation will lead to a greater contribution to team performance.

Hypothesis 4a: Daily power fluctuation has a positive indirect effect on contribution to team performance via perspective taking.

Hypothesis 4b: General power fluctuation has a positive indirect effect on contribution to team performance via perspective taking.

Method

Sample and Procedure

Like other work that has investigated variability-related constructs similar to power fluctuation, such as justice variability and emotional labor variability (Matta et al., 2017; Scott et al., 2012), we used an interval-contingent experience-sampling methodology to examine our proposed relationships. We chose an interval-contingent (rather than an event-contingent) ESM design to facilitate a commensurate comparison of power fluctuation across employees (i.e., power fluctuation represents the same time intervals and number of data points for every participant, it is not at the discretion of the participant to decide what a reportable event is, and data on noncompliance is readily attainable). We recruited full-time working adults (i.e., working at least 35 hr per week, on average) that worked in an environment with coworkers and were willing to enlist one coworker to participate in the study with them. Our sample consisted of employees derived from a university alumni pool and respondents to online advertisements. Interested participants completed a registration survey that explained the purpose and requirements of the study and requested contact information for one coworker who would be willing to participate in the study. The coworkers were then emailed a link to a different registration survey that also described the purpose and requirements of the study. Participants and subsequent coworkers were only allowed to participate in the study if they both indicated that they had daily interactions with one another.

About 1 week after receiving the link to the registration survey, employees began the experience sampling portion of the study which included three daily surveys for two full work weeks (10 workdays). The surveys were delivered (in the employees' respective time zones) as follows: Time 1 at 8:00 a.m., Time 2 at 12:00 p.m., and Time 3 at 4:00 p.m. Employees were told to complete the surveys as soon as possible and that the surveys would close within three hours of distribution. Coworkers received one daily survey for two full work weeks (10 workdays) at 4:00 p.m. of their respective time zones. Employees earned $1.00 for each completed survey, along with various monetary bonuses for completing consecutive surveys ($1.00 per day bonus for completing all three daily surveys, $5.00 bonus for each week that they completed all

of the daily surveys, etc.). In total, employees earned up to $55.00 for completion of all daily surveys. Coworkers earned $1.00 for each completed survey and a $5.00 bonus for each week that they completed all daily surveys, for an earning potential of $20.00. This data collection was approved under the University of Georgia's Institutional Review Board (STUDY00006033: *Employee Relationships*).

Although 169 employees and 119 coworkers completed the registration surveys, individuals were not included in either the experience sampling portion and/or the final sample if (1) the employee and/or his or her coworker did not have a work schedule conducive to such a study design, (2) the coworker that the employee provided did not complete a registration survey, (3) the coworker reported no daily interaction with the focal employee (to assess his or her behavior), and/or (4) the coworker chose not to participate in the daily surveys. As a result, our final sample consisted of 103 employee–coworker dyads ($N = 206$). Of the 3,090 possible employee daily surveys (1,030 Time 1 surveys; 1,030 Time 2 surveys; and 1,030 Time 3 surveys), 103 employees completed 2,535 surveys (82% response rate). Of the 1,030 possible daily surveys, 103 coworkers completed 845 surveys (82% response rate). Employees were 54% female, with an average age of 37.98 ($SD = 8.88$), an average tenure in the current organization of 8.17 ($SD = 5.14$), and 64% Caucasian, 14% Asian, 11% Hispanic/Latino, 10% African American, or 1% other. Coworkers were 61% female, with an average age of 37.43 ($SD = 9.86$), an average tenure in the current organization of 6.78 ($SD = 4.56$), and 63% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic/Latino, 11% Asian, 11% African American, or 1% other. Participants were employed in a variety of industries including manufacturing, finance, education, health care, retail, and information systems.

Employees rated power in all three daily surveys to assess their fluctuation of power throughout the day.[1] In the end of day surveys, employees rated frustration and emotional exhaustion; and coworkers rated perspective taking and contribution to team performance.

Measures

All employee and coworker scales were answered using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), unless otherwise noted. We followed best practices in multilevel data for calculating reliability using two-level alpha, composite reliability (omega), and maximal reliability (H) at both the within- and between-person levels for each of our measures (Gabriel et al., 2019; Geldhof, Preacher, & Zyphur, 2014).

Within-person (day-to-day) average power and power fluctuation. Employees responded to the personal Sense of Power Scale developed by Anderson, John, and Keltner (2012) in each of the three time periods (i.e., morning, midday, and end of day). They were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the eight items based on how they felt in that moment. The instructions asked the employees to rate the statements "based on how they felt right then" (i.e., in that moment), so as to ensure they were not indicating their general or global feelings of power, rather than their current state of sense of power (for similar approaches see Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014; Judge & Ilies, 2004; Rothbard & Wilk, 2011). The instructions and items were identical for each of the three time periods so we could accurately determine the variability throughout the day. Example items include, "I can get people to do what I want" and "I think I have a great deal of power." We aggregated the daily responses to create the absolute mean level of daily power experienced by the employee. In accordance with Cole, Bedeian, Hirschfeld, and Vogel (2011), and because level and dispersion are not statistically independent, we controlled for employees' average daily power.

