

The Pennsylvania State University  
The Graduate School  
The Mary Jean and Frank P. Smeal College of Business

**STATUS AS A PROMISING OPPORTUNITY OR AS A POTENTIAL THREAT?  
A MOTIVATIONAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING DYADIC STATUS IN TEAMS**

A Dissertation in  
Business Administration  
by  
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2015

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## ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I introduce an alternate view on status, deviating from the dominant assumption that all people pursue status. First, I build a conceptual framework that describes differences in team members' perceptions about their relative status in dyadic relationships. Specifically, I address three different motivational theories under the approach-avoidance framework: regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997), goal orientation theory (Dweck & Legett, 1988), and self-verification theory (Swann, 1983). These theories are applied to distinguish situations in which members perceive their higher status as an opportunity or threat and their lower status as an opportunity or threat. I also propose possible behavioral and team outcomes that follow members' perceptions about their dyadic status. Then, I conduct an empirical study to test a part of my conceptual framework. As expected, low self-esteem, higher status members demonstrate fewer helping behaviors and lower quality relationships with their dyadic partners than high self-esteem, higher status members. Furthermore, learning goal orientation amplifies the negative influence of higher status in dyads: Members showed the lowest levels of helping and information-sharing behaviors when they were higher status, low on self-esteem, and high on learning goal orientation. These findings support the new approach that this dissertation takes to status suggesting that not all people desire higher status.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	vi
List of Figures .....	vii
Acknowledgments .....	viii
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2 A Conceptual Framework: Application of Motivational Theories to Dyadic Status in Teams .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Status.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Definition of Status .....	8
Dyadic Status in Teams .....	10
Status as an Opportunity or a Threat?.....	13
<b>Building a Conceptual Framework on Dyadic Status in Teams.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Approach and Avoidance Motivation .....	15
Regulatory Focus .....	17
Goal Orientation .....	19
Self-verification .....	23
Size of the Gap in Status Rankings .....	26
Status Standing of the Dyad in the Team.....	28
Behavioral Outcomes.....	32
Team Outcomes .....	35
<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Implications for Status Research .....	37
Implications for Motivational Theories .....	39
Implications for Team Researchers and Managers .....	40
Conclusion .....	41
<b>Chapter 3 When Higher Status is Not Desired: Reactions to Dyadic Relative Status .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>42</b>

<b>Literature Review and Hypotheses Development</b> .....	<b>45</b>
Relative Status in Dyadic Relationships .....	45
Self-Verification Theory and Self-Esteem.....	46
Learning Goal Orientation .....	53
Team Performance .....	55
<b>Methods</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Participants and Procedures .....	57
Measures .....	58
Analytic Strategy .....	63
<b>Results</b> .....	<b>64</b>
Confirmatory Factor Analysis.....	65
Multilevel Modeling Results.....	65
Team Performance Results .....	70
Additional Analyses.....	70
<b>Discussion</b> .....	<b>73</b>
Theoretical Implications .....	73
Practical Implications.....	77
Limitations and Future Research .....	78
Conclusion .....	83
<b>Chapter 4 Discussion</b> .....	<b>84</b>
<b>Overview and Summary</b> .....	<b>84</b>
<b>Overall Implications</b> .....	<b>86</b>
<b>Future Directions</b> .....	<b>88</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>89</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>90</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: TABLES</b> .....	<b>102</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: FIGURES</b> .....	<b>113</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES</b> .....	<b>123</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

<b>Table 1</b>	Data Collection Summary .....	<b>102</b>
<b>Table 2</b>	Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations .....	<b>103</b>
<b>Table 3</b>	Variance Decomposition in Null Models.....	<b>104</b>
<b>Table 4</b>	Multilevel Modeling Results for Helping .....	<b>105</b>
<b>Table 5</b>	Multilevel Modeling Results for Information Sharing.....	<b>106</b>
<b>Table 6</b>	Multilevel Modeling Results for Quality of Dyadic Relationship .....	<b>107</b>
<b>Table 7</b>	Regression Results for the Effects on Team Performance .....	<b>108</b>
<b>Table 8</b>	ANOVA Results .....	<b>109</b>
<b>Table 9</b>	Means and Standard Deviations of Three Outcomes .....	<b>110</b>
<b>Table 10</b>	Mean Comparisons .....	<b>111</b>
<b>Table 11</b>	Multilevel Modeling Results with Two Status Dummies .....	<b>112</b>

**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1</b> Illustration of a 6-member Team.....	<b>113</b>
<b>Figure 2</b> A Conceptual Framework.....	<b>115</b>
<b>Figure 3</b> Motivational Distinctions and Dyadic Status Perceptions.....	<b>116</b>
<b>Figure 4</b> Hypothesized Model.....	<b>117</b>
<b>Figure 5</b> A Two-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status and Self-Esteem: Helping.....	<b>118</b>
<b>Figure 6</b> A Three-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status, Self-Esteem, and Learning Goal Orientation: Helping .....	<b>119</b>
<b>Figure 7</b> A Three-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status, Self-Esteem, and Learning Goal Orientation: Information Sharing.....	<b>120</b>
<b>Figure 8</b> A Two-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status and Self-Esteem: Quality of Dyadic Relationship.....	<b>121</b>
<b>Figure 9</b> Mean Levels of Helping, Information Sharing, and Quality of Relationship Across Groups.....	<b>122</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have too many people to thank, and I can never sufficiently express my sincere gratitude and appreciation in writing. Nonetheless, I want to say thanks to everyone who supported me along the way and to name a few here.

First, I thank my family, Mom, Dad, Wonkyung, Kyungwoo, Hyongsok, and Minsung, for always loving me and letting me know that you love me. I cannot ask for any better family members than you. I thank my advisor, Stephen Humphrey, for your invaluable guidance and constant encouragement. To my committee members, Lance Ferris, Aparna Joshi, and Susan Mohammed, thanks so much for your generous advice and inspiring insights. A big thanks to other faculty members and staff in the department for the warm kindness and thoughtful care that I felt from the beginning. I thank my colleagues in the department, including my cohort Kisha and Abhinav, for sharing both difficult and enjoyable moments during our time together in the program. I also want to thank my friends I met at Penn State, including Youngju, Seunghee, Yu, Sunmi, Eunju, Eunkyoo, Kyunga, Yeonji, Munkyun, and members from the KUAA, who stayed with me to work, eat, laugh, cry, chat, and whine together. Thanks to my friends in Korea; although you made me homesick, you provided even greater emotional support that helped me survive without you. My colleagues from SNU, who are going through the same struggle, thank you for sympathizing with me through our endless text messages. I should also thank my master's thesis advisor, Seokhwa Yun, for being a great mentor and leading me to such an incredible career path.

I am so blessed to have all of you who trust and support me. I would never have been able to complete this long, challenging journey without every one of you. Last, I thank God for always being with me and guiding every step of my life.



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Status hierarchies seem to exist universally in groups. Not only have researchers theorized how status ordering is determined (e.g. Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Berger, Rosenholtz, & Zelditch, 1980; Humphreys & Berger, 1981), but they have also examined the advantages of occupying higher positions and the prevalence of status competition in groups (e.g. Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000; Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Loch, Huberman, & Stout, 2000; Pettit, Yong, & Spataro, 2010; Van der Vegt, Bunderson, & Oosterhof, 2006; Wu, Loch, & Ahmad, 2011). Status, by definition, involves greater influence, respect, and prominence (Anderson, John, Keltner, & Kring, 2001), which provide sufficiently tempting benefits for many people to desire status.

According to status characteristics theory and expectation states theory, members' status in a group is determined by the states of their status characteristics that serve as the basis of performance expectations. Status characteristics include gender (e.g. Berger et al., 1972; Berger et al., 1980; Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Deaux & Emswiller, 1974; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001), race/ethnicity (e.g. Bayton, 1941; Coates, 1972; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Katz & Braly, 1933; Ridgeway, 1991), physical attractiveness (e.g. Anderson et al., 2001; Berger et al., 1980; Feingold, 1992; Langlois, Kalakanis, Rubenstein, Larson, Hallam, & Smoot, 2000; Lemay, Clark, & Greenberg, 2010), personality traits (e.g. Anderson et al., 2001; Bendersky & Shah, 2013), and nonverbal behaviors (e.g. Ellyson, Dovidio, Corson, & Vinicur, 1980; Hall, Coats, & LeBeau, 2005; Ridgeway, 1987; Ridgeway, Berger, & Smith, 1985).

In task-oriented groups such as those in work organizations, group members hold a collective goal to achieve higher performance and are pressured to anticipate the relative quality of each member's expertise and competence (Correll & Ridgeway, 2006). Thus, the status hierarchy involving the amount and quality of respect and admiration each member receives develops based on judgments regarding each member's contribution to completing the task (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). A person who is expected to perform better than others will gain higher status and thus enjoy more chances to participate, suggest ideas, make decisions, and exercise influence in a group. On the other hand, a member with lower performance expectations in relation to other members will have lower status and thus enjoy fewer opportunities to speak, interact, or perform in a group (Correll & Ridgeway, 2006). In short, members' status in task-oriented groups reflects their performance expectations and potential for success.

Because of such supposedly attractive advantages that high status may provide, the prevailing view in most status research has been based on the assumption that all people strive for status and want to be superior and get ahead of others (e.g. Adler, 1930; Hogan & Hogan, 1991). What has not been considered, however, is whether every member equally values such benefits and desires status. Individuals can differ in how much they want high status, just as they differ in a variety of other respects, including their dispositional traits and motivations. This alternate perspective on striving for status is critical in understanding the impact of status in groups, as differences in members' perceptions about their relative status in groups may prompt distinct reactions, both positive and negative, which may in turn greatly influence the whole group.

Thus, I address this relatively under-recognized gap in status literature and examine how group members' differences in status-striving affect their behaviors and relationships with other members. I believe that although many people perceive being relatively higher in status as a desired state, not everyone perceives higher status as so rewarding. Rather, some people experience more pressure and stress with higher status and behave unfavorably toward their

partners. Similarly, some individuals strive to escape from lower status, exhibiting potentially harmful behaviors, while others feel comfortable in a lower status, leading to positive reactions.

Thus, the main goal of my dissertation is to examine what makes people strive for status and what makes them yield status and to explore the consequences. To address this issue, I focus on dyadic relationships in teams. Whereas a team member's status involves evaluations that are shared by all team members, status formation starts with members assessing one another in one-to-one comparisons. Dyadic dynamics are embedded in the social relations in a group, so dyadic comparisons will inevitably reflect the shared perceptions of the group (Van der Vegt et al., 2006).

In this dissertation, I first build a conceptual framework that encompasses three motivational theories that can help in understanding variations in members' desire for status. Next, I study the effects of members' perceptions about their dyadic relative status on their specific behaviors and team performance. In turn, I operationalize my theoretical framework through the application of self-verification theory and goal orientation theory. These particular theories are employed to suggest a negative influence of being higher status, allowing us to think beyond the common understanding about status.

Specifically, in Chapter 2, I develop a theoretical model that incorporates individual differences in how members perceive their status in dyadic relationships. I apply motivational theories under the approach-avoidance framework to investigate how members differ in their desire for higher status. Based on the previous conceptualization of opportunity and threat (e.g. Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Milburn, Schuler, & Watman, 1983; Mintzberg, Raisinghani, & Theoret, 1976; Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981), I discuss how different theories help us explain why members perceive their higher status as an opportunity or threat and their lower status as an opportunity or threat.

First, I consider regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998), which argues that people differ in their motivational systems, specifically termed promotion focus and prevention focus. I

propose that because each regulatory focus involves a distinct type of a desired end state and sensitivity to outcomes, members with promotion versus prevention focus differentially perceive their status. Next, I describe goal-orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and introduce four types of goal orientation. Because performance approach, performance avoidance, learning approach, and learning avoidance goal orientations involve distinct goals and conceptions about the nature of intelligence, I argue that each goal orientation leads to divergent perceptions about relative status in dyads. Third, I discuss self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), which posits that people prefer to receive evaluations that are consistent with their self-views. Because status derives from judgments by others, I propose that members prefer their relative status to match their self-views, even if their self-views are negative.

In addition to applying motivational theories to conceptualizing dyadic relative status, my framework identifies multiple dimensions in dyadic status. That is, whereas members may perceive their dyadic status in simple relative terms (i.e., either higher or lower status than another member in the group), which is a purely dyadic-level comparison, members are also exposed to information that involves team-level evaluations. For example, the size of the status gap in a dyad, which is shaped by the difference in absolute rankings of two members on the overall team status hierarchy, and the status standing of the dyad, which is determined by the average of status rankings of the two members, may differ by dyad. I hence argue that these two additional characteristics of dyads may also significantly affect members' perceptions about their dyadic relative status.

In later sections in Chapter 2, I suggest behavioral outcomes as consequences of members' perceptions about their status. I propose that when members perceive their relative status more as an opportunity, they engage in more favorable behaviors toward their dyadic partners. On the other hand, when members perceive their relative status more as a threat, they are more likely to engage in unfavorable behaviors toward their partners. Furthermore, I relate dyadic behaviors to

team-level outcomes to address the potential impact that dyadic relative status may have on the whole team.

In Chapter 3, I operationalize a part of the framework I develop in Chapter 2 to test and support my argument in a real-world setting. Employing newly formed student teams, I apply self-verification theory to investigate specific dyadic outcomes of individual members as a reaction to their higher status. In particular, I argue that self-verifying relative status in dyads leads to more positive behaviors (i.e., helping and information sharing) and relationships than self-disconfirming relative status. I engage self-esteem as an indicator of self-views and study how it moderates the relationship between dyadic relative status and dyadic outcomes. In addition, I integrate goal orientation theory to discuss how a member's learning goal orientation may increase the proposed negative effects of higher status. Lastly, I investigate the influence of members' status perceptions on the whole team by examining the effects of their distinct reactions on team performance.

Chapter 4 concludes my dissertation by summarizing its main goals, propositions, results, and contributions. I discuss how Chapter 2, which develops a conceptual framework, and Chapter 3, which empirically tests a part of the framework, complement and supplement each other, strengthening the principal idea of this dissertation. By presenting both theoretical and empirical groundwork and a convincing argument in both, this dissertation makes notable contributions to the literature.

## Chapter 2

# **A Conceptual Framework: Application of Motivational Theories to Dyadic Status in Teams**

### **Introduction**

Members' pursuit of status in groups has been considered a ubiquitous tendency (e.g. Anderson, Hildreth, & Howland, 2015). Most research on status has focused on antecedents of high status (e.g. Anderson et al., 2001; Berger et al., 1980; Ridgeway, 1987), benefits attached to high status (e.g. Adler et al., 2000; Van der Vegt et al., 2006), or determinants or effects of status gains and losses (e.g. Bendersky & Shah, 2013; Pettit et al., 2010), all of which assume that people desire high status. In fact, competition for relative status standing seems to be pervasive in groups (e.g. Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Loch et al., 2000).

Although people may generally want to be perceived as better than others, individual members of a group may differ in how much they desire status, given that people hold different dispositional traits and motivational orientations. For instance, Hays (2013) found that women desire status more than men do, whereas men value power more than women do. His study, however, investigated differences in relative preference for status, which was still based on the idea that the desire for status exists in everyone. Unfortunately, the role of individual differences in status-striving has been almost completely ignored in the status literature, despite its vital potential to explain distinct reactions to relative status in groups. That is, although researchers have generally assumed that status is a universally valued resource, we can enhance our understanding about status by recognizing that not all people want higher status and some people

may prefer lower status. Therefore, I attempt to develop a conceptual model to investigate what makes individuals diverge in terms of their desire for status.

To address individual differences in how members perceive or desire status, I rely on the approach-avoidance motivation framework, one of the most widely accepted and richly documented motivation frameworks in guiding human behavior (Elliot & Mapes, 2005). Based on this framework, I focus on three theories: regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997), goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), and self-verification (Swann, 1983). These three theories are relevant because each can be conceptualized under and expanded beyond the approach-avoidance distinction. By examining each theory through the lens of approach-avoidance motivation, in addition to each theory's unique conceptual foundations, we can build broad overarching groundwork that helps us understand why people differ in their desire for status and provide distinct predictions about members' perceptions about relative status. Deviating from what we might generally believe of status (i.e. that all people want high status), I distinguish between situations in which members perceive their relative status more as an opportunity and situations in which members perceive their relative status more as a threat. Furthermore, given that each member's status is developed based on his or her own individual characteristics, such as gender and physical appearance (Berger et al., 1980), a motivational approach to studying status-striving is well suited as it removes concerns about individual characteristics having confounding effects on status development and perceptions.

In this chapter, I focus on dyadic pairs in teams. Whereas status-organizing processes and the development of status hierarchy in teams need to involve all team members, each member's assessment of his or her own status must start with one-to-one comparison with each of the other team members. As dyadic evaluations eventually determine the status hierarchy of the whole team, I start with rather simple relations in dyads. However, because each dyad is embedded in the team, status in dyads may be affected by the team's status hierarchy and become multi-

dimensional. Therefore, I examine status in dyadic relationships by incorporating the status structure of the whole team.

This chapter makes a number of meaningful contributions to the literature. First, I contribute to the status literature by proposing that not every member of a team strives for higher status and introducing variations in people's desire for status. This perspective provides insights into the impact of status in teams, as members' divergent perceptions about their relative status in teams may prompt distinct reactions. I also discuss different dimensions of dyadic status in the team context to describe the phenomenon in more detail and to extend our conceptualization of dyadic status in teams. Second, I contribute to the motivation literature – particularly to the approach and avoidance framework – by applying relevant theories to status gaps in teams. In addition to its extant application in diverse domains, the approach-avoidance distinction is further employed to explain how members may differ in their striving for status. Finally, I contribute to the team literature, as I attempt to identify possible behavioral outcomes of team members and resulting team outcomes that may follow members' perceptions about their dyadic relative status. The role of member composition in teams is emphasized as individual differences influence teams by promoting differential responses to status.

## **Status**

### **Definition of Status**

Although theorists have defined status in various forms, they tend to agree on three theoretical components of status in groups (Anderson et al., 2001). First, higher status involves more attention: One way to identify the superior status of a member is that he or she is the focus of attention among other members holding lower status within the same group (Chance, 1967).



Thus, higher status individuals are likely to become the center of attention and attain more prominence and visibility in the group. The second key component of status is that higher status involves more respect and esteem. Status fulfills one's need for prestige as high-status individuals are admired and looked up to by other members of the group. The third defining characteristic of status is influence: High status in the group provides control and power over other group members as well as group processes. For example, high-status individuals are given the right to make decisions for the group, direct other members' behaviors, and coordinate interactions among the members (e.g. Berger et al., 1972; Bunderson, 2003; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Ridgeway, Boyle, Kuipers & Robinson, 1998). In short, "status is the prominence, respect, and influence individuals enjoy in the eyes of others" (Anderson, Srivastava, Beer, & Spataro, 2006: 1094).

The definition of status implies various benefits attached to high status. High-status individuals are central, and salient, as they become the center of attention. They have stronger influence in a group, receive greater credit for a group's work, enjoy more opportunities to participate and interact, and have greater privilege over the decision-making process (Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Berger et al., 1980; Ridgeway, 1982; Pettit et al., 2010). High status allows control over resources such as access to technology information, choice of tasks, and help from others (e.g. Lease, Musgrove, & Axelrod, 2002; Van der Vegt et al., 2006). Research has also found that high status can lead to better personal well-being, including psychological and physical functioning such as satisfaction with life, lower stress, and higher sleep quality (e.g. Adler et al., 2000; Anderson, Kraus, Galinsky, & Keltner, 2012). Experiencing more respect, influence, and prominence in a group can produce an intrinsically more valued feeling, which derives from social recognition by others in the group (Emerson, 1962; Huberman, Loch, & Öncüler, 2004).

Another consequence of having high status involves power. Although the concept of status can be related to other constructs, many argue that it is tightly related to the concept of

power. In fact, people with power are usually high in status, and people tend to view those who hold positions of power in higher esteem (Lovaglia, 1995). Moreover, the status hierarchy in a group determines a structure for power use in the group. That is, the use of power by people who attain high status in a group is more acceptable than by those who fail to earn status, as socially validated beliefs relate differences in ability to differences in status and legitimate the use of power (Massey, Freeman, & Zelditch, 1997).

However, power can be distinguished from status. Power can be defined as “the ability to gain favorable outcomes at another’s expense” (Sell, Lovaglia, Mannix, Samuelson, & Wilson, 2004: 46), which, in other words, refers to “the ability to influence others despite resistance” (Anderson et al., 2001: 117). By this definition, power must be independent of expectations or attitudes of other group members, whereas status is determined by other members’ assessment and beliefs about an individual. Furthermore, power does not necessarily involve honor or require direct social interactions (Sell et al., 2004), which are core aspects of status.

### **Dyadic Status in Teams**

According to status characteristics and expectation states theory, an individual member’s status in a group is determined by group members’ beliefs about status characteristics that develop performance expectations of one another and shape interaction patterns of the individuals in the group (Berger et al., 1972; Berger et al., 1980; Humphreys & Berger, 1981). In other words, members of a group are ranked according to the states of their status characteristics (Berger et al., 1972), which serve as the basis of evaluations of other members and thus influence differences in social interactions. Because in almost any team the members differ in their individual traits that serve as status characteristics, status gaps between members and their differential levels of contributions and interactions are inevitable (Humphrey & Aime, 2014).

At the early stage of development where teams start to stabilize social structures, or after disruptive events such as a member change or role change, which may require redefining the current structure (e.g. Summers, Humphrey, & Ferris, 2012; see Gersick's 1988, 1989, punctuated equilibrium model), members need to evaluate one another to determine where they belong in the status hierarchy. As higher status for one person requires lower status for another (Bendersky & Hays, 2012), development of the status hierarchy in teams and perceptions of status gaps among members start with dyadic comparisons of status. Dyadic status has not been much examined in the previous literature despite its value in explaining status in teams, except for a few recent studies. For example, Joshi (2014) investigated how gender plays a role in explaining dyadic status, and Joshi and Knight (2015) examined the effects of members' demographic attributes that lead to dyadic deference.

