

FEEDBACK-SEEKING BEHAVIOR AND LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE: DO SUPERVISOR-ATTRIBUTED MOTIVES MATTER?

WING LAM
XU HUANG
ED SNAPE

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

We investigated how supervisors' interpretations of what motivates their subordinates' feedback-seeking behavior were related to both the quality of leader-member exchange and subordinates' work performance. Using a sample of 499 supervisor-subordinate dyads collected in China in two studies, we found that subordinates' feedback seeking was positively related to the quality of leader-member exchange and objective work performance only when supervisors interpreted the feedback-seeking behavior as being driven more by performance enhancement motives and less by impression management motives.

The success of organizations today depends on employees' continuously improving their work performance (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Employees may want to gauge their work performance by taking the initiative to seek feedback from their supervisors (Ashford, 1986; Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003). It is generally believed that subordinates' feedback seeking facilitates the establishment of good working relationships with supervisors (London, 2003), because it helps clarify expectations (Morrison, 1993; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000) and creates a good impression (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Edwards, 1995).

However, previous studies have suggested that the proactive behavior of subordinates may not necessarily help build better working relationships with supervisors and may even have a negative impact on these relationships (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; Johnson, Erez, Kiker, & Motowidlo, 2002). For example, Allen and Rush (1998) and Johnson et al. (2002) reported that if supervisors attributed subordinates' proactive helping behavior to altruistic motives, they tended to give better rewards to those subordinates. In contrast, if supervisors attributed such proactive helping behavior to impression management motives, they were likely to give their employees negative performance evaluations. These findings suggest that how supervisors re-

spond to subordinates' proactive behavior depends on how they interpret the motivation for their behavior.

Feedback seeking is a type of proactive behavior (Crant, 2000). Researchers have suggested that two separate kinds of motives may be associated with feedback seeking: *performance-related motives* and *impression management motives* (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Ashford and Cummings (1983) argued that performance-related motives involve a rational desire to obtain useful information in order to accomplish tasks effectively and enhance performance. This kind of motive includes an important element: information gathering about one's work role (Ashford et al., 2003; Crant, 2000). Impression management motives refer to the desire to control how one appears to others. Where supervisors attribute feedback seeking to performance-related motives, such behavior is likely to positively influence performance judgments, whereas behaviors attributed to impression management motives may be devalued or discounted (Eastman, 1994; Schlenker, 1980). Therefore, in this paper, we examine these two kinds of motives that supervisors might attribute to feedback seeking. We seek to understand the extent to which these attributions influence the relationship between subordinates' feedback seeking and the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX).

Furthermore, studies have shown that a higher-quality LMX is related to better performance, because in a high-quality LMX employees tend to receive better social support, more resources, and more guidance for career development (e.g., Gerst-

We gratefully acknowledge the suggestions of Gerben S. Van Der Vegt and Evert Van de Vliert (University of Groningen) on this article. We also thank Bradley L. Kirkman and the three anonymous reviewers of our paper for the insightful feedback and suggestions they provided.

ner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). It is possible that feedback seeking is conducive to improved performance, at least in part because such behavior enhances the quality of the relationship between employees and their immediate supervisors. Hence, we explore whether LMX plays a mediating role in the association between subordinates' feedback seeking and their work performance.

The purpose of this paper is therefore threefold: (1) to explore the relationship between subordinates' feedback seeking and leader-member exchange, (2) to examine how supervisors' interpretations of their subordinates' motives for seeking feedback influence the relationship of the supervisors and subordinates, and (3) to investigate the mediating role of LMX quality in the relationship between feedback-seeking behavior and work performance. We make two major contributions. First, we extend the literature on feedback seeking by investigating how such behavior is related to the quality of LMX and work performance. An investigation of these relationships is likely to advance researchers' understanding of the consequences of subordinates' feedback-seeking behavior. Second, although past research suggests that use of impression management tactics is positively related to the quality of LMX (Dockery & Steiner, 1990), such studies have not taken into account supervisors' attributions of the motivation for such behavior. This omission is important because there is evidence that subordinates who are seen as using impression management may be perceived as untruthful, unreliable, calculating, and manipulative (Crant, 2000). This argument suggests that where supervisors interpret feedback seeking as impression management, such behavior will not be associated with high-quality LMX. This issue has practical as well as theoretical significance, in potentially describing more fully the range of possible antecedents of LMX.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Subordinates' Feedback-Seeking Behavior and the Quality of LMX

The primary focus of past research on feedback exchange has been how a sender (usually a supervisor) conveys a message to a recipient (e.g., a subordinate) (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). In a seminal article, Ashford and Cummings (1983) challenged this perspective by arguing that subordinates may proactively seek feedback rather than passively wait for it to be delivered, as they wish to know exactly how their work has been perceived

and what they should do to manage their careers. This kind of behavior is referred to as *feedback seeking*. A dominant feedback-seeking behavior is the explicit verbal request for information on work behavior and work performance (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, & Brown, 2000). Studies have indicated that the feedback seeking of subordinates may be related to the quality of LMX because feedback seeking (1) clarifies the role expectations of supervisors (e.g., Morrison, 1993) and (2) creates positive impressions (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Edwards, 1995).

Feedback seeking may be associated with high-quality LMX because the feedback seeking facilitates the "role-making process" of the exchange relationship. In the role-making process (Graen, 1976; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), each party in a dyad has expectations about how he or she can benefit from the other party and what must be given in return. Those who feel that they are benefiting from a relationship will try to reciprocate by fulfilling the expectations of the other party. This exchange process facilitates a high-quality relationship between leaders and members. Although both parties may test one another to see whether or not the expectations of the other are met (e.g., Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997), often neither party knows what the other's expectations are (London, 2003). We argue that feedback seeking may help both parties understand the role expectations of their partners. Specifically, prior studies have shown that subordinates' feedback seeking is positively related to their understanding of their role and that such behavior reduces the role ambiguity between supervisors and subordinates (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Brown, Ganesan, & Challagalla, 2001; Wanberg & Kammermeyer-Mueller, 2000). In other words, subordinates' feedback seeking may help both parties to have a clear understanding of the role expectations, capabilities, and motivations of the other. This clarity occurs first because frequent feedback seeking can help subordinates to understand how to meet their supervisors' expectations (Morrison, 1993) and also because feedback seeking may help supervisors clarify the roles of subordinates (Morrison & Bies, 1991). Consequently, over time such role-making processes generate a fairly stable and high-quality LMX that is built on trust, respect, and mutual obligation (Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen, Wakabayashi, Graen, & Graen, 1990).

In addition, by proactively seeking feedback from supervisors, subordinates may influence their supervisors to form more positive impressions of

them (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Edwards, 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991). The impression management literature suggests that feedback seeking may create the impression that subordinates pay attention to, and are concerned about, the quality of their work (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Edwards, 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Morrison and Bies (1991) proposed that subordinates may sometimes attempt to enhance their images by seeking feedback, even if the feedback has no informational value, because feedback seeking is an effective impression management tactic. More precisely, feedback-seeking behavior can be used to shape and influence how supervisors judge and evaluate subordinates, as supervisors may consider individuals exhibiting such behavior to be capable and attentive to work performance (Morrison & Bies, 1991). As a result, they tend to establish good work relationships with such subordinates (Liden et al., 1997).

