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Self-monitoring, status, and justice-related information flow

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We develop and test a multi-level interactive model of the relationships among
self-monitoring, co-workers' formal and informal status, and justice-related information
flow in a scenario-based field study of 4,011 unique relationships collected from
84 respondents. We predict that individuals high in self-monitoring, because they
attend more carefully to social cues and have higher levels of expressive control, will be
more likely than low self-monitors to intend to seek, accept, and provide justice-related
information as a function of their co-workers' formal status, the size of their co-workers'
networks, and the advantageousness of their co-workers' position in the networks
(betweenness centrality). This cross-level interaction hypothesis receives strong
support in terms of co-workers' network size, limited support in terms of co-workers'
betweenness centrality, and no support in terms of co-workers' formal status.
We address the implications of these findings for the literature on self-monitoring,
social construction of organizational justice, and social networks, as well as the
strengths and limitations of our approach.

Research demonstrates that individuals high in self-monitoring often perform well on
the job, emerge as group leaders, and have high levels of career success (see Gangestad
& Snyder, 2000, for a review). Some major assumptions underlying this stream of
research are that high self-monitors, relative to low self-monitors, are more attuned to
the subtleties of social situations and better skilled at social interaction (Furnham &
Capon, 1983), are effective at extracting useful information from others and tend to say
little about themselves (Ickes, Reidhead, & Patterson, 1985), and are more skilled in
terms of managing their behaviour appropriately in complex environments (Kilduff &
Day, 1994). In other words, researchers argue that high self-monitors are good at
identifying with whom to talk and what to talk about. Interestingly, few, if any, empirical
studies, to our knowledge, directly test these arguments in workplace settings. Although
we know a great deal about distal outcomes of self-monitoring in the workplace

(e.g. career success), the extant literature provides little empirical evidence about how high self-monitors manage the information flow in workplace settings to achieve these outcomes.

The exploration of high self-monitors' behaviours or behavioural intentions in managing the information flow would contribute to the understanding of the process that links self-monitoring to distal outcomes. Moreover, self-monitoring scholars have called for status relationships to play a more prominent role in understanding the *behavioural* or *behavioural intention* criterion variables in the self-monitoring studies (Gangestad & Synder, 2000). For example, Gangestad and Synder (2000) suggested that status relationships (e.g. boss vs. friend) influence high self-monitors' use of different social interaction techniques.

We address these issues theoretically and empirically. In particular, we argue that the characteristics of individuals high in self-monitoring make them well-suited for understanding the formal and informal sources of status in organizations and that these individuals capitalize on their sensitivity by intending to seek and accept information from, and provide it to, the 'right' people. In doing so, we adopt a structural view of status. We focus on the formal status conferred on one's co-workers through the formal organizational positions and the informal status that accrues to co-workers through the size of their personal networks and the advantageousness of their position in the networks. These status variables differ not only in terms of their formality, but also in terms of the strength of signals sent about co-workers' power and influence.

A structural view of status is based on the position occupancy in formal and informal structure, and is different from the behavioural view of status, which focuses on the asymmetries between seeking and providing help (e.g. Flynn, Reagans, Amanatullah, & Ames, 2006). According to Flynn *et al.* (2006) status is conferred on people who are sought for help but refrain from asking others for help. A focus on help seeking and provision as a measure of status fails to capture the embedded characteristics of social status, such as honour, prestige, and deference that are apparent in actual work situations. But, a structural view allows us to capture characteristics of social status associated with formal position occupancy and with informal social network positions (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993). Pfeffer's (1981) argument that power is first and foremost a structural phenomenon exemplifies the structural approach to social status.

We limit our investigation to a specific type of information flow in organizational settings, viz., justice-related information. This decision was driven by four issues. First, justice judgments are critical determinants of individual attitudes (e.g. job satisfaction and organizational commitment), behaviours (e.g. organizational citizenship and retaliatory behaviours), and performance in the workplace (see Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001 for a review). Second, justice-related communication is an integral part of organizational communication. Recent studies on the social construction of organizational justice demonstrate clearly that individuals rely not only on their personal experiences but also on others' justice-related information in their justice judgment (e.g. Duffy, Ganster, Shaw, Johnson, & Pagon, 2006; Jones & Skarlicki, 2005; Lamertz, 2002). This line of research suggests that when individuals are uncertain about whether they are fairly treated by organizations and/or supervisors, they rely on social information and cues from others to make justice judgments (Degoey, 2000). Third, a common and critical weakness of research on the social construction of justice is the failure to 'articulate the mechanism by which social information flows to and from individuals' (Contractor & Eisenberg, 1990, p. 147). The literature is remarkably vague regarding 'the relevant characteristics of the social relationships involved and the

