

# The Effect of Credibility on Perceived Power<sup>1</sup>

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The credibility and power of a manager were manipulated in vignettes. Eighty-four subjects read a description and responded to scales measuring perceptions of power. Results indicated that credibility had a direct effect on power ratings. Objective power, which was manipulated in the vignettes, also had a direct effect on perceived power ratings. In addition, a significant interaction of objective power by credibility indicated that objective power had a moderating effect on the relationship between credibility and perceived power. The results are particularly meaningful with respect to the credibility manipulation, given that the scales used were designed specifically to measure reward, coercive, legitimate, expert, and referent power. Suggestions for future research on credibility and its relationship to social power are offered.

The process by which people influence each other to get what they want has inspired research and discussion by social scientists for many years. Social power has long been defined as the potential to influence a target (French & Raven, 1959; Tedeschi, Schlenker & Bonoma, 1973; Yukl, 1989). One of the earlier, and perhaps most influential, analyses of social power was furnished by French and Raven (1959). The French and Raven power taxonomy has been used and cited extensively in industrial/organizational psychology and social psychology (e.g., Brehm & Kassin, 1990; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989; Morgan, 1986; Muchinsky, 1987; Pfeffer, 1981; Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985; Tedeschi, Lindsfold, & Rosenfeld, 1985; Yukl, 1989).

The five bases of power proposed by French and Raven consist of reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert power. Reward power is based on the target's perception that the agent has the ability to provide rewards for the target. Coercive power is based on a similar perception by the target about punishments. Legitimate power is based on the target's perception that the agent has the legitimate right to influence the target and that he or she is obligated to comply. Referent power is based on identification with or desire to be associated with the agent. Expert power is based on the percep-

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tion that the agent can provide the target with some special knowledge (French & Raven, 1959). While there have been serious problems with some of the research conducted on the French and Raven power bases (see Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985, for a review), empirical support for the five-factor taxonomy of power does exist (Raven, 1988, 1992; Yukl, 1989).

In an alternative power taxonomy, Bass (1960) suggested that power can be expressed in terms of personal and position power. Yukl (1989) added political power to the Bass conceptualization, which includes power based on such factors as coalition building and control over decisions. Yukl and Falbe (1991) noted that the Bass (1960) and French and Raven (1959) taxonomies reflect different levels of abstraction. Each of the five French and Raven power bases can be reconceptualized as either a personal or position based source of power. Reward, legitimate, and coercive power can be reconceptualized as position-based sources of power, since these bases typically are associated with a position or title in an organization. Personal bases are referent and expert power, which are likely to stem from the individual, irrespective of his or her official position in an organization.

Other bases of power which have been explored include control over information (Eyuboglu & Atac, 1991; Pettigrew, 1972; Raven, 1974, 1988; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970; Yukl & Falbe, 1991); persuasiveness (Yukl & Falbe, 1991); and control over the target person's environment, or ecological control (Tedeschi & Bonoma, 1972).

Research on social power has typically focused on the French and Raven power bases and some of the other bases mentioned above. This approach to the study of social power may be limited. It is very likely that other important bases of power exist.<sup>4</sup> The credibility of a person is likely to be one such factor. Research indicates that there is a direct relationship between the credibility of a source and the effectiveness of persuasive communications (cf. Nesler, 1992). The present study was guided by the hypothesis that a person with high credibility would be perceived as more *powerful* than a person with low credibility.

### Credibility

The term "credibility" has been defined in many different ways. An influential book written by Hovland, Janis, and Kelly (1953) defined credibility as expertness and trustworthiness, which would obviously overlap with expert power. While this definition has been used by some researchers studying credibility (e.g., Kelman & Hovland, 1953), other definitions include the

<sup>4</sup>French and Raven suggested this possibility in their original paper. They claimed that many other power bases may exist besides the five they proposed.

attractiveness of a source of influence (Joseph, 1982; Roll & Roll, 1984), a source's prestige (Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990), and the history of past accuracy of a source (Birnbaum & Mellers, 1983). Factor analysis has also been used to generate the components of credibility. For example, Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969) suggested a three-factor solution in which the components of credibility were labeled as safety, dynamism, and qualification. McCroskey and Jenson (1975) suggested that credibility consists of five factors labeled competency, character, sociability, composure, and extraversion.

