The cost of status attainment: Performance effects of individual's status mobility in task groups

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Abstract

Although we know that considerable benefits accrue to individuals with high versus low social status, we do not know the performance effects of gaining or losing status in one's group over time. In two longitudinal studies, we measure the status positions of middle managers currently enrolled in a part time MBA program at the beginning and end of their study group's life. In both samples, we compare the individual performance (course grades) of the students who gained or lost status to those who maintained high and low stable status positions in their groups. We find that higher status at the end of the group's life is associated with higher performance. We also find, however, that the performance of individuals who gained or lost status over time does not correspond to their final status positions. Instead, those who gained status performed no better than did those who were in stable low status positions; both performed significantly worse than did those who maintained high status positions for the whole quarter. Those who lost status performed as well as those who maintained high status. We interpret these results to suggest that people might tradeoff cognitive and behavioral resources they could apply to individual performance for opportunities to enhance their status. After replicating this effect in our second sample, we identify trait neuroticism as a cognitive predictor of the status attainment-performance tradeoff, and increased dominance and generosity as behavioral mechanisms through which neurotic individuals successfully gain status without enhancing their performance.

There are two popular images of social status (the amount of respect, influence and prominence one has in the eyes of others (Anderson, John, Keltner & Kring 2001; Flynn 2003)) in American society. The first is a narrative about status *stability* that emphasizes how the rewards for status accumulate and reinforce each other over time. This perspective is empirically supported by the Matthew effect, for instance, whereby recognition for scientific achievement is disproportionally given to established scientists (Merton 1968). America is also the land of opportunity, however, which is a compelling narrative about status *mobility*. Opportunities for status mobility in society are among the most primary human motivators (Hogan & Hogan 1991; Loch, Huberman & Stout 2000). This is because we assume that rewards accrue according to our status positions, whether we are born with a silver spoon in our mouth or we scrape our way to the top.

Reflecting the importance of status in society, it is an intense subject of academic research. Scholars have generally treated it as a very stable property of individuals and groups that is more akin to the first image we described above. Research has emphasized the characteristics of individuals who are most likely to be attributed with high status by their peers (e.g., Anderson et al. 2001; Berger, Cohen & Zelditch 1972; Kalkhoff & Thye 2006; Ridgeway & Erickson 2000) and the interpersonal interactions that reinforce and

maintain stable status orders in groups and society (e.g., Berger, Ridgeway, Fisek & Norman 1998; Bienenstock & Bianchi 2004; Kalkhoff 2005; Ridgeway, Diekema & Johnson 1995; Zelditch 2001). Furthermore, scholars have documented the immense benefits that accrue to individuals judged as having high status, such as high compensation (Belliveau, Oreilly & Wade 1996), positive performance evaluations (Berger, Rosenholtz & Zelditch 1980), valuable exchange partners (Podolny 2005; Thye 2000), opportunities to influence group outcomes, and favorable resource allocations (Bales 1958; Bunderson 2003).

Despite the enormous attention to status in the literature, little of it has considered status dynamically. There has been some theoretical research on the *de*legitimation of status orders, that is, how the validity and acceptance of a status order may change (Berger et al. 1998). Status also has been conceptualized as a resource that can be exchanged (Turner, Foa & Foa 1971) and auctioned (Sutton & Hargadon 1996). There has been some empirical work on shifts in status relationships within groups (e.g., De Kelaita, Munroe & Tootell 2001; Goar & Sell 2005; Ridgeway 1982), but none has considered the *consequences* of gaining or losing status. Thus, our research question is: How do people who gain or lose status perform compared to those who maintain stable high and low status positions in task groups over time?

We examine this question in two longitudinal studies of middle managers currently enrolled in a part time MBA program whose status positions in their study groups are measured at the beginning and end of their study group's life. In both samples, we compare the individual performance (course grades) of the students who gained or lost status to students who maintained high and low stable status positions in their study groups. We call these four groups "status categories." Controlling for age, work experience and self-reported satisfaction with the team, we find a positive association between one's status position at the end of the group's life and individuals' performance. Counter-intuitively, however, we find that those who gained status – even those who attained the highest status positions in their groups –performed significantly worse than did those who maintained the highest status positions for the whole quarter. The performance of those who gained status was no better than that of stable low status members. People who lost status, on the other hand, performed no worse than their stable high status counterparts. Thus, it

appears that people who invest in status attainment do not reap benefits, and people who do not maintain their status positions do not pay a price, in terms of their individual performance.

Given this counter-intuitive pattern of results, we posit that individuals may be trading off both cognitive resources (attention) and behavioral resources (effort) from their tasks to enhance their status. In our second study we determine that status seekers tradeoff attention and efforts to enhance their status for those that would improve their performance, whereas high stable status members do not need to make that tradeoff in order to maintain their high status positions. This different allocation of resources explains their performance outcomes.

This study contributes to the literature in several important ways. First, it highlights the distinction between status as a dynamic versus a static construct. Despite many forces that legitimate and stabilize status orders in groups, individuals do experience shifts in status positions in their groups over time and the performance implications are substantial. Second, we identify a specific cognitive and behavioral profile that predicts the successful attainment of status at the cost of performance. These identified mechanisms extend research on the characteristics of individuals that predict status emergence to those that predict status evolution. Third, by using actual rather than perceived performance in real task groups, our observations of the status-performance effort tradeoff extends recent theoretical and experimental research in this area (Huberman, Loch & Onculer 2004; Loch et al. 2000).

STATUS DYNAMICS

Status hierarchies, "rank-ordered relationships among actors [that] describe…interactional inequalities" (Ridgeway & Walker 1995: 281) inevitably emerge in groups (Tiedens, Unzueta & Young 2007). Although many social forces serve to stabilize the emergent social orders, not all of the status orders are legitimated (Ridgeway & Berger 1986). For instance, Anderson, et al. (2001) measured individuals' status in a college dormitory at three points in time: two weeks into the Fall semester (time 1), after four months (time 2) and after nine months (time 3). The overall status correlation from time 1 to time 2 was .61 and from time 2 to time 3, .86 (p. 124). Thus, although the status positions stabilized considerably over time, there was still notable variation, especially in the first four months.

Some research (e.g., Barley 1986, 1996; Bechky 2003) suggests that status is continuously re-negotiated as people assert expertise and claim legitimacy (Owens & Sutton 2001; Strauss 1978). Status orders may be delegitimated if task performance requirements change such that expectations of competence become inconsistent with an established hierarchy (Berger et al. 1998; Goar & Sell 2005). Interventions that make individual's task competencies appear inconsistent with their status characteristics can equalize the status and influence differentials in task interactions (e.g., Markovsky, Smith & Berger 1984; Pugh & Wahrman 1983). This may be particularly effective when low status individuals' influence attempts are perceived to be motivated by advancing the group's interests rather than their self-interests (Ridgeway 1982).