processes whereby the effects occur' (Meyer, 1994, p. 1015). For example, some studies (e.g. Lamerzt, 2002; Umphress, Labianca, Brass, Kass, & Scholten, 2003) focused exclusively on the formation of similar justice perceptions among individuals as a result of social influence, yet failed to explore the underlying process by which social influence occurs (see also, Jones & Skarlicki, 2005). Fourth, justice scholars have noted that self-monitoring influences the extent to which justice cues spread within organizations (e.g. Degoey, 2000).

In sum, we aim to make the following theoretical and practical contributions to the literature. First, we heed the call of self-monitoring scholars about the important role of status relationships. We extend the behavioural view and take a structural view of status by examining how formal and informal status of co-workers influence high versus low self-monitors' behavioural intentions in information management. Second, we explore the process through which individuals differ in their intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information, thus contributing to a better understanding of how justice perceptions are socially constructed. Third, our approach of examining structural issues and personality simultaneously responds to calls that the role of individuals be incorporated into research on social networks.

Theory and hypotheses

Self-monitoring and status

Individuals high in self-monitoring are sensitive to social and interpersonal cues, have high levels of expressive control, and manage their behaviours effectively in terms of situational appropriateness (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001). In organizational settings, the status of co-workers, in terms of the formal authority conferred on them and their influence in the communication flows, is a critical situational and interpersonal cue. It is reasonable, then, to expect that individuals will be more or less responsive to such cue as a function of their level of self-monitoring.

Flynn *et al.* (2006) argued and found that high self-monitors, compared with low self-monitors, were more accurate in estimating social status differences between other people (in a fictitious scenario-based laboratory study and in a study of student group members) and more able to gain social status by being sought for and providing advice. Their study advanced the literature by providing direct evidence that self-monitoring influences one's ability to understand, and to use to one's advantage, the dynamics of status differences in social contexts. Despite these advances, their study was limited in that it conceptualized and measured social status only in terms of asymmetries between advice seeking and provision. Higher status was assumed to be present when individuals sought advice more infrequently and provided it more frequently, although Flynn *et al.* (2006) recognized that in some situations this assumption may not be met (e.g. see Jones, 1964). Moreover, it may be difficult to separate actual status differentials from perceptions of competence and generosity using this approach (Flynn *et al.*, 2006). Instead, the exploration of other types of status in workplace settings – both formal and informal – should strengthen our knowledge of the role of self-monitoring in the relationship between status and social interactions. We address these issues below.

Formal and informal status

The literature on structure and power distinguishes between two types of structural positions – formal hierarchical levels and informal network positions (e.g. Brass &

Burkhardt, 1993) – that constrain or facilitate behaviours or behavioural intentions in organizations. Formal hierarchical status represents the legitimated, institutionalized privilege of incumbency in organizations (Astely & Sachdeva, 1984). Individuals in high-status positions are able to influence, directly or indirectly, outcomes of low status individuals (Pfeffer, 1981), and get access to and have control over information that may not be available to low status individuals.

Individuals can also garner high levels of status informally. Patterned, repeated interactions among individuals emerge over time. Although they may shadow formally prescribed workflow and authority relationships, they represent an independent and informal way of assessing status in organizations (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). It is suggested that individuals can garner status informally by developing a large relationship network (network size) or by connecting otherwise unconnected others in a network. Individuals who connect communication gaps in a network are often referred to as bridges of structural holes or as having high levels of betweenness centrality (Burt, 1992). We adopt the label betweenness centrality here.

Formal status.   Supervisors and subordinates typically recognize and accept the status and influence associated with the formal positions in the organizational chart (Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick, & Mayes, 1980). As such, formal status in the organization conforms to what Mischel (1977) and others would refer to as a strong situational cue. A strong situation is one in which assessments of the work environment do not vary markedly across individuals, in part, because appropriate norms and standards for behaviour are clearly prescribed. Such situations typically diminish the influence of individual difference and personality variables.