Tedeschi and his colleagues (e.g., Horai & Tedeschi, 1969; Tedeschi & Lindskold, 1976) defined credibility as the objectively determined truthfulness, follow-through, and accuracy of a source. Thus, a source with high credibility is one who is consistently both honest and accurate in his or her communications with a target. A source who is not truthful and does not match words with deeds would be low in credibility. For example, consistent failure to back up threats or to fulfill promises leads to low credibility. This definition will be used henceforth in this paper.

Previous research suggests a direct effect of a source's credibility on the effectiveness of the source's ability to influence others. For example, Horai and Tedeschi (1969) found that subjects were more likely to comply with the threats of a source who had high credibility than a source with low credibility. It has also been found that subjects were more likely to comply with promises from a communicator with high credibility than one with low credibility (Crosbie, 1972; Heilman, 1974; Schlenker, Nacci, Helm, & Tedeschi, 1976). Furthermore, subjects were more likely to use information provided by a high credibility source than that provided by a low credibility source when given various types of decision-making tasks (e.g., Birnbaum & Mellers, 1983; Birnbaum, Wong, & Wong, 1976; McGarry & Hendrick, 1974).

The present study was designed to examine the effect of credibility on perceptions of the power of a source. If credibility is a power base, there should be a direct relationship between credibility and perceived power. In a  $2 \times 3$  factorial design, the level of power and the credibility of an actor were manipulated. Vignettes (see Appendix A) were created in which a manager had either high reward and coercive power, or low reward and coercive power. The actor was described as having established high or low credibility in the past, or no credibility information was provided. A modified version of a scale developed by Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989)<sup>5</sup> was used to measure

<sup>5</sup>Subjects rated the Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) questionnaire on 5-point Likert-type scales. Their items were phrased as: "increase my pay level; make my work difficult for me; make me feel important." The modified items were slightly reworded to be consistent with the vignettes, and appear in Appendix B.

French and Raven's (1959) five bases of social power (see Appendix B). A direct effect of credibility on perceived power, as measured by the modified version of Hinkin and Schriesheim's scale, was hypothesized. A direct relationship between objective (manipulated) power and perceived power was also expected.

## Method

### *Subjects*

Undergraduates ( $N = 84$ ) in upper-level psychology courses volunteered to participate in an experiment during regular class periods. The average age of the 33 males was 21.2 years old, and the average age of the 51 females was 22.8 years old.<sup>6</sup> Fourteen subjects were randomly assigned to each of the six cells.<sup>7</sup>

### *Procedure*

Subjects participated in large mixed gender groups. They were presented with a paragraph describing "Mr. Benne," an employee at the "American Plastics Corporation." In the high-power vignettes, Mr. Benne was described as having a significant capability of punishing and rewarding subordinates, while in the low-power vignettes, he was described as a senior employee who was filling in for his sick boss. In the high-credibility vignettes, Mr. Benne was described as 90% credible, while in the low-credibility vignettes, he was described as 50% credible.<sup>8</sup> In the no-information-about-credibility condi-

<sup>6</sup>Since gender did not have a significant main effect or a significant interaction effect in any analysis conducted, it was collapsed for the analyses reported in this paper. Previous research has found contradictory results regarding gender differences in perceived power. Some studies have found gender differences in power ratings (Falbo, Hazen, & Linimon, 1982; Johnson, 1976), and other studies have found no gender differences in power ratings (e.g., Ragins, 1989).

<sup>7</sup>One female subject answered every question except for one credibility question (credibility 5). An average was calculated and used for this item based on her responses to the other six credibility questions. The distribution of the gender of subjects by condition was as follows: high power/high credibility, men = 9, women = 5; high power/low credibility, men = 5, women = 9; high power/no credibility, men = 4, women = 10; low power/high credibility, men = 5, women = 9; low power/low credibility, men = 6, women = 8; low power/no credibility, men = 4, women = 10.

<sup>8</sup>We set the levels of credibility at 90% for the high-credibility condition and 50% for the low-credibility condition. Circumstances may not allow a person to be credible 100% of the time. A person who is 50% credible would be truthful in his or her communications only half of the time. A lower credibility rating might not be believable, as the person would then be dishonest in his or her communications more than half of the time. The results of both the pilot study and main study suggest that subjects reacted to this manipulation in a manner which was consistent with this logic.

tion, the credibility paragraph was omitted, thereby providing subjects with no information about Mr. Benne's credibility.

After reading the vignette, subjects were asked to respond to a modified version of Hinkin and Schriesheim's (1989) power scales, in addition to seven items measuring perceived credibility. All ratings were made on 9-point Likert-type scales.