Although the above explanations of the potentially positive association between feedback seeking and LMX have existed in the literature for some time, surprisingly, no attempt has been made to empirically examine this relationship. We therefore tested the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. Subordinates' feedback seeking is positively related to LMX quality.

The Moderating Role of Supervisor-Attributed Motives for Feedback Seeking

Researchers have stated that supervisors make attributions about subordinates' behavior and that such attributions will affect supervisory actions toward these subordinates (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Green & Mitchell, 1979; Kelley, 1967). In one of the few studies to investigate what people think of feedback seekers, Ashford and Northcraft (1992) found that when an individual has a superior performance history, feedback seeking enhances others' impressions of his or her potential work performance. It appears that investigations of how others (e.g., supervisors) attribute the motives for feedback seeking are essential for full understanding of the effects of such behavior. In view of our earlier discussion, we suggest that supervisors may attribute subordinates' feedback seeking to two separate kinds of motives: performance enhancement and impression management (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Where a supervisor interprets the motivation behind a subordinate's feedback seeking as performance enhancement, the supervisor tends to regard the subordinate as achievement-focused and intending to meet a high standard in accomplishing

work tasks (Ashford et al., 2003; Crant, 2000). Supervisors tend to appreciate this type of performance-focused effort from subordinates (Day & Crain, 1992), and they are likely to reciprocate by offering support, special benefits, and opportunities for career development (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen et al., 1990; Kacmar, Witt, Zivnuska, & Gully, 2003), which is conducive to high-quality LMX.

Where a supervisor interprets feedback seeking as driven by impression management motives or as a tactic used by employees to enhance their personal images, things are different. Researchers have found that employees who attempt to impress their supervisors may succeed and receive what they want from the supervisors (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Kacmar, 1991). However, these studies do not indicate why such employees are successful. Eastman (1994) suggested that they may be successful because their supervisors do not view their behavior as impression management. Fodor (1973, 1974) supported this view, finding that employees who attempted to impress their supervisors received no greater rewards than those who made no such attempt, because individuals usually form negative attitudes about others whom they have identified as having attempted to manipulate their impressions. In a similar vein, Crant (1996) pointed out that subordinates who engage in impression management may be perceived as untruthful, unreliable, and calculating. Their feedback seeking may similarly be perceived as manipulative and aimed at gaining rewards (Crant, 2000). If supervisors attribute subordinates' feedback seeking to impression management motives, the behavior is less likely to create a positive impression (Morrison & Bies, 1991). As a result, the supervisors tend to provide less support to such subordinates, and the feedback-seeking behavior is less likely to be associated with high-quality LMX.

Therefore, we posit that how supervisors interpret the motives driving the feedback seeking of subordinates plays an important role in determining whether such behavior is associated with high-quality LMX. Hence, we predict:

Hypothesis 2a. The positive association between subordinates' feedback seeking and the quality of LMX is stronger the more that supervisors interpret the behavior as driven by performance enhancement motives.

Hypothesis 2b. The positive association between subordinates' feedback seeking and the quality of LMX is stronger the less that supervisors interpret the behavior as driven by impression management motives.

The Mediating Role of LMX

Previous studies on feedback seeking suggest that such behavior allows employees to evaluate their own competence, monitor their performance, solve performance problems, and, more importantly, set progressive goals for work improvement in line with supervisor expectations (e.g., Morrison, 1993; Renn & Fedor, 2001). In doing so, subordinates are able to take appropriate actions to improve their work performance. Renn and Fedor (2001) found that individuals who sought feedback developed a more accurate view of their own skills and abilities than those who did not and that feedback seeking allowed them to obtain more information with which to set improvement goals. Consequently, employees who exhibited more feedback-seeking behavior tended to achieve a higher level of work performance (Renn & Fedor, 2001).

We contend that LMX may mediate the relationship between feedback seeking and work performance. As noted above, more frequent feedback seeking is expected to be related to a high-quality LMX because the behavior may clarify what leaders and members expect from each other (e.g., Morrison, 1993) and because it may create a good impression of subordinates among their supervisors (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Edwards, 1995). In addition, there is accumulating evidence that subordinates tend to perform better when they establish high-quality relationships with their supervisors (e.g., Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993). This improvement occurs because, in a high-quality LMX, leaders tend to provide members with special support, benefits, and opportunities for career development (Graen et al., 1990; Kacmar et al., 2003).

Although feedback-seeking behavior is generally believed to have a positive effect on work performance, in empirical studies that effect has varied substantially (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Morrison, 1993). In particular, some researchers have argued that feedback seeking has a relatively weak impact on work performance when supervisors interpret the behavior as driven by impression management motives (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Hence, we believe that a supervisor's interpretation may influence the effect of feedback seeking on work performance in the same way as it influences the effect of such behavior on LMX. As a result, we contend that supervisors' interpretation of the motives of subordinates may interrupt the exchange process triggered by the feedback-seeking behavior. Specifically, such behavior will only be positively related to LMX and the work performance of subordinates when super-

visors interpret the feedback seeking as driven more by performance enhancement motives and less by impression management motives. However, if supervisors interpret the feedback seeking as driven less by performance enhancement motives and more by impression management motives, the behavior may be less likely to provoke constructive social exchange processes and work performance. Therefore, we predict a mediated moderation, as shown in the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a. LMX quality mediates the interactive effects of subordinates' feedback seeking and supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives on subordinates' work performance.

Hypothesis 3b. LMX quality mediates the interactive effects of subordinates' feedback seeking and supervisor-attributed impression management motives on subordinates' work performance.

Since we could not collect data on subordinates' work performance from the company in Study 1, we only tested Hypotheses 1, 2a, and 2b in this study. In Study 2, we examined all the hypotheses. Figure 1 presents a model of the key theoretical relationships.

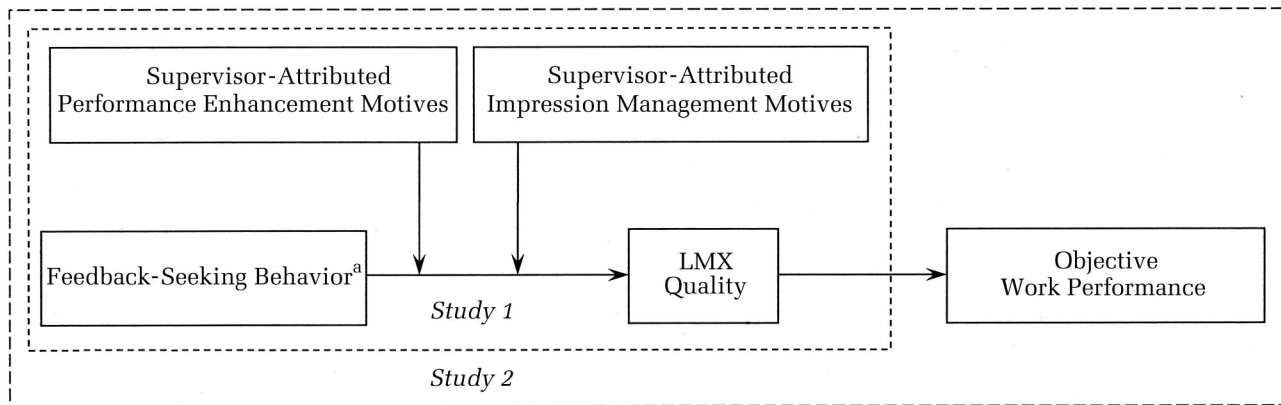
STUDY 1: METHODS

Sample and Data Collection

The sample of Study 1 included 209 supervisor-subordinate dyads from a telecommunication services company in Shandong, a province of China. Originally a state-owned enterprise, the company had been transformed into a shareholding company and listed on the New York and Hong Kong Stock Exchanges. It was the market leader and had about 15,000 employees.

