Self-Monitoring in Group Contexts: Positive Effects on Individual Status Attainment and Group Task Performance (Postprint)

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Abstract

Self-monitoring is a personality trait closely associated with interpersonal interaction. In the process of group formation and development, self-monitoring not only influences the quality of individuals' interpersonal relationships but also affects intragroup interactions; furthermore, the effect of self-monitoring may undergo dynamic changes as groups evolve. To examine the aforementioned proposition, this study conducted a one-semester longitudinal investigation of 32 college freshman dormitories. The results demonstrate that at the individual level, individuals' self-monitoring level promotes positive affect from group members toward that individual, thereby indirectly facilitating their status attainment (individual status and centrality in friendship networks); at the group level, group self-monitoring level promotes cohesion among group members, thereby indirectly enhancing the group's performance in cooperative tasks. Additionally, the influence of individual self-monitoring level on others' positive affect exhibits temporal effects; specifically, its positive effect is strengthened to a certain extent as the group develops. This study elucidates the mechanisms through which self-monitoring exerts influence on individuals and groups, making contributions to self-monitoring theory and related domains such as status.

Full Text

Self-Monitoring in Group Context: Positive Effects on Individual Status Attainment and Group Task Performance

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Abstract

Self-monitoring, as a personality trait closely associated with interpersonal interaction, not only influences the quality of individual interpersonal relationships but also shapes group-level interactions during group formation and development. Moreover, the role of self-monitoring may undergo dynamic changes as groups evolve. To investigate these propositions, this study conducted a one-semester longitudinal survey of 32 university freshman dormitories. At the individual level, results showed that an individual' s self-monitoring level promoted positive sentiments from group members toward that individual, which in turn indirectly facilitated status attainment (both individual status and friendship network centrality). At the group level, the group' s mean self-monitoring level enhanced group cohesion, which subsequently indirectly improved group performance on collaborative tasks. Additionally, the effect of individual self-monitoring on others' positive sentiments exhibited temporal effects, with its positive influence strengthening over time as the group developed. This research reveals the mechanisms through which self-monitoring influences individuals and groups, contributing to self-monitoring theory and related domains such as status research.

Keywords: self-monitoring; status attainment; group performance; longitudinal study
Classification: B849:C91

1. Introduction

Self-monitoring, as a personality trait, describes individuals' tendency to adjust their behavior to adapt to situational demands (Snyder, 1974). High self-monitors excel at managing their emotional expressions and demonstrate stronger adaptability in interpersonal interactions (e.g., Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Wang, Hu, & Dong, 2015). In group contexts, self-monitoring is particularly crucial for relationship establishment, especially during group formation and development stages, as it affects not only the effectiveness of interpersonal relationship building but also the quality of group interactions.

Previous research has identified advantages for high self-monitors in groups, such as greater leadership potential (Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991) and more advantageous positions in social networks (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001; Oh & Kilduff, 2008). However, existing studies have exclusively examined self-monitoring's effects on individuals within groups while neglecting its group-level impacts. Group research demonstrates that group personality composition influences group processes and subsequent performance outcomes (Bell, 2007; Colbert, Barrick, & Bradley, 2014; Lin & Rababah, 2014). Does a group' s average self-monitoring level—its self-monitoring composition—affect group task performance by influencing the quality of intragroup interactions? Investigating how group self-monitoring composition influences group interaction and outcomes

would deepen our understanding of self-monitoring' s nature and expand the explanatory scope of self-monitoring theory. Furthermore, while self-monitoring' s role in interpersonal interaction may change throughout group establishment and development, existing research has generally assumed stable effects, overlooking potential variations in self-monitoring' s influence across different group development stages.

To address these limitations, this study adopts a dynamic perspective to examine self-monitoring' s effects on interpersonal interaction quality at both individual and group levels. At the individual level, we investigate how self-monitoring affects interpersonal outcomes—individual status and friendship network centrality, which together capture an individual' s standing within the group. At the group level, we examine how group self-monitoring composition influences collaborative performance—group task performance in cooperative tasks. Both individual status attainment and group task performance represent important indicators of social interaction quality in group contexts and are closely associated with the personality trait of self-monitoring.