## Results

### *Pilot Studies*

Prior to the main study, two pilot studies were conducted to assess the effectiveness of the manipulations. Subjects were presented with a paragraph describing an employee of a company in terms of only one of the manipulations (high power, low power, high credibility, or low credibility).

The nineteen subjects in the credibility pilot study responded only to the seven credibility items. Ten and nine subjects were randomly assigned to 90% and 50% credibility conditions, respectively. The mean ratings of the seven credibility items (see Appendix B), were used as an index of credibility. A significant difference between the high-credibility condition ( $M = 7.41$ ) and the low-credibility condition ( $M = 3.47$ ) was found on the credibility index,  $F(1, 17) = 46.54, p < .001$ .

In the second pilot study, the power manipulation was tested in a similar manner. Seventeen subjects were asked to respond only to the reward and coercive power items from the modified Hinkin and Schriesheim scales. Nine and eight subjects were randomly assigned to the high- and low-power conditions, respectively. The employee was described as having either both high reward and high coercive power, or both low reward and low coercive power. A multivariate analysis of variance indicated a significant power effect on the mean ratings of the two scales, Wilk's Lambda = .28,  $F(1, 15) = 17.60, p < .001$ . Univariate follow-up tests indicated that the high- and low-power vignettes differed on both reward power,  $F(1, 15) = 36.79, p < .001$ , and coercive power,  $F(1, 15) = 5.74, p < .05$ . The means were in the predicted direction.

### *Manipulation Check*

As a power manipulation check for the main study, we investigated one of the simple main effects of a  $2 \times 3$  (power by credibility) multivariate analysis of variance. By examining the no-credibility-information conditions, it was possible to assess the effects of the power manipulation *independent of the effects of credibility*. The multivariate effect of power (high versus low) at the

level of no credibility information was significant using the five power scales and the credibility scale as dependent variables, Wilk's Lambda = .45,  $F(5, 74) = 14.63$ ,  $p < .001$ . Univariate analysis revealed that the effects were significant for the referent, coercive, legitimate, reward, and expert scales (all  $ps < .01$ ). The means for the power scales were all higher in the high power condition. In addition, the seven-item credibility scale was not significantly different in the high- versus the low-power conditions,  $F(1, 78) < 1.0$ ,  $p > .20$ . Thus, while subjects in the high-power condition perceived the manager as having higher power than did subjects in the low-power condition, the manipulation of power *did not* affect perceived credibility.

### Main Study

A  $2 \times 3$  multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to examine the effects of manipulated power (high or low) and credibility (high, low, or no information) on perceived power, using the five power scales as the dependent variables. A significant multivariate main effect was found for the manipulation of power, Wilk's Lambda = .29,  $F(5, 74) = 34.82$ ,  $\eta^2 = .70$ ,  $p < .001$ , providing evidence for a direct relationship between manipulated power and perceived power. Univariate follow-up tests were significant for the reward, coercive, legitimate, and referent power scales (all  $ps < .01$ ) and the high-power condition means were all higher than the low-power condition means. Only expert power was nonsignificant,  $F(1, 78) < 1.0$ ,  $p > .10$ .

The main question of this study was whether credibility would have a direct effect on perceptions of power. In the above-mentioned  $2 \times 3$  MANOVA, a significant multivariate main effect was found for the manipulation of credibility, Wilk's Lambda = .72,  $F(2, 78) = 2.65$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ . Univariate follow-up tests indicated significant effects of credibility on measures of referent power,  $F(2, 78) = 7.39$ ,  $\eta^2 = .16$ ,  $p < .001$ ; expert power,  $F(2, 78) = 6.76$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ; legitimate power,  $F(2, 78) = 4.90$ ,  $\eta^2 = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and reward power,  $F(2, 78) = 4.08$ ,  $\eta^2 = .09$ ,  $p < .05$ . There was a trend toward statistical significance for coercive power,  $F(2, 78) = 2.94$ ,  $\eta^2 = .07$ ,  $p = .059$ . The effect sizes, as estimated by  $\eta^2$ , indicate that credibility accounts for 15% of the variance in power ratings at the multivariate level, and from 7% to 16% of the variance in power ratings at the univariate level. The mean power ratings for the multivariate main effect of credibility are presented in Figure 1.