The data were collected in October 2004. Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study: one for subordinates (they were all frontline staff) and another for their immediate supervisors. Questionnaires were administered to employees and their supervisors separately. The first and second authors visited all of the respondents in person (groups of supervisors and subordinates separately), to brief them about the purposes of the study and to explain the procedures for implementing the survey. The respondents received a cover letter explaining the study, a questionnaire, and a return envelope. We coded each questionnaire with a researcher-assigned identification number in order to match employees' responses with their immediate supervisors' evaluations. To ensure confi-

FIGURE 1
Research Framework



^a We examined *general* feedback-seeking behavior in Study 1 and *negative* feedback seeking in Study 2.

dentiality, the respondents were instructed to seal the completed questionnaires in the envelopes and return them directly to us on site. Out of 465 questionnaires (230 for supervisors, 235 for subordinates), 418 usable questionnaires (representing 209 supervisor-subordinate dyads) were returned, with usable response rates of 90.9 percent and 88.9 percent for supervisors and subordinates, respectively. These 209 employees were supervised by 70 immediate supervisors. The maximum number of surveys completed by a single supervisor was four. For the subordinate sample, 77.5 percent of the members were female, and 69.4 percent had a college education or above. The mean age and organizational tenure of the subordinates were 24.1 and 2.6 years, respectively. For the supervisor sample, 69.9 percent were female, and 77.5 percent had a college education or above. The mean age and organizational tenure of the supervisors were 27.8 and 4.1 years. The average length of the supervisor-subordinate relationship was 1.01 years.

Measures

Supervisors rated feedback-seeking behavior (the independent variable), supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives (the moderators), and subordinates rated the quality of leader-member exchange (the dependent variable).

Feedback-seeking behavior. A five-item scale validated by VandeWalle et al. (2000) was used. We asked the supervisors how frequently their subordinates asked for feedback from the supervisors regarding (1) the subordinates' overall work performance, (2) their technical performance on the job, (3) the supervisors' role expectations of them, (4) social behaviors, and (5) whether the supervisors

felt that the subordinates' values and attitudes were appropriate for the firm (1 = "never," 7 = "always"). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the items was .92.

Supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives. We measured supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives using a two-item scale developed for this study (1 = "strongly disagree," 5 = "strongly agree"). As suggested in the introduction, performance enhancement motives involve work role clarification (Ashford et al., 2003; Crant, 2000). Since no measure of performance enhancement motivation existed, we extracted two items on role clarity (Rizzo & House, 1970) to develop the scale. These two items were, "Desire to discover what his or her responsibilities are" and "Desire to discover exactly what is expected of him or her." The Cronbach's alpha was .80.

Supervisor-attributed impression management motives. We used five of six items developed by Allen and Rush (1998) to ask supervisors the extent to which they perceived subordinates' feedback seeking as driven by impression management motives (1 = "strongly disagree," 5 = "strongly agree"). The items were, "Desire to enhance his or her image (e.g., to make me believe that he or she is a helpful employee)," "Desire to build up favors for a later exchange," "Desire to 'show-off' his or her expertise," "Desire to capture my attention on him or her," and "Desire to obtain recognition or other organizational rewards." Another item, "Desire to create a good impression," was developed and included in this study. We deleted one of the original items, "Desire to seek the spotlight," because our focus was on the relationship between supervisors and subordinates rather than on other work rela-

tionships, such as those between coworkers. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .81.

Leader-member exchange (LMX). The subordinates were asked to assess the quality of LMX by using the five-point LMX-7 scale developed by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) and validated by Schaubroeck and Lam (2002) in a Chinese context. The scale consists of seven items that characterize the overall effectiveness of the relationship between supervisor and subordinate. Sample items are, "How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?" (1 = "extremely ineffective," 5 = "extremely effective") and "How well does your leader understand your job problem and needs?" (1 = "not a bit," 5 = "a great deal"). The Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Control variables. Because of the potential effects of various demographic variables on the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships (Bauer & Green, 1996; Liden et al., 1993; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001), we controlled for gender, education level, age, organizational tenure, and length of relationship. Measures of these demographic variables were obtained from both the supervisors and subordinates. Age and organizational tenure were self-reported in years. Gender was dummy-coded (0 = "female," 1 = "male"). A dummy variable was also used to measure the education levels of the respondents (0 = "below college," 1 = "college or above"). Subordinates reported the length of the supervisor-subordinate relationship in years. In addition, we followed the procedures used by Turban and Jones (1988) to control for demographic similarity between supervisors and subordinates. Since all the respondents were of Chinese origin, we excluded the subscale of race discrepancy. First, gender and education discrepancies were coded as the same (0) or different (1). Age discrepancy was the absolute difference between supervisor and subordinate responses. We divided discrepancy scores by their respective standard deviations, summed

them, and then reverse-scored them: the larger the score, the greater the demographic similarity.

Translation of Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire items were originally in English and were translated into Chinese by an academic who was bilingual in Mandarin and English. We obtained a back-translation (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973) from another bilingual academic to ensure that the English and Mandarin versions of the items were comparable at a high degree of accuracy.

STUDY 1: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Confirmatory factor analyses. Before testing the hypotheses, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate the discriminant validity of supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives and supervisor-attributed impression management motives for subordinates' feedback seeking, using AMOS 5.0. The results suggested that the hypothesized two-factor model (CFI = .96, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .07) yielded a better fit than the single-factor model (CFI = .86, TLI = .79, RMSEA = .12), with a change in chi-square of 36.78 ($\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). To statistically discriminate among the three key variables (feedback-seeking behavior, supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives) rated by supervisors, we conducted another confirmatory factor analysis. Results showed that the three-factor model (CFI = .95, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .07) yielded a better fit than the single-factor model (CFI = .69, TLI = .62, RMSEA = .17). The change in chi-square was 291.80 ($\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$).

Descriptive statistics. Table 1 presents the

TABLE 1
Study 1: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities^a

Key Variables	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4
1. Feedback-seeking behavior	3.97	1.45	(.92)			
2. Supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives	3.64	0.45	.16*	(.80)		
3. Supervisor-attributed impression management motives	3.36	0.62	.06	.08	(.81)	
4. Leader-member exchange	3.16	0.76	.19**	.05	-.04	(.87)

^a $n = 209$ (supervisor-subordinate dyads).

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

means, standard deviations, and zero-order Pearson correlations of all the key variables.

Tests of Hypotheses

Because individual respondents were nested within groups (under the same supervisor within a group), we tested our hypotheses twice. First, we used hierarchical regression analyses with SPSS 12.0, and second, we used multilevel modeling with MLwiN to examine whether the statistical dependence in groups would affect our results. These analyses generated similar results; therefore, following the approach adopted by Van der Vegt, Van de Vliert, and Oosterhof (2003), we report only the results of the regression analysis here.