In addition to the strong situation argument, the information seeking literature provides an explanation for why individuals will intend to seek and accept justice-related information from individuals high in formal status. This literature generally argues that one's decision to seek and accept information from a given individual is affected by one's perception of the individual's expertise or know-how (e.g. Borgatti & Cross, 2003). This general argument suggests that one would seek justice-related information from individuals high in formal status (e.g. supervisors) who are able to provide reliable and useful information. Furthermore, the justice literature indicates that justice-related information often involves formal organizational procedures, performance evaluation, and personnel decisions on lay-off or promotion (e.g. Folger & Konovesky, 1989; Moorman, 1991; Sweeny & McFarlin, 1997). Studies suggest that high-status individuals have such information. For example, Morrison (1993) found that people are more likely to seek performance feedback from supervisors than from peers, because supervisors are typically responsible for evaluating and rewarding performance and are preferred sources of performance feedback. Research on the social construction of justice also suggests that employees often feel ambiguous about the meaning of formal organizational procedures, because the implementation of justice-related procedures (e.g. performance appraisal) is removed from their everyday experience by several layers of organizational hierarchy (Lamertz, 2002). For example, despite the rising incidence of downsizing, few individuals have access to information about why such decisions are made or about the criteria for determining who will be laid off and who will stay (e.g. Brockner *et al.*, 1994). These examples provide a basis for expecting that because high formal status individuals have a hand in the decision-making process, others are more likely to intend to seek and accept justice-related information from them.

In terms of intentions to provide justice-related information, the impression management literature demonstrates convincingly that providing information

voluntarily or on request to high-status individuals may be an effective ingratiation mechanism and a way to manage favourable impressions on those with formal authority (e.g. Bolino, 1999; Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shaw, 2007). Because the situational cues associated with formal hierarchical status constitute strong signals, it might be reasonable to expect that self-monitoring will not play a role in terms of moderating the relationship between a co-worker's formal status and an individual's justice-related information behavioural intentions. The strength of the formal status symbol is very strong, and thus even low self-monitors may be able to recognize status differentials accurately. Recall, however, that high self-monitors are characterized not only by higher sensitivity to social cues about status relationships but also by greater levels of expressive control. High self-monitors are particularly interested in *acting* on social cues in ways that cultivate a favourable public image (Flynn *et al.*, 2006). In a sensitive situation concerning procedural or interactional justice, an individual high in self-monitoring behaviour is likely to seek information from co-workers that will serve to maintain or enhance his or her social standing (i.e. a co-worker high in formal status) and will, furthermore, readily accept information from that credible source. This line of reasoning also suggests that high self-monitors will be loathe to seek and accept information from co-workers low in formal status, in part because doing so may compromise their social standing. Employing greater levels of expressive control and constantly seeking to achieve higher levels of social status, high self-monitors should be more likely to provide information to high-status co-workers as well, in particular as a means of demonstrating their competence, generosity, and usefulness. The preceding derivation suggests a strong positive relationship between co-workers' formal status and justice-related information behavioural intentions (seeking, accepting, and providing) among high self-monitoring individuals.

Although low self-monitors may accurately recognize formal status differences, they lack expressive control and are not as concerned as high self-monitors with maintaining or enhancing their social status. As a result, they are not as careful in managing their social exchanges. Extending this to justice-related information exchanges, it is reasonable to expect that low self-monitors will be sometimes unable to resist the temptation to seek and accept information from, and provide it to, low status co-workers. That is, in terms of managing sensitive information flow, they often say wrong thing to wrong people. In addition, because they are not obsessed with social status maintenance, it is likely that they will sometimes miss opportunities for exchanging this type of information with high-status co-workers. These arguments suggest a weakening of the relationship between co-workers' formal status and the intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information among low self-monitoring individuals. Thus,

> *Hypothesis 1:* Self-monitoring will moderate the relationship between co-workers' formal status and an individual's intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information such that the relationship between co-workers' formal status and justice-related behavioural intentions will be stronger among high self-monitoring individuals.