In addition to the ways in which status orders may be destabilized due to changes in the task environment, certain types of people are more likely to seek status than others, independent of their demographic characteristics or expertise on a particular task (Overbeck, Correll & Park 2005). Elangovan and Xie (1999), for instance, find that people with high self esteem and internal loci of control experience dissatisfaction when leadership is withheld. They may, therefore, challenge an emergent hierarchy in which they are attributed with lower status than they think they deserve (see also Polzer & Caruso 2008; Porath, Overbeck & Pearson 2008). Thus, individuals' status positions in groups may change over time.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDIES

We conduct two studies with separate samples of working MBA students at a large, public university. These are ideal samples for this kind of research for a number of reasons. First, these student groups had no existing formal or prescribed overarching hierarchy. Therefore, we can study the inevitable emergent status sorting processes without confounding the influence of an organizational reporting structure. Second, the groups' tasks and consequences are real, objectively measurable and meaningful for the members – in the form of a class grade on which their employers' tuition reimbursement depends – so the setting is more realistic than it would be for a short-term group created in a laboratory to work on an experimental task. Last, the groups all began and ended at the same time and individuals worked on the same tasks, enabling direct performance comparisons that are often difficult in the field.

The research procedure was essentially the same in both studies, although different non-status questions were asked in the two studies. Data were collected from two sections in Study 1and four sections in Study 2 of 65 – 72 students who were enrolled in a required Organizational Behavior course during the first 10-week quarter of the MBA program. Students initially met and were assigned to the study groups that were used for this research during a four day orientation program prior to the beginning of the quarter. In Study 2 only, prior to this orientation program, students were surveyed about their personality traits using the 60-item NEO Five Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae 1992), which acts as a proxy for cognitive resource allocation. In both studies, students were surveyed during the first week of the course (time 1) and again after the last class and right before taking their final exam (time 2), 10 weeks later. Following protocols used by Anderson, et al. (2006) and Flynn (2003), both surveys asked students to rate each member of their study group, including themselves, on a scale from 1 = very little to 7 = very much about the following characteristics: 1) To what extent does each individual make valuable contributions to the group, 2) To what extent does each individual influence the group's decisions, and 3) How much status (social respectability) does each individual have in the group?

The time 2 survey in both studies also asked students to rate their satisfaction with the team. In Study 2 only, students additionally rated each other's dominant communication and generosity in both surveys. Demographic data and work histories were collected from the MBA program office. Assignment grades were generated by two teaching assistants (TAs), each of whom graded all assignments for students from both sections on alternating assignments, thereby ensuring within-assignment grading consistency across sections and reducing the potential bias that might be introduced by the TAs' familiarity with the students. Although it is plausible that the TAs sensed the relative status of students in the entire section, they had no knowledge about the status dynamics within each study group that are the focus of this research. Final course grades were determined based on weighted points from all individual assignments throughout the quarter prior to the authors examining the survey data. Although students were obligated to complete the surveys for course credit, they voluntarily agreed to let the authors use the data for research.

STUDY 1

Hypotheses

Before presenting our hypotheses, we ask an exploratory research question about the degree of stability in group status orders. As we identified earlier, there has been little empirical research on the evolution of status orders over time to determine the extent to which status positions are immutable. The research by Anderson, et al (2001) is an exception, and as we reported earlier, they find a high degree of correlation between status positions in a college dormitory over a nine-month period, but considerably lower correlations over the first four-months of the study, especially among women. Their samples were large, non-task oriented social groups that they studied for an entire academic year. It is unclear to what extent their observations would generalize to smaller, task oriented groups with shorter life cycles that are more consistent with the focus of the majority of status research. We, therefore, first ask how stable are task oriented peer group status orders over a complete group life cycle?

Next, we develop hypotheses regarding the effects of status positions over time on individual performance. The extant status literature indicates that the higher is one's position is in the group's initial, emergent status order (hereafter called time 1), the higher is one's performance (Bales 1958). Since the group hierarchy is very stable (Anderson et al. 2001; Chase 1980), and benefits accrue to high status individuals that reinforce their status positions and outcomes (Berger, Conner & Fisek 1974; Podolny 1993; Ridgeway & Berger 1986), the group's final status order (hereafter, time 2) should also be positively associated with performance. Status characteristics theory (Ridgeway 1991), however, suggests that the status valuation of personal attributes may unfold over time through "doubly dissimilar" interactions: goal-oriented encounters between actors who differ in both demographic characteristics and resources that reinforce differing performance expectations (Ridgeway, Boyle, Kuipers & Robinson 1998). Thus, status characteristics theory would predict that individuals' status positions in their groups may change over time as a function of the status sorting process such that only the time 2 status order represents the legitimated hierarchy that is related to individual's performance.

Although there is much evidence that one's status position enhances one's performance opportunities (e.g., Bales 1958; Berger et al. 1980; Bunderson 2003), it is also plausible that one's final status position is simply a function of one's performance. To the extent that there is error in the initially formed performance expectations or the task requirements change over time, individuals may gain or lose status in

their group as their true performance abilities are revealed. If this were the case, we would still expect a positive relationship between one's time 2 status position in the group and one's individual performance. Thus, whether due to the stability and reinforcement of the initial status order, the social construction of legitimated status orders or the evolution of performance expectations, the first hypothesis we derive from the literature is:

Hypothesis 1: At time 2, status rank will be positively associated with performance.

Importantly, this hypothesis implies that one's time 2 status rank position will be associated with individual performance regardless of when the status position was attained. In other words, there should be no difference in the relationship between time 2 status position and individual performance for those whose status was conferred at the outset and maintained it and those who gained or lost status positions in their groups over time.

Some research indicates, however, that individuals may trade off efforts to enhance their status positions within their groups and their own performance due to finite cognitive and behavioral resources. Research on attentional resource allocation suggests that individuals have limited cognitive resources that they direct towards on-task, off-task and self-regulatory activities (Kanfer & Ackerman 1989). The more cognitive resources that are focused on off-task and self-regulatory activities, the worse an individual will perform due to compromised information processing functions (and *vice versa*) (Smillie, Yeo, Furnham & Jackson 2006). Thus, if a person's attention is distracted by his status ambitions, then he will be motivated to exert effort towards status enhancement, which consumes some cognitive resources that could otherwise be directed towards his tasks.

Behaviorally, Loch, et al. (2000) suggest that individuals have a finite amount of effort that they allocate between work (enhancing performance) and politics (enhancing status). As individuals expend relatively more effort to enhance their status, their productivity suffers. Whereas Loch, et al. (2000) examine the effects of status seeking behavior on group performance, we consider its effects on individual performance. We assume that the deleterious effects of status seeking may be even more pronounced than in their models because there is no opportunity to free-ride on the work effort of other group members. Thus, as individuals choose between exerting efforts to attain status or working hard at their individual

tasks, their status seeking behavior may offset whatever positional benefits their attained status rank would afford.