We conducted a hierarchical multiple regression

to test Hypotheses 1, 2a, and 2b following the steps suggested by Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt (2005). As shown in Table 2, after regressing LMX quality on the control variables in step 1, we entered feedback-seeking behavior in step 2. Feedback seeking was found to be positively related to LMX quality ($\beta = 0.14, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$), lending support to Hypothesis 1, which predicts that subordinates' feedback seeking is positively related to LMX. In step 3, we entered the supervisor-attributed motives, and interactions were entered in step 4. Table 2 shows that supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives ($\beta = 0.15, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .06$) and supervisor-attributed impression management motives ($\beta = -0.23, p < .001, \Delta R^2 = .06$) moderated the link between feedback-seeking behavior and LMX quality.

TABLE 2
Study 1: Results of Regression Analysis for the Interactive Effect of Subordinates' Feedback Seeking and Supervisor-Attributed Motives on LMX Quality^a

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Control</i>								
Supervisors' gender	0.08	0.91	0.08	0.93	0.10	1.17	0.12	1.40
Subordinates' gender	0.17	2.06*	0.18	2.26*	0.18	2.33*	0.20	2.63**
Supervisors' education	-0.04	-0.46	-0.04	-0.55	-0.06	-0.78	-0.04	-0.49
Subordinates' education	-0.02	-0.27	-0.01	-0.07	0.01	-0.13	-0.01	-0.14
Supervisors' age	0.19	2.01*	0.12	1.20	0.13	1.32	0.17	1.73
Subordinates' age	-0.02	-0.17	-0.03	-0.24	-0.03	-0.26	-0.06	-0.60
Supervisors' tenure	0.13	1.59	0.14	1.75	0.16	2.01*	0.16	2.06*
Subordinates' tenure	-0.04	-0.41	-0.02	-0.20	-0.03	-0.25	0.00	0.03
Dyadic tenure	0.01	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.04	-0.01	-0.09
Demographic similarity	0.09	0.94	0.07	0.75	0.08	0.92	0.08	0.97
<i>Independent</i>								
Feedback-seeking behavior			0.14	1.85*	0.16	2.16*	0.17	2.31*
<i>Moderator</i>								
Supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives					0.10	1.18	0.07	1.11
Supervisor-attributed impression management motives					-0.07	-1.00	-0.05	-0.79
<i>Interactive effects</i>								
Feedback-seeking behavior $\times$ supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives							0.15	1.96*
Feedback-seeking behavior $\times$ supervisor-attributed impression management motives							-0.23	-3.45***
ΔR^2			.02*		.01		.06***	

^a $n = 209$ (supervisor-subordinate dyads).

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

To determine whether the forms of the interactions matched those suggested by Hypotheses 2a and 2b, we tested the simple slopes of strong supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives (one standard deviation below the mean) and weak performance enhancement motives (one standard deviation above the mean). In support of Hypothesis 2a, we found that feedback seeking was more positively related to LMX when supervisors interpreted the behavior as driven by strong performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.24$, $p < .01$) than when supervisors interpreted the behavior as driven by weak performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.07$, n.s.). Furthermore, in support of Hypothesis 2b, we found that feedback seeking was more positively related to LMX quality when supervisors interpreted the behavior as being driven by weak impression management motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.41$, $p < .001$) than when supervisors interpreted the behavior as being driven by strong impression management motives (simple slope test: $\beta = -0.11$, n.s.). Figure 2 graphically depicts these findings.

In addition to the two-way interactions, we examined the possible three-way interaction of feedback-seeking behavior, supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives on the quality of leader-member exchange. We found no significant effect.

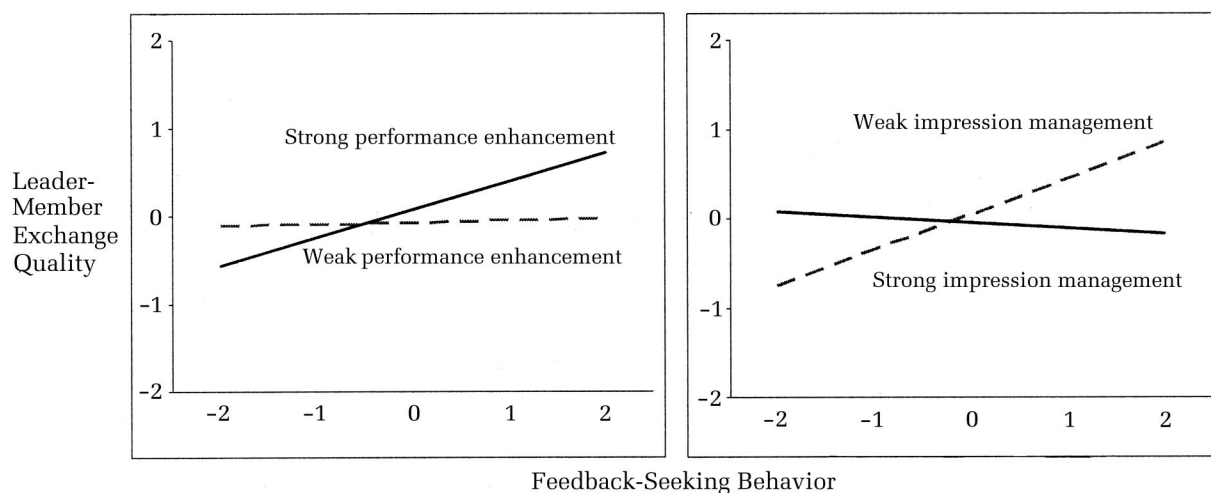
STUDY 2: OVERVIEW

To increase the validity and generalizability of the proposed theoretical model, we conducted a

second study, using data collected from manufacturing firms. Feedback can be positive or negative. In the workplace, employees may seek not only general feedback from their supervisors, but also negative feedback. Negative feedback seeking behavior refers to an effort to obtain information on inadequacies in work behavior and work performance (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Moss, Valenzi, & Taggart, 2003). Research has suggested that employees tend to self-regulate to build better work relationships. Indeed, simply to survive in organizations, employees must understand instances of their own ineffective behavior and performance so that they can make corresponding corrections (Ashford et al., 2003). Researchers have also noted that the seeking of negative feedback by subordinates can prevent both detrimental consequences of poor performance and misunderstandings between supervisors and subordinates (Ashford et al., 2003; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Further, by seeking feedback immediately after a failure, subordinates may prevent a build-up of negative supervisor evaluations (Morrison & Bies, 1991). Because negative feedback has a significantly higher instrumental value in the processes of role making and image enhancing than positive feedback (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Moss et al., 2003), in Study 2 we examined all the hypotheses using the notion of negative feedback seeking as well as the general feedback seeking that we tested in Study 1.

In summary, in the second study, we (1) examined whether our hypotheses also held for subordinates' negative feedback seeking behavior, (2) investigated how subordinates' feedback seeking, LMX quality, and supervisors' interpretations of

FIGURE 2
Study 1: Moderating Effects of Supervisors' Attributions of Subordinates' General Feedback-Seeking Behavior to Underlying Motives



the motives for feedback seeking influenced subordinates' work performance, and (3) tested whether our model could be generalized to an industry other than the one in Study 1.