1.1 Within Groups: Self-Monitoring' s Influence on Individual Interpersonal Outcomes

Group members differ in personality traits, values, and behavioral habits. To build high-quality interpersonal relationships within a group, individuals must first understand different members' characteristics and adopt appropriate communication and behavioral styles. Compared to low self-monitors, high self-monitors are more adept at observing and understanding information about others. Snyder and Cantor (1980) found that high self-monitors are better at portraying others' images, while low self-monitors are better at portraying self-images. This suggests that high self-monitors can accurately grasp different group members' characteristics and use these as behavioral cues to display likable behaviors. Additionally, research has found that high self-monitors are more skilled at using humor to express viewpoints (Turner, 1980) and appropriately controlling conversation pace (Dabbs, Evans, Hopper, & Purvis, 1980), thereby enhancing other members' enjoyment in social interactions with them. Moreover, high self-monitors display more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions in self-presentation (Ickes, Holloway, Stinson, & Hoodenpyle, 2006). Given dormitory members' frequent contact and emotional contagion, other members experience more positive emotions when interacting with high self-monitors.

We therefore hypothesize that, compared to low self-monitors, high self-monitors are more likely to elicit positive sentiments from other group members. Affect represents a valence-based evaluation of a specific individual or object, reflecting liking or disliking (Frijda, 1994; Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Following Scott, Colquitt, and Zapata-Phelan (2007), this study defines positive sentiments as the positive emotional reactions—joviality and self-assurance—that group members expect or actually experience when interacting with a particular individual.

Joviality includes feelings of happiness and enthusiasm, while self-assurance includes pride and confidence (Watson, 2000). High self-monitors' other-oriented interaction style enables group members to experience more positive emotions when interacting with them, thus forming positive sentiments toward that member.

Furthermore, we propose that the positive effect of self-monitoring on others' positive sentiments strengthens over time. In early group formation stages, members have limited communication and interact cautiously to maintain superficial harmony. However, as groups develop, members' personal traits become increasingly revealed through interactions. At this point, high self-monitors, who tend to capture information about others (Snyder & Cantor, 1980), can more effectively understand other members' preferences, habits, and personalities, and use interpersonal communication skills more strategically to elicit positive emotions. Conversely, for low self-monitors, who focus more on self-related information (Snyder & Cantor, 1980), others' self-disclosure does not effectively enhance their understanding of group members. Meanwhile, because low self-monitors are more inclined to display behaviors based on their own feelings and preferences (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), they are more likely to experience conflicts with others as the group develops, causing displeasure. Based on this reasoning, we propose:

Hypothesis 1: Individual self-monitoring level positively predicts others' positive sentiments, and this predictive power strengthens over time.

A crucial indicator of successful interpersonal relationships in groups is status attainment. Status reflects the respect and prestige an individual gains within a group (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). High-status individuals receive more resources, exert greater influence on group decisions, and more easily gain compliance from others, making status attainment an important individual goal in groups (Pettit, Yong, & Spataro, 2010). The status conferred upon an individual may be influenced by emotions. When experiencing positive emotions in interactions with someone, people pay more attention to that person and are more willing to interact with and be influenced by them. Positive emotions in interpersonal interactions represent an important resource (Fredrickson, 1998). People seek to acquire and preserve their resources and therefore prefer to interact with those who elicit positive emotions (Hobfoll, 1989), granting them higher individual status due to liking and even dependence.

Beyond status conferred by compliance, network-structural status—friendship network centrality (Baldwin, Bedell, & Johnson, 1997)—also represents an important indicator of individual standing in groups. As mentioned above, when people experience more positive emotions interacting with someone, they are more willing to interact with that person and more likely to develop close friendships, resulting in higher friendship network centrality for that individual. In groups, higher individual self-monitoring leads to more positive sentiments from others. Therefore, self-monitoring indirectly facilitates individual status attainment (both individual status and friendship network centrality) within the group

by enhancing others' positive sentiments.

Hypothesis 2: Individual self-monitoring level has an indirect positive effect on individual status attainment (individual status and friendship network centrality) through others' positive sentiments within the group.

1.2 Between Groups: Self-Monitoring' s Influence on Group Collaborative Performance

Previous research has primarily compared differences between individuals with varying self-monitoring levels in interpersonal interaction and work performance (e.g., Scott, Barnes, & Wagner, 2012; Turnley & Bolino, 2001), but has rarely examined self-monitoring' s effects at the group level. A higher group mean self-monitoring level indicates that group members are generally more adept at guiding their behavior according to situational and interpersonal cues (Snyder, 1974). Under such conditions, we argue that groups are more likely to develop strong cohesion. On one hand, when group members can effectively regulate their behavior, interactions among members become more pleasant, fostering greater interpersonal attraction and willingness to collaborate. On the other hand, when facing conflicts, high self-monitors are more capable of resolving issues through cooperation and compromise (Zaccaro et al., 1991). A higher group mean self-monitoring level means members can more effectively resolve conflicts and prevent conflict escalation from damaging team cohesion. Overall, group self-monitoring level positively influences group cohesion.