Empirical evidence supports this resource trade-off proposition. Huberman, Loch and Onculer (2004), for instance, determined that individuals gave up material gain for opportunities to enhance their status. In a two-stage experiment, they forced participants to tradeoff of their budget for increasing the chances of winning stage 1, in which there was an experimental condition where those winners would be publically recognized, for the changes of winning stage 2, worth $20. The researchers found that participants in the condition where the winner of stage 1 was publically acknowledged invested 14% more, on average across data from five different countries, than did those in the condition without this status-enhancing opportunity. In an organizational example, Flynn (2003) indicates that one way individuals gain status in their groups is by exchanging favors; in particular, by being especially generous rather than indebted to others. He finds that this generosity is costly, however, because overly generous individuals gain no practical advantage from the favors they are owed. Analysis of a curvilinear effect of imbalanced favor exchange on performance suggests that the level of generosity needed to gain status hurts individual performance.

Thus, if there are costs associated with seeking status, individuals who gain status in their groups over time may not experience the same performance benefits as those who achieve high status at the outset and maintain it over time, regardless of their time 2 status positions. We, therefore, hypothesize that controlling for time 2 status positions:

Hypothesis 2: Those individuals who gain status over time do not perform as well as do those who maintain high status positions in their groups from the beginning.

An additional implication of this logic is that the less people invest in status enhancement or maintenance efforts, the better they should perform because their resources can be focused more on their own performance. Given the structural benefits to being in a high status position, however, it is unclear *a priori* whether people who lose status in their groups over time would perform better than or equal to stable high status group members. Thus, we will conduct an exploratory comparison assuming that if status

losers' performance is either equal to or higher than that of stable high status group members, it is further evidence of our resource tradeoff proposition. We summarize our theoretical model in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Sample

99 individuals (66 men) from 24 groups of 4 – 6 people (M = 4.35, $s\ d.$ = .92) agreed to participate in the research project for a 78 percent response rate. Three people were dropped from the analyses due to incomplete data for a final sample size of 96. They are 30.67 years old, on average (*s.d.* = 3.65), 62.5 percent are Asian or South Asian and 28 percent are Caucasian. On average they have 81.63 months of post-graduate work experience (*s.d.* = 39.99).

Variables

Dependent variable. We measured objective individual performance (as opposed to peer-rated perceived performance) as the overall course grade based on two individual assignments (case write ups) worth 40 percent of the final grade, a final exam comprised of a case write up and short essay questions worth 30 percent of the final grade and in-class participation from each class cumulatively worth 15 percent of the final grade. A group assignment that was worth 15 percent of the final grade is excluded from this variable. We used their aggregated grade rather than the grade from their final exam only (which would measure their performance closest to the time 2 status assessment) because it is a more accurate indication of their actual performance than is any single assignment (Polzer, Milton & Swann 2002; Rothstein 2004; Slack & Porter 1980). This variable does not differ across class sections (t = 1.15, n.s.), so we pooled the data.

Independent variables. Because we are interested in the effects of one's position within a group's status hierarchy, we used rank-ordered variables that we constructed based on mean teammates' ratings of each person on the contribution, influence and status items, allowing for ties. We calculated the ICC(1) (an index of inter-rater reliability that takes into account group size) for the peer ratings of these items within teams in both time 1 and time 2. An ICC(1) value greater than .12 is generally considered acceptable (James 1982). All ICC(1) are greater than .28, indicating substantial within group reliability in the peer ratings. The scale alphas (at time 1 = .90 at time 2 = .94) suggest that combining the three items into a

single scale is appropriate. We ranked individuals at time 1 and time 2 within each team based on these peer-rating scales to remove any group-level variance in the individual data (note: a top-ranked individual has a value = 1, so a positive effect on performance would be indicated by a *negative* coefficient).

To examine the dynamic effects of status over time, we created a "status category" variable that is a four-part measure indicating if a subject maintained stable high, stable low, gained or lost status in their group between time 1 and time 2. We operationalized high status as being in the top ranked position in one's group. This is because individuals in the highest status positions in their groups are the unambiguously dominant members of their groups who are most likely to reap the benefits of being high status (Chase 1980). Furthermore, the benefits of having high status, but not the high*est* status, are ambiguous (Phillips & Zuckerman 2001) and likely depend on group size. Thus, a person is categorized as stable high status when he or she is in the top-ranked position in both time 1 and time 2. Stable low status is operationalized as being in the same rank position at time 1 and time 2 other than the highest-ranked position. People gained status (called "status seekers" to reflect our assumption of proactivity) if they moved up the rank order between time 1 and time 2 and lost status (called "status losers") if they moved down the rank order from time 1 to time 2.

Control variables. We control for the diffuse status characteristic of age.[1] Age is particularly salient in this sample of working MBA students because it signals valuable accumulated knowledge and wisdom. We also included a specific status characteristic, months of post-graduate work experience, because those with more experience have been exposed to more organizational behavior issues at work and may have had more managerial experience, which could help their performance on their class assignments. In addition, we included subject's satisfaction with their team ("I was satisfied working on this team" (1= to no extent, 7= to a great extent)) because people are more satisfied with interpersonal interactions when they experience complementary dominance and deference behaviors than when they encounter incongruent behaviors (Dryer & Horowitz 1997; Tiedens & Fragale 2003). Thus, satisfaction with the team is an

[1] Although gender is a more most widely used diffuse status characteristic in research on status conferrals (c.f. Anderson et al. 2001; Bunderson 2003; Carli, Loeber & Lafleur 1995; Ridgeway et al. 1995) in our preliminary analyses, gender exerts no significant effects in any of our analytical models and the pattern of results was unchanged with its exclusion. Given our small sample size, we opt to not include it in order to increase the statistical power of our models.

attitudinal variable that likely reflects how content one is with his or her one's position in the status hierarchy. Furthermore, satisfaction with the team is a key aspect of group effectiveness (Gladstein 1984), which could affect individual's performance.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations are presented in Table 1a. In Table 1b, we report mean levels of performance across the status categories. Of the status seekers, 61.2 percent started at time 1 in the second or third highest-ranked positions (M = 3.32, *s. d.* = 1.04). At time 2, 41.9 percent of seekers were in the top positions on their teams (M = 1.87, *s. d.* = .92). Among the status losers, 39 percent started in the top-ranked positions at time 1 (M = 2.03, *s. d.* = 1.03). At time 2, 53.8 percent were in the second- or third-highest positions (M = 3.50, *s. d.* = .95). Thus, there was considerable mobility in this sample, but most of it was within a few positions.

Insert Tables 1a and 1b About Here

To test our exploratory research question about how stable the status orders are, we preformed a Kendall's tau-b correlation, which adjusts for ties (Abdi 2007) between the time 1 and time 2 status rank variables. Although significant ($p < .01$), the correlation was .47, indicating substantial instability in the status orders of these groups.

We next conducted an OLS regression on individual performance with our time 2 status rank variable along with the controls (Table 2, Column 1). The results indicate that the performance is positively associated with time 2 status rank (β = -1.77, $p < .01$), supporting our first hypothesis.