STUDY 2: METHODS

Sample and Data Collection

The sample of Study 2 included 240 supervisor-subordinate dyads from two Chinese corporations, each with more than 1,500 workers. Both companies were from the vehicle component manufacturing industry in Hangzhou, in Zhejiang Province.

The data were collected in March 2005. Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study: one for subordinates (they were all blue-collar manufacturing staff) and another for their immediate supervisors. The first author visited all the respondents (groups of supervisors and subordinates separately) in person and conducted the survey following the same procedure as in Study 1. Out of 526 questionnaires (256 for supervisors and 270 for subordinates), 480 usable questionnaires (240 supervisor-subordinate dyads) were returned. Usable response rates were 93.8 and 88.9 percent for supervisors and subordinates, respectively. These 240 employees were supervised by 84 immediate supervisors. The maximum number of surveys completed by a single supervisor was five in this study. Of the sampled subordinates, 40.8 percent were female, and 12.5 percent had a college education or above. The mean age and organizational tenure of the subordinates were 29.2 and 4.0 years, respectively. Of the sampled supervisors, 28.8 percent were female, and 26.3 percent had a college education or above. The mean age and organizational tenure of the supervisors were 29.2 and 6.4 years, respectively. The average length of the relationship was 1.47 years.

Measures

Apart from negative feedback seeking behavior (the independent variable) and subordinates' objective performance (the dependent variable), the key measures—namely, supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives and supervisor-attributed impression management motives (the moderating variables), LMX quality (the mediator variable), and all control variables—were the same as in Study 1. Negative feedback seeking (the independent variable), supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives (the moderators) were rated by supervisors, and LMX quality (the mediator) was rated by subordinates.

The work performance of subordinates was measured by objective data provided by the companies.

Negative feedback seeking behavior. We measured subordinates' negative feedback seeking using the same five-item scale used to measure general feedback-seeking behavior in Study 1. Because this scale, which was validated by VandeWalle et al. (2000), does not address whether feedback is positive or negative, we modified it, asking the supervisors how frequently their subordinates asked for feedback regarding inadequacies in (1) their overall work performance, (2) their technical performance on the job, (3) role fulfillments, (4) social behaviors, and (5) how well their values and attitudes were suited to the firm (1 = "never," 7 = "always"). The alpha coefficient for the items was .82.

Subordinates' work performance. The two companies used a piece-rate pay system. Workers received monthly pay according to the quantity of their output. We obtained the monthly piece-rate scores for all respondents from January to March 2005. Work performance was measured by averaging the three-month piece-rate scores. Since the piece-rate scores were calculated differently in the two companies, we standardized the scores within each company and used the standardized scores to represent work performance.

STUDY 2: RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Confirmatory factor analyses. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to further evaluate the discriminant validity of supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives and supervisor-attributed impression management motives. The results suggested that the hypothesized two-factor model (CFI = .93, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .08) yielded a better fit than the single-factor model (CFI = .88, TLI = .83, RMSEA = .12), with a chi-square change of 25.46 ($\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). To statistically discriminate the three key variables (negative feedback seeking behavior, supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives) rated by supervisors, we conducted another confirmatory factor analysis. Results showed that the three-factor model (CFI = .91, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .08) yielded a better fit than the single-factor model (CFI = .59, TLI = .50, RMSEA = .16). The change in chi-square was 309.55 ($\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$).

Descriptive statistics. Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and zero-order Pearson correlations of all key variables.

TABLE 3
Study 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities^a

Key Variables	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4
1. Negative feedback seeking behavior	3.19	0.89	(.82)			
2. Supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives	5.09	0.80	.26***	(.82)		
3. Supervisor-attributed impression management motives	4.01	1.07	.13**	.44***	(.81)	
4. Leader-member exchange quality	3.50	0.49	.54***	.09	-.04	(.81)
5. Subordinates' objective performance ^b	0.00	0.84	.17**	.16*	-.01	.54***

^a $n = 240$ (supervisor-subordinate dyads).

^b Values are Z -scores.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Tests of Hypotheses

Following the steps suggested by Muller et al. (2005), we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses and the mediated moderation model. As shown in Table 4 (model 1), the interaction of negative feedback seeking and supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$) and the interaction of negative feedback seeking and supervisor-attributed impression management motives ($\beta = -0.19$, $p < .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$) both had significant effects on the work performance of subordinates. The results fulfill the first requirement of mediated moderation.

Next, negative feedback seeking behavior was positively related to LMX quality ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$; Table 4, model 2), thus meeting the second requirement of mediation moderation and lending support to Hypothesis 1.

In addition, we found that the interaction of negative feedback seeking behavior and supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$) and the interaction of negative feedback seeking and supervisor-attributed impression management motives ($\beta = -0.18$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$) had significant effects on LMX quality (Table 4, model 2). The interactive effects are plotted in Figure 3. In support of Hypothesis 2a, simple slope analyses show that negative feedback seeking was more positively and significantly related to LMX when supervisors interpreted the behavior as driven by strong performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.18$, $p < .05$) than when supervisors interpreted the behavior as driven by weak performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.04$, n.s.). In addition, we found that negative feedback seeking was more positively related to LMX when supervisors inter-

preted the behavior as driven by weak impression management motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.24$, $p < .01$) than when supervisors interpreted it as driven by strong supervisor-attributed impression management motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.07$, n.s.). Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was also supported.

Next, model 3 of Table 4 reveals a significant effect of the quality of LMX on work performance ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .23$), which meets the third requirement for mediated moderation, while the interactions of negative feedback seeking behavior and supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives ($\beta = 0.07$, $p < \text{n.s.}$, $\Delta R^2 = .01$) and supervisor-attributed impression management motives ($\beta = -0.10$, n.s., $\Delta R^2 = .01$) are no longer significant; these findings meet the fourth requirement for mediated moderation. The plots in Figure 3 show that negative feedback seeking behavior was more positively and significantly related to work performance when supervisors interpreted the negative feedback seeking as driven by strong performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.17$, $p < .05$) than when they believed it was driven by weak performance enhancement motives (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.09$, n.s.). Additionally, we found that negative feedback seeking behavior was more positively related to work performance when supervisors interpreted it as driven by weak (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.31$, $p < .01$) rather than strong (simple slope test: $\beta = 0.05$, n.s.) impression management motives. These results suggest that LMX completely mediated the interaction effects on subordinates' objective performance. Therefore, Hypotheses 3a and 3b were supported.

As in Study 1, we also examined the possible three-way interaction of feedback-seeking behavior, supervisor-attributed performance enhance-

TABLE 4
Results of Regression Analysis for the Mediated Moderation Model^a

Variables	Model 1: Performance		Model 2: LMX		Model 3: Performance	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
<i>Independent</i>						
Negative feedback seeking behavior	0.14	2.05*	0.14	2.12*	0.10	1.63
ΔR^2		.02*		.02*		.01
<i>Moderator</i>						
Supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives	0.12	1.59	0.08	1.04	0.07	1.13
Supervisor-attributed impression management motives	-0.11	-1.40	-0.10	-1.40	-0.05	-0.71
ΔR^2		.01		.01		.01
<i>Interactive effects</i>						
Negative feedback-seeking behavior $\times$ supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives	0.17	2.10*	0.17	2.23*	0.07	0.92
Negative feedback-seeking behavior $\times$ supervisor-attributed impression management motives	-0.19	-2.42**	-0.18	-2.30*	-0.10	-1.34
ΔR^2		.02*		.02*		.01
<i>Mediator</i>						
LMX					0.53	8.75***
ΔR^2						.23***
<i>Interactive effects</i>						
LMX $\times$ supervisor-attributed performance enhancement motives					0.02	-0.30
LMX $\times$ supervisor-attributed impression management motives					-0.07	-1.00
ΔR^2						.00

^a Coefficients of all control variables are excluded from the table. $n = 240$ (supervisor-subordinate dyads).