To determine the actual *fluctuation* of power throughout the day, we followed previous research on variability constructs (Eid & Diener, 1999; Fleeson, 2001; Matta et al., 2017; Scott et al., 2012) by calculating the standard deviation of the employees' responses to the Sense of Power Scale for the three different time points in a given day. Likewise, this operationalization of power fluctuation adheres to Roberson, Sturman, and Simons's (2007) suggestion that when modeling mean and variability in multilevel studies, "researchers may be better served by using standard deviation as a dispersion measure" (p. 585). We calculated the daily power fluctuation variable using only observations that included responses from all three time periods of the day from the participant, as well as the coworker's corresponding survey. We note that three observations is the typical number of observations sufficient to allow within-person variance to manifest and to be predicted (e.g., da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016; Trougakos, Hideg, Cheng, & Beal, 2014) and is a common cut-off used in research examining variability constructs specifically (e.g., Matta, Scott, Guo, & Matusik, 2020).[2] For the power items, the within-person two-level alpha was .72, omega was .72, and H was .73.

Between-person (person-to-person) average power and power fluctuation. To calculate general mean power, we aggregated the mean daily power variable to the person-level, which represents the mean level of daily power experienced by the employee across the 10 workdays of the study. Similarly, to calculate the general power fluctuation construct, we aggregated the daily power fluctuation variable to the person-level, which represents the general level of daily power fluctuation experienced by the employee across the 10 workdays of the study. For the power items, the between-person two-level alpha was .96, omega was .95, and H was .98.

Frustration. Employees rated frustration at the end of the day using four adjectives taken from the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, & Kelloway, 2000).

[1] We note that there were 31 out of a possible 1,030 days that had only one power observation, 92 out of a possible 1,030 days that had only two power observations, and 62 out of a possible 1,030 days that included all three power observations but did not have corresponding coworker responses.

[2] We recognize that calculating standard deviations can be sensitive to outliers. As such, we addressed the potential presence of outliers in two ways. First, we conducted a Grubbs test (Grubbs, 1969), which is a multiple construct (i.e., distance) technique used to identify outliers in a data set. This analysis found no outliers in our measurement of power (for similar results, see Cowen, 2012; Siegel-Jacobs & Yates, 1996). To corroborate this test, we also Winsorized our data to the first and 99th percentile (for similar results, see Gomulya & Mishina, 2017; Schepker, Nyberg, Ulrich, & Wright, 2018). We then ran our hypothesized model with the Winsorized data. The results of that model were identical to the results of the model with non-Winsorized data. As such, we concluded that outliers do not appear to be influencing our results.

Employees were asked to rate the extent to which the words describe how they felt in that moment. The four adjectives include, "frustrated," "angry," "unhappy," and "annoyed." The within-person two-level alpha was .83, omega was .84, and H was .84. The between-person two-level alpha was .98, omega was .98, and H was .99.

Perspective taking. We measured perspective taking using coworker ratings of Grant and Berry's (2011) four-item adaptation of the M. H. Davis, Conklin, Smith, and Luce (1996) perspective taking measure at the end of each day. Coworkers were asked to consider what transpired that workday and respond to the scale with the focal employee as the referent. Example items include, "On the job today, [name of focal employee] has frequently tried to take other people's perspectives" and "At work today, [name of focal employee] has regularly sought to understand others' viewpoints." The within-person two-level alpha was .86, omega was .86, and H was .84. The between-person two-level alpha was .98, omega was .98, and H was 1.00.

Emotional exhaustion. Employees rated emotional exhaustion at the end of each workday using 5 items from Pugh, Groth, and Hennig-Thurau (2011). Employees were asked how often they felt the five adjectives at their job that day using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*very often*). Example items include, "tired" and "exhausted." The within-person two-level alpha was .86, omega was .87, and H was .91. The between-person two-level alpha was .97, omega was .97, and H was .99.

Contribution to team performance. We measured contribution to team performance using coworker ratings of the Team Member Performance Scale from Griffin et al. (2007) at the end of each day. The scale contains three facets of team performance (i.e., team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity) with three items each. Coworkers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each item with respect to the focal employee's performance that day. An example item of team member proficiency is "Today, [name of focal employee] has communicated effectively with coworkers." An example item of team member adaptability is "Today, [name of focal employee] has dealt effectively with changes affecting your work unit." Finally, an example item of team member proactivity is "Today, [name of focal employee] has improved the way your work unit does things." The within-person two-level alphas for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were .84, .84, and .88, respectively, with an average of .85. The within-person omegas for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were .84, .85, and .88, respectively, with an average of .86. And the within-person H's for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were .87, .85, and .91, respectively, with an average of .88. The between-person two-level alphas for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were .98, .97, and .99, respectively, with an average of .98. The between-person omegas for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were .98, .97, and .99, respectively, with an average of .98. And the between-person H's for team member proficiency, team member adaptability, and team member proactivity were 1.00, 1.00, and 1.00, respectively, with an average of 1.00.