To test our second hypothesis, that those individuals who gain status over time do not perform as well as do those who maintain high status positions in their groups from the beginning, we conducted another regression adding our status category dummy variables to the model, using the high stable status as our reference group (Table 2, Column 2). In support of the hypothesis, we found that the performance of the stable high status group members was significantly higher than that of the status seekers (β = -4.64, $p <$ .05). Additionally, post-estimation tests comparing the magnitude of the dummy variables' effect sizes indicated that the status seekers' performance was not significantly different than was that of the stable low status members (F (2, 88) = 2.46, *n.s.*).

To answer our exploratory question about the performance of status losers compared to stable high status members, we observe that the dummy variable for status losers is not statistically significant (β = -2.95, *n.s.*). This means that there are no performance differences between these categories. The magnitude of the effect size was not significantly smaller than that of the status seekers (F (2, 88) = 2.17, *n.s.*), however, and only marginally smaller than that of the stable low status members (F (2, 88) = 2.73, p = .07).

Insert Table 2 About Here

Post-hoc analyses. We ran several additional analyses to rule out alternative potential explanations for our findings. First, we were concerned that the different performance outcomes for status seekers and stable high status members could be due to status seekers who did not attain the top positions in their groups at time 2 bringing down the average performance level in that category. Thus, we ran an OLS regression analysis on the performance of just the 25 individuals who were in the highest status positions in the groups at time 2. Since satisfaction is the only control variable with a significant effect in the analysis on the full sample, we excluded age and experience from our analyses on this small sub-sample to conserve statistical power (Becker 2005). The dummy variable (equal to one for the stable high status category and zero for the status seeker category) indicated significantly better performance for stable high status than status seekers category (β = 5.82, p < .01), ruling out this alternative explanation.

Second, it is possible that status seekers' performance is no better than that of stable low status group members because high status positions in these groups are not associated with resources that enhance *individual* performance. Instead, stable high status group members may have been conferred high status at the outset because they are good students, which is why their performance is higher. If this were the case, then status seekers are not positioning themselves in a way that would improve their individual performance. If the relationship between high status and individual performance is due to good students being conferred high status, then the relationship between their time 1 status position and performance should be the same for assignments at all points in time. If, however, the high status individuals are accumulating resources that benefit their individual performance, then we should observe a stronger relationship between time 1 high status and performance on later assignments than on earlier ones. We,

thus, disaggregated our performance variable and examined the effect of time 1 status rank on performance on the first and last individual assignments of the quarter and on the final exam. We find a non-significant effect of time 1 high versus low status on the first individual assignment (β = -.16, *n.s.*) but a significant effect of this variable on the last assignment (β = -.29, $p < .05$) and on the final exam (β = -.60, $p < .05$), again controlling for age, experience and satisfaction. These results suggest that, consistent with the extensive literature on the benefits of having high status, the individual performance of high status group members is, indeed, enhanced over time. Thus, we can rule out this alternative explanation for our findings.

Study 1 Discussion

The results of this study are quite counter-intuitive. First, despite the assumption and previous findings in the literature, we determined that there was quite a lot of individual status mobility in these groups and that the status orders, although significantly correlated over time, were not particularly stable. Second, although we found an expected relationship between one's time 2 status position in one's group and one's performance, *when* one attained high status mattered. Specifically, controlling for individuals' time 2 status rank, those who gained status performed significantly worse than did those who maintained high status positions in their groups over time. Even the status seekers who successfully attained the top-ranked positions at time 2 performed worse than did the stable high group members. Furthermore, those who lost status over time performed just as well as those who maintained stable high status positions, despite their relatively low status in the group's legitimated status orders. These results appear to be consistent with research suggesting that individuals' efforts towards status enhancement in their groups may cost their individual performance due to how they allocate their limited resources.

Although the fairly small sample size makes this study's analyses conservative tests of our hypotheses, we want to replicate these results with a second, larger sample. We also want to determine what cognitive and behavioral resources are being traded off to enhance status over time without improving performance. We, therefore, conducted a second study.

STUDY 2

Hypotheses

Our first objective is to replicate the performance consequences of status mobility from Study 1 that those who gain status do not perform as well as their time 2 status positions would indicate and that those who lose status nevertheless perform as well as those who maintain stable high status (we do not formally hypothesize the latter null effect). Thus, we again hypothesize that controlling for time 2 status position:

Hypothesis 1: Status seekers do not perform as well as do those with stable high status in their groups.

We posit that these performance differences are due to cognitive and behavioral resources that individuals proactively tradeoff between status enhancement and individual performance. Status seekers may need to allocate more away from their tasks towards status attainment than stable high status members do because maintaining high status is easier than is gaining it over time (Loch et al. 2000). Status losers may need to exert even less effort than the stable high status members do, thus conserving resources for performance (again, refer to Figure 1 for a graphical representation of this theoretical model). To confirm this mechanism, we identify cognitive and behavioral resources that may be traded off for performance.

Cognitive resources. Since research on the allocation of cognitive resources is generally conducted in controlled laboratory experiments where response speeds can be directly measured (Wallace & Newman 1998), we used a proxy variable in our research based on the finding that some people are more easily distracted from their tasks than others. Specifically, Wallace and Newman (1997) suggest that neurotic individuals (those who are anxious, insecure and worried (Hogan, Curphy & Hogan 1994)) are particularly susceptible to the automatic orienting of attention -- "any instance where attention and cognitive resources are redirected from an ongoing process to distracter stimuli" (Wallace & Newman 1997: 139 - 140). Without sufficient attentional resources to self-regulate, neurotics are particularly vulnerable to the maladaptive products of automatic processes, such as erroneous inferences and inappropriate behavioral responses. This dysregulation process suggests that neurotics are easily distracted by non-task related stimuli (Smillie et al. 2006), especially if the stimulus is negative (Eysenck & Eysenck 1985; Gray 1994; Rusting & Larsen 1998). Thus, attentional dysregulation may explain why neuroticism is associated with poor performance (Barrick, Mount & Judge 2001; O'Connor & Paunonen 2007). Indeed, when they are able to focus their attention on their tasks, neurotic individuals outperform their more emotionally stable peers (Smillie et al. 2006).

Since neuroticism negatively predicts status conferrals and emergent leadership (Anderson et al. 2001; Hogan et al. 1994) and individuals are quite accurate at perceiving their status in groups (Anderson et al. 2006), we reasoned that low status attributions by their peers in the initial status orders of their groups might serve as a negative, non-task distracter stimulus. The negative feedback would make neurotic individuals feel quite insecure about their status positions, so they may be especially motivated to improve their status positions over time (Kanfer & Ackerman 1989). They would, therefore, be highly susceptible to attentional dysregulation, lowering their individual performance relative to more task focused individuals. We expect the opposite pattern for status losers. Low neuroticism scores could explain why they are attributed with relatively high status at the beginning, why they are not as motivated to maintain their high status as are the stable high status category members and why their performance is better than their final status position would indicate.