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

ment motives, and supervisor-attributed impression management motives on LMX quality and work performance. Again, we found no significant effect.

DISCUSSION

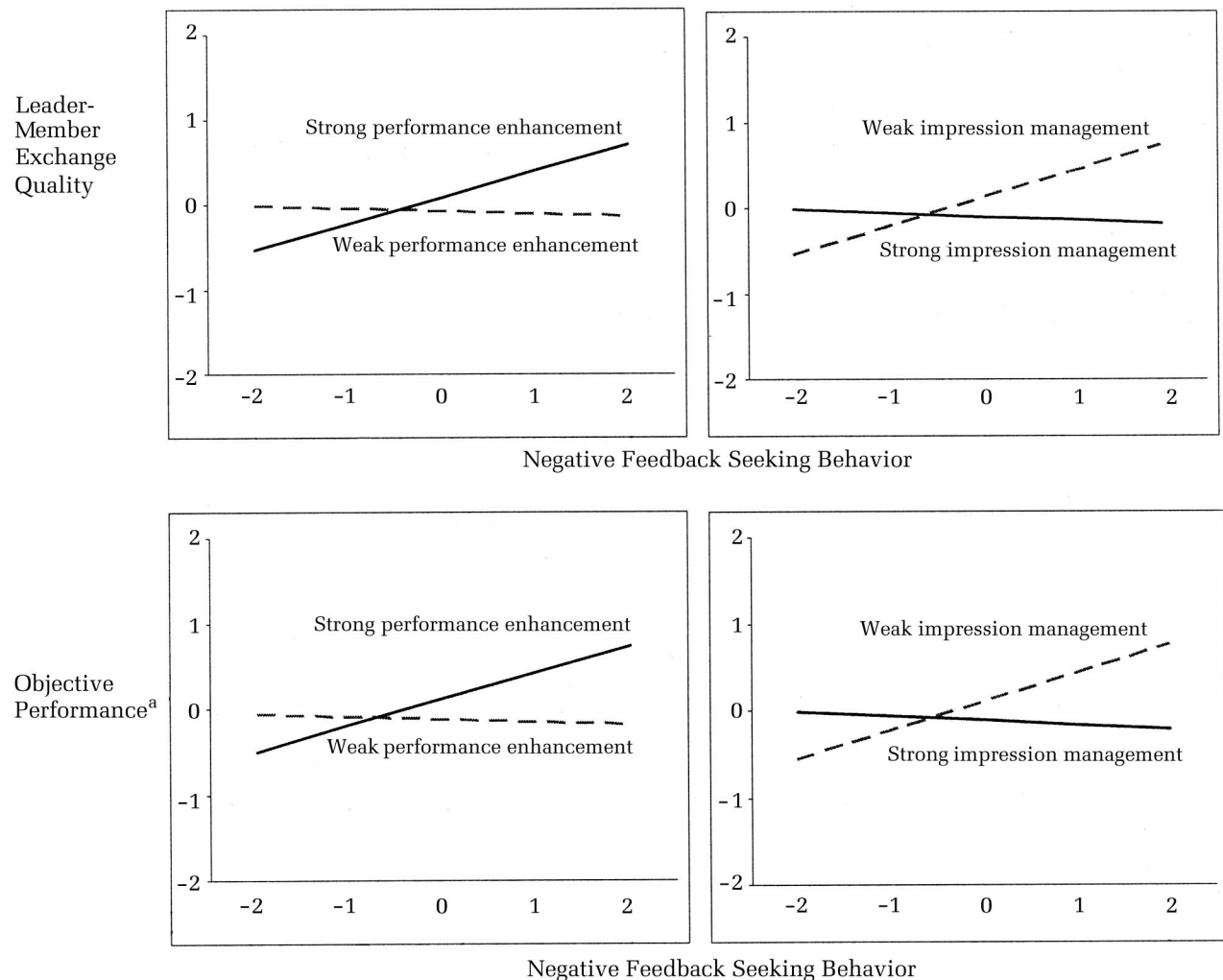
We found that subordinates' feedback-seeking behavior was more strongly, positively related to a high-quality leader-member relationship (LMX) and subordinates' work performance when supervisors interpreted the feedback seeking as driven more by performance enhancement motives and less by impression management motives. These findings suggest that supervisors do not have a simple appreciation of the explicitly proactive behaviors of their subordinates. Rather, it appears that they place great emphasis on the underlying

motivations for these behaviors. Thus, our results have extended the feedback-seeking behavior literature by demonstrating the importance of supervisors' attributions of subordinates' motives for feedback seeking.

Theoretical Implications

First, we extend the literature on feedback-seeking behavior by investigating how such behavior is related to the quality of LMX and work performance. The results provide more understanding of the outcomes of subordinates' feedback seeking. In past empirical studies, the effects of feedback seeking on work performance have varied; for example, Morrison (1993) found that feedback seeking was positively related to work performance, yet Ashford and Black (1996) failed to find support for the

FIGURE 3
Study 2: Moderating Effects of Supervisors' Attributions of Subordinates' Negative Feedback Seeking Behavior to Underlying Motives



^a Z-score.

relationship. Because previous research has not answered the question of how feedback-seeking behavior directly influences work performance, in the present study we added investigation of how LMX quality mediates the relationship between feedback seeking and performance. This addition to previous efforts is important because LMX focuses on the people interaction that is essential in work contexts.

Second, past findings presented in the LMX literature suggest that impression management, particularly ingratiation, is positively associated with LMX quality (e.g., Dockery & Steiner, 1990; Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Wayne & Liden, 1995). However, supervisors' assessments of subordinates' motives have not previously been considered in LMX research. Our research suggests that, regardless of the

real motives for subordinates' feedback seeking, supervisors' attributions of motives play a vital role. When supervisors attribute behavior to impression management, high-quality LMX is absent. This pattern suggests that such attributions are worthy of attention, as they help explain the effects of subordinates' behavior on the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships and, ultimately, on performance.

This research also has implications for how high-quality LMX might be established. Although it has been suggested that either supervisor or subordinate can contribute to building such an exchange (Liden et al., 1997), previous studies have tended to focus mainly on supervisors' initiation of LMX by, for example, establishing appropriate relationships with each subordinate (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Our findings suggest that subordinates may also take a proactive role in building high-quality LMX, by seeking feedback from their supervisors.

Managerial Implications

A practical implication is that proactive work behavior in general and feedback seeking in particular may not be necessarily associated with a high quality of LMX. Our findings show that such behaviors are positively related to social exchanges between supervisors and subordinates only when the supervisors believe that the feedback-seeking behavior is intended to improve performance rather than to enhance impression. The results help subordinates understand the fact that supervisors prefer more work-related efforts from them (Day & Crain, 1992) and do not generally find impression management desirable.