Informal status – social network characteristics. The social network literature suggests that the characteristics of one's structural positions in the relationship networks at work are important signals of power and influence. Individuals with many direct social contacts (i.e. a large social network) are visible and prominent to

others, have great access to information, and thus are influential (Knoke & Burt, 1983). That those with larger networks are higher in influence and power is based on the assumption that relations are often asymmetric and that powerful persons are most frequently objects, rather than sources, of communication (Knoke & Burt, 1983; Wasserman & Faust, 1994). In addition, individuals vary in terms of whether they occupy structurally advantageous positions in organizational social networks. This type of network position is often referred to as 'betweenness centrality' or structural-hole bridging (e.g. Burt, 1992) and captures the extent to which an individual holds an advantageous position by connecting pairs of otherwise unconnected individuals in the networks.

Centrality can be conceptualized in many ways (Freeman, 1979; Knoke & Burt, 1983). We focus on network size and betweenness centrality because of their particular relevance for information flow (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993). Network size represents direct alternatives to information sources and the level of communication activity. Larger networks allow more direct communication and confer more social influence. Betweenness centrality is particularly relevant in terms of the information control and dissemination and, as a result, betweenness-central individuals tend to be influential and upwardly mobile in organizational settings (Burt, 1992). In terms of justice-related information, the information seeking and impression management literature would suggest that individuals will more readily seek and accept such information from, and provide it to, co-workers who occupy important, but informal, network positions.

But compared with formal status, network characteristics send weaker signals of status differentials. In terms of network size, high self-monitors are more aware of the thoughts and feelings of others in their social networks (Ickes, Stinson, Bissonette, & Garcia, 1990), and understand more accurately 'who occupies a position of relatively higher status in the exchange relations' (Flynn *et al.*, 2006, p. 8). In sensitive justice-related information situations, high self-monitors, compared with low self-monitors, are more likely to seek the information from co-workers who have more extensive alternatives of access to information; furthermore, high self-monitors will more readily accept the information from that credible source. Although the status signal sent by network size is weaker than that sent by formal status, low self-monitors may be still able to recognize the prominence of co-workers with extensive networks, but just lack the expressive control needed to manage justice-related information exchange effectively. Thus,

> *Hypothesis 2:* Self-monitoring will moderate the relationship between co-workers' network size and an individual's intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information such that the relationship between co-workers' network size and justice-related behavioural intentions will be stronger among high self-monitoring individuals.

Because indirect contacts are much more difficult to observe (Krackhardt, 1990), individuals who hold betweenness-central positions are less prominent or visible than individuals who have many direct contacts with others. Thus, the status signal sent by co-workers' betweenness centrality is even weaker than that sent by network size. In this weak situation (e.g. Mischel, 1977), the role of self-monitoring as a moderating factor may be even more prominent. In particular, low self-monitors may fail to recognize whether certain individuals hold powerful positions as bridges of gaps in organizational social networks. Thus,

Hypothesis 3:   Self-monitoring will moderate the relationship between co-workers' between-ness centrality and an individual's intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information such that the relationship between co-workers' betweenness centrality and justice-related behavioural intentions will be stronger among high self-monitoring individuals.

Method

Sample and procedures

The hypotheses were tested in a scenario-based network field study of two organizations – a securities trading company (35 total employees) and an electricity plant (56 total employees) in the People's Republic of China. Accurate measurement of network concepts requires high response rates. To ensure strong participation rates, the research team conducted site visits to explain the purposes of the study, to encourage participation, and ultimately, to administer questionnaires during work time. Specifically, we told participants that a goal of this study was to help organizations design better performance appraisal and promotion systems. We offered the participants pens in return for their participation. All participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and were guaranteed confidentiality. Completed questionnaires were given directly to a member of the research team. The data were collected in two stages separated by 1 week. In the first stage, a member of the research team distributed a questionnaire containing questions about background and individual characteristics. One week later, the researcher administered a second questionnaire that included sociometric (or network) forms for measuring social networks (friendship and workflow) and the criterion variables (intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information). The 'roster method' (Marsden, 1990) was used. The questionnaire included a list of all employees in the organization; respondents answered the questions for each co-worker. The questionnaires were created and completed in Chinese after standard translation and back-translation procedures.