Analysis

We used multilevel path analysis in Mplus 7.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010) to test our hypothesized relationships. In order to minimize model complexity and avoid issues with nonconvergence, we followed best practice by modeling hypothesized Level 1 relationships using random slopes and nonhypothesized paths using fixed slopes (e.g., Baer, Matta, Kim, Welsh, & Garud, 2018; Gabriel, Koopman, Rosen, & Johnson, 2018; Ilies, Liu, Liu, & Zheng, 2017; Koopman et al., 2016; M. Wang et al., 2013). The Level 1 variables (within-person constructs) included daily mean power, daily power fluctuation, frustration, perspective taking, emotional exhaustion, and contribution to team performance. General power fluctuation and general mean power (between-person constructs) were modeled as Level 2 variables. In order to follow the recommendations of Gabriel et al. (2019) to estimate both within-person and between-person effects, we relied on group-mean centering when centering Level 1 predictors and grand-mean centering when centering Level 2 predictors in order to not conflate within-person and between-person variance (Enders & Tofighi, 2007).

To test mediation, we used the parametric bootstrapping procedure recommended by Preacher, Zyphur, and Zhang (2010). For mediation, we conducted a Monte Carlo simulation with 20,000 resamples to test a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect (see Koopman et al., 2016; Lanaj, Johnson, & Barnes, 2014; and M. Wang et al., 2013 for similar applications of this technique).

Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We first conducted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) to determine if the within-person constructs measured in our study were distinguishable from each other. We measured the within-person five-factor model using all our focal constructs—power, frustration, perspective taking, emotional exhaustion, and contribution to team performance. Consistent with its operationalization (Griffin et al., 2007), we modeled contribution to team performance by specifying three first-order latent constructs (team member proficiency, adaptability, and proactivity) as indicators of a second-order team performance factor at the within-person level. The results of the MCFA revealed that our proposed model fit the data well: $\chi^2(392) = 2062.848$, $p < .01$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .921, RMSEA = .071, SRMR (within) = .056. Moreover, all the indicators loaded statistically significantly onto their respective latent factors. We also tested our preferred model against alternative models. Specifically, we tested a model in which frustration and emotional exhaustion were combined as a common factor, and several models in which we paired perspective taking with each of the three facets of team performance. Fit statistic ranges from alternative models were as follows: $\chi^2(396) = 3091.834$–3908.771, $p < .01$, CFI = .834–.873, RMSEA = .090–.103, SRMR = .065–.075. Our preferred model demonstrated better fit than any alternative model we tested. These results establish the dimensionality and discriminant validity of our measures.

Results

Variance Components, Descriptive Statistics, and Correlations

We tested null models (regressions with no predictors) to partition the amount of variance residing at the within- versus the between-individual levels of analysis. The null models demonstrated that the within-individual level accounted for much of the variance in our focal constructs: 67% for daily power fluctuation, 39% for frustration, 49% for perspective taking, 35% for emotional exhaustion, and 37% for contribution to team performance. Considering the amount of within-person variance, these results confirm that a multilevel modeling approach is appropriate. Furthermore, the percentage of variability within-individuals of daily power fluctuation (67%) demonstrated the usefulness in our ESM study design. Most of the variance in daily power fluctuation resides at the within-individual level (i.e., individuals have days in which their power fluctuates a great deal and others where power remains relatively stable). Nonetheless, because 33% of variability in power fluctuation exists between-individuals, our data shows some individuals do generally experience more power fluctuation than others.

Test of Hypotheses

The means, standard deviations, and correlations are reported in Table 1. Figure 2 and Table 2 present the results of the multilevel path analysis testing our hypothesized relationships. We controlled for the employee's average (daily and general) power to demonstrate the effects of (daily and general) power fluctuation and our mediating mechanisms over and above the employee's power level. Hypothesis 1a predicted a positive relationship between daily power fluctuation and frustration. Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, power fluctuation was positively associated with frustration ($\gamma = .30$, $p < .05$). Similarly, Hypothesis 1b predicted a positive relationship between general power fluctuation and frustration. Consistent with Hypothesis 1b, power fluctuation was positively associated with frustration ($\gamma = .71$, $p < .05$). Hypothesis 2a (2b) predicted a positive indirect effect of daily (general) power fluctuation on emotional exhaustion via frustration. Our results showed a positive relationship between frustration and emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = .28$, $p < .05$). In support of Hypothesis 2a, there was a positive and significant indirect effect of daily power fluctuation on emotional exhaustion through frustration (.08, 95% CI [.009, .185]). In support of Hypothesis 2b, our results revealed a positive and significant indirect effect of general power fluctuation on emotional exhaustion through frustration (.20, 95% CI [.039, .431]).[3]