As can be seen from Figure 1, the means for reward, coercive, legitimate, and referent power all fell into the predicted pattern. The means presented in Figure 1 indicate that subjects rated the low-credibility manager as lower in perceived power than when no credibility information was provided, and the high-credibility manager received the highest perceived power ratings. This

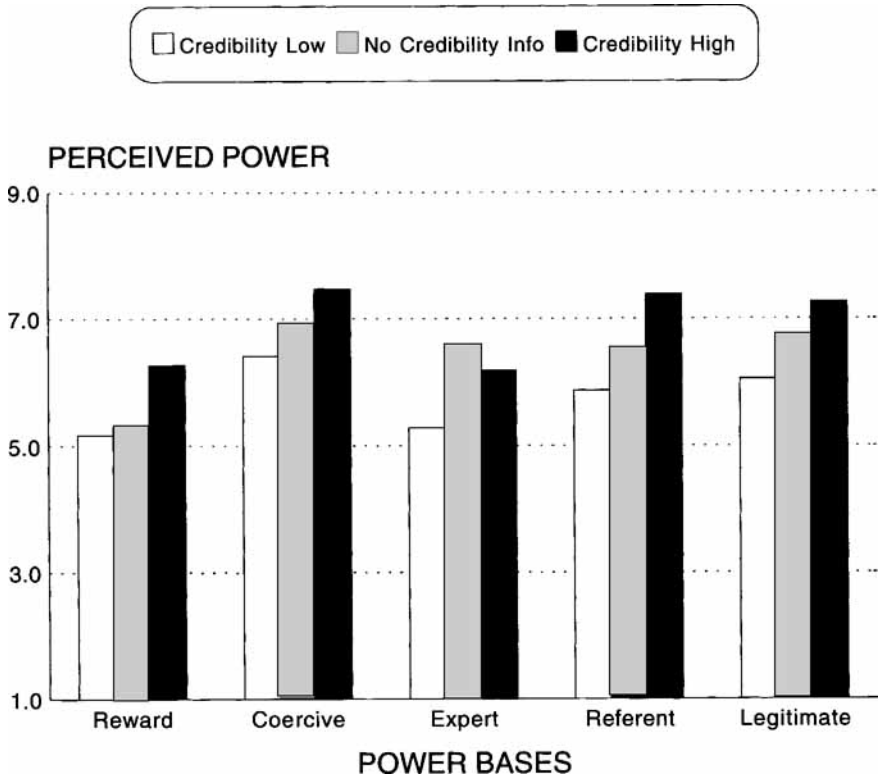


Figure 1. Means for the multivariate main effect of credibility.

pattern was not observed for the ratings of expert power. Although the means for expert power are in the expected direction for the low- and high-credibility manipulations, the highest expertise rating was given to the manager when no information about credibility was provided. This multivariate main effect of credibility provides evidence for a direct relationship between credibility and perceived power.

Finally, in the  $2 \times 3$  MANOVA, a significant interaction between power and credibility was found, Wilk's Lambda = .77,  $F(2, 78) = 2.07$ ,  $\eta^2 = .12$ ,  $p < .05$ . To interpret this significant interaction, we examined the simple main effects.

The effect of credibility at the level of *low power* was significant, Wilk's Lambda = .63,  $F(2, 78) = 3.8$ ,  $\eta^2 = .21$ ,  $p < .001$ . Univariate follow-up tests indicated significant effects on all five power bases (all  $ps < .05$ ). The effect size estimates ( $\eta^2$ ) for the credibility manipulation were .11 on reward power, .09 on coercive power, .16 on expert power, .16 on referent power, and .11

on legitimate power. The means for the five power bases at the level of low power are presented in Figure 2. Figure 2 indicates that the high-credibility manager received the highest perceived power ratings on all of the power bases except expert power. When the manager had low objective power, high credibility served to significantly enhance the power ratings for the reward, coercive, referent, and legitimate power bases. The highest ratings of expertise occurred in the no-credibility-information condition, but the high-credibility manager received higher mean ratings than did the low-credibility manager on the expertise scale.