All 91 participants from the two organizations responded to the two sociometric questions that measured the friendship and workflow networks. This 100% response rate allows us to calculate network size and betweenness centrality in both networks for all the 91 respondents. However, seven participants did not respond in part or in full to the sociometric questions that measured the criterion variables. Therefore, our final analysis only included the complete data from those participants who responded to both predictor and criterion variables. Our final sample included 84 employees – 29 from the securities trading company and 55 from the electricity plant. Among the 29 participants, 16 people were women and 13 were men, 6 held managerial positions including the general manager and departmental managers. The average age was 32 years ($SD = 7.00$) and the average tenure was 7 years ($SD = 4.06$). Among the 55 participants, 9 people were women and 46 were men, 10 held managerial positions. The average age was 38 years ($SD = 8.21$) and the average tenure was 14 years ($SD = 6.46$).

Although the sample size is relatively small, our hypotheses are tested in a multi-level framework with a large Level 1 sample size. The lowest level in the multi-level analysis is the relationship or dyadic level, and the effective sample size at this level is 4,011 dyadic relationships. That is, 29 individuals each reported the nature of their relationships with, and their likelihood to seek and accept information from as well as provide it to, 34 co-workers in the securities trading company sample ($N = 986$ dyads); and 55 individuals each reported the nature of their relationships with, and their likelihood to seek and

accept information from as well as provide it to, 55 co-workers in the electricity company sample ($N = 3,025$). In essence, the multi-level design includes 4,011 relationships (Level 1) nested within 84 individuals (Level 2). The Level 2 sample size in our study is modest, but comparable to recently published studies using a similar multi-level approach. For example, Ilies, Scott, and Judge (2006) analysed 825 data points nested within 66 individuals, whereas Bono, Foldes, Vinson, and Muros (2007) examined 889 observations within 54 participants.

Measures – criteria

Intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information

The three criterion variables in our study – intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information – were collected using a scenario-based measure. Following prior research (e.g. Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997), we used context- or organization-specific items within the performance appraisal and promotion contexts to measure our justice-related behavioural intentions. Several weeks before the data collection, we interviewed several employees in the focal organizations to gather information about how performance appraisal and promotion decisions were made. We drew on previous justice studies to capture some common aspects of organizational procedures, feedback provision, supervisory explanations of decisions, and consistent treatment of employees in the contexts of performance appraisal and promotion (e.g. Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Moorman, 1991; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997). Using these common aspects and applying them to the common information we obtained from the employee interviews, we wrote two scenarios that described the performance appraisal (i.e. scenario 1) and the promotion decision process (i.e. scenario 2), respectively. Our scenarios captured the *lack* of these aspects in the contexts of performance appraisal and promotion in terms of *injustice* descriptions, rather than the *existence* of those aspects in terms of *justice* descriptions.

First, each employee was instructed to respond to the performance appraisal scenario below (English translation):

> Your company states that supervisors follow specific procedures to assess employee performance. These procedures are made public to all employees. Suppose that in a certain performance appraisal situation, your supervisor's evaluation of your performance was lower than your self-appraisal. Because of this discrepancy, you are not sure if you understand the performance appraisal procedures correctly. You also want to know whether the supervisor followed these procedures closely when appraising your performance.

The participants then used the sociometric (or network) form to indicate how likely it was that they would seek and accept information about the procedures themselves and about whether the supervisor applied the procedures from each of the other employees in the organization. To assess participants' likelihood of providing the information, each respondent was, in-turn, instructed to *assume that it was another employee who experienced the same performance appraisal problem*. The participants then used the sociometric form to indicate how likely it was that they would provide information about the procedures and about the supervisor's application of the procedures to each of the other employees.

The second scenario related to promotion decision was:

> The promotion policy in your company publicly states that promotion decisions are based on individual ability and performance and that supervisor performance appraisal ratings and

individual self-appraisals are the main criteria for promotion decisions. Suppose that based on your self-evaluation, you expected to be promoted. You were not. On one hand, you did not know what appraisal your supervisor gave you; on the other hand, your supervisor did not provide you with any explanation or justification about your non-promotion. You find this lack of information troubling. You want to know if the supervisor (1) treats everyone (those who were appraised for promotion) in the same way as s/he treats you, (2) if the lack of feedback on the promotion process is fair.

Similar to the first scenario, after reading this description participants used a sociometric form to indicate how likely it was that they would seek and accept, and in-turn, provide, information about the supervisor's consistent treatment of everyone and responsibility to explain the promotion process and decisions. Participants responded to a total of 16 items across the two scenarios regarding intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information.