Status gaps between two team members can be understood in a number of dimensions. First, status gaps can be simply perceived in relative terms. That is, one person may perceive him- or herself as either relatively higher or lower in status than another person in the team. That is, because members cannot identify absolute rankings of or absolute differences between one another until they finally establish the status-ordering of the whole team, the initial step is to simply evaluate whether one is higher or lower status than another team member.

Once the status hierarchy of the team is developed through the status-organizing process (e.g. Berger, 1992; Berger et al., 1972; Berger et al., 1980; Cohen & Zhou, 1991; Correll & Ridgeway, 2006; Humphreys & Berger, 1981), status gaps in dyads can become more complex and involve other team-derived factors such as size of the gap and status-standing of the dyad in the team. Because each dyad is embedded in the team, it cannot be detached from other members' standing in the team and each member in a dyad may differentially perceive the status gap based on his or her own status and partner's status-standing in the whole team. Figure 1 helps in understanding such dimensions by illustrating a team with 6 members where the status hierarchy

has been formed: 1 being the highest status member and 6 being the lowest status member. Figure 1-1 shows all possible dyadic pairs in a 6-member team.

First, dyadic status gaps can differ in size in terms of the absolute status rankings of the two members in the team. For instance, the status gap between the highest status member (Member 1) and the lowest status member (Member 6) may be more salient than the status gap between the second and fifth rankers in the status hierarchy, which may nevertheless be more prominent than the gap between the third and fourth members in the team. Figure 1-2 illustrates how pairs can differ in their absolute size of the gap in terms of status rankings.

On the other hand, whereas status gaps in different dyadic pairs can have the same absolute size in terms of rankings, the average status of the two members in a dyad can differ across pairs. For instance, the status gap between the highest status member (Member 1) and the second highest status member (Member 2) in the team will have the same absolute size as the gap between the third and fourth members. However, the relative standings of these two dyads in the team differ: The former dyadic pair stands relatively higher than the latter on the status hierarchy ladder of the team. Figure 1-3 shows possible pairs that can differ in their standing in the team, holding the same absolute size of gap.

Status gaps in dyads can also differ in both their absolute size and their average standing in the team. For instance, the status gap between Member 1 and Member 2 differs from the status gap between Member 3 and Member 6 in the team. The size of the gap is bigger in the latter pair, but the former has a higher average status-standing in the team. Figure 1-4 compares dyadic pairs that differ in both dimensions.

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### **Status as an Opportunity or a Threat?**

If status gaps exist in dyadic relationships in teams, how does a member perceive his or her dyadic status in relationships he or she forms with another member? Although members may experience disputes over status because of its benefits and their inherent tendency to strive for status, they may not all value their relative status in dyadic relationships in the same way. For instance, some members may enjoy being in a position that grants a great amount of respect and power whereas others may want to avoid being in a spotlight that provides too much attention and pressure. Similarly, although some may see being lower status as an opportunity to learn from the other person, others may view it as a threat as they lack power and influence.

Thus, I argue that team members vary in how they perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships. Specifically, members may see higher status more as an opportunity or threat and, similarly, they may view lower status more as an opportunity or threat. In the managerial and organizational decision-making literature, a similar opportunity-threat distinction is used to refer to situations that are perceived as positive with potential gains and that are perceived as negative with potential losses (e.g. Milburn et al., 1983). For instance, whereas Mintzberg and his colleagues (1976) regarded opportunity as a positive situation in which gain is possible, Staw and his colleagues (1981) saw threat as a negative situation with impending losses and costs. Dutton and Jackson's (1987) concepts of opportunity and threat also involve attributes of positivity versus negativity and possible gain versus loss, in addition to their notion of controllability. Therefore, drawing from previous works on opportunity and threat conceptualizations, in this chapter, I define an opportunity as "a positive situation in which gain is likely" and a threat as "a negative situation in which loss is likely."

When a team member perceives him- or herself as higher status, he or she may consider it an opportunity or a positive situation with potential gains, given that people have a need for

superiority and that high status provides valuable advantages. Scholars have found that people are willing to sacrifice themselves to attain high status (Flynn, 2003) or even to react aggressively to those who challenge their status (Porath, Overbeck, & Pearson, 2008).

However, not everyone perceives higher status as desirable. Rather, some people believe that high status involves a negative situation with disadvantages, such as more pressure and stress. Because of the perceived burden attached to high status, they may feel they lack control over the situation, which relates to feelings of incompetence (Thompson, 1981). For example, having influence in decision-making, which requires responsibilities and duties, can make some individuals feel rather helpless because they may believe they do not deserve such power and status.

How people perceive low status is expected to have similar distinctions. That is, although some people may be discouraged or angry that they are lower status than others, others may feel relieved to be lower status. For people who strive for higher status, lower status in a relationship seems like a threat, which entails loss and takes away their control and sense of competence. Others, however, may not desire to receive what is expected from attaining high status, such as more influence and power, and may prefer to work with someone who is higher status, and more competent, so they can learn from him or her and rely on his or her lead.

### **Building a Conceptual Framework on Dyadic Status in Teams**

To explore variations across group members in their striving for status, I develop a conceptual model that describes what determines individuals' perceptions of dyadic status, particularly in the team context, and how differences in status perceptions affect members' behaviors and team outcomes. Specifically, I take a motivational approach and employ the approach-avoidance framework, which has been theoretically and empirically validated

throughout its long history (Elliot & Mapes, 2005). I use motivational theories that can be conceptualized under (and also extended beyond) this framework and employ these theories as a conceptual lens through which to examine differences in members' perceptions about their dyadic status. Figure 2 summarizes the conceptual framework I develop in this chapter.

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Insert Figure 2 about here  
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### **Approach and Avoidance Motivation**

The principal framework I introduce to explain distinctions in people's desire for higher versus lower status involves approach and avoidance motivations. People are motivated to approach pleasure and avoid pain. This approach-avoidance distinction is one of the most basic and dominant motivational principles, and it has received a vast amount of attention from scholars in different disciplines (e.g. Atkinson, 1964; Bandura, 1986; McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953).

The approach motivation can be defined as “the energization of behavior by, or the direction of behavior toward, positive stimuli (objects, events, possibilities) whereas avoidance motivation may be defined as the energization of behavior by, or the direction of behavior away from, negative stimuli (objects, events, possibilities)” (Elliot, 2006: 112). Because the approach motivation involves sensitivity to desirable stimuli, it seeks new positive conditions while sustaining existing positive situations. On the other hand, the avoidance motivation involves sensitivity to undesirable stimuli and covers preventing new negative conditions as well as escaping from existing negative situations (Elliot, 2006).

As the approach-avoidance framework serves as a fundamental foundation on which other motivational distinctions depend and provides a basic guide to study human behavior (Elliot

& Covington, 2001), it can help in understanding how people differ in their desire for status. That is, for some people, higher status reflects pleasure, leading them to perceive it as an opportunity and to strive for it, but for others higher status provides pain, making them perceive it as a threat and avoid it. The same is true for lower status. Based on the idea that people have distinct appetitive and aversive desires under the approach-avoidance distinction, I examine three motivational theories that enhance our predictions about members' differences in their striving for status.

One of the motivational principles that can be conceptualized under the approach-avoidance framework is regulatory focus (e.g. Higgins, 1997). Regulatory focus theory emphasizes a distinction in sensitivity to positive and negative stimuli, which is consistent with the approach-avoidance framework (Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, Djurdjevic, Chang, & Tan, 2013). In addition, regulatory focus theory discusses how the approach-avoidance distinction operates by specifying differences in people's needs (Higgins, 1997). In this chapter, I apply regulatory focus theory by incorporating people's sensitivity toward stimuli and their differential needs in understanding people's perceptions about their relative status.

Another motivation theory that involves the approach-avoidance distinction in individuals is goal orientation theory (e.g. Dweck & Leggett, 1988); people's achievement goals and goal orientations can be differentiated by approach and avoidance motivations (Elliott & Thrash, 2002). Achievement goal orientation conceptualizations initially rest on the performance-learning goal distinction, but they also engage the approach-avoidance distinction (e.g. Elliot, 1999; VandeWalle, 1997). Based on both dimensions of the distinctions, I employ goal orientation theory (e.g. Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and argue that distinct goal orientations differentially explain members' perceptions about relative status.

Lastly, my conceptual framework also includes self-verification theory (e.g. Swann, 1983). Self-verification involves individuals' motive to maintain consistency between their



existing self-views and self-relevant evaluations. No extant research directly applies the approach-avoidance distinction in the self-verification literature even though self-verification involves both the approach and the avoidance desire as people may seek to maintain a consistent self-conception or to avoid self-disconfirming situations (Elliot & Mapes, 2005). I examine how self-verification theory can be applied to describe members' desire for higher or lower status, depending on their self-views.

Based on these three theories, I develop a conceptual model that explains how people differentially perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships. The three theories provide a great underlying basis for understanding status gaps by linking to the approach-avoidance framework and suggesting the enlightening prediction that not all members equally prefer higher status. In the following sections, I introduce each of the three theories and present propositions about members' perceptions about their dyadic status. Figure 3 illustrates the proposed relationships.

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Insert Figure 3 about here  
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### **Regulatory Focus**

Higgins (1997, 1998) introduced the concept of regulatory focus and identified two distinct motivational systems in which the approach-avoidance motivation principle operates, termed promotion focus and prevention focus. Each regulatory focus involves a distinct type of a desired end state. First, a promotion focus relates to approach motivation; it is concerned with attaining aspirations and accomplishments and involves an ideal self-regulation (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1997, 1998; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002; Shah, Higgins, &

Friedman, 1998). The ideal self-regulation system, or striving to achieve an ideal self, emphasizes attention to the presence or absence of positive outcomes such as successes and potential gains.

In contrast, a prevention focus relates to avoidance motivation; it is concerned with ensuring safety and security and involves an “ought” self-regulation. The ought self-regulation manages discrepancies between the actual self and the ought self-guides, or “individuals’ representations of someone’s beliefs about their duties, obligations, and responsibilities” (Crowe & Higgins, 1997: 118). Because ought self-guides function as minimal goals, which are the standards that *must* be met, a prevention focus is associated with sensitivity to the absence or presence of negative outcomes such as failures and potential losses (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1997, 1998; Higgins, Friedman, Harlow, Idson, Ayduk, & Taylor, 2001; Lockwood et al., 2002; Shah et al., 1998).

I argue that, based on regulatory focus theory, not every individual has the same self-regulatory concerns regarding status. Specifically, promotion-focused people have a strong need to achieve advancement and growth. This motivation is also present in dyadic relationships. As higher status relates to greater performance expectations, having higher status in dyadic relationships represents more potential to accomplish success and achieve an ideal self than the other member has. Moreover, favorable benefits associated with relatively higher status, such as greater influence and power in the relationship, become significantly salient to people with a strong promotion focus because they are more sensitive to positive gains. Therefore, people who are promotion-focused are expected to perceive their higher status in the relationship particularly as an opportunity as it involves favorable gains to which they will sensitively attend.

On the other hand, when people have a strong prevention focus, they are more sensitive to negative outcomes of having lower status in dyadic relationships. First, lower status implies lower performance expectations and a greater chance to fail, which can endanger a member’s desire for security and ought self-regulation. Furthermore, lower status entails less respect and

attention and thus less control and power in interactive processes such as decision-making. All these negative outcomes associated with lower status stand out for people with a strong prevention focus. Therefore, people who are prevention-focused are more likely to perceive lower status as a threat or as a negative situation with unfavorable losses that will be particularly influential to their perception of the relationship.

Taken together, I propose that regulatory focus plays a significant role in group members' perceptions of being higher versus lower status. Although people with a promotion focus (or prevention focus) are likely to perceive higher status more as an opportunity (vs. threat) and lower status more as a threat (vs. opportunity), a promotion focus leads members to be more sensitive to their favorable gains, and a prevention focus triggers members' sensitivity to their unfavorable losses. Thus, focusing on the status gap in relative terms between two team members, I suggest the following propositions that describe dyadic relationships between relatively higher status Member A and relatively lower status Member B.

***Proposition 1a:** The higher A's promotion focus, the more likely A is to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

***Proposition 1b:** The higher B's prevention focus, the more likely B is to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

## **Goal Orientation**

Another motivation theory that involves the approach-avoidance distinction in individuals is goal orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Goal orientation theory argues that people exhibit different perceptions and responses in the same situations because they hold different goals that shape their interpretation and reactions (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996). In Dweck and Leggett's (1988) initial work, two distinct goal orientations were identified: performance orientation and learning orientation.

First, performance orientation and learning orientation involve different goals. An individual with a performance goal seeks to demonstrate the adequacy of his or her ability and establish favorable judgments of his or her competence. Because this individual is more concerned about level of ability, the main question of concern is whether his or her ability is adequate or inadequate (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Information provided in the given situation is likely to be used to interpret an individual's own competence, and therefore the individual perceives his or her own poor performance on the task as proof of inadequate ability, which can create feelings of helplessness and discouragement. According to Dweck and Leggett (1988), performance-oriented people are likely to be entity theorists; that is, they likely believe that intelligence is a fixed, uncontrollable trait and thus are more concerned about securing positive evaluations of their competence and avoiding negative judgments.

On the other hand, an individual with a learning orientation is more concerned about increasing his or her competency as intelligence is conceived as a malleable, increasable quality (i.e. incremental theorists) (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliott & Dweck, 1988). The person's main concern centers on how to improve his or her ability or achieve mastery (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Whether or not the person succeeds on the present job is not critical, but the person continues to seek challenges and escalate effort as he or she perceives difficult conditions as good opportunities to receive useful feedback and improve in ability and skills (Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

Although Dweck and Leggett's (1988) work, as well as following research on goal orientation theory, conceptualized goal orientation as a two-factor construct (i.e. performance goal orientation and learning goal orientation), researchers started to support the idea that an approach-avoidance distinction was needed (e.g. Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; VandeWalle, Cron, & Slocum, 2001). Specifically, VandeWalle (1997) argued that a performance goal orientation includes both the desire to gain favorable judgments and the desire to avoid

unfavorable judgments about one's competence and distinguished between a proving dimension of performance goal orientation (i.e. performance approach) and an avoiding dimension of performance goal orientation (i.e. performance avoidance). The approach-avoidance distinction has also been applied to the learning goal orientation construct. Elliot and McGregor's (2001) study extended the learning goal concept by distinguishing between learning-approach and learning-avoidance goals. Whereas learning-approach goals indicate people's desire to master and increase their competence, learning-avoidance goals encompass people's concerns about losing their skills and abilities or failing to achieve the absolute requirements.

As previous studies advocated differential effects of goal orientations in various contexts (e.g. Alexander & van Knippenberg, 2012; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Ford, Smith, Weissbein, Bully, & Salas, 1998; Hirst, van Knippenberg, Chen, & Sacramento, 2011; Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007; Pieterse, van Knippenberg, & van Dierendonck, 2013; VandeWalle et al., 2001), I argue that different types of individuals' goal orientation also have distinct influence on how members interpret their status in dyadic relationships. Specifically, when performance-oriented members find themselves with higher status than another member, they are happy that their desire to acquire positive evaluations is fulfilled. Higher status in the relationship, which entails greater prominence, attention, influence, and expected performance, provides and represents an opportunity to prove their ability. In contrast, if performance-oriented members are involved in a relationship in which they are lower status, they are likely to become anxious and depressed and to experience a sense of shame (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), particularly because they believe their competence is difficult or even impossible to improve. Because they want to receive positive evaluations and avoid negative judgments about their competence, being lower status may directly conflict with their principal desire.

However, members with each dimension of performance orientation will have different concerns involving their competence: how to show their competence (performance approach) or

how to hide their incompetence (performance avoidance). That is, members with a performance-approach orientation are more concerned about proving their ability to others whereas those with a performance-avoidance orientation are more concerned about avoiding negative outcomes. Therefore, whereas higher status provides a favorable situation with positive gains and lower status represents an unpleasant situation that involves negative losses for both performance-approach-oriented and performance-avoidance-oriented members, the benefits of higher status are more salient to those who are performance-approach-oriented, and losses attached to lower status are more salient to those who are performance-avoidance-oriented.

In contrast, members with a learning goal orientation have different perceptions about their status. Because people with a learning goal orientation have a desire to advance their ability and believe their competence can be developed, being lower status than another person does not necessarily pose a threat to them. Rather, they may perceive the situation as an opportunity to extend their mastery or acquire new skills from higher status members. On the other hand, being higher status, or working with less competent members, may imply a threat, as there is less chance to learn but more chance that their skills may fade or diminish.

The benefits of being lower status are particularly salient to learning-approach-oriented members, as they believe working with someone who is expected to hold high competence and to exhibit high performance provides a great chance to learn and face challenging goals. Learning-avoidance-oriented people, on the other hand, may particularly believe that being higher status indicates that there is not much to learn in the relationship, and there may be a high chance to forget or lose skills or not perform as well as before when working with someone who is less competent and less knowledgeable.

Therefore, I develop the following propositions about performance approach, performance avoidance, learning approach, and learning avoidance goal orientations in relation to

members' perceptions about their dyadic status gaps. The propositions apply to dyadic relationships between relatively higher status Member A and relatively lower status Member B.

***Proposition 2a:** The higher A's performance approach goal orientation, the more likely A is to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

***Proposition 2b:** The higher B's performance avoidance goal orientation, the more likely B is to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

***Proposition 2c:** The higher B's learning approach goal orientation, the more likely B is to perceive his or her relationship with A as an opportunity.*

***Proposition 2d:** The higher A's learning avoidance goal orientation, the more likely A is to perceive his or her relationship with B as a threat.*

### **Self-verification**

Self-verification theory (Swann, 1983) argues that people have a strong desire to confirm their self-views, even if their self-views happen to be negative. The general idea of self-verification theory involves both approach and avoidance desires. Elliot and Mapes (2005) specifically argued that self-verification theory needs to be considered within the approach-avoidance framework, as people may have a desire to acquire consistent self-concepts or avoid self-disconfirming evaluations.

According to self-verification theory, just as people with positive self-views prefer to receive positive evaluations, people with negative self-views prefer to receive negative evaluations (Swann, 2011). People want self-verifying evaluations, even if they are negative, because they want their social world to be predictable, knowable, and controllable, maintaining things as they should be and guiding their behaviors accordingly (Swann, 1983; Kwang & Swann, 2010). Ample evidence suggests that people want to self-verify (e.g. Swann & Read, 1981a, 1981b; Swann, Hixon, Stein-Seroussi, & Gilbert, 1990; Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989). For example, people prefer to solicit self-confirmatory feedback. Specifically, Swann and Read (1981a) found that people who see themselves as assertive preferred more assertive feedback

whereas those who view themselves as unassertive preferred more unassertive feedback. People also choose interaction partners who support their self-views. For example, Swan and his colleagues (1990) found that participants, if not deprived of resources, preferred the self-verifying evaluator, even if the evaluator is unfavorable. Rudich and Vallacher (1999) also indicated that both participants with positive self-views (i.e. high self-esteem) and those with negative self-views (i.e. low self-esteem) preferred to choose the partner who provided self-confirming feedback.

The central tenet of self-verification theory that people have a strong desire to maintain their self-views can be applied to dyadic relationships because the benefits of self-verification are effective even if the evaluations involve just one person (Swann et al., 1989). First, people who have favorable self-views want to acquire consistency in their positive self-concept. One context that helps to confirm one's positive self-view is a higher status in a dyadic relationship. As discussed, being higher status implies that the member is more respected, enjoys more attention, has more influence, and receives higher performance expectations, which all reflect the value and worth of the member. These qualities contribute and correspond to positive self-views. This context provides an "opportunity structure" (McCall & Simmons, 1966), which satisfies the person's need to verify his or her valuable self-views and creates a self-confirmatory environment. In short, if a member holds positive self-views and finds him- or herself to be higher status in a dyadic relationship, he or she is likely to perceive the relationship as an opportunity that provides favorable benefits.

On the other hand, if a member has negative self-views, but has higher status than his or her partner in a dyadic relationship, the member will experience a discrepancy between his or her self-conceptions and the environment. The person with stable negative self-views may not be accustomed to being high status or receiving positive evaluations about his or her ability. This feeling of dissonance and conflict may lead the member to perceive the situation as disturbing



and uncomfortable. Despite the potential benefits of being high status, higher status in a relationship may create a threatening situation to those who believe they do not deserve such status.

Next, when a member with positive self-views finds that he or she is lower status in a dyadic relationship, the member will not be happy with the fact that the context directly conflicts with his or her own self-conceptions. People who hold positive self-views may become highly disappointed and distressed when they receive negative feedback, such as being perceived as inferior to their dyadic partners, and may find their relationships extremely destructive. More seriously, people may even resist the very existence of the relationship (Kwang & Swann, 2010), as such a relationship does not provide a social environment that supports their self-views and people may selectively choose interactions by entering or leaving relationships in an attempt to confirm their self-conceptions. In sum, when one person finds him- or herself having lower status than another in a dyadic relationship, the person will find the relationship more unfavorable and threatening if the person holds strong positive self-views.

Last, when a member with negative self-views forms a relationship with someone who is perceived to be higher status, this relationship provides an opportunity structure, or a self-confirming context. That is, the member finds the relationship psychologically comforting and anxiety-reducing because his or her own self-views and the evaluation from the situation match (Swann, 2011). For example, because members with strong negative self-views do not expect to be respected, prominent, or powerful in social interactions, being lower status in dyadic relationships is not a surprising or unsettling experience but a more coherent reflection of their self-views. Thus, based on self-verification theory, compared to others, if a member holds negative self-views, he or she is more likely to perceive lower status in a dyadic relationship as an opportunity or a positive situation with favorable gains, such as feelings of security and controllability.

In sum, I present the following propositions, which describe how self-verification theory can be applied to explain people's perceptions of being higher versus lower status in dyadic relationships. Again, the propositions involve dyadic relationships between relatively higher status Member A and relatively lower status Member B.