Hypothesis 3a predicted a positive relationship between daily power fluctuation and perspective taking. Our results demonstrated that daily power fluctuation was positively associated with perspective taking ($\gamma = .20$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 3a. Hypothesis 3b predicted a positive relationship between general power fluctuation and perspective taking. Contrary to our prediction, our results demonstrated a nonsignificant relationship between general power fluctuation and perspective taking ($\gamma = -.09$, *ns*). Hypothesis 4a (4b) predicted a positive indirect effect of daily (general) power fluctuation on contribution to team performance via perspective taking. Our results demonstrated a positive relationship between perspective taking and contribution to team performance ($\gamma = .26$, $p < .05$). In support of Hypothesis 4a, there was a positive and significant indirect effect of daily power fluctuation on contribution to team performance through perspective taking (.05, 95% CI [.007, .113]). However, testing for mediation between general power fluctuation and contribution to team performance via perspective taking, our results revealed a nonsignificant indirect effect of general power fluctuation on contribution to team performance through perspective taking (–.02, 95% CI [–.228, .158]). This relationship is inconsistent with the within-person level of analysis.[4] Taken together, these results demonstrate that, though similar in one regard (i.e., the power fluctuation to frustration relationship), there are differences between daily and general power fluctuation.

Discussion

Research on the implications of individuals' power in organizations and other social settings has increased dramatically over the last decade (Galinsky et al., 2015). The vast majority of the work in this space has examined power using static levels of power (i.e., high vs. low power in a given time period; Anderson & Brion, 2014; Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Galinsky et al., 2015; Schaerer, du Plessis, et al., 2018; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). We suggest that this method may be problematic as it seems to be inconsistent with the reality that many individuals face during their workdays (Flynn et al., 2011; Schaerer, Lee, et al., 2018). Indeed, individuals' levels of power are more likely to fluctuate over time rather than remain stagnant indefinitely (Foulk et al., 2018; Smith & Hofmann, 2016). To this end, we created a theoretical model which drew from the social distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013) and micro role transition theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001)

[3] We took several measures to ensure the distinctiveness of frustration and emotional exhaustion. First, from a face validity perspective, based on the construct definitions and items, we believe that these concepts are distinct. Second, as described earlier, we tested our preferred model against an alternative model in which we combined frustration and emotional exhaustion into one factor. The preferred model demonstrated superior model fit to the alternative model. Third, from a theoretical perspective, we concluded that, similar to other emotion variables and their manifestations (e.g., Fox & Spector, 1999; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), frustration should be separated from its manifestation (e.g., emotional exhaustion). Fourth, as seen in Table 1, the correlation between the two variables is .30, suggesting a moderate effect size, though certainly distinct variables. Finally, we reversed the causal order of emotional exhaustion and frustration and reran our model. Power fluctuation was not associated with emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = -.01$, *ns*). Thus, as we predicted, the effects of power fluctuation on emotional exhaustion flow through frustration in our data.

[4] We also tested our model for reverse causality. Specifically, we compared the non-nested reverse casual model to our preferred model using Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Bayesian information criterion (BIC; for similar examples testing reverse causality, see Jin, Seo, & Shapiro, 2016; Matta et al., 2017; Ou et al., 2014). Lower AIC and BIC values are favored when comparing models because the model with the smallest AIC and BIC is "the one most likely to replicate" (Kline, 2011, p. 220). The results of comparing the preferred model to the reverse causal model showed that the hypothesized model (AIC = 6243.28, BIC = 6456.55) had lower AIC and BIC than the reverse causal model (AIC = 6756.64, BIC = 6965.17), demonstrating that the primary model provided superior fit to the data.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Average daily power	3.78	0.26	—	−.22*	−.35*	.20*	−.45*	.43*
2. Daily power fluctuation	0.22	0.17	−.16*	—	.18	−.13	.26*	.00
3. Frustration	1.64	0.57	−.17*	.12*	—	−.08	−.13	.69*
4. Perspective taking	3.92	0.56	.08*	.05	−.02	—	−.15	.86*
5. Emotional exhaustion	2.16	0.56	−.10*	.01	.30*	.03	—	−.17
6. Contribution to team performance	3.94	0.41	−.02	.03	−.06	.36*	−.06	—

Note. Level 2 $N = 103$; Level 1 $n = 845$. Within-individual correlations are reported for Level 1 variables and are found below the diagonal. Level 1 variables are group-mean centered. Between-individual correlations are reported for Level 2 variables and are found above the diagonal. Level 2 variables are grand-mean centered. Mean daily power, daily power fluctuation, mean general power, and general power fluctuation are all comprised of the same variable aggregated to different levels.
* $p < .05$.

to help explain the occurrence and consequences of power fluctuation.