Moreover, the effect of group self-monitoring on group cohesion also strengthens over time. In early group formation stages, members adopt temporary impression management strategies when entering a new social environment. However, as groups develop and mature, groups experience more events (e.g., group activities, conflicts) and the role of trait self-monitoring gradually emerges. Higher overall member self-monitoring enables groups to maintain appropriate behaviors and communication styles during long-term activities, developing into cohesive groups. When members' overall self-monitoring level is low, they cannot maintain early superficial harmony, negatively impacting group cohesion. In other words, differences in cohesion between high and low self-monitoring groups become more pronounced as groups develop. Based on this reasoning, we propose:

Hypothesis 3: Group mean self-monitoring level positively predicts group cohesion, and this predictive power strengthens over time.

Higher group cohesion typically indicates stronger member connections, greater collective identity, and stronger centripetal force (Man & Lam, 2003). Group cohesion facilitates coordination among members and smooths group collaboration (Mullen & Copper, 1994). In highly cohesive groups, members demonstrate stronger goal commitment and exert greater personal effort to achieve group objectives (Klein & Mulvey, 1995). These positive consequences of cohesion help group members better accomplish group tasks, particularly in cooperative tasks

requiring substantial communication and coordination, where highly cohesive groups often demonstrate better performance. Previous empirical research has well supported cohesion' s positive effects on group performance (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003; Filho, Dobersek, Gershgoren, Becker, & Tenenbaum, 2014).

Considering group self-monitoring' s promoting effect on group cohesion, we propose that group self-monitoring level may indirectly and positively influence group task performance by enhancing group cohesion.

Hypothesis 4: Group mean self-monitoring level has an indirect positive effect on group task performance through group cohesion.

[Figure 1: see original paper] presents the main research framework of this study.

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2. Method

2.1 Participants and Procedure

We selected freshman dormitories at Peking University as our research context and conducted a longitudinal survey from September to December 2016. Freshman dormitories were chosen for several reasons. First, they minimize heterogeneity across groups, as members share the same gender and similar age. Second, freshman roommates constitute a group without explicit goals or established social norms—a weak situation that facilitates observation of trait effects. Third, as newly formed groups, longitudinal tracking enables observation of causal relationships and investigation of self-monitoring' s dynamic effects. Based on these considerations, we recruited 40 freshman dormitories (18 male and 22 female dormitories) with 159 participants (71 males; one male dormitory had three members) during the first week of the semester. We administered three questionnaire surveys at Week 3 (T1), Week 9 (T2), and Week 15 (T3), with each data collection completed within five days. Ultimately, 32 dormitories (12 male dormitories) with 122 freshmen (45 males) completed all three surveys.

2.2 Variable Measurement

2.2.1 Individual Level Individual Self-Monitoring (T1): We measured individual self-monitoring using Lennox and Wolfe' s (1984) 13-item scale. Sample items include "In social situations, I have the ability to change my behavior if I feel it is necessary" and "I can accurately judge others' true emotions through their eyes" (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The scale' s Cronbach' s was 0.87.

Others' Positive Sentiments (T2): Following Scott et al. (2007), we selected four items from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule-Expanded (PANAS-X, Watson & Clark, 1994) to measure others' positive sentiments toward a specific individual. Participants rated their emotional feelings when

interacting with each dormitory member: "When I am with him/her, I feel: happy/enthusiastic/proud/confident"(1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The scale' s Cronbach' s was 0.80, so we averaged the four items. In calculation, others' positive sentiments (T2) for a specific individual represented the average of evaluations made by other dormitory members regarding that individual. As shown in [Figure 2: see original paper], A' s score on others' positive sentiments was obtained by averaging the emotional experience ratings from B, C, and D when with A, and similarly for B, C, and D. We calculated Rwg (within-group interrater reliability) and ICC(1) (intraclass correlation coefficient) to assess interrater agreement (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Results showed a median Rwg of 0.97 and ICC(1) of 0.60, indicating good within-group consistency in evaluations of a specific member, justifying aggregation of other members' ratings to represent the individual' s others' positive sentiments (T2) (James, 1982).