The sociometric approach required participants to repeatedly answer the same question for each of their co-workers. Such repeated measurement leads to the nesting of the responses within respondents. Therefore, the assumption of independent data points for conventional confirmatory factor analysis is violated. The non-independent or nesting nature of the responses can be confirmed statistically by the estimates of intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) that measures the amount of variance of the item responses attributable to between-individual variance (Muthen, 1991). In our study, the ICC estimations for all the 16 items are larger than .30, indicating the necessity of using a multi-level factor analysis to capture the factorial structure underlying the 16 items. Following previous studies (e.g. Dyer, Hanges, & Hall, 2005; Zimprich, Perren, & Hornung, 2005), we conducted a multi-level (two-level) confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) using MPLUS version 4.0 (Muthen & Muthen, 2006). We also followed these authors and examined multiple fit indices – comparative fit index (CFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). We used the values of CFI above .95, and RMSEA and SRMR of less than .06 as good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). First, we included all 16 items in a MCFA model. An examination of inter-item correlations at the Level 2 person-level and the Level 1 relationship-level revealed that six items had high correlations with all other items in the set. The multiple fit indices showed good model fit of RMSEA (.036), within-level SRMR (.036), but less acceptable values of CFI (.92), and undesirable between-level SRMR (.164).

To improve the model fit of the MCFA, we discarded the six items and subjected the remaining 10 items to another MCFA. The fit of this model was improved dramatically (RMSEA = .030), CFI (.968), and within-level SRMR (.024). Although the between-level SRMR (.11) was still below ideal standard, the chi-squared goodness-of-fit statistic for the reduced model improved dramatically compared with the original model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 973.53$, $\Delta df = 138$). Because our theoretical focus of the factorial structure underlying the behavioural intentions resides at the Level 1 relationship-level, rather than Level 2 person-level, we decided to adopt the 10-item model to construct the measures of intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information. Of the 10 items, three items measured intention to seek justice-related information. A sample question is: 'How likely is it that you will seek information about the performance appraisal procedures from this co-worker?' Three items measured intention to accept justice-related information. A sample question is: 'How likely is it that you will accept information from this co-worker about whether the supervisor treats everyone (those who were appraised for promotion) in the same way as s/he treats you?' Four items measured intention to provide the information. A sample

question is: 'How likely is it that you will provide information about the supervisor's application of performance appraisal procedures to this co-worker?' The items had five response options from 1 (*Very Unlikely*) to 5 (*Very Likely*).

Measures – predictors

Co-workers' formal hierarchical status
Formal hierarchical status was coded as 1 for managers (including the general manager and departmental managers) and 0 otherwise.

Co-workers' network size and betweenness centrality
We tested our hypotheses using information on two different organizational social networks – workflow and friendship – in each of the two organizations. Work-related information is transmitted in the workflow network whereas interactions based on mutual liking and emotional attachments are found in the friendship network.

Using the roster method, participants responded to the question about workflow for each of their co-workers in their organization. The workflow question 'How often do you meet this person during work time in order to get your work done?' had three response options (1 $=$ *Never*, 2 $=$ *Occasionally*, and 3 $=$ *Often*). A second question concerned a participant's friendship with all other members of the organization. The question 'How close are you to this person?' had four response options (1 $=$ *Unknown*, 2 $=$ *Co-worker*, 3 $=$ *Friend*, and 4 $=$ *Close friend*).

We used these matrices to calculate the two measures of co-workers' informal status – network size and betweenness centrality in each organization. As mentioned above, a 100% response rate for the network measures allowed us to get the measures of network size and betweenness centrality for all organizational members. Because calculations of network variables in the networking software UCINET 6 (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002) require a binary matrix, we coded workflow as 1 if participants selected option 2 (occasionally) or 3 (often) and 0 otherwise. We coded the friendship variable 0 if participants selected option 1 (don't know) or 2 (co-worker) and 1 if participants selected 3 (friend) or 4 (close friend). Network size was operationalized as in-degree centrality or the number of different persons who indicated that they communicated with or were a friend of a focal person (Freeman, 1979). The use of an asymmetric in-degree measure captures the notion of status or 'the distinction between subordination and superordination' (Knoke & Burt, 1983, p. 199). Betweenness centrality reflects the extent to which an individual occupies a structurally advantageous position in the workflow and friendship networks, respectively. Following other social network studies (e.g. Brass & Burkhardt, 1993), we symmetrized the friendship and workflow matrices using the rule that if either member of a pair nominated the other, the pair was considered to have a tie. Each of the symmetrical matrices was submitted to the *betweenness* procedure in UCINET 6. The higher the betweenness score of an individual, the greater the extent to which the individual connects otherwise unconnected people in the workflow and friendship networks.