Moreover, it is critically important that supervisors have the abilities and skills to accurately interpret the motives underlying subordinates' proactive behavior. It is known that perceptual bias, stereotypes, and misunderstandings are likely to influence supervisors' evaluations of their subordinates (Spector & Jex, 1991). If a supervisor mistakenly attributes the feedback seeking of a subordinate who genuinely wants to enhance work performance to impression management motives and, subsequently, the supervisor does not engage in constructive exchange with the subordinate, that subordinate is likely to be discouraged from exhibiting such behavior in the future. Leadership development programs should encourage supervisors to be open to subordinates' proactive behaviors in general, but these programs should also develop both supervisors' and subordinates' communication skills to facilitate their mutual understanding.

Limitations and Future Research

Like any study, this one is not without limitations. First, we cannot draw firm conclusions about causation from a cross-sectional study, and we cannot rule out the possibility of reverse causation. It is possible that a high-quality LMX might encourage subordinates to seek feedback more frequently. Thus, researchers have found that employees seek feedback more often if their leaders are positively supportive (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; Williams, Miller, Steelman, & Levy, 1999); further, mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas, and consideration of their feelings are positively related to feedback-seeking behavior (VandeWalle et al., 2000). Therefore, longitudinal studies are needed to provide firm evidence of causation. Second, be-

cause our data were collected only in China, one might question whether our findings and theory can be generalized to other cultural settings. Some researchers have shown that feedback-seeking behavior may vary across cultures (Morrison, Chen, & Salgado, 2004; Sully de Luque & Sommer, 2000). For example, Morrison et al. (2004) found that employees in low-individualism and "high power distance" societies, such as China, may be less likely to seek feedback from their supervisors. Therefore, it is possible that different results may be found in other nations. Third, we only examined subordinates' feedback seeking in the form of verbal requests (inquiring). Facial expression, observations, monitoring, or other forms of feedback seeking were not been tested in this research because it is difficult to measure these behaviors. Therefore, future studies should develop measures to further investigate different forms of the feedback seeking of subordinates rated by supervisors and/or peers. Related to the third limitation is that we addressed the frequency of subordinates' feedback seeking and limited its target to immediate supervisors only, given that we were using a cross-sectional design. We did not examine patterns in other aspects of feedback-seeking behavior, such as the timing of feedback-seeking attempts (e.g., whether immediately following performance or after a delay) and a target's mood.

One possible way to extend our model would be to address the question of why supervisors tend to attribute feedback-seeking behavior to performance enhancement and impression management motives. According to the cognitive information processing approach (Lord, 1985; Schneider, 1991), a supervisor tends to form a schema of attributions of each subordinate's behavior and underlying motives during the early stages of the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Wayne & Liden, 1995). Once relationships and roles have become established, the supervisor will often use the schema for a particular subordinate as a cognitive shortcut for making inferences about the motives behind the subordinate's subsequent behavior. The schemata formed in the early stage of exchange processes may determine how supervisors interpret the subordinates' motives for behaviors in later exchanges (Lord & Maher, 1991). For this reason, we suggest that future research examine how these schemata are developed and how they influence the way that supervisors make sense of and evaluate subordinates' behaviors.

Our study could be extended by using a longitudinal research design, not only to address issues of causality as discussed above, but also to examine developing rather than established relationships.

Specifically, a longitudinal study might address how feedback seeking contributes to the development of LMX quality and to improved performance over time, as a relationship develops. In addition, we propose that a feedback loop may exist, because the quality of LMX may also be positively related to feedback seeking (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; Williams et al., 1999), which, in turn, may be conducive to higher work performance. Higher work performance may then further encourage feedback-seeking behavior. In addition, because research has also suggested that higher performance leads to a more positive LMX (Deluga & Perry, 1994; Dockery & Steiner, 1990), the feedback loop may also consist of higher work performance leading to more positive LMX, which leads to more frequent feedback seeking.

Further, Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) found that LMX mediated the positive relationship between subordinates' mastery orientation and their in-role work performance. The authors explained that because subordinates with high mastery orientations strive to develop their competence, skills, and abilities, they tend to actively engage in frequent social exchanges with their supervisors in order to discuss and learn how to perform better at work. Following this line of reasoning, the mastery goal orientation of a subordinate may be a driving force for feedback-seeking behavior and/or the ways in which supervisors attribute the motives for the behavior. This is an interesting area for future research.

In spite of the limitations of our research, our findings provide new insights into the relationships between LMX and impression management, feedback-seeking behavior and LMX, and the effects of supervisors' interpretations of subordinates' motives for feedback seeking on LMX quality as well as on the work performance of subordinates.

REFERENCES

- Allen, T. D., & Rush, M. C. 1998. The effects of organizational citizenship behavior on performance judgments: A field study and a laboratory experiment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83: 247–260.
- Ashford, S. J. 1986. Feedback-seeking in individual adaptation: A resource perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 29: 465–487.
- Ashford, S. J., & Black, J. S. 1996. Proactivity during organizational entry: The role of desire for control. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81: 199–214.
- Ashford, S. J., Blatt, R., & VandeWalle, D. 2003. Reflections on the looking glass: A review of research on feedback-seeking behavior in organizations. *Journal of Management*, 29: 773–799.
- Ashford, S. J., & Cummings, L. L. 1983. Feedback as an individual resource: Personal strategies of creating information. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 32: 370–398.
- Ashford, S. J., & Cummings, L. L. 1985. Proactive feedback seeking: The instrumental use of the information environment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 58: 67–79.
- Ashford, S. J., & Northcraft, G. B. 1992. Conveying more (or less) than we realize: The role of impression-management in feedback seeking. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 53: 310–334.
- Ashford, S. J., & Tsui, A. S. 1991. Self-regulation for managerial effectiveness: The role of active feedback seeking. *Academy of Management Journal*, 34: 251–280.
- Bauer, T. N., & Green, S. G. 1996. Development of leader-member exchange: A longitudinal test. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39: 1538–1567.
- Brislin, R., Lonner, W. J., & Thorndike, R. 1973. *Cross-cultural research methods*. New York: Wiley.
- Brown, S. P., Ganesan, S., & Challagalla, G. N. 2001. Self-efficacy as a moderator of information-seeking effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86: 1043–1051.
- Crant, J. M. 1996. Doing more harm than good: When is impression management likely to evoke a negative response? *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 26: 1454–1471.
- Crant, J. M. 2000. Proactive behavior in organizations. *Journal of Management*, 26: 435–462.
- Day, D. V., & Crain, E. C. 1992. The role of affect and ability in initial exchange quality perceptions. *Group and Organization Management*, 17: 380–397.
- Deluga, R. J., & Perry, J. T. 1994. The role of subordinate performance and ingratiation in leader-member exchanges. *Group and Organization Management*, 19: 67–86.
- Dienesch, R. M., & Liden, R. C. 1986. Leader-member exchange model of leadership: A critique and further development. *Academy of Management Review*, 11: 618–634.
- Dockery, T. M., & Steiner, D. D. 1990. The role of the initial interaction in leader-member exchange. *Group and Organization Studies*, 15: 395–413.
- Eastman, K. K. 1994. In the eyes of the beholder: An attributional approach to ingratiation and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37: 1379–1391.
- Edwards, J. R. 1995. Alternatives to difference scores as dependent variables in the study of congruence in organizational research. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 64: 307–324.