The multivariate effect of credibility at the level of *high power* was not significant, Wilk's Lambda = .89,  $F(2, 78) < 1.0$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ ,  $p > .20$ . As would be expected, the univariate follow-up tests for each of the five power scales were nonsignificant. The mean ratings for the high-power condition are presented in Figure 3. As can be seen in Figure 3, the differences between the means are relatively small, indicating that credibility information did not

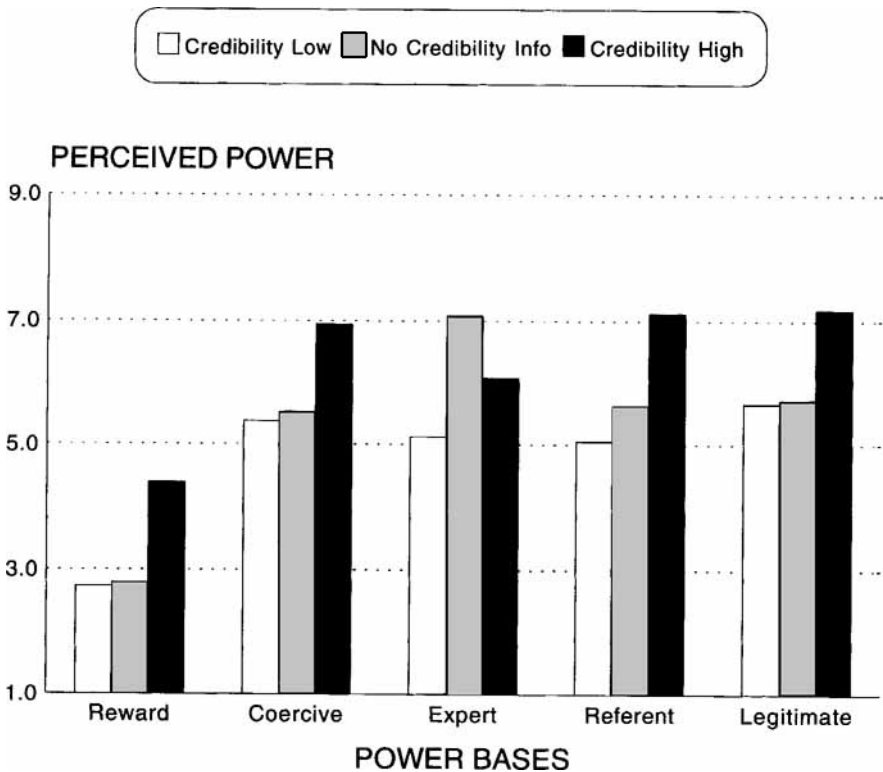


Figure 2. Means for the simple main effect of credibility at the level of low power.



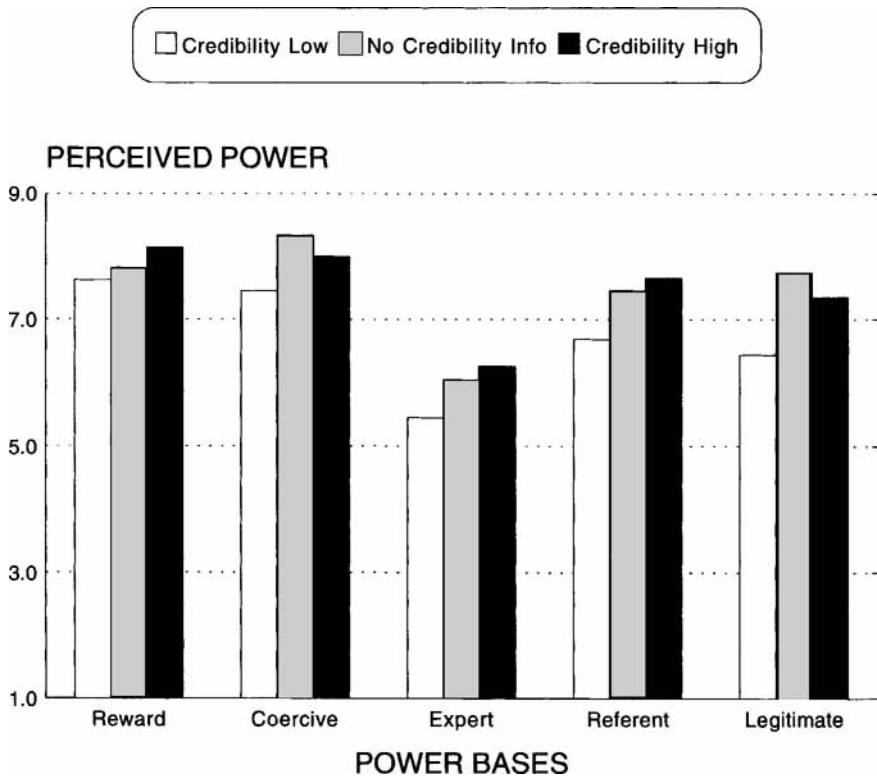


Figure 3. Means for the simple main effect of credibility at the level of high power.

have an impact on perceptions of power when a manager was described as having high power.