Self-monitoring
The 13-item self-monitoring scale validated by Lennox and Wolfe (1984) ($\alpha = .81$) was used. The scale includes a subscale for ability to modify self-presentation (e.g. 'In social

interactions, I have the ability to alter my behaviour if I feel that something else is called for') and a subscale for sensitivity to expressive behaviour of others (e.g. 'I am often able to read people's true emotions correctly through their eyes'). The items had five Likert-type response options from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). As in prior research, we found that a second-order factor model with two latent factors captures the factor structure of the 13-item self-monitoring much better than two-factor correlated model (O'Cass, 2000). Based on prior research, the confirmatory factor analysis results, and a very strong correlation between the subscales ($r = .64$), a single-factor 13-item measure of self-monitoring was used in this study.

Controls

Our goal was to isolate the power of status (formal and informal) and self-monitoring in predicting behavioural intentions in the specific justice-related scenarios. Because individuals are more likely to share information with friends and close co-workers (e.g. Anderson & Williams, 1996), it was necessary to control friendship and workflow ties in the friendship and workflow equations, respectively. Thus, any main and moderated effects of the status variables are net of whether the individuals were friends or communicated regularly on the job. In the network matrix, we operationalized *friendship tie* as 1 if an individual reported that a co-worker was a friend or close friend in response to the question 'How close are you to this person?' (0 otherwise). We operationalized *workflow tie* as 1 if an individual reported that he or she communicated occasionally or often with a co-worker in response to the question 'How often do you meet this person during work time in order to get your work done?' (0 otherwise).

Research demonstrates that gender plays an important role in justice-related dynamics (Austin & McGinn, 1977; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997), inequalities in organizational power distribution and differential network centrality (Ibarra, 1992), and sensitivity to social information and differential benefits gained from self-monitoring behaviour (Flynn & Ames, 2006). Because our hypotheses concern dyadic relationships (i.e. we predict whether an individual intends to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information), we controlled the gender in our analyses, with men coded 1 and women coded 0. Our hypotheses suggest that co-workers' status (formal and informal) relates to justice-related behavioural intentions, but the formal status and network positions (network size and betweenness centrality) of the focal individual also play a role in information-related behaviours (e.g. Burt, 1992) and were therefore controlled. As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, it was also important to control co-workers' self-monitoring with the controls of the focal individual's formal and informal status. Finally, an individual's intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information may be driven by an overarching tendency to engage in such behaviours. Therefore, we control these tendencies by averaging each of these three criterion variables across the individual and including the variable as a Level 2 or person-level control (see below).

Analysis approach

To test our hypotheses that the personality variable self-monitoring will moderate the relationship between co-workers' status (formal and informal) and behavioural intentions regarding justice-related information, we adopted a multi-level analysis

approach using hierarchical linear modelling (HLM). In the first-level of the analyses, we regressed the three types of behavioural intentions on co-workers' formal and informal status variables (plus the Level 1 control variables). Level 1, therefore, is a relationship-level analysis. At the second level, we modelled the cross-level interactions of self-monitoring and co-workers' status variables. That is, we regressed the relationship-level slopes of co-workers' status (formal and informal) for predicting the behavioural intentions on self-monitoring [see Ilies *et al.* (2006) for a similar analysis].

Before conducting the multi-level analyses, we estimated a null model with no predictors to partition variance into relationship-level (Level 1) and person-level (Level 2) components. These analyses show systematic and substantial person-level variation in intention to seek ($\tau_{00} = .35$, $p < .001$), accept ($\tau_{00} = .37$, $p < .001$), and provide ($\tau_{00} = .36$, $p < .001$) justice-related information. For intention to seek justice-related information, 58% of the variance resides at relationship-level and 42% resides at person-level, while the ratios are 51% at relationship-level and 49% at person-level, and 48% at relationship-level and 52% at person-level for intention to accept and to provide justice-related information, respectively.