We used an experience sampling methodology and multilevel path analysis to test the hypothesized relationships of our theoretical model in a field setting. Focal participants were surveyed three times per day over 10 workdays, whereas one coworker of each participant was surveyed once a day for the 10 workdays. The findings of our study suggest that power fluctuation does indeed occur and has both positive and negative consequences. Furthermore, our results demonstrate that power fluctuation can lead to cognitive benefits but that those benefits may come at an emotional cost.

More specifically, daily power fluctuation can increase one's sense of frustration. Shifting back and forth between experiencing higher and lower power than others may come with certain micro transitions in terms of one's role that leads to frustration (Ashforth et al., 2000; Ashforth et al., 2001; Fox & Spector, 1999; Kahn et al., 1964; Meier & Spector, 2013; Spector, 1978), which can have downstream ramifications on individuals also (Fox & Spector, 1999; Harold et al., 2016; McCarthy et al., 2016; Spector, 1978). Our findings demonstrate that daily power fluctuation that leads to feelings of frustration take an emotional toll that ultimately manifests as emotional exhaustion.

Our results also demonstrate the positive relationship between daily power fluctuation and perspective taking. Individuals who experience power fluctuation inherently experience levels of power and social distance consistent with low-, middle-, and high-power others, which allows them to learn from and understand others in ways they may not have been able to otherwise (Parker & Axtell, 2001). Perspective taking can play a critical role in one's ability to boost team performance. Perspective taking can lead to enhanced cooperation and helping, among other positive workplace behaviors (Parker & Axtell, 2001). Our findings demonstrate that the cognitive gains associated with perspective taking that occurs as a result of daily power fluctuation ultimately manifest in greater contributions to team performance.

Additionally, our findings show interesting similarities and differences between daily (day-to-day differences in) power fluctuation and general (person-to-person differences in) power fluctuation. Specifically, individuals that generally experience more power fluctuation than other individuals generally experience more frustration as well, ultimately manifesting in increased emotional exhaustion. These relationships are consistent with our findings from the within-person level of analysis of power fluctuation, suggesting that power fluctuation, regardless of whether it is

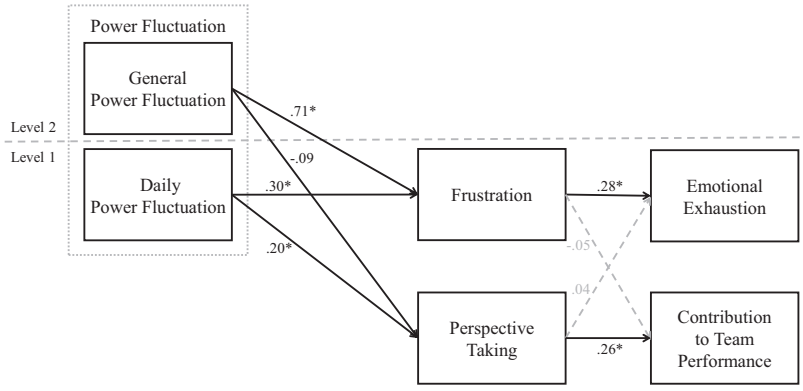

Figure 2. Results of multilevel path analysis for hypothesized model. Level 2: $N = 103$; Level 1: $n = 845$. Although not depicted, daily mean power and general mean power were entered as a control variable on all endogenous variables. * $p < .05$.

Table 2
Results of Multilevel Path Analysis

Variable	Frustration			Perspective taking			Emotional exhaustion			Contribution to team performance		
	γ	*SE*	*p*	γ	*SE*	*p*	γ	*SE*	*p*	γ	*SE*	*p*
Intercept	**1.68**	.06	.000	**3.92**	.06	.000	**1.56**	.21	.000	**3.00**	.16	.000
Level 1												
Control												
Mean daily power	**–.30**	.14	.028	**.20**	.09	.028	−.13	.09	.141	−.09	.06	.131
Predictor												
Daily power fluctuation	**.30**	.15	.046	**.20**	.09	.029	−.12	.14	.392	.02	.07	.753
Mediator												
Frustration							**.28**	.06	.000	−.05	.03	.135
Perspective taking							.04	.04	.267	**.26**	.04	.000
Level 2												
Control												
Mean individual power	**−.62**	.10	.000	**.34**	.10	.001	**−.50**	.10	.000	**.22**	.07	.001
Predictor												
General power fluctuation	**.71**	.30	.017	−.09	.37	.805	.53	.37	.148	**.49**	.23	.032
Variance (%)												
Level 1 pseudo-R^2		8.4			1.4			13.0			14.5	
Level 2 pseudo-R^2		39.8			16.4			55.2			57.1	

Note. Level 2 $N = 103$; Level 1 $n = 845$. Coefficients in boldface type are significant at $p < .05$.

routine (i.e., a between-person deviation) or abnormal (i.e., a within-person deviation), seems to be a frustrating experience.