Others' Positive Sentiments (T3): Measured identically to T2. Cronbach' s was 0.81, median Rwg was 0.98, and ICC(1) was 0.62.

Individual Status (T3): Following Anderson, John, Keltner, and Kring (2001) and Bendersky and Shah (2012), we used three items to measure individual status in the dormitory. Participants rated each dormitory member: "This roommate has high prestige in our dormitory," "This roommate is highly respected in our dormitory," and "This roommate is very influential in our dormitory" (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). An individual' s status equaled the average of other members' status ratings. Cronbach' s was 0.87, median Rwg was 0.97, and ICC(1) was 0.58, indicating good within-group consistency and justifying aggregation.

Friendship Network Centrality (T3): Participants rated each dormitory member: "Is this member your friend in life (e.g., for entertainment, sports)?" (1 = yes, 0 = no). An individual' s friendship network centrality equaled the total number of dormitory members who considered that individual a friend (Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2004).

2.2.2 Group Level Group Self-Monitoring (T1): We operationalized group self-monitoring as the mean of individual self-monitoring levels within the group. Prior research on group-level personality composition has employed three main approaches (LePine, 2003): (1) additive model—member average; (2) conjunctive model—lowest member' s score; and (3) disjunctive model—highest member' s score. We adopted the additive model for several reasons. First, the conjunctive model applies when between-group differences stem from the lowest member, while the disjunctive model applies when differences stem from the highest member (LePine, 2003). Since group cohesion emerges from interactions among all members, individual high or low self-monitors may not solely determine group cohesion, whereas members' overall self-monitoring level exerts greater influence. Second, we found high correlations between the average score (additive model) and both the highest score (disjunctive model; $r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$) and lowest score (conjunctive model; $r = 0.56$, $p < 0.001$), indicating

substantial overlap with alternative calculation methods. Third, prior research suggests the additive model provides more representative predictions across different task contexts (e.g., Tziner & Eden, 1985; Devine & Philips, 2000). Additionally, using the additive approach aligns with existing literature (Roberson & Williamson, 2012). Personality traits are inherent individual attributes that generally do not converge among group members, so rater agreement calculation is unnecessary for this additive approach (e.g., Bradley, Klotz, Postlethwaite, & Brown, 2013; Lin & Rababah, 2014).

Group Cohesion (T2): Group cohesion (T2) was obtained by averaging all members'individual ratings of dormitory cohesion. We used two items from Jehn and Mannix (2001): "Our dormitory has strong cohesion" and "Our dormitory members have team spirit"(1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach' s was 0.95, median Rwg was 0.88, and ICC(1) was 0.25.

Group Cohesion (T3): Measured identically to T2. Cronbach' s was 0.95, median Rwg was 0.89, and ICC(1) was 0.24. These Rwg and ICC(1) values indicate good within-group consistency in members' cohesion perceptions, justifying aggregation to the group level.

Group Task Performance (T3): We used an objective behavioral measure. The third data collection occurred in a laboratory setting. Dormitory members first completed questionnaires, then performed a team task—a jigsaw puzzle game adapted from Liu and Zhang' s (2005) management production exercise. In this task, all dormitory members were assigned two roles (D and W) to collaboratively complete a puzzle task. The D group (2 members) could see the puzzle design blueprint and had 20 minutes to communicate with the W group using only verbal language; they could not show the blueprint or drawings, make gestures, or draw shapes for the W group. The W group (1–2 members) could not see the design blueprint but could use paper and pen to record information obtained from the D group.

The task implementation comprised four stages: (1) members freely chose roles and were assigned to separate rooms; (2) the experimenter provided the design blueprint to the D group, who discussed how to describe it to the W group; (3) the D group entered the W group' s room for face-to-face communication to describe the blueprint; and (4) after communication, the D group left, and the experimenter gave the scrambled puzzle pieces to the W group to complete the puzzle. This group task required members to understand each other' s strengths and weaknesses, allocate roles appropriately, and necessitated effective information transmission, feedback, and clarification between D and W groups. Thus, this collaborative task demanded good understanding, communication, and rapport among group members at all stages, assessing whether the group possessed long-term, high-quality social interaction.