Hypothesis 2a: Neuroticism will positively predict the likelihood of being a status seeker compared to any of the other three status categories.

Hypothesis 2b: Neuroticism will negatively predict the likelihood of being a status loser compared to any of the other three status categories.

Hypothesis 2c: The negative effect of neuroticism on performance will be mediated by the status category variables.

Behavioral resources. Next, we look for more direct evidence that neuroticism affects the allocation of individual's task versus status enhancing behavioral resources, which at least partially explain the relatively low performance of status seekers and the relatively high performance of status losers. The literature identifies two behaviors that may be associated with successfully enhancing one's status without benefitting one's individual performance: generosity and dominant communication.

As described earlier, Flynn and colleague's research indicates that increasing peers' perceptions of one's generosity is a means by which people gain status in their groups (Flynn 2003; Flynn, Reagans, Amanatullah & Ames 2006). Being perceived as generous towards the group, not just towards individuals, may also enhance status: Ridgeway (1982) demonstrated that low status members' influence attempts were considered more legitimate when the status seekers were perceived to have a cooperative, group-oriented

motivation than a self-aggrandizement one. However, being too generous or overly oriented toward group goals could hurt individual's performance to the extent that it distracts from their own task efforts (Chen, Chen & Meindl 1998; Flynn 2003; Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi & Yoon 1994). Although these studies do not measure the effects of generosity on *changes* in ones social status over time, it is plausible that individuals could increase their generosity as a way to gain higher status in existing peer relationships. We expect that neurotic individuals, therefore, will be more likely to increase their generosity over time in an effort to enhance their status. Since Flynn (2003) identifies a negative curvilinear effect of generosity on performance, we expect that status seekers may overinvest in increasing their generosity to meet their status ambitions to the point that those efforts will hurt their performance. If lower generosity investments are associated with less status enhancement, then the investments of other category members are less likely to hurt their performance.

Hypothesis 3: a) Neuroticism will positively predict generosity change over time, b) generosity change will positively predict the likelihood that an individual is a status seeker versus other status categories, and negatively predict that an individual is a status loser versus other status categories, thus mediating the effect of neuroticism on status category, and c) members of the status seeker category will be more likely than the other status category members to invest in generosity change beyond the point at which the negative curvilinear effect of generosity change on performance becomes detrimental.

Another means by which individuals may gain status is by increasing their dominant communication (Lee & Ofshe 1981; Mazur 1985; Tiedens & Fragale 2003; Tiedens et al. 2007). We posit that increasing one's communication of dominance may be an effective means of gaining status because it tends to produce complementary submissive responses (Dryer & Horowitz 1997; Tiedens & Fragale 2003). For example, Mazur (1985) finds that assertive speech is associated with high status and Lee and Ofshe (1981) determine that a target's dominance behaviors (e.g. acting confidently and assertively) are associated with larger awards in a fictional personal injury case. Furthermore, Tiedens et al. (2007) determined that people were motivated to perceive dominance complementarity when they wanted to coordinate with the other to succeed at their joint tasks. We, therefore, extrapolate from this finding that neurotic individuals may enhance their group status by increasing their dominant communication to convey confidence and

assertiveness in a way that elicits complementary deferential responses from other group members.[2] There is some indirect evidence that increasing dominant communication may have a curvilinear effect on performance. Ames and Flynn (2007) find a negative curvilinear effect of assertiveness and perceived leadership effectiveness. Even though they did not measure actual performance and leadership is a distinct domain from status, we believe their results suggest that there could be a curvilinear effect of changes in dominant communication on performance. Specifically, the social costs incurred by excessive assertiveness may undermine the performance-enhancing resources that generally flow to high status individuals.

Hypothesis 4: a) Neuroticism will positively predict dominant communication change over time, b) dominant communication change will positively predict the likelihood that an individual is a status seeker versus other status categories, and negatively predict the likelihood that an individual is a status loser compared to other status categories, thus mediating the effect of neuroticism on status category, and c) the negative curvilinear effect of dominant communication change on performance will be mediated by the status seeker versus other status categories.

Furthermore, our status-performance tradeoff model implies a linear, positive relationship between the level of investment in generosity and dominant communication and mobility within a group's status order. Because status maintenance is hard and status ascension is harder, greater investment in these efforts should be positively associated with status gains. Reducing the amount of effort one expends towards these activities should be associated with loss of status.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a positive linear relationship between the level of investment in generosity and dominant communication change and the amount of mobility within in a group's status order.

Methods

Sample. 235 individuals (161 men) from 44 teams from 4 – 6 people (M = 5.4, $s.d.$ = .62)

[2] The way these individuals assert dominance matters, however. While the authors cited above operationalized dominance in terms of non-verbal behavior and assertive communication, other work has determined that *coercive*, threatening dominance behaviors do not effectively enhance one's status because such behaviors are considered illegitimate by other members of the group (Ridgeway & Diekema 1989; Ridgeway & Berger 1986). We will, therefore, operationalize dominance behaviors as non-coercive communications only.

agreed to participate in the research project for a 90 percent response rate. They are 29.45 years old on average (*s.d.* = 3.68), 52 percent are Asian or South Asian and 37 percent are Caucasian. On average they have 73.65 months of post-graduate work experience (*s.d.* = 50.35).

Variables

Dependent variables. Performance differed across sections in this sample, so we used a section mean-centered, aggregated individual performance measure for this study, and then pooled the data. In this sample, the grade is based on two individual assignments (case write ups) worth 34 percent of the final grade, a final exam comprised of a case write up and short essay questions worth 25 percent of the final grade, completion of the time 1 and time 2 surveys worth 10 percent of the final grade and in-class participation from each class cumulatively worth 15 percent of the final grade. A group assignment that was worth 16 percent of the final grade is excluded from this variable.

To test Hypothesis 5, we constructed status rank change scores by subtracting the time 1 within-team status rank from the time 2 within-team status rank. Since a top-ranked individual in either time period has a value of one, negative numbers indicate a movement *up* the status hierarchy.

Independent variables. We constructed the status category variable the same way as in Study 1. In this sample, the ICC(1) of the peer ratings of contribution, influence and status were all greater than .19 in both time periods and the scale alphas at time 1 = .86 and time 2 = .91. To test our mediation hypotheses, we created three dummy variables that equal 0 for the status seeker category and 1 for high stable status, for status losers and for low stable status category members, respectively. We also created three dummy variables that equal 0 for the status losers category and 1 for each of the other status categories.

Controls. We first tested the effects of age, experience, satisfaction and time 2 status rank on performance in this sample with an OLS regression. Like in Study 1, neither age nor experience significantly affects performance in these data (β_{age} = -.07, *n.s.*; $\beta_{exp.}$ = .007, *n.s.*). Satisfaction has a marginally significant effect (β = .34, $p < .10$) and time 2 status rank is significant (β = -.84, $p < .01$), so we controlled for these latter two variables only.