Conversely, our general (person-to-person differences in) power fluctuation results did not show the same relational patterns with perspective taking and contributions to team performance as the daily (day-to-day differences in) power fluctuation results. Namely, the direct and indirect paths of general power fluctuation to perspective taking and contribution to team performance via perspective taking, respectively, were nonsignificant. This might suggest that, consistent with other research on reoccurring situations (Christian, Eisenkraft, & Kapadia, 2015; Crombez, Eccleston, Baeyens, & Eelen, 1997; Eccleston & Crombez, 1999), the habituation of power fluctuation may reduce the novelty of interacting with others of varying levels of power. Taken together, our results demonstrate that power fluctuation, whether on a daily or general level, comes at an emotional cost to individuals; however, the cognitive gain that individuals receive from power fluctuation at a daily level, does not appear to exist at a general level. Collectively, these findings have important and interesting implications for both theory and practices, as described in the following text.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Our study demonstrates several important contributions to the power literature. First, by introducing the concept of power fluctuation, we help transcend the consensus of previous research that power should be examined as a static variable. Historically, like most other constructs examined in the organizational and social sciences (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010), power has most commonly been studied using one's level of power at a given time (Anderson & Brion, 2014; Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Galinsky et al., 2015; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). Our findings show that, while controlling for level of power, power fluctuation occurs and has important implications for organizations. Not only does power fluctuation seem to be more closely representative of the reality that most individuals face in organizations, but it also explains incremental variance that otherwise could not be accounted for. In this way, we provide another example of how integrating temporal perspectives and constructs into a domain can change scholarly understanding of the phenomena, pushing research into entirely new directions (George & Jones, 2000).

Our study contributes to the expansion of the social distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013). The social distance theory of power was developed within the static power level paradigm. By introducing the concept of power fluctuation to its original set of core constructs and relationships, we help extend this theory by broadening its scope and potential capacity to explain relationships within the power literature. Furthermore, and as previously alluded to, we suggest that adding power fluctuation to the social distance theory of power's nomological network increases it generalizability because power fluctuation seems to be closer to what individuals actually experience over time, as opposed to an indefinite level of power. As such, we demonstrate the utility of the social distance theory of power outside of its original dichotomy of only high versus low static power.

Next, our integration of social distance theory of power with theorizing on micro role transitions also has valuable implications. Mayer and Sparrowe (2013) suggest that integrating theories is a useful way to make a theoretical contribution. We believe this is particularly reflective of our work here. Incorporating many of the basic tenets of micro role transition theory to theorizing on the social distance that power creates helps to clarify the important role that power fluctuation plays in the power literature. As an example, this integration helps to explain one way in which power influences perspective taking—that is, results for the relationships for power levels are mixed, but our study

demonstrates a positive relationship between power fluctuation and perspective taking.

Our study highlights both the positive and negative effects of power fluctuation. Research on power in general has demonstrated both positive and negative consequences. This may create a tension in the literature as to the valence of its outcomes and begs the questions when and why would power be positive and/or negative? Our results help to alleviate this tension by demonstrating a situation in which a power variable can simultaneously have both costs and benefits to the individual and organization. When power fluctuates, even in a given day, individuals tend to feel frustrated and emotional exhausted. With that said, daily power fluctuation also allows individuals to engage in perspective taking and, in turn, better contribute to their team's performance. We argue that it is the fluctuation of power itself that helps to explain the mechanisms behind both positive and negative consequences.

Finally, our study contributes to the relatively nascent discussion of differences between within-person and between-person relationships. Our results revealed some relationships that were similar across levels of analysis, and some that were distinct across levels of analysis. The fact that there are differences between levels, in addition to amount of variance in power fluctuation found at the within-person level (67%), demonstrates the importance, interestingness, and utility of studying power-related phenomena not only at a between-person level, but also at a within-person level of analysis (M. S. Davis, 1971; Gabriel et al., 2019).

Our study also provides practical implications for managers and employees of organizations. First, given the potentially positive and negative nature of the consequences of power fluctuation, managers should be aware of both these costs and benefits. It would be important to understand that employees' power does indeed fluctuate, even throughout a given day. Therefore, one is likely to feel a sense of frustration and emotional exhaustion (e.g., our model explains 13% of one's day-to-day experienced emotional exhaustion). However, managers must assess whether those costs outweigh the potential benefits of power fluctuation, namely perspective taking and contribution to team performance (e.g., our model explains 14.5% of one's day-to-day contribution to team performance).[5] If managers believe their employees are suffering too much from emotional exhaustion, they might consider creating an environment in which power fluctuation is less likely to occur (e.g., fewer opportunities to interact with others of varying levels of power), though this may result in decreased contributions to team performance. Likewise, if managers believe their employees could use a boost in their contributions to team performance, it might be prudent to create more opportunities for power fluctuation to occur (e.g., structure teams with employees of varying power levels), while still providing opportunities to recover from the emotional exhaustion that will likely ensue. Ultimately, it is important to note that the cognitive benefits of power fluctuation may come at an emotional cost.