We measured task performance by puzzle completion and completion time. Since all dormitories completed the puzzle, final task performance (T3) was measured by total time spent (in minutes). Shorter time indicated better perfor-

mance; for easier interpretation, we multiplied time by -1 in hypothesis testing to represent group task performance.

2.3 Analysis Strategy

For individual-level hypotheses, we used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to control for between-group differences, as individuals were nested within different groups. For group-level hypotheses, we used ordinary least squares regression. All indirect effects were tested using RMediation (Tofighi & MacKinnon, 2011), which more accurately estimates Type I error than traditional methods (e.g., Sobel test; MacKinnon, Fritz, Williams, & Lockwood, 2007; MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004).

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3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

presents correlations among individual-level variables. Individual self-monitoring (T1) positively correlated with others' positive sentiments at both T2 and T3, with a stronger correlation at T3, providing preliminary support for Hypothesis 1. Others' positive sentiments (T2/T3) significantly correlated with individual status (T3) and friendship network centrality (T3), as expected. Individual self-monitoring (T1) did not significantly correlate with individual status (T3) or friendship network centrality (T3), indicating no direct effect of self-monitoring on status outcomes.

presents correlations among group-level variables. Group self-monitoring (T1) positively correlated with group cohesion at both T2 and T3, but the correlation did not strengthen over time, contrary to expectations. Group cohesion (T2/T3) significantly correlated with group task performance (T3), as expected. Group self-monitoring (T1) did not significantly correlate with group task performance (T3), indicating no direct effect.

3.2 Exclusion of Irrelevant Variables

Before conducting regression analyses, we excluded potential confounding factors. First, we examined gender effects. Male and female self-monitoring levels did not differ significantly (M_male = 4.62, SD = 0.10; M_female = 4.73, SD = 0.07; t(120) = -0.91, p = 0.362), consistent with Day, Schleicher, Unckless, and Hiller' s (2002) meta-analytic finding that gender is unrelated to self-monitoring when using Lennox and Wolfe' s (1984) 13-item scale. Moreover, gender did not significantly correlate with others' positive sentiments, individual status, friendship network centrality, group cohesion, or group task performance at either level (ps $>$ 0.455).

Second, we excluded cognitive ability effects on group task performance. We

obtained freshmen's college entrance exam rankings in their respective provinces, which research shows significantly correlate with general cognitive ability (Frey & Detterman, 2004), using these rankings as a proxy for general cognitive ability. Results showed no significant correlations between exam rankings and group cohesion or task performance (ps $>$ 0.611).

Finally, we examined effects of shared interests on group cohesion. For university students, differences in dietary habits and entertainment activities significantly influence close communication and may affect group cohesion. In the second survey, participants responded to "How different are your eating habits from your roommates?"and "How different are your entertainment activities from your roommates?" (1 = completely different, 7 = completely similar). Results showed no significant correlations between group dietary similarity, group entertainment similarity, and group cohesion (ps $>$ 0.148).

3.3 Regression Analysis

Before testing individual-level hypotheses, we estimated between-group variance in individual status using a null model: = 0.20, p $<$ 0.01, ICC(1) = 0.268, indicating that 26.8% of variance was explained by between-group differences, necessitating HLM. For friendship network centrality, no significant between-group variance emerged: = 0.12, p = 0.111, but we used HLM consistently for all tests.

presents HLM results. Model 1 shows a significant positive relationship between individual self-monitoring (T1) and others' positive sentiments (T2). To test temporal effects, Model 2 controlled for others' positive sentiments (T2) and used individual self-monitoring (T1) to predict others' positive sentiments (T3). Results show that others' positive sentiments (T2) significantly predicted others' positive sentiments (T3), and individual self-monitoring (T1) also significantly predicted others' positive sentiments (T3). A Z-test comparing the regression coefficients of individual self-monitoring (T1) on others' positive sentiments (T2) versus (T3) revealed that the latter was significantly larger (Z = 2.52, p $<$ 0.05). This indicates that individual self-monitoring' s effect on others' positive sentiments strengthened from T2 to T3. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported: individual self-monitoring promotes others' positive sentiments, and this effect strengthens over time.