***Proposition 3a:** The higher A's positive self-views, the more likely A is to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

***Proposition 3b:** The higher B's positive self-views, the more likely B is to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

***Proposition 3c:** The higher B's negative self-views, the more likely B is to perceive his or her relationship with A as an opportunity.*

***Proposition 3d:** The higher A's negative self-views, the more likely A is to perceive his or her relationship with B as a threat.*

### **Size of the Gap in Status Rankings**

As discussed earlier, status gaps between two members in a team can vary by size based on the members' absolute status rankings in the whole team. Again, the status gap between Member 1 and Member 6 in Figure 1 differs in size from the status gap between Member 3 and Member 4. Such variations in the size of the status gap may influence members' perceptions about their dyadic status, suggesting additional effects to the proposed relationships above.

First, when promotion-focused members achieve higher status in a dyad, their positively perceived situation stands out even more significantly as the size of the difference in absolute rankings increases. For instance, when Member 1 in Figure 1-2 forms a relationship with Member 6, Member 1 may perceive the relationship as even more of an opportunity than when he or she is with Member 2 because there is a greater difference in status rankings of the two members in the former dyad. The bigger the gap, the more privileges and gains the higher status member can enjoy in the relationship. On the other hand, prevention-focused members will perceive their lower status in a dyadic relationship even more as a threat because the size of the gap in rankings

increases. The bigger status gap in rankings amplifies the salience of the disadvantages in the relationship. For instance, Member 6 may perceive his or her relationship with Member 1 more as a threat than his or her relationship with Member 5 as Member 6 will experience a greater feeling of incompetence and failure in the relationship with Member 1.

Members who are high in performance-approach orientation are also happier with their higher status in dyads if their partners are far below them in status rankings because the bigger the difference in status rankings, the greater amount of favorable judgments and achievements they can enjoy in the relationship. On the other hand, high performance-avoidance-oriented members consider their status to be a greater threat in the relationship with members who are positioned much higher on the status hierarchy in the team. The greater difference in their own rankings and higher status partners' rankings highlights their inferior competence even more significantly.

The effects of learning goal orientation are also strengthened as the status gap increases. For instance, highly learning-approach-oriented Member 6 may believe his or her relationship with Member 1 provides a greater opportunity to learn than his or her relationship with Member 5 because the bigger gap in status represents greater amounts of potential skills and knowledge to be learned. On the other hand, if Member 1 is highly learning-avoidance-oriented, he or she will be more hesitant to work with Member 6 than with Member 2. Working with a member who is too low in status in the team, and thus expected to be a poor performer, may lead to skill losses and knowledge shrinkage.

Status gaps also play a role in the effects of self-verification. Members with strong positive self-views are happier with their relationship and perceive it more as an opportunity when they are much higher in status rankings than their dyadic partners, as greater gaps in status provide more advantages, such as more power and influence. On the other hand, members with strong positive self-concepts may be even more discontented with their lower status in the dyad

when the gaps increase. Believing they deserve better judgments and evaluations, positive self-view members may perceive the relationship even more as a threat, so that they ally with someone who seems to be much better skilled and more respected in the team.

In contrast, members with strong negative self-views may perceive the dyadic relationship in which they have lower status more as an opportunity because they see greater gaps in the rankings. They are likely to experience more feelings of comfort as they work with someone who is much more competent and influential. However, when members with strong negative self-views form a relationship with someone who is much lower in status, their feelings of distress and uneasiness may increase and the relationship may seem even more uncomfortable.

In short, members not only evaluate their relative status in dyads, but also consider how much their own and their partners' status rankings stand apart in the status hierarchy of the whole team. Taken together, I propose the following, suggesting the role of the size of the status gap, with A indicating the higher status member and B indicating the lower status member in the dyad.

***Proposition 4:** The size of the gap between status rankings of A and B increases the effects of regulatory focus, goal orientation, and self-verification described in Propositions 1, 2, and 3.*

### **Status Standing of the Dyad in the Team**

Members' perceptions about their status in dyads may depend on the status standing of the dyad in the team. For instance, the dyadic pair of Member 1 and Member 2 in Figure 1-3 is placed higher in the status hierarchy of the whole team than the dyadic pair of Member 5 and Member 6. If the size of the gap is held constant, the status rankings of both dyadic partners may influence how they perceive their dyadic relative status. First, promotion-focused Member 1 will be happier with his or her relationship with Member 2 than promotion-focused Member 5 will be with Member 6 because Member 1 is even higher status than a relatively higher status member in

the team (i.e. Member 2) whereas Member 5 is just above supposedly the least influential member in the team (i.e. Member 6). Similarly, prevention-focused Member 2's lower status in the dyadic relationship with Member 1 is not as depressing as prevention-focused Member 6's perception about the relationship with Member 5 because the former dyad occupies higher standing in the team than the latter dyad, and Member 2's reference point (i.e. partner's status ranking in the team) is higher. In the latter dyad, Member 6 may be more dissatisfied with his or her relationship because he or she is even inferior to the other member who still stands quite low in the status hierarchy of the whole team (i.e. Member 5).

Second, the status standing of the dyad (i.e. average status ranking of two members) may also influence the effects of goal orientations on members' status perceptions. For instance, Member 1, who is performance-approach-oriented, is more likely to perceive his or her relationship with Member 2 as an opportunity than Member 5 would perceive his or her relationship with Member 6 to be an opportunity because being higher status than someone who is also regarded as relatively higher status in the team will more significantly highlight the benefits in the relationship. Highly performance-avoidance-oriented members, on the other hand, will perceive their dyadic relationship with the higher status member as even more of a threat because the partner's status decreases. That is, Member 6 is more likely to perceive his or her relationship with Member 5 as negative than Member 2 would perceive his or her relationship with Member 1 because being lower status in the dyad that occupies a low standing in the team and being lower status than someone who is also quite low in the status hierarchy only signifies that person's own inadequacy and incompetence.

Although members who are learning-approach-oriented are more likely to perceive their lower status as an opportunity, they will perceive it even more favorably if the status standing of their dyad is higher in the team. For instance, Member 3 is more likely to perceive his or her relationship with Member 1 positively than Member 5 perceives his or her relationship with

Member 3. There may be a number of reasons for this. First, Member 1 is supposedly the most knowledgeable person in the team, so there can be much more to learn from Member 1 than from other members. Also, because Member 3 is relatively higher in status in the team than Member 5, there are fewer members for Member 3 to learn from in the team than for Member 5. That is, learning-approach-oriented Member 3 is comparatively happier to work with someone who is higher in status because, for Member 3, there are fewer members from whom to learn in the team.

Learning-avoidance-oriented members will perceive their dyadic relationship with lower status partners as even more of a threat because their partners' status in the team is lower (thus, the lower standing of the dyad). For instance, Member 5 is more likely to perceive his or her relationship with Member 6 as negative than Member 1 is to perceive his or her relationship with Member 2 as negative. Compared to Member 1, for Member 5, there are more team members from whom he or she can learn. Thus, working with Member 6, who is expected to be the least competent member in the team, may seem to produce more opportunity to lose capabilities and less chance to master the requirements. For Member 1, on the other hand, it may seem relatively less destructive to work with Member 2 than with others as Member 2 is still the best available member in the team, excluding him- or herself.

The effects of self-verification are also affected by the status standing of the dyad. Members with positive self-views are happier as their dyad's standing increases in the status hierarchy. For instance, members with strong positive self-views are likely to perceive their relationship as even more of an opportunity if they are higher status in the dyad that stands high in the hierarchy and as more of a threat if they are lower status in the dyad that stands low in the status rankings. That is, Member 1 will be happier with Member 2 than Member 5 would be with Member 6 because Member 1 will be satisfied that he or she is still higher than another person who holds a relatively high position in the team, which more strongly confirms his or her positive self-views. Similarly, Member 6 would be more disappointed with the relationship with Member

5 than Member 2 would be with Member 1 as Member 6 realizes that he or she is still lower than another relatively low status member in the team (i.e. Member 5), which even more heavily disconfirms his or her positive self-concepts.

In contrast, when members have strong negative self-views, it is likely that they will be relatively more satisfied if they are lower status in the dyad that stands lower in status in the team. That is, a member who believes he or she deserves low evaluations may enjoy more feelings of comfort and relief when in the dyad that is relatively low status in the team and with someone who is also relatively low status but still higher than him- or herself. Therefore, it is likely that Member 6 with negative self-views will perceive his or her relationship with Member 5 as more of an opportunity than Member 2 with negative self-views would perceive his or her relationship with Member 1. On the other hand, members who have strong negative self-conceptions and higher status in dyadic relationships will experience greater feelings of discomfort and distress when they are with someone who holds relatively high status in the team. For example, Member 1 will perceive his or her relationship with Member 2 even more unfavorably, compared to how Member 5 would perceive the relationship with Member 6, realizing that he or she is still higher status than another relatively high status person in the team (i.e. Member 2), which even more firmly contradicts his or her negative self-views.

The following propositions refer to the effects of status standing of the dyad in the team on the impact of regulatory focus, goal orientation, and self-views with respect to members' perceptions about their dyadic status. A refers to the relatively higher status member and B refers to the relatively lower status member in the dyadic relationship.

***Proposition 5:*** *Holding the size of the gap constant, the status standing of the dyad between A and B moderates the effects of regulatory focus, goal orientation, and self-verification (Propositions 1-3).*

***Proposition 5a:*** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B increases, promotion-focused A is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

**Proposition 5b:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B decreases, prevention-focused B is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

**Proposition 5c:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B increases, performance approach-oriented A is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

**Proposition 5d:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B decreases, performance avoidance-oriented B is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

**Proposition 5e:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B increases, learning approach-oriented B is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with A as an opportunity.*

**Proposition 5f:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B decreases, learning avoidance-oriented A is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with B as a threat.*

**Proposition 5g:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B increases, A with positive self-views is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with B as an opportunity.*

**Proposition 5h:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B decreases, B with positive self-views is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with A as a threat.*

**Proposition 5i:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B decreases, B with negative self-views is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with A as an opportunity.*

**Proposition 5j:** *Holding the size of the gap constant, as the status standing of the dyad between A and B increases, A with negative self-views is even more likely to perceive his or her relationship with B as a threat.*

## **Behavioral Outcomes**

Situations perceived more as an opportunity versus more as a threat may prompt distinct behaviors in perceivers. In this section, I discuss possible behavioral outcomes that members may exhibit in response to their perceptions about their relative status in dyadic relationships. First, when members perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships as an opportunity, or a positive situation in which gains are likely, they are apt to demonstrate more positive behaviors. Because members are satisfied with their relative status and pleased with the relationship, they act



more favorably toward their partners. Furthermore, as they expect more gains and benefits in the relationship, they are more motivated to engage in behaviors that can potentially further improve their relationships.

One possible positive behavioral outcome is prosocial behavior, such as helping or organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Prosocial behaviors refer to “positive social acts carried out to produce and maintain the well-being and integrity of others” (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986: 710). When a person perceives a situation more as an opportunity, there is a greater chance that this person is more willing to go beyond his or her specified role requirements and voluntarily help others. For instance, if higher status members perceive their relationship as positive and beneficial to maintain, they are more likely to help their partners who are lower status and who are not expected to perform as well as they are.

Knowledge sharing can also be expected from members who are happy with their status. Knowledge sharing can be defined as a process in which “team members share task-relevant ideas, information, and suggestions with each other” (Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006: 1239). Whereas researchers have identified various factors that can foster knowledge sharing among members (e.g. Collins & Smith, 2006; Foss, Minbaeva, Pederson, & Reinholt, 2009; Quigley, Tesluk, Locke, & Bartol, 2007), it is likely that higher status members who perceive their relationship as an opportunity and are believed to possess greater task-relevant capabilities and skills will engage in knowledge sharing to help other members attain useful information and develop skills that are essential for successful task completion.

Another possible behavioral outcome is ingratiation. Ingratiation is a tactical form of impression management of which the intentional goal is to increase liking (Jones, 1964). Because people are more attracted to someone who seems to be attracted to them, this strategy is effective in evoking interpersonal attraction and liking (Stevens & Kristof, 1995). As ingratiation can generate positive responses from its targets, it is likely that when members perceive their

relationship as an opportunity, they may exhibit ingratiating behavior toward their partners. For instance, lower status members who are satisfied with the relationship may exhibit ingratiating behavior toward higher status members to enhance the higher status members' attraction and liking of the lower status member.

In contrast, when members perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships as a threat, they are likely to exhibit more unfavorable behaviors. Because members are not satisfied with their relative status in the relationship, they may become more hostile toward their partners. Feelings of anger or helplessness may stimulate unfriendly actions.

One anticipated negative behavior is social undermining. Social undermining refers to "behavior intended to hinder, over time, the ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and favorable reputation" (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002: 332). That is, people may intentionally attempt to bring down someone by engaging in interpersonal harm, such as belittling someone's ideas or withholding important information (Duffy et al., 2002). For instance, if members in dyadic relationships perceive their lower status as a threat, it is likely that they may try to diminish their higher status partner's ability to achieve success and prevent the partner from attaining a good reputation in their team.

Members also may behave unethically toward their partners when they are not happy about their status in the relationship. Unethical behavior can be defined as "any organizational member action that violates widely accepted (societal) moral norms" (Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Trevino, 2010: 2), such as lying, stealing, or cheating. Whereas researchers have found diverse antecedents of unethical behaviors (for a review, see Kish-Gephart et al., 2010), members' perceptions about their relationship may also play a role. For instance, if a lower status member strongly believes he or she should be in a higher position, that member may lie about group assignments, meeting schedules, or work progress to his or her partner to inhibit the partner's performance.

Avoidance behaviors can also be expected when people perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships as a threat. While avoidance itself does not involve direct harmful acts, if a member in the relationship continues to avoid interpersonal interactions with his or her partner, the behavior may eventually harm the dyadic relationship as well as the whole team. If higher status members in dyadic relationships perceive their relative status as very unfavorable and uncomfortable, they may engage in avoidance behaviors to escape from the relationship that gives them feelings of uneasiness and anxiety.

I develop the following propositions to describe members' behavioral responses to their perceptions about their relative status in dyadic relationships.

***Proposition 6a:*** *The more a member perceives his or her relative status in a dyadic relationship as an opportunity, the higher the likelihood he or she engages in favorable behaviors toward the other member in the dyad (e.g. helping, knowledge sharing, ingratiation).*

***Proposition 6b:*** *The more a member perceives his or her relative status in a dyadic relationship as a threat, the higher the likelihood he or she engages in unfavorable behaviors toward the other member in the dyad (e.g. social undermining, unethical behavior, avoidance).*

## **Team Outcomes**

Members' perceptions about their status in dyadic relationships can ultimately influence various outcomes at the team level. Variations in status perceptions in dyads can directly affect team outcomes, but they can also have an impact through members' behaviors directed toward dyadic partners. Although a variety of team outcomes can be affected, I provide a few notable examples, as it is beyond the scope and purpose of this work to address all possible connections.

First, as members perceive their relationships with other members more as opportunities, teams may enjoy higher levels of cohesiveness. Team cohesiveness can be defined as "the degree to which group members are attracted to other group members and are motivated to stay in the

group” (Summers, Coffelt, & Horton, 1988: 627). When more members perceive their status in relationships with other members favorably, they are likely to experience greater attraction to their team and greater motivation to remain part of the team. Furthermore, as members engage in more positive behaviors that can benefit their partners, it is also likely that the whole team’s level of cohesiveness will increase.

On the other hand, when members believe their status in dyadic relationships is unfavorable, teams may experience higher levels of conflict. Scholars have introduced different types of conflict, including task and relational conflict (e.g. Jehn, 1995), each of which leads to different consequences. Bendersky and Hays (2012) introduced another type of conflict, status conflict, which refers to a dispute people have over their status position in a group. Whereas it is likely that as members perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships negatively, they may encounter higher levels of task and relational conflict, status conflicts in particular directly relate to members’ unsatisfactory status perceptions. It is also likely that members’ hostile behaviors toward others, resulting from their unhappy perceptions about their status, will increase the levels of team conflict.

Team performance can be affected by members’ status perceptions, their consequent behaviors, or other team outcomes such as team cohesiveness and team conflict. As members perceive their dyadic status more as an opportunity, they may exhibit more positive behaviors such as more helping and knowledge sharing, which can enhance team performance. Despite mixed findings, high levels of team cohesiveness can also improve team performance (e.g. Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003) by creating a more enjoyable work environment and promoting coordination and productivity of the team (e.g. Summers et al., 1988). On the other hand, when members perceive their dyadic status more as a threat, they may engage in destructive behaviors such as social undermining or unethical behavior, which can ultimately prevent the team from functioning effectively. Furthermore, more conflict, particularly status conflicts

resulting from negative perceptions about dyadic status, may inhibit team performance (e.g. Bendersky & Hays, 2012).

In sum, the following are proposed, with possible linkages to team outcomes:

***Proposition 7a:*** *As more members perceive their relative status in a dyadic relationship as an opportunity, the team is more likely to experience favorable outcomes (e.g. high cohesiveness, low conflict, high performance).*

***Proposition 7b:*** *As more members perceive their relative status in a dyadic relationship as a threat, the team is more likely to experience unfavorable outcomes (e.g. low cohesiveness, high conflict, low performance).*

## **Discussion**

The conceptual model I develop in this research provides new insights into understanding status in teams. By distinguishing between situations in which higher status is perceived as an opportunity or a threat, and in which lower status is perceived as an opportunity or a threat, this new framework promotes the idea that status is not always a valued resource for everyone. Drawing from motivational theories, I describe how variations in members' perceptions about dyadic status are determined and drive distinct behavioral and team outcomes.

### **Implications for Status Research**

Research on status primarily assumes that all humans pursue status. Although I acknowledge that this view may be generally valid, I challenge the traditional view by arguing that individual team members differ in how much they desire status and that it is likely that some prefer to be lower status. Because status may not only entail advantageous benefits but also create potential stressors, based on their individual characteristics, members may differentially perceive their dyadic relative status.

I specifically discuss situations in which members perceive their status in dyadic relationships as an opportunity, a positive situation with possible gains, or as a threat, a negative situation with potential losses. This distinction is critical because members may exhibit behaviors as a reaction to their status perceptions, which may influence the whole team in the end. For instance, members who are happy with their relative status may perceive their relationship more as an opportunity and thus react more favorably toward their dyadic partners, thereby promoting positive team outcomes. On the other hand, members who are not satisfied with their dyadic status may believe their relationship is threatening and behave unfavorably toward their dyadic partners, which may result in detrimental team outcomes. Thus, if future research in status aims to clarify the real dynamics that members' status creates and identify possible resulting outcomes, researchers should consider the possibility that not every member in the team prefers to be high status and recognize variations in members' striving for status.

Another contribution this research makes to the status literature is that it specifies dimensions in dyadic status in teams. I argue that whereas a member can be simply higher or lower status than another member, dyadic status perceptions can vary by the size of the status gap, or how much two members stand apart in terms of their status rankings in the team. Furthermore, depending on where the dyad is positioned in the status hierarchy of the team, members' understanding of their dyadic status may also change. That is, members' own and their dyadic partners' absolute status rankings may jointly influence how they view their relative status in dyadic relationships. By addressing the multi-dimensional nature of dyadic status in teams and its underlying implications, this chapter provides a clearer understanding of how dyadic pairs perceive their relative status.

## **Implications for Motivational Theories**

The principal perspective this research takes on status departs from the approach-avoidance distinction suggesting that people want to approach positive stimuli and avoid negative stimuli. Whereas the approach-avoidance framework has been applied across a range of domains (e.g. animal learning, emotion, decision making), it has not been specifically employed to explain how people's perceptions about status vary and influence teams. Thus, this research highlights three theories under this framework and introduces the application of those theories to understanding dyadic status.

Regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997) was addressed to support the idea that people generally approach high status and avoid low status, but members with a promotion focus or prevention focus differ in the extent to which they perceive higher status as an opportunity and lower status as a threat. Goal orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) also provides a new approach to understanding status perceptions. That is, depending on individual members' goal orientation (e.g. performance approach, performance avoidance, learning approach, learning avoidance), members' desire for higher versus lower status may vary. This research strengthens the value of investigating multiple dimensions of goal orientation by further identifying their differential effects on status perceptions. Last, I aim to contribute to self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), which also involves both approach and avoidance desires (Elliot & Mapes, 2005). Self-verification theory can be extended to explain how members differ in their desire for high versus low status and to provide interesting predictions about members' reactions. In sum, the conceptual framework developed in this research contributes to the overall approach-avoidance motivation framework in general and to the three individual motivational theories specifically by not only tying the theories under one umbrella but also by expanding the utility of each theory to explore dyadic status in teams.

## **Implications for Team Researchers and Managers**

This chapter highlights the potential for research in teams. First, I investigate determinants of members' perceptions about and behaviors toward another member in the team by recognizing individual differences in members' preference for higher or lower status. This alternate view on status-striving will help team researchers better understand the real impact of status hierarchy in the team and members' consequent behaviors toward one another, which may result in critical team outcomes.

In addition, this research provides insights into studies in team composition. That is, as it is natural to have a status hierarchy develop in teams (Humphrey & Aime, 2014), it is valuable to examine the composition of members' attributes that minimize the destructive effects of status differences and help teams function more smoothly. For instance, a high level of status conflict may exist if the team is composed of only performance approach-oriented members, as they may all desire to be higher status. On the other hand, if a team can maintain a good balance between performance-oriented and learning-oriented members, the team may be less likely to suffer from unhappy members acting in hostile ways.

This research communicates new suggestions to practitioners with respect to managing team members. Team managers need to understand that not every team member prefers to be higher status. For instance, a member who is the most competent member in the team may not be the member who is most satisfied with his or her relationships in the team. Moreover, a member who is the least competent member in the team may actually act as a catalyst that inspires and energizes the whole team, as he or she may behave most favorably toward other members and engage in beneficial activities. Although managers may have difficulty anticipating all possibilities and composing an optimal team with members with certain characteristics, this research proposes potential ways to promote positive behaviors and enhance team effectiveness.



**Conclusion**

This research introduces the novel view on status that variations may exist in team members' desire for status, drawing from well-studied motivational theories. I hope to advance our understanding of status by exploring team members' perceptions about their dyadic status and by suggesting dyadic- as well as team-level consequences. The conceptual framework and propositions developed in this chapter can readily be applied and observed in empirical settings and provide a guideline to shape future investigators' inquiry into status.