Additionally, our study demonstrates the importance of managers monitoring levels of power fluctuation over time. If employees experience power fluctuation habitually, the daily cognitive benefits of perspective taking and contribution to team performance may be eliminated. It is also important to note that though the benefits decrease when power fluctuation becomes routine, the costs do not. Indeed, higher general levels of power fluctuation still may result in frustration leading to emotional exhaustion. Therefore, managers should take caution in the extent to which power fluctuation becomes an everyday occurrence.

Equally, it is important for employees to realize and understand the potential costs and benefits of power fluctuation. Those with generally high levels of power may feel reluctant to interact with those of lower levels of power than themselves in fear of damaging their status or reputation. Similarly, it is human nature to avoid role conflict, therefore individuals may be hesitant to seek opportunities in which their power may fluctuate. However, our results demonstrate that individuals—and their organizations—can benefit from power fluctuation during short periods of time, particularly in the extent to which they engage in perspective taking and contribute to team performance.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our study has many strengths, both theoretically (e.g., introducing a new concept, expanding theory) and methodologically (e.g., ESM study design, time and source separation). Notwithstanding our contributions to the literature, our study is not without some limitations. For example, some concerns over common method variance (CMV) may exist. To reduce the likelihood of CMV, several steps were taken. First, we provided time separation between power fluctuation and both mediators as well as time and source separation between power fluctuation and perspective taking (and those linkages make up the primary contribution of this work). Second, we used group-mean centering for our within-person effects, which eliminates several sources of common method bias, including social desirability and acquiescence (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Finally, we note that CMV is unlikely to explain the relationships involving variability constructs such as power fluctuation (Scott et al., 2012), which comprise the core findings of our research.

Second, given that our study introduces a new concept to the power literature (i.e., power fluctuation), the scope of our study remains limited. For example, in this study we examine the possible consequences of power fluctuation, leaving the potential antecedents of power fluctuation for future research. Though outside of the scope of this paper, the obvious next phase in this stream of research is to take a step backward and determine the possible antecedents of power fluctuation. Additionally, we recognize the potential for moderating relationships of power fluctuation. Though outside the scope of this study, one could argue, for instance, that individuals' regulatory focus may play a role in the consequences of power fluctuation. Extrapolating from the results of our study, promotion-focused individuals may feel the impact of power fluctuation on frustration less due to their more positive, advancement orientation compared with prevention-focused individuals (Higgins, 1997).

Our examination took place across two work weeks (i.e., 10 days), so it is therefore limited in its potential to explain power fluctuations across a greater timeframe. As previously mentioned, there may be reason to believe that power fluctuation over a longer

[5] These numbers are quite impressive when one takes into account that the variance explained in these constructs centers explicitly on daily variations from an individual's baseline (or average level), which are typically much smaller effect sizes (Lanaj, Kim, Koopman, & Matta, 2018; Matta, Sabey, Scott, Lin, & Koopman, 2020).

period of time may demonstrate incremental findings. For example, if individuals experience power fluctuation over the course of a year, they might become more prone to adequately deal with the potential drawbacks of such fluctuation. As such, future research may benefit from examining power fluctuations across longer time periods (months, quarters, years, etc.). We also note that we based our daily power fluctuation assessment on three assessments of power throughout the course of the day. Although asking employees to complete many more than three assessments per day in an interval-contingent ESM design is likely unfeasible, scholars could also study power fluctuation with other approaches, such as event- or signal-contingent approaches (Beal, 2015), that may provide alternative insights into the power fluctuation phenomenon.

Relatedly, some concerns over the reliability of intraindividual variability may emerge based on using three observations per day to construct our operationalization of daily power fluctuation. Although precedent supports the use of the three observation cut-off for variability constructs (e.g., Matta, Scott, et al., 2020), recent simulation evidence suggests many more observations may be needed for a reliable estimate of intraindividual variability (Du & Wang, 2018; L. Wang & Grimm, 2012). We note, however, these reliability estimates are attempting to establish if intraindividual variability is sufficiently stable to be a meaningful trait or construct of a person that can be used to predict other between-person differences. This type of stability is not germane to our research question. In fact, we do not want power fluctuation to be sufficiently stable over time. Rather, our research question hinges on power fluctuation varying on a day-to-day basis, such that this within-person variance in power fluctuation is predictive of outcomes that specific day. Moreover, if we were to apply the standards from those simulations (based on research attempting to establish that variability is stable enough to be considered a between-person difference), we would need to survey our participants likely between 10 and 80 times per day (L. Wang & Grimm, 2012) each day for the duration of our 2 week study, resulting in between 100 and 800 surveys per participant over the course of the study. Though this would be optimal, it is not feasible in our setting.