Models 3 and 4 examined effects of others' positive sentiments (T2) on individual status (T3) and friendship network centrality (T3). We used T2 rather than T3 positive sentiments to minimize common method bias. Results show that others' positive sentiments (T2) positively predicted both individual status (T3) and friendship network centrality (T3). We further tested the indirect effects of individual self-monitoring (T1) on individual status (T3)/friendship network centrality (T3) via others' positive sentiments (T2) using RMediation, which tests indirect effects by multiplying the path coefficient from individual self-monitoring (T1) to others'positive sentiments (T2) by the coefficient from others'

positive sentiments (T2) to individual status (T3)/friendship network centrality (T3). As shown in , the 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals did not include zero, indicating significant indirect effects.

presents ordinary least squares regression results. Model 1 shows a significant positive relationship between group self-monitoring (T1) and group cohesion (T2). Model 2 controlled for group cohesion (T2) and used group self-monitoring (T1) to predict group cohesion (T3). Results show that group cohesion (T2) significantly predicted group cohesion (T3), but group self-monitoring (T1) did not significantly predict group cohesion (T3). Thus, Hypothesis 3 received partial support: group self-monitoring level promoted group cohesion, but this effect did not change over time.

Model 3 examined the effect of group cohesion (T2) on group task performance (T3). Consistent with individual-level analyses, we used T2 rather than T3 cohesion to minimize common method bias. Results show that group cohesion (T2) significantly predicted group task performance (T3). We further tested the indirect effect of group self-monitoring (T1) on group task performance (T3) via group cohesion (T2) using RMediation. As shown in , the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval did not include zero, indicating a significant indirect effect.

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4. Discussion

This study examined the role of self-monitoring in group contexts. Through a longitudinal investigation of university freshman dormitories, we found that at the individual level, self-monitoring enhanced others' positive sentiments toward the focal person, and this effect strengthened over time; furthermore, self-monitoring indirectly improved the individual' s status attainment (individual status and friendship network centrality) through enhanced positive sentiments. At the group level, group self-monitoring improved group cohesion; furthermore, group self-monitoring indirectly enhanced group task performance through increased cohesion.

The second part of Hypothesis 3—that the predictive power of self-monitoring on group cohesion strengthens over time—was not supported. We propose two possible explanations. First, considering sample characteristics, as the semester progressed, students participated in more activities with increasingly dense schedules, making it more difficult to coordinate times for all dormitory members to engage in collective activities compared to early stages. Thus, the frequency of dormitory-wide activities may have decreased, potentially offsetting self-monitoring' s effect on group cohesion. Second, unlike the individual-level mediator "others'positive sentiments toward a specific individual,"group cohesion involves not only pleasant interaction experiences but also mutual commitment and investment; however, high self-monitors do not show higher commitment levels toward work or partners (Jenkins, 1993; Norris & Zweigenhaft, 1999). Therefore, group self-monitoring composition' s effect on group cohesion may

have a "ceiling." Either explanation could account for why self-monitoring' s predictive effect on group cohesion remained stable.

4.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several theoretical contributions to self-monitoring and status research. First, by shifting levels of analysis, we examined not only individual-level effects of self-monitoring on interpersonal quality (others' positive sentiments) and status attainment (individual status and friendship network centrality) but also, more importantly, group-level effects of group self-monitoring composition on group interaction (cohesion) and outcomes (task performance). Previous self-monitoring research has focused primarily on the individual level, examining how high self-monitors differ in behavioral manifestations (e.g., Oh & Kilduff, 2008; Wang et al., 2015). As people increasingly rely on groups to accomplish work, we need to focus more on group composition rather than solely on individuals within groups. However, we know little about self-monitoring' s group-level effects. A notable exception, Roberson and Williamson' s (2012) study, treated group self-monitoring only as a boundary condition, testing whether it moderated the relationship between expressive network strength and procedural justice climate strength, without directly examining group self-monitoring composition as a group input affecting internal interactions and outcomes. By investigating self-monitoring composition at the group level, this study reveals a previously overlooked positive function: higher group self-monitoring levels facilitate stronger group cohesion, which indirectly promotes group task performance.

Second, we introduced a dynamic perspective to examine how self-monitoring' s effects change with group development. At the individual level, two competing rationales exist regarding whether self-monitoring' s effect on interpersonal quality strengthens or weakens over time. On one hand, as members transition from being strangers to becoming acquainted, factors like personality and value similarity may exert greater influence, potentially reducing self-monitoring' s effect. Alternatively, early group formation may temporarily elevate all members' self-monitoring levels, but as groups develop, only high self-monitors maintain situational and social sensitivity, strengthening trait effects. Our results support the latter possibility: self-monitoring positively promotes others' positive sentiments, and this effect strengthens over time. Adopting a dynamic perspective is important because interaction frequency and content change during group development (Tuckman, 1965). In early stages, people cautiously test and build trust, potentially using impression management that weakens personality effects. As groups develop, increased collaboration and conflict reduce impression management, making personality traits more salient. Our individual-level finding that self-monitoring' s effect on others' positive sentiments strengthens over time supports this reasoning.