## Chapter 3

### When Higher Status is Not Desired: Reactions to Dyadic Relative Status

#### Introduction

Status exists in any group in human society. Status has been recognized as a valuable resource, as it provides advantages such as stronger influence and power in a group and more attention and respect from the group members (Anderson et al., 2001; Berger et al., 1980; Ridgeway, 1982). People strive for status not just to receive the tangible benefits, but also to feed the intrinsic need to get ahead and advance socially (Anderson et al., 2001; Emerson, 1962; Huberman et al., 2004).

Most studies assume that all people desire high status, suggesting that status motive is universal and fundamental (e.g. Anderson et al., 2015). Despite a considerable amount of research on status, such investigators did not take into account the individual differences in perceiving status, although members can demonstrate varying levels of aspiration to status. For instance, some people may have a greater desire to achieve a higher rank in the social hierarchy, whereas others may feel more comfortable staying in lower positions. Such differences in members' striving for status may in turn influence their reactions to their status and prompt divergent outcomes. For some members, high status can be seen as an opportunity and a positive motivator to engage in favorable behaviors, whereas for others, high status may be perceived as a threat that reduces beneficial behaviors or even drives undesirable actions toward others.

Whereas some research has found negative effects of high status on behaviors such as helping, involving relational aspects such as commitment toward one another (e.g. Van der Vegt et al, 2006), I am interested in exploring the individual differences in members' desire for status

and the negative consequences of high status. Specifically, I apply self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), which provides a theoretical framework to understand what makes members more likely (or less likely) to strive for status. Deviating from the generally conceived argument that people want to obtain positive evaluations (e.g. self-enhancement theory), self-verification theory posits that people want to attain feedback that matches their self-views, thus suggesting the potential negative consequences of being at a relatively higher status. In this chapter, I examine two types of beneficial behaviors, helping and information sharing, and the quality of the relationships as possible outcomes of status perceptions and examine how these positive outcomes can be affected based on members' self-views (i.e. self-esteem) and relative status.

In addition, I introduce goal orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) to further examine how higher status may become more destructive. Given that learning goal orientation motivates individuals to extend their mastery and learn new skills, which is more likely when working with higher-status, more competent people, I expect that members' learning goal orientation may exacerbate the potential negative effects of being higher status. Particularly, when members' status does not match their self-views, their levels of learning goal orientation may play a greater role.

To study these effects, this study involves dyadic relationships of members in a newly formed group. Although the way groups act immediately after formation may differ from how they perform later (Humphrey & Aime, 2014), I want to examine members' reactions when the status hierarchy is just starting to develop. Status hierarchies in task-oriented groups are developed based on performance expectations of each member (Berger et al., 1972; Berger et al., 1980). That is, when the group is formed, a member who is expected to contribute significantly to the group's work is likely to achieve higher status, whereas a member whose performance expectations are not as remarkable is likely to occupy lower status. The group's status hierarchy involves evaluations of every group member, but individual members may need to engage in one-

on-one judgments of one another in dyadic pairs. Although relative status in dyads may not be as prominent as their standing in the whole group, each dyadic comparison provides a basis for their standing in the group's hierarchy and may eventually determine each member's status in the group. In fact, a deep understanding of dyads can subsequently help us investigate larger and more complex social relationships such as groups (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). To describe how status in dyads may influence the whole group in the end, I also examine the effects of members' reactions to dyadic status on team performance. I expect that members' distinct types of behaviors and relationships in dyads will help us predict team performance.

By examining the impact of relative status in dyads, this chapter makes a number of contributions to the literature. Most importantly, I examine members' reactions to their relative status in dyadic relationships, introducing factors that can produce a negative influence of being of higher status. Whereas previous studies mostly emphasized people's desire to attain higher status, this study contributes to the status literature by introducing variations in people's motivations for achieving higher status. Second, this study contributes to the self-verification theory literature by examining how the match or mismatch between members' self-esteem and their relative status affects their behaviors. The effects of self-verification are found to be valid at the team level (e.g. Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002), and I aim to extend the applicability of the theory by studying dyadic status in teams. Consistent with the theory, self-verification situations are expected to prompt more positive reactions, whereas contexts that conflict with members' self-views will invoke more negative responses. Third, this study also connects to goal orientation theory by proposing a member's learning goal orientation as an additional factor that may intensify the negative effects of being higher status. Lastly, this study contributes to the team literature as it focuses on members' status perceptions in newly formed teams and the effects of their behavioral responses on team performance. By examining reactions of members to their initial relative status in dyads, we can gain a better understanding about team members' behaviors

in new teams where the status hierarchy is starting to form. Furthermore, I provide insights into explaining the role of member composition in teams as I address how individual differences among members may ultimately affect the whole team through their distinct reactions.

## **Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

### **Relative Status in Dyadic Relationships**

Individual status can be defined as “the prominence, respect, and influence individuals enjoy in the eyes of others” (Anderson et al., 2006: 1094). Members who accomplish high status in a group will receive high attention and admiration from other members and hold more power in various group processes such as decision making and resource control. Status characteristics and expectation states theory (Berger et al., 1972; Berger et al., 1980) explain how individual status is developed. The theory argues that the beliefs about status characteristics (e.g. gender, education) shape the performance expectations of one another, which in turn determine the interaction patterns and status ordering of group members. When group members first meet, a status organizing process occurs. That is, at the beginning of the group formation when there is no established status hierarchy, members immediately start making evaluations of each other’s status based on their judgments of expertise and competence.

This process of anticipating the relative quality of each member’s contribution to the group’s work can be broken down into one-on-one assessments. While a person can compare him- or herself with multiple people at the same time, he or she has to conduct dyadic comparisons with each one of the members to figure out his or her own ranking in the hierarchy. In dyadic relationships, one member can be either higher or lower status than the other member. Whereas I acknowledge that two members can perceive themselves to be equal status, I focus on

dyads in which one member is perceived to be higher or lower status than the other, as status hierarchy formation is a ubiquitous process that occurs in almost all social relations (Anderson et al., 2001) and human nature allows people to evaluate their abilities by comparison with those of others (Festinger, 1954).

Depending on how members perceive their relative status in dyadic relationships, members' behaviors toward their dyadic partners may vary. That is, members who are satisfied with their higher status are more likely to engage in favorable behaviors toward their partners. On the other hand, members who are unhappy with their relative status in the relationship are likely to be more unfavorable toward their partners. In this study, I examine two types of behavioral responses. Specifically, I expect behaviors such as helping and information sharing to be more likely when members view their higher status in the relationship more as a positive situation in which gain is likely. For instance, if higher status is perceived to provide positive benefits that they value, such as feelings of recognition and self-worth, members may become more willing to put effort into aiding others. On the other hand, members may exhibit less helping and information sharing behaviors when they perceive that their higher status is not so desirable. For instance, members may not be willing to share knowledge with those whom they are not very happy to be with. In addition to behavioral reactions, it is also likely that members' perceptions about their dyadic relative status may affect the quality of relationships. The more positive perceptions there are about their status in a dyad, the higher quality of the dyadic relationship they will achieve.

### **Self-Verification Theory and Self-Esteem**

The prevalent idea that people strive for superiority may be consistent with self-enhancement theory (e.g. Jones, 1973; Pfeffer & Fong, 2005). Self-enhancement theory argues

that people have a strong desire to receive favorable feedback from others and want to be seen in a positive light. People embrace information that has positive implications for the self and avoid information that has unfavorable implications for the self (Sedikides, 1993). Self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), on the other hand, takes a rather provocative perspective and posits that people have a strong desire to sustain their self-conceptions. That is, people want to confirm their self-views, even if their self-views are negative. According to the theory, people with positive self-views prefer to receive positive evaluations, and people with negative self-views prefer to receive negative evaluations (Swann, 2011). For example, people who see themselves as likable want others to see them as likable, whereas people who see themselves as dislikable want others to see them as dislikable (Swann, 2011).

People want to maintain self-verifying evidence and evaluations because they want their social world to be coherent and predictable (Swann, 1983; Swann, 2011; Swann, Rentfrow, & Guinn, 2003). Stable self-views help people not only to anticipate others' reactions towards them but also to guide their own behaviors and become predictable to others as well (Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004). Thus, self-verification serves both the epistemic function of providing a feeling of psychological consistency and pragmatic function of organizing behaviors to establish smooth social interactions (Swann et al., 2003).

To satisfy their need to self-verify or to confirm their firmly held self-views, people strive to construct self-confirmatory *opportunity structures*, or “social environments that foster the survival of their self-views” (Swann, 1987: 1039). There are three strategies that people can use to create the self-verifying social environment. First, people can deliberately select certain relationships or contexts to enter, maintain, or leave (1<sup>st</sup>). For instance, people can selectively interact with others who provide them with self-confirmatory feedback. They can also end the relationship that provides self-disconfirmatory feedback and creates feelings of uneasiness and discomfort. Swann and Pelham (2002) found that college students look for a new roommate when

they believe their current roommate does not perceive them as they do. In the study by Swann, Stein-Seroussi, and Giesler (1992), both participants with positive self-views and participants with negative self-views chose a partner who held self-verifying (i.e. favorable and unfavorable, respectively) impressions of them.

Second, if people have stable self-views that they want others to hold of them as well, they need to “look the part” (Swann, 1983; Swann et al., 2003) (2<sup>nd</sup>). That is, they can systematically communicate their self-conceptions, both positive and negative, by displaying visible identity cues. Some effective identity cues include physical appearances such as clothes, hairstyle, jewelry, makeup, and body gestures or other artifacts such as houses, offices, or cars. Through this strategy, people can convey their self-views to others and secure a self-confirmatory social context (Swann, 1983, 1987, 2011; Swann et al., 2003).

If the first and second strategies do not work, people can still construct a self-confirming environment through their actions (3<sup>rd</sup>). For instance, people can act especially aggressively if they see themselves as aggressive and want others to hold the same views. In Swann and Hill’s (1982) study, participants who held dominant self-views acted even more dominantly if they were given feedback that they were submissive, and participants who saw themselves as submissive became even more submissive if they were indicated as dominant. By actively engaging in self-confirmatory behaviors, individuals can instill their self-views through others’ conceptions.

In this study, I focus on one of the most commonly studied self-concepts in social psychology; namely, self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to an individual’s global judgments of the self, which consists of both the competence dimension (i.e. the degree to which they see themselves as capable) and worth dimension (i.e. degree to which they view themselves as persons of value) (Cast & Burke, 2002). Thus, a person with high self-esteem has an overall positive evaluation of his or her own capability and value, whereas a person with low self-esteem will possess generally negative judgments of his or her own competence and worth.



Just as other previous works on status would argue, self-verification theory would suggest that members with high self-esteem would prefer to be in a relationship where they receive more positive feedback and evaluations. Members will enjoy relative higher status, which entails high performance expectations leading to greater attention, respect, and influence in the team. Particularly for those who have strong positive self-conceptions, achieving higher status in a relationship will be more desirable, as it makes their social world more predictable and coherent. Therefore, when members with high self-esteem realize that they are evaluated more positively and perceived as more competent than their dyadic partners, they are likely to perceive their relative status in the relationship more as an opportunity, which provides a positive situation with benefits and a sense of control over one's mastery and self-image (Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Thompson, 1981).

On the other hand, self-verification may diverge from the traditional view on status in their predictions about higher status members who hold lower self-esteem. Self-verification theory would argue that members with negative self-views would want their relationship partners to rather view them more unfavorably and would prefer to be at a lower status. There could be several reasons for this. First, members with negative self-views simply do not want their partners to see them positively because partners' positive evaluations conflict with their negative self-views, which will make their relationships and interactions unpredictable and inconsistent. Moreover, as people's self-views are developed by observing how others treat them and are reinforced as more and more confirming evidence accumulates (Swann, 2011), it is likely that members with firmly held negative self-views have in general not experienced much positive treatment from others in their lives. Thus, they may lack a sense of control over the situation and may not feel comfortable to be at a higher status than someone and receive great attention and respect. Therefore, when people with low self-esteem attain higher status, they are less likely to

enjoy the relationship but rather perceive it more unfavorably than their counterparts with high self-esteem.

The members who perceive their relative status more positively are likely to be more satisfied and engaged in the relationship, leading to more positive behaviors. One most likely outcome is helping behaviors. Whereas Van der Vegt and his colleagues (2006) found that less expert, lower status members are more likely to be committed and offer help to more expert, higher status members than vice versa, I do not primarily investigate the direct relationship between status and helping in this study. Rather, I argue that the potential negative relationship between status and helping may be mitigated if higher status members value status (i.e. high self-esteem) or aggravated if higher status members do not desire increased status as much (i.e. low self-esteem).

The nature of interpersonal relationships influences people's helping behaviors, and those who hold favorable perceptions about the relationships are found to be more willing to help (e.g. Anderson & Williams, 1996; Bowler & Brass, 2006; Venkataramani & Dalal, 2007). Furthermore, based on the group engagement model by Tyler and Blader (2003), people may exhibit discretionary cooperative behavior to secure their social identity and status within the group. Engaging in positive behaviors will help members sustain their relative standing and enjoy respect from others (Sparrowe, Soetjijto, & Kraimer, 2006). Thus, when members with high self-esteem who value and strive to maintain status achieve higher dyadic status, they are more likely to engage in helping behaviors toward their partners. On the other hand, if higher status members' self-esteem is low, they will be less likely to value the relationship and may perceive the relationship as rather unpleasant and disappointing, becoming less beneficial toward their dyadic partners.

Members' helping behaviors can also be viewed as a way to employ the strategy of developing opportunity structures discussed earlier. By helping their partners, members with high

self-esteem are able to maintain and enrich the relationship that verifies their self-view (x1<sup>st</sup>). Even though they may not be intentionally trying to look the part of a person who is of higher status (2<sup>nd</sup>) or act as they are of higher status (3<sup>rd</sup>), their helping behaviors may function as an identity cue or as a reflection of appropriate actions of someone who deserves more respect and higher status.

Taken together, I hypothesize the following about member A and member B in a dyadic relationship. In all the following hypotheses in this study, A refers to the higher status member, and B refers to the lower status member in a dyadic relationship.

***Hypothesis 1:** The higher the self-esteem of A, the more helping behavior A will engage in towards B.*

Similarly, members may vary in their level of information sharing behavior, based on their desire for status. Information sharing behavior, which could be used interchangeably with knowledge sharing (Wang & Noe, 2010), can be defined as a process in which “team members share task-relevant ideas, information, and suggestions with each other” (Srivastava et al., 2006: 1239). Based on the previous research on information sharing, it is likely that members who are higher status and possess more and better quality information may be reluctant to share their knowledge either because they view their possession of information as a source of power (e.g. Szulanski, 1996) or they have less motivation to manage their image or impress other members than lower status members in the team (e.g. Bolino, 1999).

I, however, argue that members' willingness to share information could depend on their level of self-esteem by affecting their perceptions about status. When high self-esteem members attain higher status in a dyadic relationship, this relationship will provide a self-verifying context, where their self-views match with the evaluations from the environment. Because members with high self-esteem may believe they deserve and qualify for higher status, they will be more confident in sharing their knowledge with lower status members and will be more willing to share

information in a relationship that provides favorable experience and self-verifying evaluations. Furthermore, because they would want to maintain the relationship that gives them higher status, they will be more motivated to engage in positive behaviors that can help them be seen as more likable. Thus, information sharing behavior may reflect self-confirming strategies, as it allows members with high self-esteem and higher status to maintain the favorable relationship (1<sup>st</sup>), be seen as competent, and act as though they deserve higher status (3<sup>rd</sup>).

On the contrary, when low self-esteem members are of higher status, it creates a disagreement between their firmly held negative self-views and their standing in the relationship. This inconsistency may lead to withholding the information, as these members may not feel secure or safe to share their knowledge with others (e.g. Chowdhury, 2005; Staples & Webster, 2008). Members may have come to hold low self-esteem through previous self-verifying processes that consistently confirmed their negative self-views, which may have shaped low confidence and trust in their own competence. Furthermore, when low self-esteem members are of higher status, they are less likely to perceive the relationship as favorable or desirable, and thus they may become less motivated to engage in beneficial behaviors that require extra effort. Thus, higher status members with strong negative self-views will be more reluctant to share their information with their lower status members than higher status members with strong positive self-views.

***Hypothesis 2:** The higher the self-esteem of A, the more information sharing behavior A will engage in towards B.*

In addition to behavioral outcomes, I also posit that the quality of the dyadic relationship will be affected by members' self-esteem. When members form a relationship that provides them with a self-verifying context with evaluations that are consistent with their self-views, they are more likely to value the relationship than when they were in a self-disconfirming relationship. For instance, when high self-esteem members are at higher status in a dyadic relationship, they are

more likely to perceive the relationship positively, treat their partners favorably, and act constructively toward their lower-status partners, which may all contribute to higher quality of the relationship. On the other hand, it is likely that, when low self-esteem members are of higher status in a relationship, they may not respect the relationship as much, behave more inappropriately toward their partners, or create more conflict, which may result in lower levels of cohesiveness or satisfaction between the members. I thus hypothesize the following about the effects of higher status members' self-esteem on the quality of dyadic relationship.

***Hypothesis 3:** The higher the self-esteem of A, the higher quality of relationship A will form with B.*

### **Learning Goal Orientation**

To further enhance our understanding about people's reactions to their relative status, I address an additional possible moderator that may increase the negative effects of being at higher status. According to goal orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), people differ in their goals, which shape their distinct response patterns. In the initial work on goal orientation theory, two different goal orientations were identified: performance goal orientation and learning goal orientation.

Individuals with performance orientations emphasize goals to demonstrate their competence and are concerned about the adequacy (or inadequacy) of their ability. Performance-approach-oriented people seek to establish favorable evaluations of their work whereas performance avoidance-oriented people are mainly concerned about avoiding negative judgments of their competence. People who adopt performance goals are likely to believe that intelligence is a fixed trait (i.e. entity theorists) (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Because they do not expect their intelligence to be increasable, they are mostly concerned about achieving positive evaluations and avoid negative judgments of their given ability.

In this study, I focus on the second dimension of goal orientation, learning goal orientation, to support an idea that higher status is not always desired. Individuals with learning orientations are more committed to extending their mastery and ability. They are more interested in learning new skills, and improving their competence than accomplishing outstanding performance, and thus they are more likely to find intrinsic interest in the task itself (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot & Dweck, 1988). As members with high learning goal orientation perceive intelligence as a malleable quality (i.e. incremental theorists), they believe their competence can be developed. Therefore, they embrace and prefer challenging conditions that can provide them opportunities to learn and improve their capabilities.

Because learning goal orientation motivates members to challenge difficult goals, it is likely that members with a high learning goal orientation may perceive higher status as less desirable. Being of higher status may signal that they are not facing challenging enough situations, and thus there are fewer chances to advance their skills. Relationships with relatively less competent others would hinder members from acquiring new knowledge and developing their competence. As lower status members are expected to be poorer performers, higher status members who are highly learning goal oriented may believe there is not much to learn from their partners, leading to negative perceptions about the relationship.

Whereas learning-goal-oriented members may still stay motivated to progress and learn as best as they can in the relationship, looking for the inherent joy in the task, the negative effects of learning goal orientation on higher status would be salient when there is a self-disconfirming situation. For instance, learning goal orientation will reduce positive behaviors, particularly when low self-esteem members find themselves at a higher status in a relationship. First of all, higher status is not even the condition that would attract people with low self-esteem who believe others are more knowledgeable and skilled, and this negatively perceived situation would be worsened if higher status members value opportunities to learn and improve their ability. In other words,

learning goal orientation would strengthen the negative perceptions of members with low self-esteem about their higher status. Hence, I hypothesize that, when members with low self-esteem are at a higher status in a dyad, their learning goal orientation will inhibit their helping and information sharing behaviors and harm the quality of their relationship.

***Hypothesis 4a:** A's learning goal orientation will moderate the effects of A's self-esteem on helping: A will engage in less helping behaviors towards B at lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of learning goal orientation.*

***Hypothesis 4b:** A's learning goal orientation will moderate the effects of A's self-esteem on information sharing: A will engage in less information sharing behaviors towards B at lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of learning goal orientation.*

***Hypothesis 4c:** A's learning goal orientation will moderate the effects of A's self-esteem on the quality of the relationship: A will show a lower quality relationship with B at lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of learning goal orientation.*

### **Team Performance**

As the dyads examined in this study exist in task-oriented groups, I now explore the influence of dyadic relative status on team performance by investigating the role of dyadic behaviors and relationships. First, helping behavior is expected to increase team performance, as intragroup helping is a valuable performance resource in teams, particularly when members differ in their status (e.g. expertness) (Van der Vegt et al., 2006). Podsakoff, Ahearne, and McKenzie (1997) suggested that helping behavior, especially by more experienced members, may increase group effectiveness by supporting less experienced members to more effectively and efficiently solve work-related problems. Furthermore, high levels of intragroup helping behavior create a more attractive and supportive group environment and improve group effectiveness and productivity (Podsakoff et al., 1997). In fact, many studies have found support for positive effects of members' helping behavior on team performance (e.g. Chen, Lam, Naumann, & Schaubroeck, 2005; Naumann & Bennett, 2002; Nielsen, Bachrach, Sundstrom, & Halfhill, 2012; Podsakoff et al., 1997; Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Maynes, & Spoelma, 2014; Van der Vegt, et al.,

2006). Thus, I argue that members' helping behaviors in dyads will enhance the performance of the whole team.

***Hypothesis 5a:** Members' helping behaviors will be positively related to team performance.*

Information sharing, which involves the provision of task-related knowledge and know-how (Wang & Noe, 2010), is also directly related to team performance. Information sharing enables employees to gain useful knowledge for their jobs and to develop skills that are necessary for their successful task completion. Previous research suggests that organizations become more productive when they are successful in creating the conditions for employees to share knowledge with peers (Argote, Beckman, & Epple, 1990). As knowledge is one of the most difficult resources for employees to acquire in a short amount of time or to imitate others' (e.g. Grant, 1996), teams that are able to exploit knowledge of each individual members are more likely to become effective and succeed in their work. Thus, information sharing in dyads will combine to improve the overall team functioning, and teams in which members in dyads share useful knowledge are more likely to show higher performance.