Mediator variables. We measured neuroticism using 12 items from the 60-item NEO Five Factor Inventory that are associated with that dimension (Costa & McCrae 1992). All items are on a scale from 1

= Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree (e.g., "I am not a worrier" (reverse coded)). We measured perceived generosity with a peer-rated five-item scale from Flynn et al. (2006) using seven-point scales from 1 = Never to 7 = Always. Sample items are, "S/he is flexible and tries to accommodate others' needs" and "S/he is unwilling to sacrifice his/her self-interest for the good of the team" (reverse coded). The ICC(1) at time 1 = .66 and at time 2 = .65. The time 1 scale alpha = .74 and the time 2 scale alpha =.87. Perceived dominance behavior was based on two items, "To what extent does each person on the team demonstrate a willingness to assert his/her ideas and opinions in the face of opposition and challenge?" and "To what extent does each person on the team convince and persuade others to see his/her perspective and ideas?" The ICC(1) at both time 1 and 2 = .27 and the scale alphas at time 1 and time 2 = .83. We centered each of the time 1 and time 2 variables around the team mean to eliminate between-team effects, and created change scores by subtracting the time 1 mean-centered peer rating from the time 2 mean-centered peer rating. Thus, we created "generosity change" and "dominant communication change" variables.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations are provided in Table 3a and means and standard deviations across status categories are in Table 3b. We, again, explored the stability in the status orders between time 1 and time 2 and found that they were even less stable in this sample than they were in Study 1, with Kendall's tau-b = .36, $p < .01$.

Insert Tables 3a and 3b about here.

We next replicated our analyses from Study 1 to test Hypothesis 1 (Table 4). Consistent with this hypothesis, we found that status seekers' performance was significantly lower than that of stable high status members (β = -2.05, $p < .05$). Similar to Study 1, we also found that status losers' performance was not significantly different from stable high status members (β = .10, *n.s.*). Furthermore, post-estimation tests of the magnitude of the dummy variable's coefficients confirmed that the performance of status seekers was not statistically different than that of stable low status members (F (2, 229) = 2.09, *n.s.*). Unlike in Study 1, however, the magnitude of the status loser coefficient was significantly smaller than both that of the status seekers (F (2, 229) = 5.30, $p < .01$) and stable low status members (F (2, 229) = 4.90, $p < .01$). This provides further evidence of the performance-effort tradeoff mechanism.

Insert Table 4 about here

To test our cognitive resource hypotheses, we first confirmed that neuroticism is negatively associated with status conferrals in the time 1 status rank (β = .46, p < .01). We then conducted multinomial logistic regressions on the status category variable, first with status seekers as the base category to test Hypothesis 2a, then with status losers as the base category to test Hypothesis 2b. In support of Hypothesis 2a, neuroticism scores for status seekers were significantly higher than those for any other category ($\beta_{\text{stable low}}$ = - .75, p < .05; $\beta_{\text{stable high}}$ = - 1.45, p < .05; $\beta_{\text{status losers}}$ = - .92, p < .01). Contrary to the predictions of Hypothesis 2b, however, we did not find significant differences between the neuroticism of status losers and either stable low status members (β = .17, *n.s.*) or stable high status members (β = -.53, *n.s.*). Given that status losers do not have lower neuroticism scores than other status category members, we do not conduct further analyses of mediation by or of the status loser category.

We next followed the steps from Baron and Kenny (1986) to test our mediation hypotheses regarding status seekers.[3] As shown in Figure 2, we determined that neuroticism's effect on individual performance is mediated by the status category seeker versus stable high status dummy variable.[4] The effect of neuroticism on performance is not mediated by the status seeker versus status loser dummy variable, however, as the coefficient of the dummy variable is no longer significant when added to the model with neuroticism (β = 1.16, *n.s.*). Thus, Hypothesis 2c is supported with respect to the status seekers versus stable high status category contrast only.

Insert Figure 2 about here

To test Hypotheses 3a and 4a, we regressed neuroticism on generosity change and dominance change, controlling for satisfaction and time 2 status rank. The effect of neuroticism was significantly positive on both variables ($\beta_{\text{generosity change}}$ = .10, p < .01 and $\beta_{\text{dominance change}}$ = .13, p < .01). Results of multinomial logistic regression analyses with status seekers as the base category indicate that generosity change is higher for status seekers versus stable high status category members (β = -2.51, p < .05), but not compared to the other two categories ($\beta_{\text{stable low}}$ = - .54, *n.s.*; $\beta_{\text{status losers}}$ = - .71, *n.s.*). Thus, we tested the mediation

[3] We do not test the contrast between status seekers and low stable status members, since the performance effect of that contrast is not significant.

[4] Since we perform a logistic regression to test effects on status category, we cannot perform Sobel tests.

effect of generosity change on the significantly negative effect of neuroticism on the status category seeker versus stable high dummy variable that we found in the analyses of Hypothesis 2c. This effect was substantially reduced with generosity change in the model and the significant negative effect of generosity change on this dummy variable remained (Figure 3). We conclude, therefore, that the effect of neuroticism on the likelihood of being a status seeker versus a stable high status member is at least partially mediated by increased generosity, supporting Hypothesis 3b for this contrast only.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Results of multinomial logistic regression analyses (controlling for satisfaction and time 2 status rank) with status category seekers as the base category provide support for Hypothesis 4b: Status seekers increased their dominant communication significantly more than did any of the other status category members ($\beta_{\text{stable low}} = -2.02$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{stable high}} = -3.57$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{status losers}} = -2.67$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, with dominant communication change added to the model predicting status category by neuroticism, the effects of neuroticism are reduced to non-significant levels for both low stable status ($\beta = -.60$, *n.s.*) and high stable status ($\beta = -.94$, *n.s.*) category members compared to status seekers. The effect on status losers is reduced, but the coefficient is still significant ($\beta = -.74$, $p < .05$), indicating only partial mediation. Thus, Hypothesis 4b is fully supported for the effects of status seekers versus stable high and low members, and partially supported for status seekers versus status losers.

To test Hypotheses 3c and 4c, we separately regressed generosity change and dominance change along with their squared terms on individual performance, controlling for satisfaction and time 2 status rank in both analyses. Both squared terms were significant and negative ($\beta_{\textit{generosity change squared}} = -1.31$, $p < .05$; $\beta_{\textit{dominance change squared}} = -1.15$, $p < .05$). Thus, the effects of increasing generosity and dominant communication on performance are an inverted U, with declining performance after -.36 amount of increased generosity and -.05 amount of increased dominant communication. Consistent with these hypotheses, the mean level of investment in generosity and dominant communication among status seekers was well above these inflection points ($M_{\textit{generosity change}} = .12$, *s.d.* = .32; $M_{\textit{dominance change}} = .35$, *s.d.* = .40), whereas the mean investment in the behaviors was below zero for all other category members. Multinomial logistic regression analyses on status category with status seeker as the base category by a

dummy variable equal to one for dominant communication change above the -.05 inflection point, including the control variables, confirm that status seekers are more likely than all other status category members to overinvest in dominant communication ($\beta_{\text{stable low}} = -1.37$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{stable high}} = -4.25$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{status losers}} = -2.30$, $p < .01$). A parallel analysis with a dummy variable equal to one if generosity change is above the -.36 inflection point is significant only for stable high, however ($\beta = -2.69$, $p < .05$). Thus, it appears that the level of investment in these efforts that results in status enhancement is so high as to be more detrimental to performance than is the level of investment for the other category members, particularly the stable high status ones.