Finally, this study contributes to status research by identifying an important antecedent of individual status attainment in groups—positive sentiments held

by other group members toward the focal person. Previous status research (represented by expectation states theory) suggests that individual status formation primarily stems from expectations about a person' s contributions (Correll & Ridgeway, 2003). However, we argue that in general interpersonal interactions, others' positive emotions represent an important pathway to status. Exploring alternative routes to status attainment is a recent theoretical focus, with researchers suggesting that virtue also serves as a status pathway (Bai, 2017).

4.2 Limitations and Future Directions

Despite its strengths, this study has several theoretical and methodological limitations requiring future attention.

First, whether findings based on freshman dormitories generalize to work teams and other groups requires further examination. We selected freshman dormitories to test dynamic effects, but dormitory groups differ from work teams in important ways. Although students exchange task-related information about academics and careers, dormitories lack explicit task goals and are more relationship-oriented. Therefore, caution is needed when generalizing individual-level findings—that self-monitoring indirectly promotes status attainment through others' positive sentiments—to work teams. In teams with low task demands and high relationship focus, self-monitoring may remain effective; but in highly task-oriented teams, whether self-monitoring' s indirect effect on status is overshadowed by task contributions requires future investigation. At the group level, whether self-monitoring' s indirect effect on team performance through cohesion generalizes to actual work tasks also requires careful consideration, despite our use of objective performance measures.

Second, this study did not examine boundary conditions for self-monitoring' s effects in groups. In fact, certain group characteristics may moderate self-monitoring' s influence. For example, self-monitoring may exert stronger effects in groups with stronger relationship orientation, more ambiguous interaction norms, or lower member similarity (higher potential for conflict), as these situations require monitoring others'behaviors and feelings, controlling emotional and behavioral responses, and making appropriate responses. Our dormitory context represents a relationship-oriented situation; future research should examine whether norm clarity and member similarity (e.g., value differences, professional background diversity) moderate effects. More interestingly, while this study reveals self-monitoring' s positive meaning in group contexts, self-monitoring is not always positive. Future research should explore potential negative effects of self-monitoring on interpersonal or group interactions and when these negative effects emerge.

Third, although we introduced a dynamic perspective, we did not measure changes in group interaction, preventing us from empirically determining what factors interact with self-monitoring or revealing specific group interaction processes. For instance, does the strengthening effect of individual self-monitoring

on others' positive sentiments occur because high self-monitors increasingly understand and capture information about other members' personalities, values, and habits as groups develop, or because low self-monitors experience more interpersonal conflicts? Similarly, does the failure of group self-monitoring' s predictive effect on cohesion to strengthen over time result from high self-monitors' weaker commitment to the dormitory and greater external socializing, or from reduced frequency of dormitory-wide activities and decreased overall interaction time? These internal processes require future investigation. Additionally, our time span had limitations. We tracked freshman dormitories for one semester, which we believed sufficient for roommates to develop deep understanding given daily interaction frequency, and self-monitoring still exerted positive effects. However, whether this time span was sufficiently long or within what timeframe self-monitoring' s effect on others' positive sentiments gradually strengthens remains unclear. Therefore, inferences about self-monitoring' s temporal effects require caution and more empirical evidence for integrated conclusions.

Fourth, we ignored potential hierarchical divisions within groups. Specifically, some dormitories may have clear informal leaders, while others maintain egalitarian relationships. In dormitories with informal leaders, these leaders may play positive roles in organizing activities, coordinating relationships, and allocating tasks, potentially resulting in stronger cohesion and better collaborative performance than dormitories without informal leaders. Moreover, when informal leaders exist, using simple averaging to calculate group self-monitoring level may overlook differential effects of informal leaders versus regular members on group cohesion and performance. Future research should employ more sophisticated designs, such as examining the independent and interactive effects of leader personality characteristics and group member personality composition (Colbert et al., 2014; LePine, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, & Hedlund, 1997).

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.