***Hypothesis 5b:** Members' information sharing behaviors will be positively related to team performance.*

The quality of the relationship between members is also expected to predict team performance. Prolific research has found that relationships between team members are critical in explaining members' work attitudes and performance (e.g. De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jordan, Feild, & Armenakis, 2002; Seers, 1989; Sherony & Green, 2002). First of all, individual members who maintain good-quality interpersonal relationships may find their work more pleasant and become more motivated to put effort into their roles. In addition, higher satisfaction and cohesiveness in dyadic relationships may lead to more synergistic interactions in the whole team, thus increasing team productivity. When members experience less conflict with one another,



teams may enjoy higher levels of social integration and achieve more effective communication among members, which may all enhance team effectiveness. Thus, I suggest that quality of dyadic relationships will help predict team performance.

***Hypothesis 5c:** Higher quality of dyadic relationships will be positively related to team performance.*

Figure 4 illustrates the hypothesized relationships.

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Insert Figure 4 about here  
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## **Methods**

### **Participants and Procedures**

Participants were undergraduate college students enrolled in six sections of a business course at a large eastern United States university. Students in this course worked in 5-6 member, mixed-gender teams for the entire semester. Therefore, participants were able to experience the formation of status in a new team by interacting with each other and completing several course assignments together. Participation was voluntary, while extra credit was given for participating in this study, and students were assured that their responses would be confidential. Participation in this study required completing a series of online surveys administered at four different times over the course semester.

After providing an introduction of the study to students in each of the class sections in the very beginning of the semester, students were sent a link to the first survey (Time 1) via email. The first survey assessed participants' individual characteristics including self-esteem and learning goal-orientation. About two to three weeks after the first survey was completed, which was after making sure that all teams were created, I sent out the second survey (Time 2). The

second survey asked participants to evaluate perceived status of each member in their team including themselves, to assess their status perceptions at the early stage of team formation.

About three to four weeks after the second survey was conducted, a link to the third survey (Time 3) was distributed. The third survey was structured to assess dyadic behaviors; participants were asked to rate how much each of their team members engaged in particular behaviors (i.e. helping and information sharing) directed towards them. In addition, the third survey included team-level items such as task interdependence. The last survey (Time 4) was sent out about three to four weeks after the third survey was completed. This survey was also based on dyadic relationships between team members. Participants were asked to provide ratings of the quality of relationships they formed with each of their team members. After the semester officially ended, the team performance measure was collected from each class. In total, my final sample included 402 dyads from 141 individual members (32.3% female) in 43 teams to be used in hypotheses testing analyses. Because the main purpose of my study was to test reactions to higher versus lower dyadic status, the final sample included only those dyads with members with different levels of perceived status (i.e. dyads with members with same or missing status were eliminated in the final sample). Table 1 summarizes data collected at each of the time period.

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Insert Table 1 about here  
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## **Measures**

### ***Dyadic Relative Status***

At Time 2, participants were asked to rate status of each member in their team including themselves based on the four-item scale. The scale adapted from Flynn's (2003) study was used,

including items such as “How well respected is this member in your team?” (1 = not respected at all and 7 = extremely), “How valuable are this member’s contributions to your team” (1 = not valuable at all and 7 = extremely valuable), and “How much influence does this member exert over decisions during team’s work?” (1 = no influence at all and 7 = extremely great deal of influence). Based on Anderson and his colleagues’ (2006) definition of status, I added one more item (i.e. “How visible is this member in your team?”; 1 = not visible at all and 7 = extremely visible) to encompass the whole dimension of status. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .900.

To test the hypotheses, I had to assign a score of perceived dyadic relative status to each directed dyad (i.e. a dyad with a focal and a partner member). For instance, if there is no missing response, each member in a 5-person team will be involved in four directed dyadic relationships, each of which he or she will have a separate score on his or her dyadic relative status. I obtained members’ own perceptions of their dyadic relative status (i.e. higher vs. lower status in the dyad) by comparing the status score each focal member assigned to him or herself to the score he or she gave to each of other member in the team. For each dyad, I created a dummy variable, for which I assigned a score of 1, if the focal member rated him or herself to be higher status, and 0 if the focal member rated him or herself to be lower status than the other member in the dyad. If the focal member rated the same on his or her own status and the other member’s status, a score of 9 was given for that directed dyad, and dyads with a score of 9 was eliminated in the final sample for hypotheses testing. From all the dyads that provided status information, 51% were higher status, 35% were lower status, and 13% were same status.

### *Self-Esteem*

Rosenberg’s (1965) 10-item measure was used to assess individual member’s self-esteem level. At Time 1, each member was asked to indicate his or her agreement on a 7-point Likert

scale (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). Sample questions include “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” and “I take a positive attitude toward myself.” Cronbach’s alpha was .897.

### ***Learning Goal-Orientation***

At Time 1, participants were asked to rate their learning goal orientation using six items from Elliot and McGregor’s (2001) achievement mastery goal orientation measure. Elliot and McGregor’s (2001) achievement goal construct measure was more relevant to my sample with college students than other more workplace-based scales, and was more comprehensive as their scale included both approach- and avoidance- dimensions of learning goal orientation. Sample items include “I want to learn as much as possible from this class” and “I worry that I may not learn all that I possibly could in this class.” Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree), and Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .827.

### ***Dyadic Outcomes***

Behavioral outcomes (i.e. helping and information sharing) were structured and measured in dyadic terms. At Time 3, each member was asked to rate how each of other members in the team behaved toward him- or herself. In other words, behaviors of focal participants toward partners in dyads involved partners’ ratings. The items for both types of behaviors were modified to indicate behaviors over the course of the time their team has worked together. All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = very strongly disagree and 7 = very strongly agree).

*Helping behavior* was assessed using five items from Settoon and Mossholder’s (2002) interpersonal citizenship behavior scale. Sample items include “This member helped me when I

was running behind in my work activities” and “This member went out of his/her way to help me with project-related problems.” Cronbach alpha for this scale was .953.

Each partner in the dyad provided ratings of *information sharing* behavior of a focal participant using a modified version of De Dreu’s (2007) scale. Three items used in this study include “This member exchanged information with me,” “This member informed me about work-related issues” and “This member provided me with new facts, insights, and ideas.” Cronbach alpha for this scale was .945.

At Time 4, the *quality of dyadic relationship* was also assessed by the focal participants’ dyadic partners. I used a four-item scale, rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = very strongly disagree and 7 = very strongly agree). The four items were “This member and I get along well with each other,” “I am satisfied with the relationship with this member,” “I would be willing to participate in another task with this member,” and “This member and I experienced emotional conflict (reverse-coded).” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .830.

### ***Team Performance***

Team performance was measured based on the grade each team received from their class team project. The task was to come up with a business plan to create a new venture company. Each team was responsible to give a presentation and submit a written assignment, and I combined these two metrics into a single measure of team performance.

### ***Control Variables***

Members’ gender may affect their responses toward their dyadic status, as gender is one of the salient characteristics that determine status evaluations (e.g. Berger et al., 1972), which

could affect how they perceive status. Thus, I included a focal participants' gender as an individual-level control variable. Furthermore, whether the dyadic partners are same or different gender can also have impact on members' behaviors toward their dyadic relative status. Thus, I also tried a dyadic-level control variable, by creating a dummy variable indicating whether dyads are with same- (coded 1) or different- (coded 0) gender members. Because results did not change significantly after entering an additional variable, I only included a focal participant's gender dummy variable (male = 0, female = 1) in the following hypotheses testing analyses.

In addition, I included task interdependence as a team-level control variable. The extent to which team members perceive their work performance depends upon others' efforts or skills may influence how they behave towards one another. Task interdependence was found to influence teams, particularly when there was diversity and differences among members (e.g. Joshi & Roh, 2009). Although all teams were given identical tasks (i.e. class assignments) in this study, it was still possible that the level of task interdependence could differ across teams and team members as task interdependence involves not only task-inherent characteristics but also interpersonal interactions such as the way individual members behave and execute their work (Wageman & Baker, 1997). Thus, my interest was not in the agreement among team members, but the average amount of interdependence within the team.

I obtained a score of task interdependence for each team by averaging the ratings of all team members, who provided their ratings on task interdependence, on the three-item task interdependence scale adapted from Campion, Medsker, and Higgs's study (1993). All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = very strongly disagree and 7 = very strongly agree), and sample items include "I cannot accomplish my tasks without information or materials from other members of my team" and "Other members of my team depend on me for information or materials needed to perform their tasks." Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .733. Again, the scale involved items that indicate how much each member perceives the interdependence between

him or herself and other members, rather than the overall team-level interdependence among all members.

In addition, status perceptions or reactions to status perceptions could also be affected by how many members are present in the team. That is, being higher status than another person in a three-person team could be different from being higher status than another person in a six-person team. To take into account such potential influence, I initially included team size as a team-level control variable. However, because the results did not change significantly after including this variable, and teams participated in my study did not differ much in terms of their team size ( $M = 5.221$ ,  $SD = .64$ ), I excluded team size in the final analyses and results I present below.

### **Analytic Strategy**

My data involved a three-level hierarchical data structure as directed dyads (Level-1) were nested within individual team members (Level-2), which in turn were nested within teams (Level-3). I thus tested my hypotheses via multilevel modeling for three-level models using MPlus 7.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). Multilevel modeling is superior to ordinary least square (OLS) regression when analyzing nested data, because OLS does not take into account the interdependence of lower-level observations nested within higher-level clusters, which can lead to underestimation or overestimation of standard errors for parameter estimates and test statistics (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992).

To test the hypothesized cross-level interaction effects of dyadic status (Level 1) and individual-level (Level 2) self-esteem variable, I treated the Level-1 random regression slopes of dyadic status in predicting dyadic behaviors as dependent variables of Level-2 self-esteem variable. I also specified that the residuals of slope and dependent variable to be correlated. Similarly, to test the three-way interaction, I created an interaction term of self-esteem and

learning goal-orientation, and treated it as a predictor of the random regression slopes of dyadic status in predicting dyadic behaviors. In addition, following Hofmann and Gavin's (1998) suggestion, I grand-mean centered predictors except for the dummy-coded dyadic status and gender.

Furthermore, to assess the model fit of each model estimated, starting from the null model with no predictors involved, I examined the deviance index, which was defined as  $-2 \times$  log-likelihood of a maximum-likelihood estimate. I report the deviance index for each of the model tested (i.e. null model, Model 1-Model 5 in Tables 4, 5, and 6); the smaller the deviance value, the better the model fit. I conducted a series of chi-square tests to examine the significance of difference in the fit between two models, as the difference in the deviance values is distributed as chi-square with degrees of freedom equal to the difference in the number of parameters estimated in each of the two models (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992).

For the latter part of my model, where I examined the effects of dyadic outcomes on team performance, I obtained the average scores of the dyadic outcomes for each team, and performed regression analyses using SPSS version 22.

## Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among all variables are presented in Table 2. The multilevel modeling results predicting helping, information sharing, and quality of dyadic relationship are presented in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6.

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Insert Table 2 about here  
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### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Before conducting hypotheses testing, one concern I had was that whether helping and information sharing behaviors were truly different from each other (correlation = .60). Even though helping and information sharing are theoretically different types of behaviors, I performed a confirmatory factor analysis to examine whether the two-factor model was significantly better than the one-factor model, using MPlus 7.3. The results showed that the two-factor model, where helping and information sharing were specified to be two factors fitted better ( $\chi^2(19) = 86.04, p < .001$ ) than a one-factor model with combined indicators of helping and information sharing behavior ( $\chi^2(20) = 844.85, p < .001$ ). The chi square difference test indicated that the difference in model fit was significant ( $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(1) = 758.81, p < .001$ ), suggesting that helping and information sharing are two distinct factors. In addition, I examined whether the quality of dyadic relationship variable is different from the other two behavioral outcomes, and found that three-factor model fitted significantly better than a one-factor model ( $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(3) = 1421.74, p < .001$ ).

### **Multilevel Modeling Results**

To conduct multi-level modeling analyses, I first had to insure that significant variance existed in helping, information sharing, and quality of dyadic relationship across individuals (Level-2) as well as across teams (Level-3). First, I estimated two-level null models with no predictors involved for the three outcome variables. I found significant between-individual variance in helping ( $\tau = .72, p < .001$ ), information sharing ( $\tau = .37, p < .05$ ), and quality of relationship ( $\tau = .44, p < .001$ ), indicating that 35%, 18%, and 41% of the variance in helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship, respectively resided between individuals. When I added in a team level in null models, I found significant between-team variance in helping ( $\tau$

= .53,  $p < .01$ ), information sharing ( $\tau = .41, p < .01$ ), and quality of relationship ( $\tau = .19, p < .01$ ). In this model, the findings revealed that 26%, 20%, and 18% of the variance in helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship, respectively, resided between teams, whereas 9%, 2%, and 23% variance in helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship, respectively, existed between individuals. Table 3 shows variance decomposition in null models for the three outcomes.

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 Insert Table 3 about here  
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### ***Helping***

Model 1 of Table 4 only includes a dyadic-level variable (i.e. a focal participant's dyadic relative status), predicting focal participant's helping behavior toward his or her dyadic partner. The results show that dyadic relative status has a significant negative relationship with helping ( $\hat{\gamma} = -1.15, p < .001$ ). That is, higher status in a dyad leads to lower helping towards the partner.

Level-2 (individual-level) predictors were included in Model 2 of Table 4 to predict the random intercept from the Level-1 regression. The results showed that self-esteem was significantly and positively related to helping ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.30, p < .01$ ), indicating that higher self-esteem of a focal participant led to more helping behaviors toward his or her dyadic partner. However, a focal participants' gender was not significantly related to helping ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.24, ns$ ). Model 3 of Table 4 exhibits results after entering a Level-3 control variable (i.e. task interdependence). The results showed that the level of task interdependence was marginally positively related to helping ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.36, p < .1$ ).

In Model 4 of Table 4, the random slope from the Level-1 regression was predicted by Level-2 self-esteem variable to examine the cross-level interaction between dyadic relative status

and self-esteem, testing Hypothesis 1. The results showed that the interaction was significant ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.40, p < .01$ ), and I plotted the pattern of this interaction, following Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken's (2003) procedure. As shown in Figure 5, whereas higher status generally decreases helping behaviors, this negative relationship is more prominent if a focal participant has low self-esteem. In other words, when low self-esteem members are placed in higher status in a dyad, they will exhibit less helping behaviors than high self-esteem counterparts. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Model 5 of Table 4 examined the three-way interaction stated in Hypothesis 4a. I entered learning goal orientation as a Level-2 variable in predicting random intercept and random slope from the Level-1 regression. In addition, I created an interaction term between learning goal orientation and self-esteem, and included it to predict random intercept and random slope for dyadic-level helping behavior. I found a significant three-way interaction between one Level-1 variable (i.e. dyadic relative status) and two Level-2 variables (i.e. self-esteem and learning goal orientation) ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.25, p < .05$ ). Figure 6 illustrates this three-way interaction pattern. First, the figure shows that high self-esteem members show greater levels of helping than low self-esteem members when they are higher status in dyads, as expected and confirmed by Hypothesis 1. This relationship, however, was further strengthened by members' learning goal orientation: when members had high learning goal orientation, helping behavior decreased to a greater extent for members with low self-esteem. Thus, Hypothesis 4a was supported.

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Insert Table 4, Figures 5, 6 about here  
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### *Information Sharing*

Model 1 of Table 5 shows results when only a Level-1 predictor (i.e. dyadic relative status) was entered into the null model. Dyadic relative status was found to be significantly and negatively related to information sharing ( $\hat{\gamma} = -0.45, p < .05$ ). That is, members with lower dyadic status showed more information sharing toward their dyadic partners than those with higher dyadic status.

Self-esteem and focal participants' gender were included in Model 2 of Table 5 as Level-2 predictors in predicting the random intercept from the Level-1 regression. The results showed that self-esteem was significantly and positively related to information sharing ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.22, p < .05$ ), indicating that members with higher self-esteem engage in more information sharing than those with lower self-esteem. Focal participants' gender, however, was not significantly related to information sharing ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.16, ns$ ). Model 3 of Table 5 includes task interdependence as a Level-3 control variable, which was only marginally significantly related to information sharing ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.40, p < .1$ ).

Model 4 of Table 5 tested Hypothesis 2, as the random slope from the Level-1 regression was predicted by Level-2 self-esteem variable. The results showed that the moderating effect of self-esteem on the relationship between relative status and information sharing was not significant ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.07, ns$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

The three-way interaction was tested in Model 5 of Table 5. The results showed that the three-way interaction (i.e. interaction term between learning goal orientation and self-esteem predicting the slope from the Level-1 regression) was significant ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.28, p < .05$ ). This interaction pattern is depicted in Figure 7. As expected, the figure shows that members with low self-esteem and high learning goal orientation showed the greatest level of decrease in their

information sharing behaviors as they move from lower status to higher status in the dyad. Thus, Hypothesis 4b was supported.

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 Insert Table 5, Figure 7 about here  
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### ***Quality of Dyadic Relationship***

Dyadic relative status was entered into the null model for the quality of dyadic relationship in Model 1 of Table 6. The results showed the significant negative effects of status on the quality of dyadic relationship ( $\hat{\gamma} = -0.68, p < .001$ ). That is, members with higher status showed lower quality of their dyadic relationship.

In Model 2 of Table 6, two Level-2 variables were added. Self-esteem had significant positive effects on the quality of the dyadic relationship ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.20, p < .001$ ). The higher the focal participant's self-esteem, the higher quality of the relationship the dyadic partner perceived. Furthermore, focal participant's gender also had significant effects on the quality of the relationship ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.40, p < .001$ ), indicating that female focal participants were more likely to have more positive dyadic relationships. Model 3 of Table 6 included a Level-3 control variable (i.e. task interdependence), which was not significantly related to the quality of dyadic relationships ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.19, ns$ ).

Model 4 of Table 6 was employed to test Hypothesis 3. As expected, self-esteem was significantly related to the dyadic relative status–quality of relationship slope ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.20, p < .05$ ). Figure 8 illustrates the pattern of this interaction, showing that the negative relationship between status and quality of relationship was mitigated by self-esteem. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Lastly, Model 5 of Table 6 tested the three-way interaction stated in Hypothesis 4c. Learning goal orientation and its interaction term with self-esteem were included to predict the

random intercept and random slope from the Level-1 regression (i.e. dyadic relative status predicting the quality of relationship). The results showed that the interaction term between learning goal orientation and self-esteem predicting the random slope was not significant ( $\hat{\gamma} = 0.04, ns$ ), providing no support for Hypothesis 4c.

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 Insert Table 6, Figure 8 about here  
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### **Team Performance Results**

Hypothesis 5a-5c stated that member's dyadic helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship would positively affect team performance. To test these effects, for each team I averaged helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship in dyads in which focal participants displayed either higher or lower status. That is, only those who were included in the final sample for multilevel modeling was considered in this analysis. The results, however, indicated no significant effects of any of the three responses on team performance (helping:  $\beta = .28, p = ns$ ; information sharing:  $\beta = .23, p = ns$ ; quality of relationship:  $\beta = -.01, p = ns$ ), showing no support for Hypothesis 5 (see Model A of Table 7).

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 Insert Table 7 about here  
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### **Additional Analyses**

Because my hypotheses involving dyadic relative status necessitated focal participants who are either higher or lower status, dyads in which focal members either did not provide information about status or exhibited same status as their dyadic partners were excluded in the multilevel modeling analyses. To more broadly explore and understand the effects of the three

types of outcomes on team performance, I conducted a series of additional analyses. Among dyads that carried information about at least one of focal members' helping, information sharing, or quality of relationships, I selected those that were excluded in the multilevel modeling analyses (Model B of Table 7). Model C of Table 7 included dyads that were excluded in the multilevel modeling because focal members rated themselves as same status as their partners. Lastly, all dyads (Model D of Table 7), both those included and excluded in the multilevel modeling analyses, were tested. The results showed that whereas in Model B and Model C, none of the three outcomes significantly led to team performance, when all dyads with available helping, information sharing, or quality of relationship information were examined, helping was significantly related to team performance ( $\beta = .40, p < .05$ ).

The main idea of my study was to examine how dyadic relative status, higher or lower, has impact on members' behaviors and relationships in dyads. Therefore, the final sample used in hypotheses testing included only dyads where focal participants differentiated their dyadic status from their partners. That is, they either perceived themselves to be higher or lower status than their partners. However, it is possible that some members may rate themselves and their dyadic partners to be same status. In fact, my sample showed that from all directed dyads that provided status ratings, 13.2% (61 out of 463) indicated they are same status. Therefore, I conducted a series of analyses to investigate whether directed dyads with same status members would provide different findings from dyads with differentiated status.

First, to simply examine how three different groups of dyads differed in their levels of helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship, I employed a one-way ANOVA. I compared between the directed dyads with higher status, lower status, and same status. As shown in Table 8, the ANOVA results indicated that the levels of helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship significantly differed across the three groups at  $p \leq .001$ . Overall, it was found that for all three outcomes, members on average exhibited the highest levels when they

were lower status, then middle levels when same status, and the lowest levels when they were higher status. Table 9 shows means and standard deviations of the three outcomes for each of the groups with different dyadic status. The post hoc tests showed that only two mean differences that were not significant at  $p \leq .05$  were helping between the lower status group and the same status group, and information sharing between the lower status group and the same status group (see Table 10). Mean levels of helping, information sharing, and quality of relationship for each group are plotted in Figure 9.