Finally, to test Hypothesis 5, which predicts a positive relationship between the level of status enhancing behaviors and status mobility, we regressed generosity change and dominant communication change on change between time 2 and time 1 status order position for those individuals in either the status seeker or status loser categories (i.e., mobile status group members). In support of this hypothesis, both results are significant ($\beta_{\text{generosity change}} = -1.34$, $p < .01$ and $\beta_{\text{dominance change}} = -2.77$, $p < .01$). Thus, the more (less) one invests in generosity and dominant communication, the more one moves up (down) in the status hierarchy.

Study 2 Discussion

Study 2 replicates our findings from Study 1 that individuals seem to trade off their performance for status attainment in their groups, with status seekers performing worse than and status losers performing better than one would expect based on their time 2 status rank. Our results suggest that the higher neuroticism of status seekers than other status category members produces lower initial status attributions. This (presumably) increases these individuals' motivation to enhance their status positions in their groups, thus distracting attention away from their tasks. To attain their higher status positions, neurotic individuals increase their generosity and dominant communication behaviors. Both of these types of efforts lead to successful status enhancement, but require such high investments that those activities are detrimental to their performance. This apparent status enhancement – performance tradeoff was consistently greater for status seekers than that of stable high status members, and compared to all other status category members with respect to neuroticism and dominant communication. Thus, we conclude that the allocation of both

cognitive and behavioral resources towards status enhancement and away from tasks explains why status seekers' performance is worse than the performance of stable high status members.

We are not able to explain why the performance of status losers is no worse than that of stable high status members with these data. Although the more that individuals reduced their investments in being generous or communicating dominantly the lower they fell in the group's status hierarchy, status losers are not less neurotic than their stable group members. Nor do they have significantly lower generosity or dominant communication change scores than their stable group members, on average. We assume, therefore, that the reasons these individuals lost status in their groups over time is due to disengagement in the social processes of their groups in ways that we do not observe. Hopefully, future research will be able to identify social processes that can account for the performance implications of both status enhancement and status losses.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings from these studies contribute to social-psychological research on status attainment in groups. By focusing on the dynamics of status order evolution over time, we found that the strong assumption that one's positions in the legitimated time 2 status order is positively associated with performance regardless of when that position was attained is unfounded. Gaining status over time does not boost one's performance at all; nor does losing status hurt one's performance.

Although it is possible that we did not observe a performance benefit of gaining status due to a lag between the attainment of a high status position and the conferral of benefits that might enhance performance, any longer term potential benefit for the status seekers in these groups is irrelevant. Since the groups were disbanded after the academic quarter in which they were studied, the individuals who worked to attain higher status positions could not expect payoffs for their efforts in the future. Thus, the motivation to invest in status attainment over time occurs despite no apparent instrumental performance benefits of achieving even the highest status positions. This result is consistent with Huberman et al.'s (2004) finding that individuals trade off material value for status opportunities in one-shot interactions.

A strength of this research is that we used real individual performance rather than perceived or rated performance. One way to interpret these results is that status seekers are effectively conveying more task

competence (as determined by the "contribution" component of our status measure) than they actually have. We might not see the status enhancement-performance tradeoff in a task environment where performance is ambiguous or subjectively determined by those who are influenced by the status seekers' portrayals of their own abilities. Future research should explore this possibility.

An additional contribution of our studies is the determination of a specific personality profile of status seekers that is quite different from that of individuals who are conferred high status by their peers in emergent status orders (Anderson et al. 2001; Hogan et al. 1994). Although we found that neuroticism was negatively associated with time 1 status ranking, it was *positively* related to the likelihood of being a status seeker.

Limitations

Of course, there are limitations to these studies. First, although there were many benefits to using student teams, future research should examine if these results persist outside a business school setting, where all the individuals may have fairly high status aspirations (Pfeffer & Fong 2004). A related limitation is that, since the surveys were conducted with pedagogical objectives as well as research ones, the students received feedback about their perceived leadership skills between the time 1 and time 2 surveys (they did not receive feedback on their status, influence and contribution ratings). Although not about their relative leadership rankings in the group whatsoever, this information, nonetheless, could have influenced students' status seeking behavior – particularly that of students who measured high in neuroticism and received feedback that they were perceived as having weak leadership skills. Although this is a legitimate critique, Anderson, et al. (2006) demonstrated that people's impressions of their status positions are quite accurate even without feedback. In addition, when we compare individuals' time 1 self-ratings to those of their peers, status seekers do not have more inflated self-perceptions of their status at time 1 (prior to getting feedback) than do people in other status categories. So while the feedback may have heightened the effects we observed, we do not believe it dramatically changed the status dynamics of these groups.

Third, since we measured performance as students' aggregated grade from assignments they completed over time, it is possible that this masked the performance benefits of gaining status. If

someone's status increased only towards the end of the quarter, for instance, their performance on early assignments would not reflect their higher status in the group. We had to balance this possibility against the poor quality of a single performance measure (i.e., their final exam), which is a noisy measure of true performance due to variations in how well students take tests and measure-to-measure performance fluctuations. When we conduct our analyses using just the last case assignment and final exam grades, we find that the results in our Study 1 sample are consistent with our results using the full performance measure but only at marginally significant levels ($\beta_{\text{high v. low}}$ = -3.52, p = .05; $\beta_{\text{high v. seeker}}$ = -2.82, p = .06), but that neither of the contrasts are significant in the Study 2 sample. Thus, we cannot rule out some measurement error in our results. We hope these limitations encourage more research on dynamic status processes.

Conclusions

The results of these studies suggest caution when trying to achieve high status ambitions. Instead of working to gain higher status over time, individuals are better served by trying to convey competence during a group's initial interactions because it will be much easier to maintain an initial high status position than to try to climb the social ladder later on.