Taken jointly, the simple main effects of this significant interaction can be interpreted as providing evidence for a moderating effect of *objective power* on the relationship between credibility and perceived power. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), evidence for the existence of a moderator is supported by a significant interaction in an analysis of variance. Specifically, Baron and Kenny stated that moderators partition an independent variable (in this case, manipulated power) to establish its domains of maximal effectiveness in regard to a given dependent variable (in this case, power ratings). Following this logic, credibility is maximally effective when objective power is low. Significant main effects, which indicate direct effects, can also exist (Baron & Kenny, 1986) when a moderator is present (also see Stone & Hollenbeck, 1989, for a discussion of detecting moderator variables).

*Reliabilities*

The internal consistency estimates of reliability for the scales measuring power and credibility for the main experiment are presented in Table 1. The alpha coefficients for the scales suggest that the modified version of the Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989) power scales was as reliable as the original scale. The credibility scale was also highly reliable.

*Scale Intercorrelations*

The intercorrelations between the power scales and the credibility scale are also presented in Table 1. The credibility scale correlated significantly with every measure of the French and Raven power bases. The power bases correlated significantly with each other, which suggests that the French and Raven bases of power are not completely orthogonal constructs. Other studies have also found significant patterns of intercorrelations between measures of the French and Raven's power bases (e.g., Frost & Stahelski, 1988; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989, 1990; Ragins, 1989; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1990).

## Discussion

The relationship between credibility and social power is a complex one. The results of this experiment indicated that credibility had a direct effect on perceived social power. The manager with high credibility received the high-

Table 1

*Scale Reliabilities and Intercorrelations*

	Reward	Referent	Legitimate	Coercive	Expert	Credibility
Reward	(.97)					
Referent	.58**	(.91)				
Legitimate	.45**	.80**	(.91)			
Coercive	.67**	.74**	.64**	(.91)		
Expert	-.01	.39**	.41**	.21	(.85)	
Credibility	.25*	.42**	.45**	.33**	.27*	(.97)

*Note.* Numbers in parentheses reflect Cronbach's alpha for that scale. Credibility refers to the 7-item credibility scale.

\* $p < .05$ , two-tailed. \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

est perceived power ratings on all of the power bases.<sup>9</sup> These findings indicate that credibility information had a direct effect on the perceptions of social power, which confirmed our initial hypothesis. The effect size for the multivariate main effect of credibility on the power ratings, as indexed by eta squared, indicated that 15% of the variance in perceived power was accounted for by the credibility manipulation. While this can be characterized as a moderate effect (Jaccard & Becker, 1990), it is even more impressive given that the scales used were constructed to measure reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert power exclusively. Thus, even with measures which should be insensitive to the influence of credibility, we found significant effects and accounted for 15% of the variance in power ratings.

We also found that objective power had both a direct effect on perceived power ratings and a moderating effect on the relationship between credibility and perceived power. The direct effect of objective power is evident from the multivariate main effect of power. The moderating effect of objective power is evident from the multivariate interaction of power by credibility. An analysis of the simple main effects following the significant interaction revealed that credibility did not have a significant impact on power ratings when the source had high power. However, when the source had low power, credibility information did significantly affect power ratings. This effect accounted for 21% of the variance, as indexed by eta squared. Considering the simple main effects jointly, they indicate that when the manager had high objective power, credibility was relatively unimportant to his perceived power. However, when the manager had low objective power, high credibility significantly enhanced perceptions of reward, coercive, referent, and legitimate power. These interaction effects indicate that the relationship between credibility and perceived power is moderated by the level of objective power (Baron & Kenny, 1986). One applied generalization from these results is that managers with relatively low power should be concerned with their credibility if they ultimately wish to be able to influence subordinates. The effect sizes of credibility on the individual scales, which ranged from .09 to .16, are impressive given that the scales used were not designed to assess credibility.

Our data indicate that objective power moderated the relationship between credibility and perceived power, but it is also possible that high credibility could not increase perceived power due to a ceiling effect (as the mean ratings in the high-power condition seen in Figure 3 are near the top of the scale). However, low credibility did not lower the perceived power of the manager with high objective power. The failure of low credibility to lower

<sup>9</sup>The only exception was the expertise scale. No credibility information led to the highest ratings on expertise, but the high- and low-credibility conditions did influence expertise in the predicted direction.

perceptions of power suggests that credibility information was not considered relevant to power in the high-power condition. A theoretical explanation for the moderating effect of power on credibility is that a manager with very high objective power will be perceived as powerful, irrespective of his or her credibility, simply because of the great amount of power he or she already possesses from the other power bases.