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 Insert Table 8, 9, 10, Figure 9 about here  
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Next, I conducted a same series of multilevel modeling analyses as I did in hypotheses testing, using two dummy status variables. I created a dummy variable, named High Status, for which I coded 1 if a directed dyad was higher status and 0 if either lower or same status. Directed dyads were assigned 1 if lower status and 0 if either higher or same status, for the second dummy variable named Low Status. Table 11 provides multilevel modeling results for all three types of outcomes. Model 4 for each of the outcomes in Table 11 corresponds to Model 4 in the hypotheses testing multilevel modeling analyses where two-interactions were included, but employs two status dummy variables. Similarly, Model 5 includes three-way interactions. The results showed that none of the hypothesized two-way interactions or three-way interactions was significant for any of the three types of outcomes, when same status dyads were considered. One notable finding was that, however, the two-way interactions between High Status and learning goal orientation and Low Status and learning goal orientation were significant for quality of relationships (High Status:  $\beta = -.19, p < .05$ ; Low Status:  $\beta = -.26, p < .01$ ).

These findings imply that whereas the effects of self-esteem and learning goal orientation were present when members perceived either they were higher or lower status, members moving



from higher or lower status to same status or from same status to higher or lower status do not influence the effects of self-esteem or learning goal orientation on their helping, information sharing, or quality of the relationship. However, it seems that the role of learning goal orientation is more critical when members are same status in dyads.

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Insert Table 11 about here  
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## **Discussion**

This study supports my main argument that team members may value status differently, leading to distinct consequences. The results demonstrated that members' own perceptions about their dyadic relative status would affect their behaviors and relationships in dyads, based on their levels of self-esteem and learning goal orientation. These findings not only provide significant theoretical implications, but also propose useful practical suggestions for managers. Furthermore, this chapter sparks a new conversation in the status literature and offers interesting future research directions.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the conditions that could make high status less desirable and even destructive in teams. Whereas most of the previous research on status was based on the assumption that status is a universally pursued asset people all strive for (e.g. Huberman et al., 2004), I argued that not all people would be happy to be of high status and that high status can rather potentially damage people's behaviors and relationships. By challenging the extant rather taken-for-granted perspective on status, I aimed to broaden our

understanding of status in the team context and state that members' behaviors toward their dyadic partners may depend on their own motivations for and response to status.

First of all, even though I did not intend to examine the direct effects of status on members' behaviors, my findings in fact revealed that there are negative associations between status and beneficial dyadic behaviors. That is, higher status members in general exhibited lower levels of helping and information sharing toward their dyadic lower status partners. These results are in part consistent with findings from other research which reported negative effects that the high status members may have on teams (e.g. Van der Vegt et al., 2006). Furthermore, the quality of the relationship was also directly and negatively influenced by focal participants' status, but the interpretation of this finding may need to be taken with caution. Because the relationship quality was rated by dyadic partners, it is possible that lower status partners, particularly those who may hold a highly positive views of themselves, may have evaluated their relationship with others of higher status to be less favorable and less pleasant.

Going beyond uncovering the direct effects of status on behaviors, this study centrally focused on variations in the levels of members' pursuit of status to explain members' divergent reactions to their higher status in dyads. Applying self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), I argued that members who have low self-esteem are less likely to be friendly or act benevolently towards their dyadic partners, when they achieve higher status in the dyad. Because high status would not match with self-views that low self-esteem people may hold of themselves, it is likely that they may not value or enjoy the relationship that provides them high status.

The results from this study strongly supported this idea. Whereas higher status members on average showed less helping behavior towards their dyadic lower status partners, this negative relationship was even more heightened, when higher status members held low self-esteem. This finding is in line with self-verification theory, which asserts that people have a desire to obtain consistency in their self-views and evaluations from the environment. A decrease in helping of

low self-esteem, higher-status members can also be understood as one of the strategies for enacting opportunity structures or environments that would support their self-views (Swann, 1987).

The relationship quality was also influenced by members' self-esteem. The results showed that higher status members who held low self-esteem are less likely to develop favorable relationships with their lower status members. This finding is also consistent with self-verification theory's expectation that members who have negative self-views may not like to be higher status, which may result in having more unfavorable interactions with other lower status members. My findings that are all based on dyadic relationships further strengthen the self-verification theory's argument because they showed that self-verification benefits are effective even when evaluations come from one person (e.g. in dyads) (Swann et al., 1989).

In addition, this study contributes to the goal orientation literature (e.g. Dweck & Leggett, 1988) by suggesting that learning goal orientation can prevent those who attain high status when they do not fully desire it from being beneficial. Whereas learning goal orientation has been accepted as a positive motivator that enhances people's activity, perceptions, and performance (e.g. Elliot & McGregor, 1999; Ford et al., 1998; Payne et al., 2007), this study introduces a condition in which learning goal orientation could become detrimental. Negative response to higher status of low self-esteem members may become even more salient when those members have higher motivation to learn. When high learning goal orientation members are put into a position that they do not prefer, such as self-disconfirmatory situations, they will have high motivation to search for opportunities to learn. However, when they realize that there is even less chance that they can learn from their lower status partners, such as lower possibility of receiving useful information about their task roles or critical feedback on their work progress, they may become less generous, resulting in lower helping or lower knowledge sharing behavior. The results supported these speculations and showed that higher status members who engaged in the

least levels of both helping and information sharing behaviors were those who held low self-esteem and high learning goal orientation, both of which would have undermined their desire for status.

Interesting findings were also found through my additional analyses. There was an unexpected interaction between higher status and learning goal orientation and between lower status and learning goal orientation when compared with same-status dyads. These interaction effects were not present when the same status was not considered. Whereas these findings need to be explored more in depth and addressed with appropriate theoretical argument, they provide insights into recognizing an even greater role of learning goal orientation in understanding status perceptions.

This study makes valuable contributions to team research. First, I specifically examined newly formed teams in which the status hierarchy was just starting to develop. Therefore, I was able to detect how team members would react to their initial status in teams, which would be more readily activated by their dispositional traits such as self-esteem. For instance, trait activation theory (Tett & Guterman, 2000) argues that individual traits are more likely to manifest in behavior when the situation provides relevant cues for the expression of trait-relevant behavior. Thus, when members first encounter their status in new teams, their individual differences may have more variability in enacting behavioral responses to their new status than to status that has been maintained for a longer time period and shaped by other prolonged factors. For example, it is likely that, when members with low self-esteem continue to be of higher status in dyads or in teams, they may learn to adjust to the situation or deal with the self-disconfirming environment, thus not displaying discrete reactions. By utilizing new teams, which granted every member a new status, this study was able to more accurately incorporate individual differences in status striving to predict consequent responses.

## **Practical Implications**

If it is true that members differ in their levels of status striving, it is important for managers to not assume that granting high status is always a compelling reward or recognition. Managers need to consider who would be well suited to or would be most satisfied with a high formal status position in the team when making decisions for promotions or replacements. For instance, it is likely that people with low self-esteem may not feel comfortable being at high status, and it may be beneficial for managers to discuss with their employees before assigning higher roles. However, this study does not seek to argue that low self-esteem members should never make it to higher status positions, and in fact, self-esteem can be developed and improved over time, while it can also be lost (e.g. Ferris, Brown, & Heller, 2009). My findings only suggest that managers should understand that variations in members' desire for status exist and should be prepared to minimize the negative consequences of assigning members their less preferred status positions.

Whereas it is almost impossible to design a team with ideal composition of members, managers may need to consider achieving a balance between members with varying levels of self-esteem and learning goal orientation. For instance, having different levels of self-esteem across members may become advantageous for teams, as this type of diversity could solve the problem that could otherwise occur when all members compete for status and power in teams. Furthermore, if both members with high learning goal orientation and members with low learning goal orientation work in the same team, they both could benefit from being low status and high status, respectively, leading to less conflict.

In addition to role change or position change in existing team members, this study also provides implications for teams going through membership change. That is, when there is an introduction of a new member into a team, which is an increasing phenomenon within

organizations (Humphrey & Aime, 2014), members will start to evaluate one another and develop an immediate status structure. As revealed by this study's findings, it is likely that members would react differently toward a new member, based on their perceptions about their own and the new member's relative status and their individual characteristics such as self-esteem and learning goal orientation. Whereas it was often assumed that members would experience disputes over their relative status positions (Bendersky & Hays, 2012), which may get particularly serious when there is a new high status member entering an existing team, managers need to be aware that not all members will struggle to maintain their original status and create conflict with the new high member, but some may actually become more prosocial and beneficial to the team.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

My study has limitations that, however, may lead to insightful future research paths. For example, in this study, I measured status using four items, adapted and modified from the previously accepted scale. Then I compared the scores on that scale each focal participant has given to him- or herself and to the dyadic partner. Even though this was a proper strategy to achieve ratings on dyadic relative status, another applicable way to measure relative status would be to have each participant to rank every one of members in the team. This measure would directly address the relative status rankings in the team, which may provide accurate evaluations on each focal member's perceptions about the dyadic relative status. However, this method would involve other weaknesses too. For instance, if I force members to rank their team members, I may be losing information about those dyads with same status members and may be creating arbitrary gaps in status between dyadic members, which may not be present. Therefore, it may be interesting to explore how using different scales for relative status would change the results and provide distinct implications.

In this study, I only examined whether either higher or lower status would have an impact on behaviors. However, it is likely that the size of the status gap between the two members would play a significant role. For instance, low self-esteem members may show even lower levels of helping behavior towards those who are of greatly lower status than towards those who are of just a bit lower status. Thus, if I had members rank their team members, the reactions to their relative status may differ by their own and their dyadic partners' absolute status rankings in the team.

Because the main purpose of this study was to examine how higher versus lower status in dyads would actuate certain responses, my hypotheses did not engage the same status dyads. Whereas my subsequent analyses showed that the same status dyads did not show very significant effects, these findings are exploratory, and there still remains fruitful potential in future research on same-status dyads. For instance, as the findings from additional analyses indicated, whereas self-verification effects may not be as salient in same status dyads, other individual motivational traits such as goal orientation may play a critical role in explaining the behaviors of same-status members. Furthermore, it is likely that same-status members may experience a greater sense of competition, as socially similar people are more likely to be compared and viewed as competitors, which would in turn increase the actual level of competition and decrease the strength of social tie (Reagans, 2005). Similar people tend to evaluate themselves as relative to each other, so they may feel even more deprived when similar others obtain higher status (Burt, 1982).

Another intriguing issue regarding status that is missing in this study is whether the focal participants' ratings match with those of their dyadic partners or other members in the team. Because I was interested in examining members' reactions towards their own perceptions about their relative status, this study did not take into account others' evaluations of focal members. However, it is possible that the way in which others rate focal participants' status may differ from self-ratings and could have a divergent influence on focal members' responses. Because self-perceptions are influenced by diverse factors such as personality traits and demographic

characteristics (Atwater & Yammarino, 1997), they could be biased and greatly differ from objective evaluations. For example, members with high self-esteem may be more likely to rate themselves at higher status than any other member of their team, thus distorting the real impact of status and self-esteem, although this was not the case in my study. In addition, if members are aware of the gap between their own perceptions and others' ratings, that could also affect focal participants' behaviors. For instance, high self-esteem members may feel more frustrated and become more hostile than low self-esteem members if they realize that the other members in the team do not seem to respect them enough. Thus, future researchers could compare self-ratings and other-ratings of individual status and examine how they may differentially have an impact on members' behaviors and team outcomes.

This study only examined status at one point of time during the duration of the team existence. This decision was appropriate, as I wanted to focus on members' initial status in newly formed teams. However, more research could be conducted on how members' status shifts as the teams progress. For instance, behavioral reactions studied in this research could have an impact on status change over time. Members who start with higher status may lose status if they do not exhibit positive behaviors that others would respect and value (Sparrowe et al., 2006). As it is likely that low self-esteem members may reduce prosocial behaviors as a means to gain consistency between their self-views and status, a decrease in the status of these members over time may reflect the effectiveness of their use of strategy to enact opportunity structures (Swann, 1987).

Another limitation of this study is that it only partially examined the principal tenet of self-verification theory. That is, whereas my study introduced self-esteem as an individual-level factor that can change members' responses to status, I only examined a self-disconfirmatory situation in which low self-esteem contradicts higher status, but not where high self-esteem conflicts with lower status. In fact, the results showed that low-status, high self-esteem members



still showed high levels of helping and good quality of relationships. Whereas it is possible that self-verification effects are more effective in the former condition, other individual characteristics could be explored to explain another crucial aspect of effectiveness of self-verification theory. For example, for narcissists who hold even stronger and more extreme positive self-views, negative responses such as undermining behaviors could be stimulated when they are put in lower status positions. In fact, narcissism was found to lead to aggression, particularly when given negative feedback such as an insult (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998).

Whereas self-verification theory was appropriate to support the main argument of this study that higher status is not always desired, future research could examine other theories that could also help explain variations in members' desire for high status. For instance, Exline and Lobel (1999) introduced the concept called sensitivity about being the target of a threatening upward comparison (STTUC). Specifically, they argued that outperformers often experience discomfort when they believe others are making upward comparisons (UCs) and when they perceive that their outperformance poses a threat to those making UCs. Therefore, it is likely that, when a person holds a higher status in a dyadic relationship, he or she may not perceive his or her superior position as a pleasant situation, but rather feel distressed and guilty leading to unfavorable outcomes. For example, high status members may engage in avoidance behaviors, such as showing a lack of interaction or communication with other members, to mitigate the tension deriving from experiencing STTUC.

Furthermore, this study was limited to only one type of individual goal orientations due to its main goal to find conditions where high status could become harmful. However, performance goal orientation could also provide implications for reactions from those people who are of lower status. The findings from this study were consistent with previous works (e.g. Van der Vegt et al., 2006) that lower status members engage in more helping behaviors than higher status members. However, it is possible that members who hold high performance goal

orientation, implying that they have higher desire to demonstrate their ability and achieve success (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), may display destructive reactions when they find themselves to be at lower status in relationships. Therefore, it may be worth exploring other individual characteristics that may offer predictions that may deviate from the previous findings in status research.

Unfortunately, the effects of dyadic outcomes on team performance were all found to be weak in my findings, although they were not unnoticeable. The results revealed that members' helping in dyads had a positive impact on team performance when all dyads were included. This finding still implies that dyadic helping behaviors can create a more favorable and pleasant environment among the members and promote overall team cohesiveness and cooperation (Podsakoff & Mackenzie, 1997), thus leading to higher team performance. One unexamined aspect was that I did not distinguish between behaviors of higher status members and lower status members. For example, future research could investigate how the effects of helping by higher status members differ from the effects of helping by lower status members. Furthermore, information sharing by more competent members may provide more useful implications for team performance than information sharing exhibited by less knowledgeable members. Because dyadic behaviors and relationships function as a starting point for members to build essential interactions in teams and a basis for teams to perform collectively, I highly believe that dyadic dynamics should provide valuable information in explaining team effectiveness and performance.

Lastly, because this study involved student teams, it may lack external validity. However, the study was not conducted under laboratory settings, and teams were real teams that were not created just for this research purpose. In fact, the data was collected at multiple times (i.e. four-wave surveys over 15 weeks and final performance) from multiple sources among the participants. In addition, the teams worked on projects that would provide meaningful rewards; not only were their grades significantly affected but also the projects were directly connected to their future career goals, given the relevance of the task to their major. Furthermore, because the

main idea of this study would be most easily applied to newly formed teams and rather short-term responses, the nature of these teams was highly appropriate to this study. Nonetheless, future research would benefit from replicating this study in real-world settings.

## **Conclusion**

Status has been believed to be a desired resource that everyone would enjoy. This chapter tested an idea that this current assumption about status may not be valid for some people. Upon employing multilevel modeling analyses, I found the negative effects of higher status, which were enhanced by proposed moderators. Whereas status may provide valuable benefits including both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, this research suggests that we should not ignore the role of individual differences that each team member may bring to the team, which can create variations in status striving and thus differentiated reactions to dyadic relative status. I believe this twisted perspective generates a strong conceptual medium to achieve more comprehensive understanding of status in teams.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion**

#### **Overview and Summary**

This dissertation examined members' variations in their status striving. I argued that, whereas some members may perceive their status as a promising opportunity, others may perceive their status as a potential threat. Drawing from motivational theories, I proposed a number of conditions that make members diverge in their levels of desire for status, creating distinct perceptions and outcomes of their dyadic status.

I first started by developing a conceptual model that engages three motivational theories under the approach-avoidance framework. Based on the opportunity-threat perception distinction (e.g. Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Milburn et al., 1983; Mintzberg et al., 1976; Staw et al., 1981), I differentiated between motivational states that would determine members' opportunity versus threat perceptions about their dyadic relative status. First, I applied the regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997) and stated that the benefits of higher status would be more salient to promotion-focused members, thus leading to an opportunity perception, whereas prevention-focused members would be more sensitive to losses attached to lower status, thereby developing a threat perception.

Goal orientation theory (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) explains how members may differ in their goals, which creates diverse responses to the same situations. Identifying four different types of goal orientations following previous research (e.g. Elliot & McGregor, 2001; VandeWalle, 1997), I argued that, whereas performance-approach-oriented and learning-approach-oriented members are more likely to perceive higher and lower status more as an opportunity, respectively,

and performance-avoidance goal-oriented and learning-avoidance goal-oriented members are more likely to perceive lower and higher status more as a threat, respectively.

Self-verification theory (Swann, 1983) was also introduced to achieve another theoretical support for differences in members' desire for status. The main idea of the theory is that people prefer to receive evaluations that match with their self-views, even if their self-views are negative. Based on this notion, I proposed that members who hold positive self-views are more likely to value higher status, and members who hold negative self-views are more likely to prefer lower status, resulting in distinct opportunity and threat perceptions about their dyadic relative status.

To describe dyadic relative status in multiple dimensions, I specified two additional characteristics of dyadic status in teams. For instance, the size of the difference in status rankings of the dyadic partners and the average status rankings of dyadic partners are incorporated in the aforementioned propositions. These two aspects contribute to more detailed conceptualizations of members' perceptions about their dyadic status.

Furthermore, I discussed how opportunity and threat perceptions lead to dyadic behavioral outcomes. I suggested that opportunity perceptions are more likely to produce favorable behaviors such as helping, information sharing, and ingratiation, whereas threat perceptions are more likely to induce potentially harmful behaviors such as social undermining and unethical and avoidance behaviors. These behaviors are in turn expected to affect team outcomes such as team cohesiveness, team conflict, and team performance.

After introducing my conceptual framework, I attempted to test a part of the model in the real setting to secure its validity. Involving student teams, I found support for some of my hypotheses that were developed based on the conceptual model. Specifically, the findings indicated that members' self-esteem mitigated the negative effects of higher status on helping. In other words, self-confirmatory states (i.e. higher status and high self-esteem) increased helping

behaviors, whereas self-disconfirmatory states (i.e. higher status and low self-esteem) reduced helping behaviors. Furthermore, the quality of dyadic relationship was also influenced by self-verification effects. That is, when members with high self-esteem achieved higher status, the relationship quality was higher than when members with low self-esteem were higher status in dyads.

Learning goal orientation was also found to have additional influential effects on members' responses to their status. The findings showed that members' learning goal orientation intensified the negative effects of higher status. Members showed the least levels of helping and information sharing behaviors when they were of higher status, low in self-esteem, and high in learning goal orientation.

I attempted to investigate the relationship between dyadic outcomes and team performance. Whereas the effects of dyadic outcomes were not as strong as I expected, the relationship still seemed to exist. If all of the dyads that provided information on dyadic outcomes were involved, helping was found to positively affect team performance.

### **Overall Implications**

In addition to the contributions discussed in detail in each chapter, I describe the overall implications of my dissertation in this section. First of all, this dissertation has implications for the status literature. Most importantly, I addressed a new perspective to status by suggesting that people do not always want higher status. I applied this view to the development of a conceptual framework that describes situations in which members perceive their dyadic relative status as an opportunity and when they perceive their dyadic relative status as a threat. Whereas I acknowledge that in general people's tendency to desire higher status may be more prevalent than their tendency to desire lower status, my model introduces an alternate view to the previous

dominant assumption that all members would compete for higher status. Specifically, I argued that there are variations in members' desire for status, and these differences may create distinct outcomes at both the dyadic and team levels. Not only does my conceptual framework build a convincing argument based on well-established motivational theories, but the findings from the empirical study also support the principal idea of this dissertation.

This dissertation also contributes to the motivation literature. Based on the approach-avoidance distinction framework, I employed three motivational theories (i.e. regulatory focus, goal-orientation, and self-verification) that have received a great amount of attention and have been applied to diverse domains. I aimed to extend the utility of these theories by involving it in my framework introducing a novel approach to members' status striving. Furthermore, the findings from the empirical study indicated that self-verification and goal-orientation theories were valid in explaining variations in members' dyadic behaviors and relationships as a result of their perceptions about status. Again, the effectiveness of these motivational theories was strengthened, both through theoretical reasoning as well as empirical support.

This dissertation offers implications for the team literature. Even though this dissertation primarily involved dyadic status perceptions and dyadic outcomes, dyadic relationships are embedded in teams and can become significant indicators of critical team-level outcomes. Team dynamics reflect interactions of dyadic behaviors and relationships and thus can be understood through investigating multiple dyadic interpersonal relations in teams (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Therefore, what was discussed and validated in this dissertation at the dyadic level provides insights into understanding more complex phenomena in team dynamics. This dissertation also speaks to the research on team composition as it introduces how diverse individual characteristics that the members bring to their team can combine to make positive and negative consequences in teams. Certain individual differences are found to be influential in affecting status perceptions, which managers may need to be aware of when designing or restructuring teams.

## **Future Directions**

In this section I note a number of general directions for future research that this dissertation encourages. First, future researchers may extend the view of status introduced in this dissertation. For instance, they can examine the conditions that augment the differences in members' desire for status and explore the significant consequences in teams and organizations. Not only may several other motivational theories such as STTUC theory (Exline & Lobel, 1999) introduced earlier, but also theories in other domains may help improve our understanding. For instance, leadership theories such as leader-member exchange (LMX) can be employed to explain variations in members' perceptions about their dyadic relationships. In fact, two members' LMX levels were found to influence their dyadic coworker exchange (Sherony & Green, 2002), and it is likely that two members' LMX scores may affect how they perceive their dyadic relative status. In addition, teams in which politics are more pervasive may generate different dynamics in members' status striving and perceptions, suggesting another potential future research venue in the status literature.