Additionally, the mean levels of power experienced by our sample were relatively high (3.78 for daily power and 3.74 for general power). This implies that the sample generally felt a high sense of control over valued resources on a daily level. This certainly does not confound our findings in this study because we examined power fluctuation controlling for level of power; however, it is worth noting that our sample experienced a high overall sense of power. Future research could look at the role power fluctuation plays in different mean levels of power. Would the consequences of power fluctuation be significantly different for a sample of individuals that experience a generally low sense of power compared with those of middle or high power?

A strength of our study design was the inclusion of multiple sources (i.e., focal employees and their coworkers) in gathering the variables in our theoretical model. Future research in this space may benefit from including a source from outside of the workplace to examine the potential spillover effect to individuals' family lives caused by power fluctuation. As our results demonstrate, daily power fluctuation can increase one's emotional exhaustion. Research in the work–nonwork interface has demonstrated a positive association between emotional exhaustion and work–family conflict (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, & Dollard, 2008; G. B. Hall, Dollard, Tuckey, Winefield, & Thompson, 2010). That said, it may be interesting to study the effects of power fluctuation at work in the home.

Another fruitful area for future research may be to attempt to further tease apart different types of power fluctuation. We chose to measure power over time relative to all of one's interaction partners (which is blends deviations in power relative to one specific partner with deviations across multiple interaction partners) because this is the way power is theorized and assessed in the power literature. Indeed, if we were to choose one or the other, our sense of power operationalization would ultimately not capture the aggregate sense of power as described and examined in the literature at large, resulting in a deficient measurement of the construct. However, there is reason to believe that power fluctuations may vary in their consequences depending on the referent. That is, the referent may serve as a boundary condition that moderates the effects of power fluctuations we have demonstrated here. For example, individuals' power may fluctuate from interacting with multiple interaction partners whose power varies. It may also fluctuate due to changes in the environment in which interactions occur. The detrimental effects of power fluctuation may be more pronounced when the power fluctuation occurs in the same dyad because the ambiguity in roles is heightened.

Relatedly, future research could explore potential differences between objective power fluctuation (as examined in this study) and perceptions of power fluctuation (a perceptual measure)—two systematically different forms of power fluctuation. We see important differences here, as perceptions do not inherently equate to objective measures (e.g., Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). Indeed, objective differences are more synonymous with a disaggregation of the Level 1 variable. Perceptions, alternatively, are more proximal and a likely lens through which daily variation is filtered. In fact, future research may benefit from examining whether perceptions of power fluctuation serve as filters or buffers of objective (within- and between-person) fluctuations in power. Although the above forms of variability are beyond the scope of this first exploration of power fluctuation, we see it as a fruitful boundary condition for future scholars to investigate.

An additional future study may be interested in examining the moderating effects of incorporating Ashforth and colleagues' (2000) "role segmentation-role integration continuum" (p. 475). Ashforth et al. drew a distinction between role transitions that involve highly segmented roles (i.e., roles with inflexible and impermeable boundaries) and role transitions that involve highly integrated roles (i.e., roles with flexible and permeable boundaries). Though our study remains agnostic to where the role transitions fall on the continuum, this additional detail may add interesting nuances to the outcomes of power fluctuations in future research.

As we previously alluded, a strength of our design was the use of a field study. This allowed us to answer the call of Schaerer, du Plessis, et al. (2018) to increase "organizational realism for social power research" (p. 200). However, we also note that our field study cannot claim causal relationships due to its very nature, though we did test for reverse causation and did not find any issues (see Footnote 4). Future research could also explore the power fluctuation phenomena in laboratory settings to better establish causal connections within the power fluctuation nomological net-

work. For example, scholars could manipulate conditions of power fluctuation compared with levels of power to determine the consequences of the fluctuations.

Finally, it may be beneficial for future scholars studying the effects of power fluctuations, perspective taking, or frustration to examine more nuanced versions of performance. Our study aggregates the three core aspects of the Griffin et al. (2007) performance measure (i.e., proficiency, adaptability, and proactivity); however, there may be subtle differences in the outcomes if the dimensions are separated that could lead to further contributions in this area of research.

Conclusion

Historically in the organizational and social sciences, power has been evaluated statically. This approach seems to be somewhat inconsistent with the realities that most individuals face at work. Thus, we introduced the concept of power fluctuation to better explain the phenomenon that one's sense of power varies throughout the day. Our results support the notion that power fluctuations leads to both positive and negative consequences. Specifically, daily and general power fluctuation increased frustration and emotional exhaustion, but daily power fluctuation also increased perspective taking and contributions to team performance. Our study extends theory, contributes to power literature, and offers important insights for both research and practice.

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