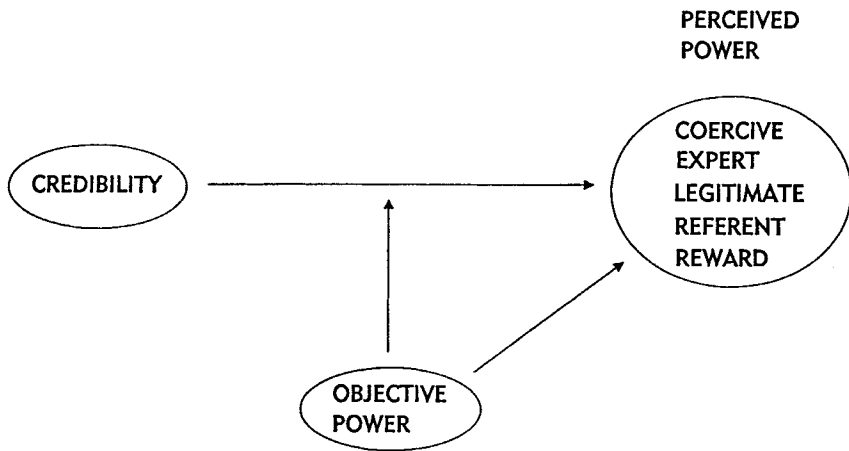
Another notable finding in this experiment is apparent from examining the means for the condition in which power was high and credibility was low, and comparing them to the low-power condition in which credibility was high. Power ratings of the *low-power* manager with high credibility were actually higher for referent ( $M = 7.1$ ), expert ( $M = 6.9$ ), and legitimate power ( $M = 7.1$ ), than for the *high-power* manager with low credibility ( $M$ s = 6.6, 5.4, 6.4, respectively). While these differences are not significant, taken as a whole, our results indicated that credibility had a dramatic effect on perceived power ratings.

A graphic representation of a model depicting the effects of credibility on social power is presented in Figure 4. Both credibility and objective power had direct effects on perceived power, as indicated by the significant main effects. Objective power also had a moderating effect on the relationship between credibility and perceived power, as indicated by the significant interaction of credibility and power.

### Suggestions for Future Research

While some caution should be used in interpreting these results, we feel justified in suggesting that we have enough evidence to warrant further research. Future research should investigate the generalizability of these results to populations other than college students. Additionally, since we chose only to manipulate reward and coercive power in the vignettes, future research could include manipulations of the other bases of power or various combinations of them. While we only manipulated two power bases, our subjects appeared to have had implicit leadership theories, since the power ratings indicated that subjects assumed higher referent, expert, and legitimate power in the high-power conditions. Without specific information about the other three power bases, subjects made specific attributions about the power of the manager in the vignette, which would follow from attribution theory (e.g., Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1973). This would also explain why some of the scale intercorrelations reported in this study were higher than have been previously reported in the literature (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989; Ragins, 1989; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1990).

In this experiment, we chose to use a power scale which was appropriate for our vignettes and had exhibited strong psychometric properties (Hinkin



*Figure 4.* Model illustrating the direct effects of credibility and objective power on perceived power, and the moderating effect of objective power on the relationship between credibility and perceived power.

& Schriesheim, 1989). Our data also indicated that these scales are highly reliable. There are many other scales that have been developed to measure the French and Raven power taxonomy (e.g., Bachman, Bowers, & Marcus, 1968; Frost & Stahelski, 1988; Gioia & Sims, 1983; Imai, 1989; Ragins, 1989; Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Future research should replicate our findings utilizing other measurement instruments. Future research could also be aimed at assessing other types of power relationships, as only downward power relationships were considered here. For example, Yukl and Falbe (1991) also considered lateral power relationships.

Passive observational research using existing work relationships in organizations could also be conducted to assess if the relationship between power and credibility found in this study occurs in field settings. This type of research would provide external validity evidence (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Future research should also use an actual task where there is a power and credibility manipulation. This would allow the assessment of behavioral changes in a laboratory setting. Finally, future research should assess if credibility information explains a significant amount of variance in global power ratings beyond the French and Raven power bases.