Dyadic status was described in multiple dimensions in this dissertation. Future research may elaborate our understanding about status by engaging the diverse aspects of status described in this dissertation. For instance, researchers could empirically test how individuals' absolute status rankings or differences in their rankings lead to divergent outcomes in dyads and in teams. Furthermore, members' self-ratings and other-ratings of status can be compared to uncover their differential effects.

In addition, whereas this dissertation stems from my motive to study members' response to their higher versus lower status in dyads, some members may perceive that they are the same status as exhibited in my sample. Although my subsequent analyses did not show salient findings



about same-status dyads, these findings were rather exploratory and not *a priori* hypothesized. My conceptual framework and propositions were mainly developed to compare higher versus lower status perceptions. Future research may delve into the identification of a valid theoretical foundation that can be applied to testing of the real dynamics that occur between same-status members.

The empirical study only tested a part of the conceptual model that was developed in the dissertation. Other studies can be conducted to examine other relationships that were articulated in the model. For instance, in addition to helping and information sharing behaviors that were tested in this dissertation, other behaviors such as ingratiation, social undermining, avoidance, and unethical behaviors that are also proposed as potential reactions that dyadic members may display may be empirically detected. Furthermore, to attain more potent connections to team research, other team outcomes can be analyzed. For instance, whereas additional analysis is warranted, dyadic relationships may play a more significant role in explaining subjective team outcomes such as team cohesiveness or team conflicts than team performance.

## **Conclusion**

Whereas status has long been recognized as people's universal desire, for both its instrumental utility as a means to achieve resources such as power and monetary gains and its intrinsic value in itself as a source of emotional pleasure of prestige and acknowledgement (Huberman et al., 2004), the existing research on status appears to be neglecting an alternate, yet critical perspective on status. Throughout this dissertation, I thus attempted to propose and build a persuasive argument that not everyone pursues higher status. The conceptual framework supplemented with empirical support in this dissertation establishes a fruitful basis for future research on status.

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**APPENDIX A: TABLES**

**TABLE 1**  
**Data Collection Summary**

<u>Time 1</u>	<u>Time 2</u>	<u>Time 3</u>	<u>Time 4</u>	<u>After Semester</u>
Self-Esteem	Status	Helping	Quality of Relationship	Team Performance
Learning Goal Orientation	Team Size	Information Sharing		
Gender		Task Interdependence		

**TABLE 2**  
**Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations**

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Dyadic Relative Status	.59	.49	--							
2	Focal Member Gender	.31	.46	-.08	--						
3	Self-Esteem	5.58	.90	.05	-.11	--					
4	Learning Goal Orientation	4.57	1.08	.02	.06	-.05	--				
5	Average Task Interdependence	5.19	.47	-.01	-.10	.15	.04	--			
6	Helping	5.08	1.44	-.39	.11	.18	-.04	.20	--		
7	Information Sharing	5.37	1.42	-.18	.07	.13	-.02	.13	.60	--	
8	Quality of Dyadic Relationship	5.82	1.04	-.33	.22	.16	-.07	.10	.58	.48	--

*Notes:* N = 402

Dyadic relative status is coded 0 = Lower, 1 = Higher.

Member gender is coded 0 = Male, 1 = Female.

Correlation coefficients with an absolute value equal to or greater than .10 are significant at  $p \leq .05$ , equal to or greater than .15 are significant at  $p \leq .01$ .

**TABLE 3**  
**Variance Decomposition in Null Models**

	<u>Helping</u>		<u>Information Sharing</u>		<u>Quality of Relationship</u>	
	Two-Level	Three-Level	Two-Level	Three-Level	Two-Level	Three-Level
<u>Level-1</u>						
Variances	1.35*** (.16)	1.35*** (.18)	1.65*** (.21)	1.62*** (.29)	.63*** (.09)	.63*** (.10)
%	65%	65%	82%	79%	59%	59%
<u>Level-2</u>						
Variances	.72*** (.16)	.19+ (.12)	.37* (.17)	.03 (.19)	.44*** (.12)	.25+ (.13)
%	35%	9%	18%	2%	41%	23%
<u>Level-3</u>						
Variances		.53** (.17)		.41*** (.12)		.19*** (.05)
%		26%		20%		18%

*Notes:* N=402 at dyadic-level, 141 at individual-level, 43 at team-level. For variables, the first value in a cell is the variance estimate, and the value in parentheses is the standard error. % refers to % of variance residing at each level.  
 +  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.



**TABLE 4**  
**Multilevel Modeling Results for Helping**

	<u>Null</u>	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>
<u>Intercept</u>	5.01*** (.14)	5.70*** (.14)	5.69*** (.15)	5.68*** (.15)	5.63*** (.15)	5.63*** (.16)
<u>Level 1</u>						
Dyadic relative status		-1.15*** (.16)	-1.18*** (.15)	-1.17*** (.15)	-1.11*** (.16)	-1.10*** (.16)
<u>Level 2</u>						
Gender			.24 (.17)	.25 (.17)	.25+ (.14)	.26+ (.15)
Self-esteem			.30** (.10)	.28** (.10)	.03 (.08)	.01 (.08)
Learning goal orientation						.00 (.09)
Self-esteem × learning goal orientation						-.04 (.08)
<u>Level 3</u>						
Task interdependence				.36+ (.21)	.39* (.20)	.39+ (.20)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 two-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem					.40** (.13)	.42*** (.12)
Dyadic relative status × learning goal orientation						-.06 (.11)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 × level 2 three-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem × learning goal orientation						.25* (.12)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.00	.14	.28	.29	.46	.46
Model deviance	1242.89	1170.65	1023.49	1021.32	1001.13	994.62
Change in deviance		72.24***	147.16***	2.17	20.19***	6.51

Notes: N=402 at dyadic-level, 141 at individual-level, 43 at team-level. For variables, the first value in a cell is the beta coefficient, and the value in parentheses is the standard error.

+  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 5**  
**Multilevel Modeling Results for Information Sharing**

	<u>Null</u>	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>
<u>Intercept</u>	5.33*** (.12)	5.60*** (.18)	5.60*** (.19)	5.59*** (.20)	5.61*** (.20)	5.62*** (.20)
<u>Level 1</u>						
Dyadic relative status		-.45* (.21)	-.49* (.23)	-.48* (.22)	-.52* (.23)	-.54* (.23)
<u>Level 2</u>						
Gender			.16 (.15)	.18 (.16)	.20 (.16)	.22 (.16)
Self-esteem			.22 (.10)	.21* (.10)	.17 (.11)	.15+ (.08)
Learning goal orientation						.03 (.10)
Self-esteem × learning goal orientation						-.15 (.10)
<u>Level 3</u>						
Task interdependence				.40+ (.20)	.28 (.20)	.26 (.21)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 two-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem					.07 (.18)	.09 (.15)
Dyadic relative status × learning goal orientation						-.11 (.13)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 × level 2 three-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem × learning goal orientation						.28* (.14)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.00	.03	.16	.17	.23	.24
Model deviance	1271.45	1261.32	1113.84	1110.84	1107.06	1100.05
Change in deviance		10.13**	147.48***	3.00+	3.78	7.01

*Notes:* N=402 at dyadic-level, 141 at individual-level, 43 at team-level. For variables, the first value in a cell is the beta coefficient, and the value in parentheses is the standard error.

+  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 6**  
**Multilevel Modeling Results for Quality of Dyadic Relationship**

	<u>Null</u>	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>
<u>Intercept</u>	5.83*** (.09)	6.24*** (.11)	6.17*** (.11)	6.17*** (.12)	6.14*** (.10)	6.14*** (.12)
<u>Level 1</u>						
Dyadic relative status		-.68*** (.15)	-.74*** (.15)	-.73*** (.15)	-.67*** (.13)	-.67*** (.13)
<u>Level 2</u>						
Gender			.40*** (.11)	.40*** (.12)	.37*** (.10)	.35 (.28)
Self-esteem			.20*** (.06)	.19*** (.06)	.03 (.06)	.06 (.10)
Learning goal orientation						-.08 (.10)
Self-esteem × learning goal orientation						.08 (.07)
<u>Level 3</u>						
Task interdependence				.19 (.14)	.17 (.13)	.21 (.14)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 two-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem					.20* (.09)	.20+ (.12)
Dyadic relative status × learning goal orientation						.06 (.10)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 × level 2 three-way interaction</u>						
Dyadic relative status × self-esteem × learning goal orientation						.04 (.09)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.00	.11	.28	.28	.49	.50
Model deviance	922.62	881.61	762.15	760.68	738.79	729.33
Change in deviance		41.01***	119.45***	1.47	21.90***	9.46+

Notes: N=402 at dyadic-level, 141 at individual-level, 43 at team-level. For variables, the first value in a cell is the beta coefficient, and the value in parentheses is the standard error.

+  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 7**  
**Regression Results for the Effects on Team Performance**

	<u>Model A<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Model B<sup>b</sup></u>	<u>Model C<sup>c</sup></u>	<u>Model D<sup>d</sup></u>
Helping	.28	.26	.32	.40*
Information Sharing	.23	-.03	-.29	.02
Quality of Relationship	-.01	.18	.11	.21
R <sup>2</sup> Change	.21*	.13	.08	.29**

*Notes:* <sup>a</sup> N=402 dyads, 43 teams; <sup>b</sup> N= 301 dyads, 43 teams; <sup>c</sup> N=61 dyads, 28 teams; <sup>d</sup> N=703 dyads, 43 teams.

Entries are standardized regression coefficients.

+  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 8**  
**ANOVA Results**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
<u>Helping</u>	Between Groups	116.42	2	58.21	34.001***
	Within Groups	722.27	422	1.71	
	Total	838.69	424		
<u>Information Sharing</u>	Between Groups	27.05	2	13.52	7.23***
	Within Groups	792.74	422	1.87	
	Total	819.78	424		
<u>Quality of Relationship</u>	Between Groups	38.26	2	19.13	20.89***
	Within Groups	355.28	388	.92	
	Total	393.54	390		

\*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 9**  
**Means and Standard Deviations of Three Outcomes**

		<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
<u>Helping</u>	Low <sup>a</sup>	5.74	1.13
	Same <sup>b</sup>	5.35	1.19
	High <sup>c</sup>	4.61	1.45
<u>Information Sharing</u>	Low	5.67	1.46
	Same	5.64	1.14
	High	5.16	1.36
<u>Quality of Relationship</u>	Low	6.25	.81
	Same	5.88	.78
	High	5.55	1.08

*Notes:* <sup>a</sup> refers to directed dyads with lower status focal member (n=164; 35.4%);

<sup>b</sup> refers to directed dyads with same status (n=61; 13.2%);

<sup>c</sup> refers to directed dyads with higher status focal member (n=238; 51.4%).

**TABLE 10**  
**Mean Comparisons**

	Group 1	Group 2	Mean Difference (Group 1- Group 2)	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<u>Helping</u>	Low <sup>a</sup>	High <sup>b</sup>	1.13***	.14	.85	1.40
	Low	Same <sup>c</sup>	.38 <sup>+</sup>	.20	-.01	.78
	Same	High	.74***	.19	.36	1.12
<u>Information Sharing</u>	Low	High	.51***	.14	.23	.80
	Low	Same	.03	.21	-.38	.44
	Same	High	.48*	.20	.09	.88
<u>Quality of Relationship</u>	Low	High	.69***	.11	.48	.90
	Low	Same	.37*	.15	.07	.67
	Same	High	.32*	.15	.04	.61

*Notes:* <sup>a</sup> refers to directed dyads with lower status focal member; <sup>b</sup> refers to directed dyads with higher status focal member; <sup>c</sup> refers to directed dyads with same status. <sup>+</sup>  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.

**TABLE 11**  
**Multilevel Modeling Results with Two Status Dummies**

	Helping		Information Sharing		Quality of Relationship	
	Model 4	Model 5	Model 4	Model 5	Model 4	Model 5
<u>Intercept</u>	5.16*** (.19)	5.15*** (.19)	5.59*** (.26)	5.59*** (.30)	5.73*** (.10)	5.71*** (.09)
<u>Level 1</u>						
High Status	-.60*** (.17)	-.58*** (.16)	-.45 (.32)	-.45 (.39)	-.23+ (.13)	-.21+ (.13)
Low Status	.53*** (.15)	.53*** (.14)	.09 (.19)	.10 (.20)	.43*** (.10)	.44*** (.10)
<u>Level 2</u>						
Gender	.16 (.16)	.16 (.18)	.08 (.14)	.08 (.17)	.28*** (.08)	.26** (.09)
Self-esteem	.39* (.19)	.42* (.20)	.04 (.27)	.01 (.41)	.08 (.13)	.12 (.11)
Learning goal orientation		.11 (.12)		.07 (.17)		.18* (.08)
Self-esteem × learning goal orientation		-.03 (.19)		.16 (.30)		-.08 (.12)
<u>Level 3</u>						
Task interdependence	.41 (.18)	.39+ (.19)	.35 (.29)	.30 (.47)	.22+ (.12)	.21+ (.12)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 two-way interaction</u>						
High status × self-esteem	.03 (.22)	.00 (.22)	.20 (.25)	.23 (.44)	.14 (.15)	.14 (.13)
Low status × self-esteem	-.36+ (.19)	-.40* (.20)	.11 (.36)	.13 (.59)	-.06 (.14)	-.07 (.13)
High status × learning goal orientation		-.18 (.16)		-.15 (.18)		-.19* (.09)
Low status × learning goal orientation		-.13 (.14)		-.07 (.21)		-.26** (.09)
<u>Level 1 × level 2 × level 2 three-way interaction</u>						
High status × self-esteem × learning goal orientation		.23 (.21)		-.03 (.56)		.20 (.15)
Low status × self-esteem × learning goal orientation		.01 (.22)		-.27 (.70)		.15 (.13)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.36	.37	.25	.25	.41	.44
Model deviance	1157.53	1148.12	1273.42	1264.34	858.31	844.72
Change in deviance	19.07*	9.41	9.18	9.08	26.66***	13.59*

Notes: N=463 at dyadic-level, 161 at individual-level, 43 at team-level. For variables, the first value in a cell is the beta coefficient, and the value in parentheses is the standard error. Model 4 was compared with the model without interaction terms.

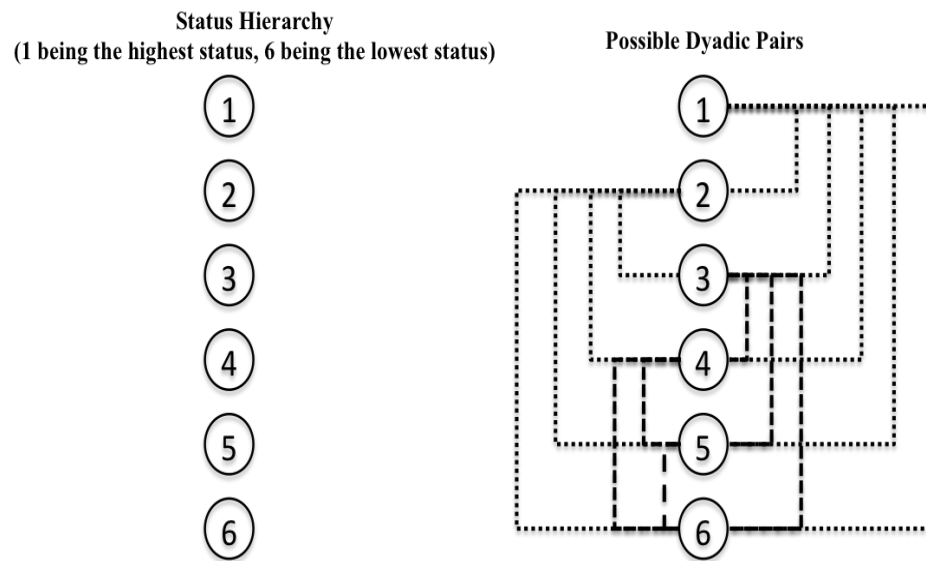
+  $p \leq .1$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; two-tailed tests.



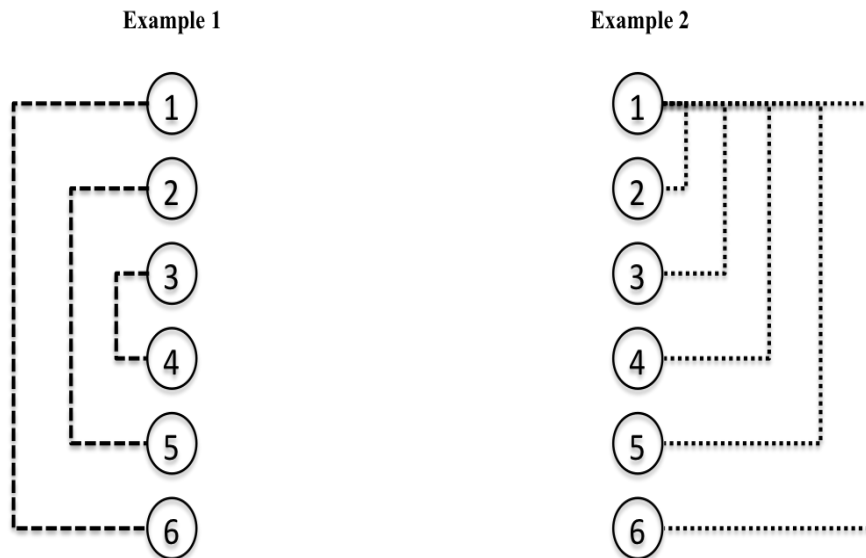
APPENDIX B: FIGURES

**FIGURE 1**  
**Illustration of a 6-member Team**

**FIGURE 1-1 A 6-member Team with Differentiated Status**

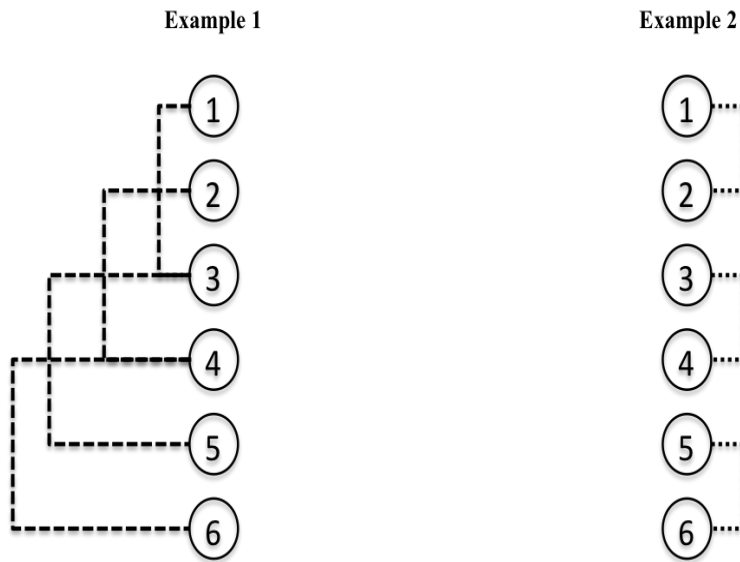


**FIGURE 1-2 Examples of Dyadic Pairs with Different Size of the Status Gap**

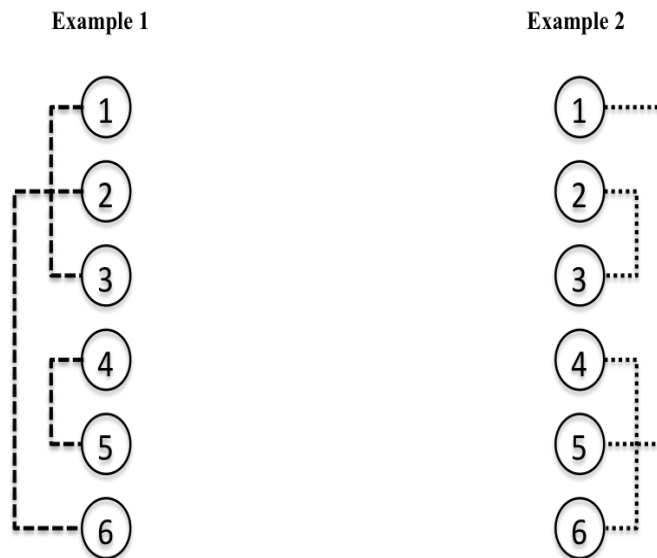


**FIGURE 1 (cont'd)**  
**Illustration of a 6-member Team**

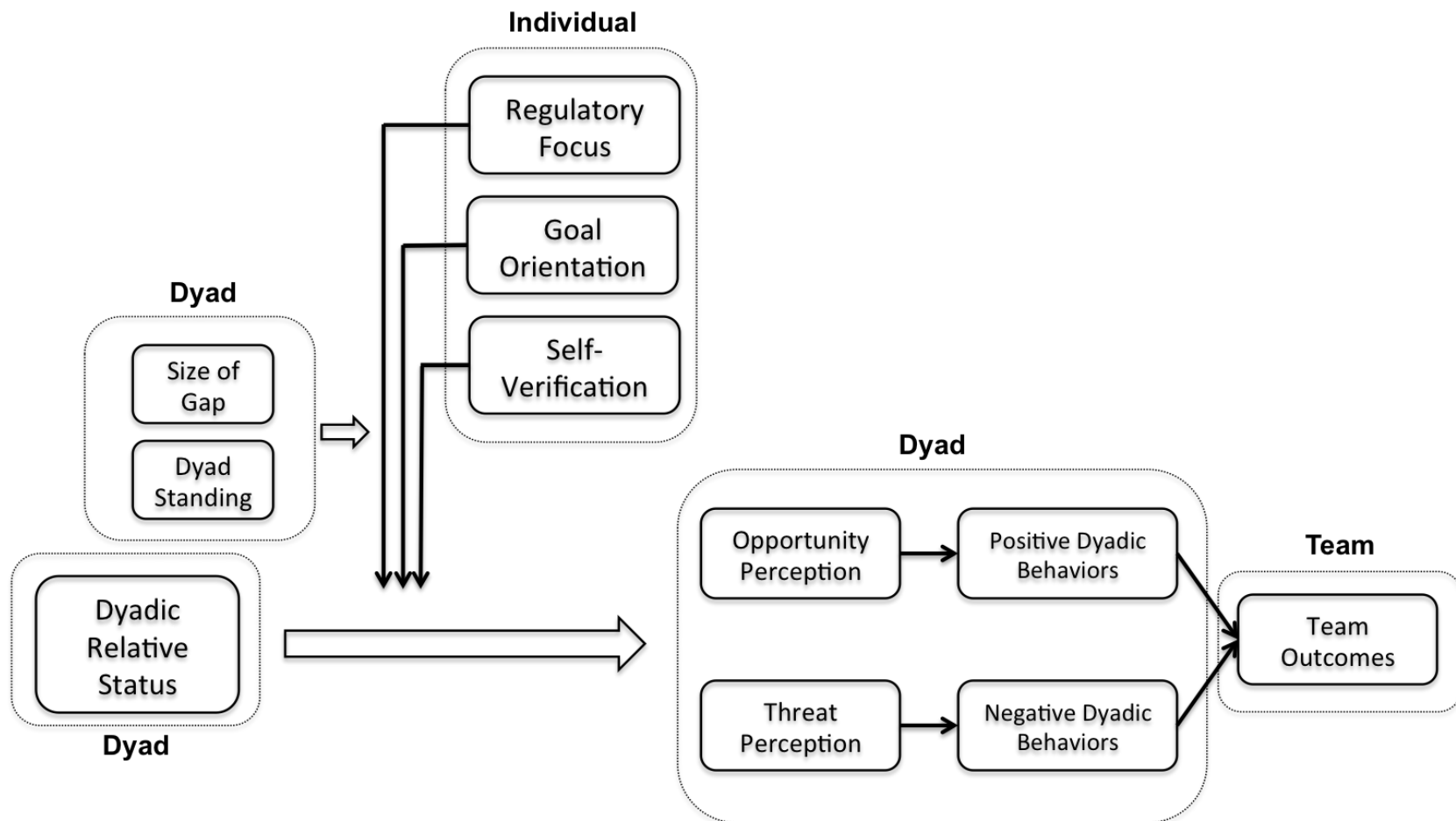
**FIGURE 1-3 Examples of Dyadic Pairs with Different Standing (Same Size of the Status Gap)**