- Fodor, E. M. 1973. Disparagement by a subordinate, ingratiation, and the use of power. *Journal of Psychology*, 84: 181–186.
- Fodor, E. M. 1974. Disparagement by a subordinate as an influence on the use of power. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 59: 652–655.
- Gerstner, C. R., & Day, D. V. 1997. Meta-analytic review of leader-member exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82: 827–844.
- Graen, G. B. 1976. Role-making processes within complex organizations. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*: 1201–1245. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Graen, G. B., & Scandura, T. A. 1987. Toward a psychology of dyadic organizing. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior*: 175–208. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. 1995. Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *Leadership Quarterly*, 6: 219–247.
- Graen, G. B., Wakabayashi, M., Graen, M. R., & Graen, M. G. 1990. International generalizability of American hypothesis about Japanese management progress: A strong inference investigation. *Leadership Quarterly*, 1: 1–23.
- Green, S. G., & Mitchell, T. R. 1979. Attributional processes of leaders in leader-member interactions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 23: 429–458.
- Ilgen, D. R., Fisher, C. D., & Taylor, M. S. 1979. Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 64: 359–371.
- Janssen, O., & Van Yperen, N. W. 2004. Employees' goal orientations, the quality of leader-member exchange, and the outcomes of job performance and job satisfaction. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47: 368–384.
- Johnson, D. E., Erez, A., Kiker, D. S., & Motowidlo, S. J. 2002. Liking and attributions of motives as mediators of the relationships between individuals' reputations, helpful behaviors, and raters' reward decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87: 808–815.
- Kacmar, K. M., Witt, L. A., Zivnuska, S., & Gully, S. M. 2003. The interactive effect of leader-member exchange and communication frequency on performance ratings. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88: 764–772.
- Kelley, H. H. 1967. Attribution theory in social psychology. In D. Levine (Ed.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation*: 192–238. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Kipnis, D., & Schmidt, S. M. 1988. Upward-influence styles: Relationship with performance evaluations, salary, and stress. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33: 528–542.
- Liden, R. C., Sparrowe, R. T., & Wayne, S. J. 1997. Leader-member exchange theory: The past and potential for the future. In G. R. Ferris (Ed.), *Research in personnel and human resources management*, vol. 15: 47–119. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., & Stilwell, D. 1993. A longitudinal study on the early development of leader-member exchanges. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78: 662–674.
- London, M. 2003. *Job feedback: Giving, seeking, and using feedback for performance improvement*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Lord, R. G. 1985. An information processing approach to social perceptions, leadership and behavioral measurement in organizations. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior*: 87–128. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Lord, R. G., & Maher, K. J. 1991. *Leadership and information processing: Linking perceptions and performance*. Boston: Routledge.
- Maslyn, J. M., & Uhl-Bien, M. 2001. Leader-member exchange and its dimensions: Effects of self-effort and other's effort on relationship quality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86: 697–708.
- Morrison, E. W. 1993. Newcomer information seeking: Exploring types, modes, sources, and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36: 557–589.
- Morrison, E. W., & Bies, R. J. 1991. Impression management in the feedback-seeking process: A literature review and research agenda. *Academy of Management Review*, 16: 522–541.
- Morrison, E. W., Chen, Y.-R., & Salgado, S. R. 2004. Cultural differences in newcomer feedback seeking: A comparison of the United States and Hong Kong. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 53: 1–22.
- Morrison, E. W., & Phelps, C. C. 1999. Taking charge at work: Extrarole efforts to initiate workplace change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42: 403–419.
- Moss, S. E., Valenzi, E. R., & Taggart, W. 2003. Are you hiding from your boss? The development of a taxonomy and instrument to assess the feedback management behaviors of good and bad performers. *Journal of Management*, 29: 487–510.
- Muller, D., Judd, C. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. 2005. When moderation is mediated and mediation is moderated. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89: 852–863.
- Renn, R. W., & Fedor, D. B. 2001. Development and field test of a feedback seeking, self-efficacy, and goal setting model of work performance. *Journal of Management*, 27: 563–583.
- Rizzo, J. R., & House, R. J. 1970. Role conflict and ambi-

- guity in complex organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 15: 150–163.
- Schaubroeck, J., & Lam, S. S. K. 2002. How similarity to peers and supervisors influences organizational advancement in different cultures. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45: 1120–1136.
- Schlenker, B. R. 1980. *Impression management: The self-concept, social identity, and interpersonal relations*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Schneider, D. J. 1991. Social cognition. In M. R. Rosenzweig & L. W. Porter (Eds.), *Annual review of psychology*: 527–561. Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.
- Spector, P. E., & Jex, S. M. 1991. Relations of job characteristics from multiple data sources with employee affect, absence, turnover intentions, and health. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76: 46–53.
- Sully de Luque, M. F., & Sommer, S. M. 2000. The impact of culture on feedback-seeking behavior: An integrated model and propositions. *Academy of Management Review*, 25: 829–849.
- Turban, D. B., & Jones, A. P. 1988. Supervisor-subordinate similarity: Types, effects, and mechanisms. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73: 228–234.
- Vancouver, J. B., & Morrison, E. W. 1995. Feedback inquiry: The effect of source attributes and individual differences. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 62: 276–285.
- Van Der Vegt, G. S., Van De Vliert, E., & Oosterhof, A. 2003. Informational dissimilarity and organizational citizenship behavior: The role of intrateam interdependence and team identification. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46: 715–727.
- VandeWalle, D., Ganesan, S., Challagalla, G. N., & Brown, S. P. 2000. An integrated model of feedback-seeking behavior: Disposition, context, and cognition. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85: 996–1003.
- Wanberg, C. R., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D. 2000. Predictors and outcomes of proactivity in the socialization process. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85: 373–385.
- Wayne, S. J., & Ferris, G. R. 1990. Influence tactics, affect, and exchange quality in supervisor-subordinate interactions: A laboratory experiment and field study. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75: 487–499.
- Wayne, S. J., & Kacmar, K. M. 1991. The effects of impression management on the performance appraisal process. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 48: 70–88.
- Wayne, S. J., & Liden, R. C. 1995. Effects of impression management on performance ratings: A longitudinal study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38: 232–260.
- Wayne, S. J., Shore, L. M., & Liden, R. C. 1997. Perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40: 82–111.
- Williams, J. R., Miller, C. E., Steelman, L. A., & Levy, P. E. 1999. Increasing feedback seeking in public contexts: It takes two (or more) to tango. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84: 969–976.



Wing Lam (mswing@polyu.edu.hk) is an assistant professor in the Department of Management & Marketing at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. She received her Ph.D. from the same university. Her research interests include feedback-seeking behavior in organizations, leadership, emotional labor, and emotional intelligence.

Xu Huang (mshuangx@polyu.edu.hk) is an associate professor in the Department of Management & Marketing at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Groningen. His primary research interests include psychological empowerment, organizational justice, leader-member exchange, leadership behavior in China, and cross-cultural organizational psychology.

Ed Snape (msedward@polyu.edu.hk) is a professor in the Department of Management & Marketing at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Durham. His research interests include employee commitments, union commitment and participation, workplace climate, and leadership.



Copyright of *Academy of Management Journal* is the property of Academy of Management and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.