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Table 1a: Study 1 descriptive statistics and correlations (N = 96). Means and (standard deviations) or N reported on diagonal.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1) Performance	80.93 (7.03)				
2) Time 2 status rank	-.31**	2.57 (1.34)			
3) Experience	-.08	-.04	81.63 (39.99)		
4) Satisfaction	.18+	.09	.05	5.96 (1.15)	
5) Age	-.02	-.05	.75**	.09	30.67 (3.65)

+ = p < .10 * = p < .05 ** = p < .01

Table 1b: Study 1 mean (s.d.) individual performance across status categories

Status Category	*Performance*
Stable High (N = 12)	86.45 (5.18)
Status Seekers (N = 31) / Time 2 top-ranked (N = 13)	81.22 (7.03) / 80.73 (4.49)
Status Losers (N = 26)	80.17 (6.24)
Stable Low (N = 27)	78.85 (7.46)

Table 2: Study 1 OLS regression results.[a b]

Variables	Column 1			Column 2 (stable high omitted dummy)		
Time 2 status rank	-1.77	(.51)	**	-1.34	(.71)	+
Experience	-.02	(.03)		-.03	(.03)	
Satisfaction	1.33	(.59)	*	1.62	(.61)	**
Age	.08	(.28)		.17	(.28)	
Stable Low Status Category				-5.92	(2.83)	*
Status Seeker Status Category				-4.64	(2.30)	*
Status Loser Status Category				-2.95	(2.91)	
Adj. R^2	. 12	**		.15	**	

[a] + = p < .10 * = p <.05 ** = p < .01

[b] β (standard error) reported

Table 3a: Study 2 descriptive statistics and correlations (N = 235). Means and (standard deviations) reported on diagonal.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Performance	0.00 (4.31)						
2. Time 2 – Time 1 Status Rank Change	-.02	.02 (1.72)					
3. Time 2 Status Rank	-.32**	.53**	3.15 (1.59)				
4. Satisfaction	.10	.01	.04	5.85 (.145)			
5. Generosity Change	.07	-.18**	-.23**	.07	0.00 (.389)		
6. Dominance Change	.11	-.52**	-.39	-.04	.27**	0.00 (.508)	
7. Neuroticism	-.14*	-.14*	.02	.04	.15*	.15*	2.15 (.630)

+ = p < .10 * = p < .05 ** = p < .01

Table 3b: Means and standard deviations of dependent and mediator variables across status categories

Status Category	*Centered Performance*	*Neuroticism*	*Generosity Change*	*Dominance Change*
Stable High (N = 22)	3.09 (2.73)	1.96 (.47)	- .04 (.36)	- .02 (.49)
Status Seekers (N = 73) / Time 2 top-ranked (N = 27)	- .05(3.92) / - .74 (4.12)	2.32 (.56) / 2.26 (.59)	.12 (.32) / .21 (.32)	.35 (.40) / .46 (.47)
Status Losers (N = 71)	.34 (4.49)	2.05 (.59)	- .08 (.43)	- .25 (.44)
Stable Low (N = 70)	-1.27 (4.44)	2.14 (.74)	- .03 (.40)	- .11 (.48)

Table 4: Study 2 OLS of performance effects of status category (stable high status omitted dummy), N = 235.[a b]

Variables			
Time 2 status rank	-.92	(.21)	**
Satisfaction	.37	(.18)	*
Stable Low Status Category	-1.92	(1.15)	+
Status Seeker Status Category	-2.05	(1.00)	*
Status Loser Status Category	.10	(1.17)	
Adj. R^2	.14	**	

[a] + = p < .10 * = p < .05 ** = p < .01

[b] β (standard error) reported

Figure 1: Theoretical Model

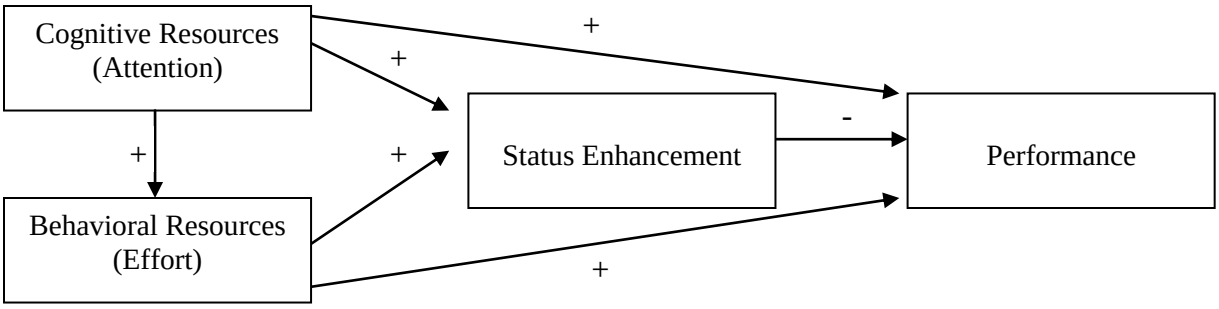

Figure 2: Mediation of neuroticism's effect on performance by status category seekers v. stable high (N = 95. Analyses control for satisfaction only because time 2 rank perfectly predicts stable high status category).

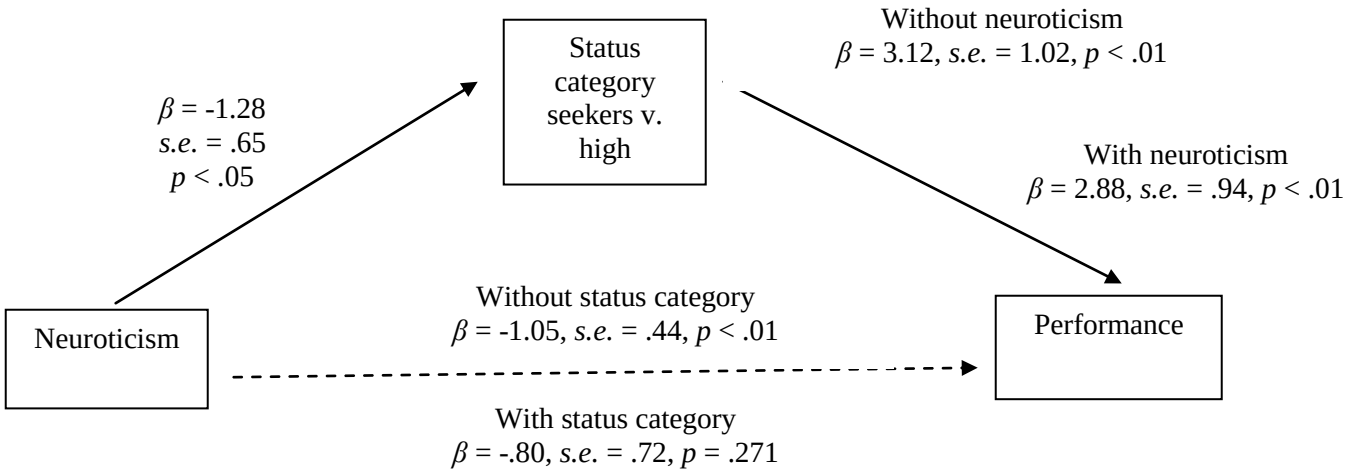

Figure 3: Mediation of neuroticism's effect on status category seekers v. high generosity change (N = 95. Analyses control for satisfaction only because time 2 rank perfectly predicts stable high status category).