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## Appendix A

*Vignettes***HIGH POWER<sup>a</sup>**

Mr. Benne is a supervisor at the American Plastics Corporation. His position allows him to make certain decisions which will affect his subordinates. Mr. Benne can fire anyone in his division whom he feels is not doing a good job, or can give subordinates undesirable work assignments as he sees fit. He also has the authority to provide rewards and incentives such as raises or "perks" to those employees he feels are doing well.

In order to meet his responsibilities, Mr. Benne uses all kinds of communications to his subordinates, including promises, threats, and persuasive communications. Those around him have learned from experience that Mr. Benne is (truthful most of the time) not very truthful. (On the average he keeps his promises, makes good on his threats, and is accurate in his persuasive communications about 90% of the time.) About 50% of the time he does not keep his promises, does not back up his threats, and is not accurate in his persuasive communications.

**LOW POWER<sup>a</sup>**

Mr. Benne is a worker at the American Plastics Corporation.

Upon arriving at work one Monday, he was informed that his supervisor, Mr. Kelson, would be out for a few weeks with an illness. Upper management decided that Mr. Benne would be filling in for his boss since Mr. Benne was the employee under Mr. Kelson who had been with the company the longest. Mr. Kelson's position only allows him to make a limited number of decisions which affect his subordinates. Mr. Kelson can infrequently give subordinates undesirable work assignments, but company policies and union regulations do not allow him to exercise this ability often. Mr. Kelson also can suggest which of his subordinates should be provided with rewards such as raises or promotions. However, any rewards for his workers must be approved by the Personnel Department, which reviews Mr. Kelson's evaluations of his subordinates every six months. The Personnel Department typically does not act on any of Mr. Kelson's suggestions for raises.

In order to meet his job responsibilities at the company, Mr. Benne has used all kinds of communications with his co-workers, including promises, threats, and persuasive communications. Those around him have learned from experience that Mr. Benne is (truthful most of the time) not very truthful. (On average he has kept his promises, made good on his threats, and has been accurate in his persuasive communications about 90% of the

*Continued*

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*Appendix A Continued*

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time.) About 50% of the time he has not keep his promises, has not backed up his threats, and has not been accurate in his persuasive communications.

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<sup>a</sup>The second paragraphs contains the credibility manipulation. The sentences in parentheses represent the high-credibility manipulation. In the no-information condition, the second paragraph was omitted.

**Appendix B**

*Scale Items*

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Modified version of Hinkin and Schriesheim's (1989) scale. Subjects were asked to "rate the degree to which you believe that Mr. Benne can do each of the following." The item numbers indicate the order of presentation. The 9-point scales used included two anchors: (1) Disagree, and (9) Agree.

(Reward Power)

- 02. Mr. Benne can increase his subordinates' pay level.
- 16. Mr. Benne can influence his subordinates' getting a pay raise.
- 18. Mr. Benne can provide his subordinates with special benefits.
- 22. Mr. Benne can influence his subordinates' getting a promotion.

(Coercive Power)

- 04. Mr. Benne can give his subordinates undesirable job assignments.
- 10. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates' work difficult for them.
- 12. Mr. Benne can make things unpleasant on the job.
- 14. Mr. Benne can make being at work difficult.

(Legitimate Power)

- 07. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel that they have commitments to meet.
- 19. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel like they should satisfy their job requirements.
- 23. Mr. Benne can give his subordinates the feeling that they have responsibilities to fulfill.
- 26. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates recognize that they have tasks to accomplish.

(Expert Power)

- 11. Mr. Benne can give his subordinates good technical suggestions.
  - 15. Mr. Benne can share with his subordinates his considerable experience and/or training.
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*Appendix B Continued*

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- 20. Mr. Benne can provide his subordinates with sound job-related advice.
- 24. Mr. Benne can provide his subordinates with needed technical knowledge.

*(Referent Power)*

- 03. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel valued.
- 06. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel like he approves of them.
- 08. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel personally accepted.
- 25. Mr. Benne can make his subordinates feel important.

*(Credibility)*

- 01. Mr. Benne is a man who keeps his word.
  - 05. Mr. Benne's subordinates can rely on what he says.
  - 09. Mr. Benne does what he says he will do.
  - 13. Mr. Benne follows up on what he says.
  - 17. Mr. Benne matches words with deeds.
  - 21. Mr. Benne tells the truth.
  - 27. Mr. Benne's employees can believe what he tells them.
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