**FIGURE 1-4 Examples of Dyadic Pairs with Different Size of the Status Gap and Different Standing in the Team**



**FIGURE 2**  
**A Conceptual Framework**



**FIGURE 3**  
**Motivational Distinctions and Dyadic Status Perceptions**

	<b>Opportunity Perception</b>	<b>Threat Perception</b>
<b>Higher Status</b>	<b>Promotion Focus</b> (Prevention Focus)*  <b>Performance Approach Orientation</b> (Performance Avoidance Orientation)*  <b>Positive Self-views</b>	<b>Learning Avoidance Orientation</b> (Learning Approach Orientation)*  <b>Negative Self-views</b>
<b>Lower Status</b>	<b>Learning Approach Orientation</b> (Learning Avoidance Orientation)*  <b>Negative Self-views</b>	<b>Prevention Focus</b> (Promotion Focus)*  <b>Performance Avoidance Orientation</b> (Performance Approach Orientation)*  <b>Positive Self-views</b>

\*Motivation conditions with comparatively weaker effects

**FIGURE 4**  
**Hypothesized Model**

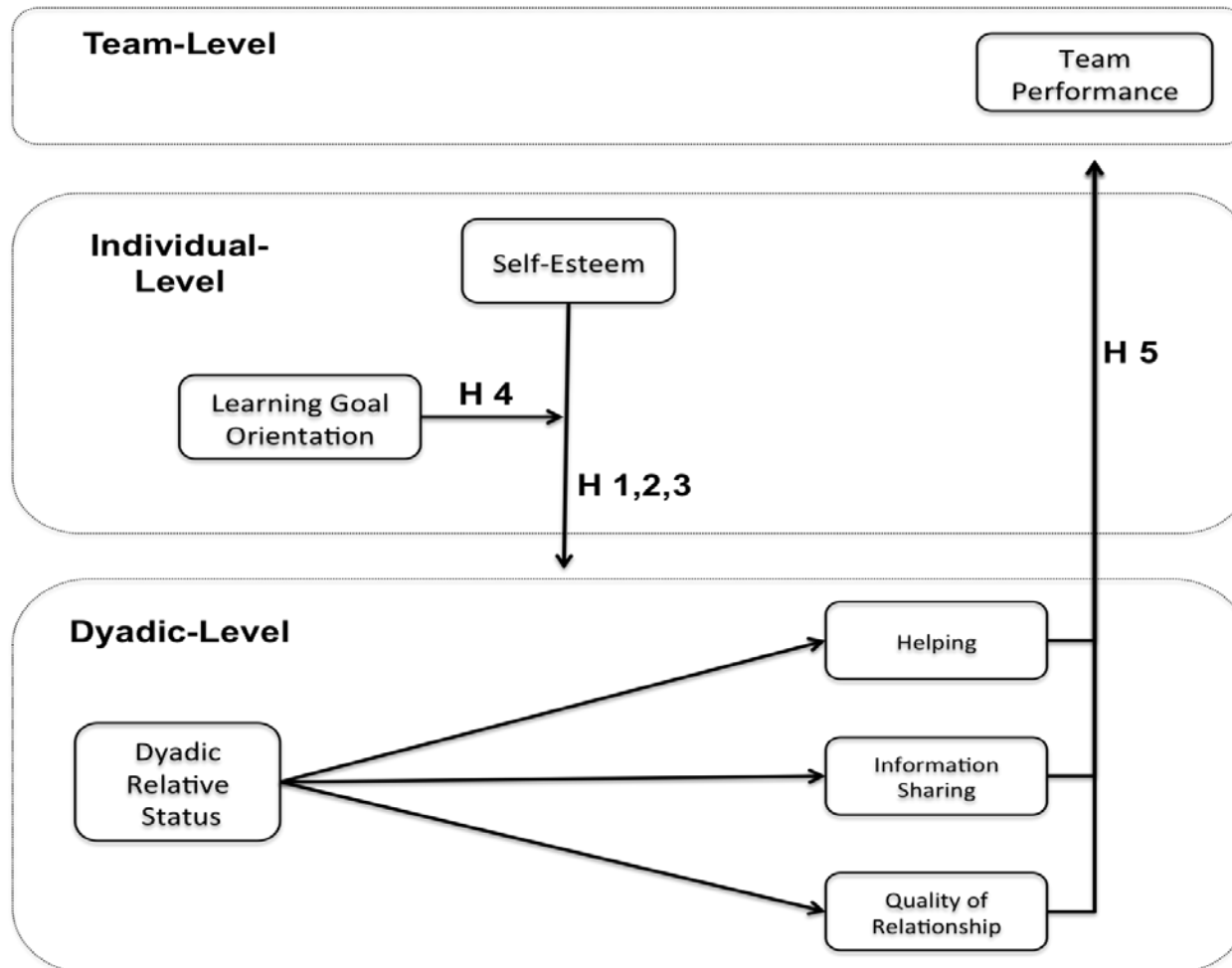


FIGURE 5

A Two-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status and Self-Esteem: Helping

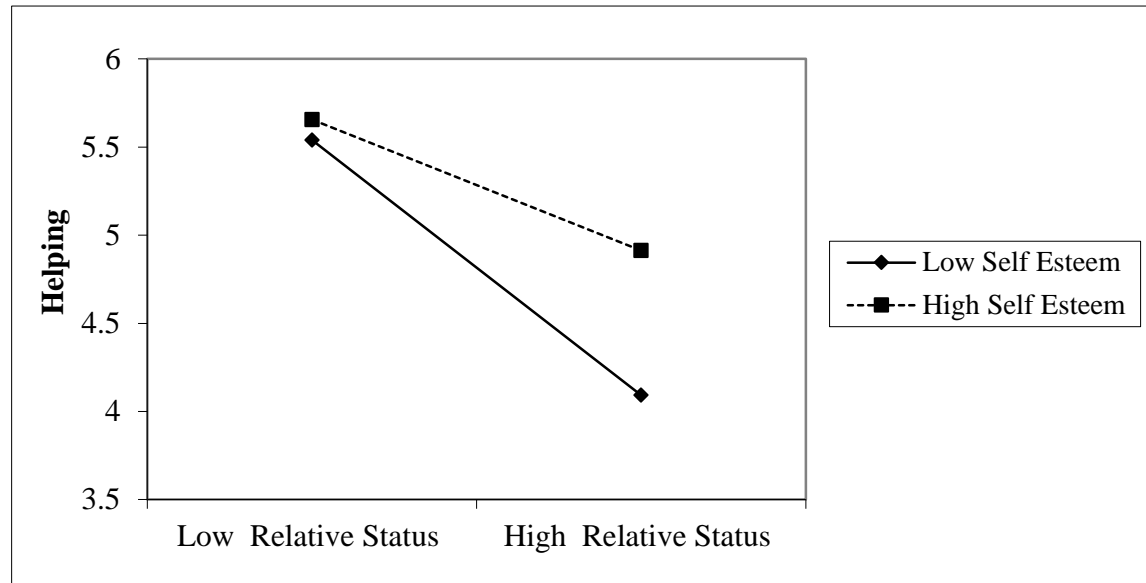


FIGURE 6

A Three-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status, Self-Esteem, and Learning Goal Orientation: Helping

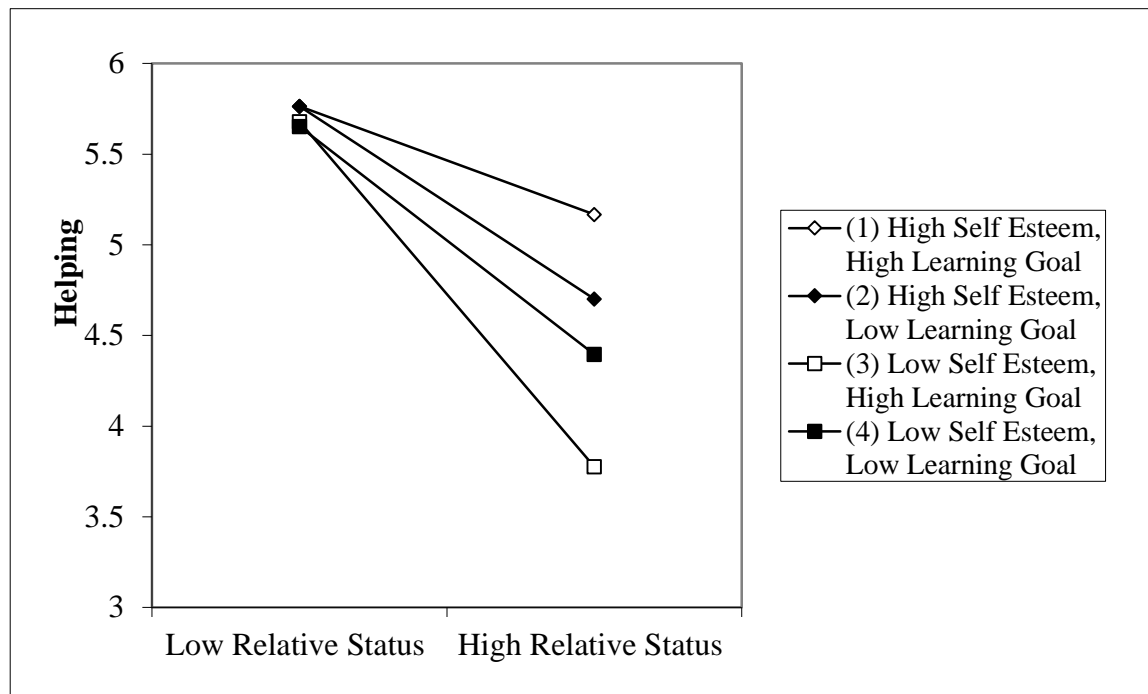


FIGURE 7

A Three-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status, Self-Esteem, and Learning Goal Orientation: Information Sharing

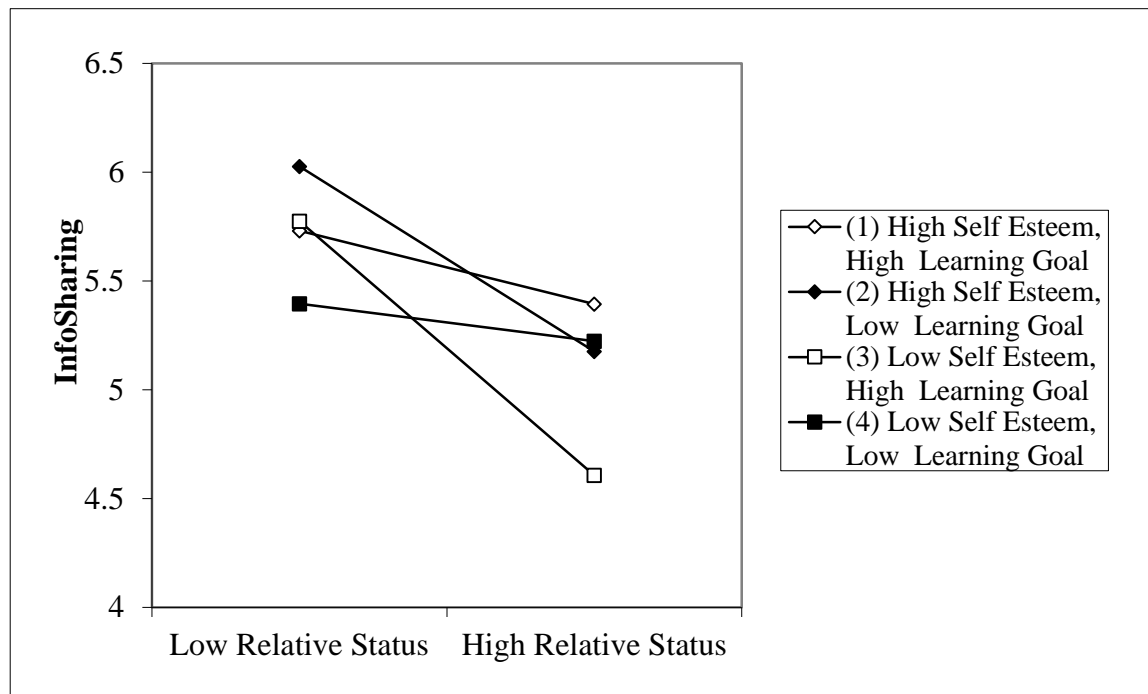
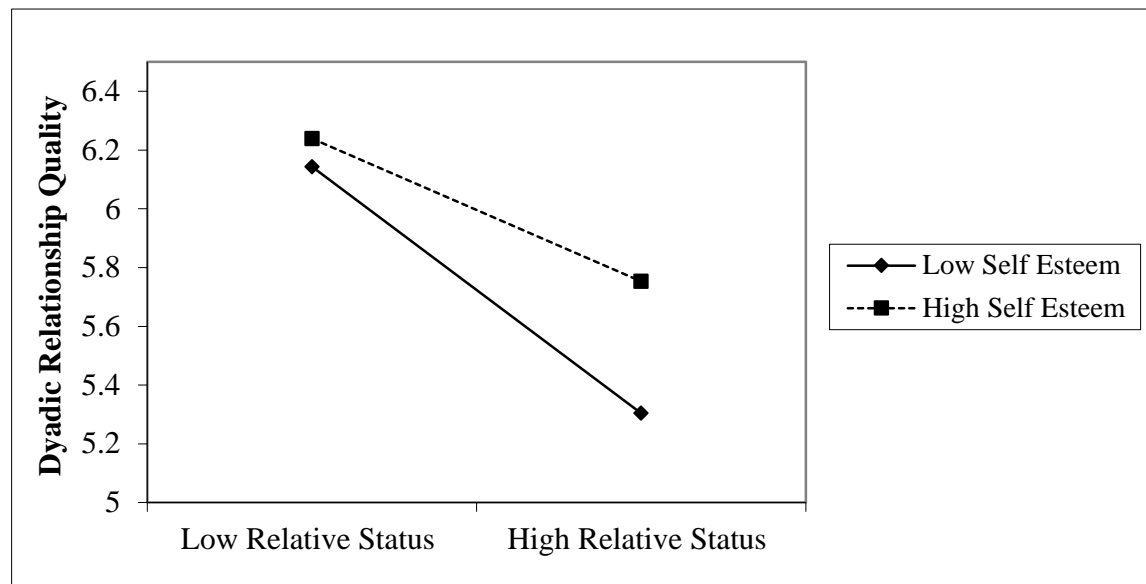
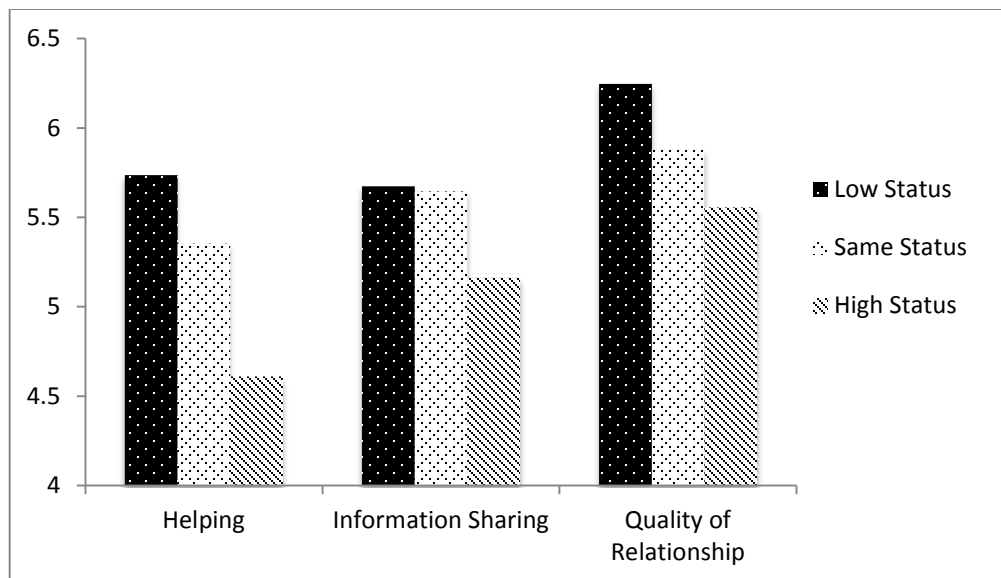




FIGURE 8

A Two-Way Cross-Level Interaction of Dyadic Relative Status and Self-Esteem: Quality of Dyadic Relationship



**FIGURE 9****Mean Levels of Helping, Information Sharing, and Quality of Relationship Across Groups**

## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES

### Questionnaire A - Time 1

#### Self Esteem

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I certainly feel useless at times.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. At times I think I am no good at all.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

\*reverse-coded

### Learning Goal Orientation

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I want to learn as much as possible from this class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. It is important for me to understand the content of this course as thoroughly as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I desire to completely master the material presented in this class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I worry that I may not learn all that I possibly could in this class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Sometimes I'm afraid that I may not understand the content of this class as thoroughly as I'd like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am often concerned that I may not learn all that there is to learn in this class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Questionnaire B - Time 2**

**Status**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please rate *each* of your class team members, *including yourself*, based on the following question.

**How well respected is this member in your team?**

	Not at All Respected	Unrespected	Somewhat Unrespected	Neither Respected Nor Unrespected	Somewhat Respected	Respected	Extremely Respected
1. <i>Member Name 1</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. <i>Member Name 2</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. <i>Member Name 3</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. <i>Member Name 4</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. <i>Member Name 5</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. <i>Member Name 6</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please rate *each* of your class team members, *including yourself*, based on the following question.

**How valuable are this member's contributions to your team?**

	Not at All Valuable	Not Valuable	Somewhat Not Valuable	Neither Valuable Nor Not valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Valuable	Extremely Valuable
1. <i>Member Name 1</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. <i>Member Name 2</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. <i>Member Name 3</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. <i>Member Name 4</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. <i>Member Name 5</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. <i>Member Name 6</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please rate *each* of your class team members, *including yourself*, based on the following question.

**How much influence does this member exert over decisions during your team's work?**

	No Influence at All	Very Little	Little	Neither	Some	A Lot	Extremely Great Deal of Influence
1. <i>Member Name 1</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. <i>Member Name 2</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. <i>Member Name 3</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. <i>Member Name 4</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. <i>Member Name 5</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. <i>Member Name 6</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please rate *each* of your class team members, *including yourself*, based on the following question.

**How visible is this member in your team?**

	Not Visible at All	Almost Invisible	Somewhat Invisible	Neither Visible Nor Invisible	Somewhat Visible	Visible	Extremely Visible
1. <i>Member Name 1</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. <i>Member Name 2</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. <i>Member Name 3</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. <i>Member Name 4</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. <i>Member Name 5</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. <i>Member Name 6</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### Questionnaire C - Time 3

#### Helping

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

Over the course of the time my team has worked together,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Member Name* \_\_\_\_\_

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Assisted me with difficult assignments, even when assistance was not directly requested.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Helped me when I was running behind in my work activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Went out of his/her way to help me with project-related problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Took on extra responsibilities in order to help me when things got demanding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Helped me with work when I have been absent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



### Information Sharing

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

Over the course of the time my team has worked together,

\_\_\_\_\_ *Member Name* \_\_\_\_\_

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Exchanged information with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Informed me about work-related issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Provided me with new facts, insights, and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### Team Task Interdependence

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I cannot accomplish my tasks without information or materials from other members of my team.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Other members of my team depend on me for information or materials needed to perform their tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Within my team, jobs performed by team members are related to one another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### Questionnaire D - Time 4

#### Quality of Relationship

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your relationship with this member.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Member Name* \_\_\_\_\_

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am satisfied with the relationship with this member.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I would be willing to participate in another task with this member.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. This member and I get along well with each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. This member and I experienced emotional conflict.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

\*reverse-coded

## VITA

**Sung Won Min**

### **EDUCATION**

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The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Business Administration, 2015  
Concentration: Organizational Behavior

Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea  
Master of Science (MS) in Business Administration, 2009  
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Korea University, Seoul, Korea  
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) with Honors, 2007

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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Status / Teams / Motivation