The Level 1 relationship-level model includes the Level 1 controls (i.e. friendship ties, co-workers' gender, and self-monitoring) and the central Level 1 variables in our model – co-workers' formal status, network size, and betweenness centrality.

$$Y_{ij}(\text{Outcome variable}) = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{Friendship tie}) + \beta_{2j}(\text{Co-workers' gender})$$
$$+ \beta_{3j}(\text{Co-workers' self-monitoring})$$
$$+ \beta_{4j}(\text{Co-workers' formal status})$$
$$+ \beta_{5j}(\text{Co-workers' network size})$$
$$+ \beta_{6j}(\text{Co-workers' betweenness centrality}) + r_{ij} \qquad (1)$$

where Y_{ij} is the observed value of outcome variable for observation i nested within person j, β_{0j} is the intercept for individual j, β_{1j}–β_{6j} are regression slopes of the six covariates at the relationship-level for person j, and r_{ij} is a residual term.

The Level 2 person-level predictors include the five Level 2 controls (i.e. the focal person's gender, formal status, network size, betweenness centrality, and averaged outcome variable) and self-monitoring variable:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Gender}) + \gamma_{02}(\text{Formal status}) + \gamma_{03}(\text{Network size})$$
$$+ \gamma_{04}(\text{Betweenness centrality}) + \gamma_{05}(\text{Average of outcome variable})$$
$$+ \gamma_{06}(\text{Self-monitoring}) + u_{0j} \qquad (2)$$

where γ_{00} is the intercept, γ_{01}–γ_{06} are the regression coefficients and u_{0j} is the Level 2 residual.

The cross-level interaction hypothesis tests involve the prediction of the slopes of the within-person predictors. Thus:

$$\beta_{4j}(\text{Co-workers' formal status slope}) = \gamma_{40} + \gamma_{41}(\text{Self-monitoring}) + u_{4j} \quad (3)$$

$$\beta_{5j}(\text{Co-workers' network size slope}) = \gamma_{50} + \gamma_{51}(\text{Self-monitoring}) + u_{5j} \quad (4)$$

$$\beta_{6j}(\text{Co-workers' betweenness centrality slope})$$
$$= \gamma_{60} + \gamma_{61}(\text{Self-monitoring}) + u_{6j} \quad (5)$$

Stated as a final and full mixed model including intra-individual main effects, cross-level main effects, and the cross-level interactive effects, the predicted equation is:

$$Y_{ij}(\text{Outcome variable}) = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}(\text{Friendship tie}) + \gamma_{20}(\text{Co-workers' gender})$$
$$+ \gamma_{30}(\text{Co-workers' self-monitoring}) + \gamma_{01}(\text{Gender})$$
$$+ \gamma_{02}(\text{Formal status}) + \gamma_{03}(\text{Network size})$$
$$+ \gamma_{04}(\text{Betweenness centrality})$$
$$+ \gamma_{05}(\text{Average of outcome variable})$$
$$+ \gamma_{40}(\text{Co-workers' formal status})$$
$$+ \gamma_{50}(\text{Co-workers' network size})$$
$$+ \gamma_{60}(\text{Co-workers' between centrality})$$
$$+ \gamma_{06}(\text{Self-monitoring}) + \gamma_{41}(\text{Self-monitoring}$$
$$\times \text{co-workers' formal status}) + \gamma_{51}(\text{Self-monitoring}$$
$$\times \text{co-workers' network size}) + \gamma_{61}(\text{Self-monitoring}$$
$$\times \text{co-workers' betweenness centrality}) + u_0 + r \quad (6)$$

We estimated three models for each of the criteria and for the friendship and workflow networks, respectively. The first HLM model included all the controls. The second model included all the controls and the main effects of co-workers' formal status, co-workers' network size, co-workers' betweenness centrality, and self-monitoring. The third model included the controls, the main effect predictors, and the set of two-way interactions, that is, the simultaneous computation of the mixed-model formula (Equation 6).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations are reported in Table 1. The HLM models for the friendship and workflow networks are shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, co-workers' formal status and co-workers' network size relate consistently and positively to all three types of behavioural intentions with regard

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Level-1 Controls													
1. Friendship tie	0.20	0.40											
2. Workflow tie	0.33	0.47	.15**										
3. Co-workers' gender	0.76	0.21	−.05**	−.02									
4. Co-workers' self-monitoring	3.39	0.57	.04**	.03	−.10**								
Level-1 Predictors													
5. Co-workers' formal status	0.21	0.41	.07**	.09**	.02	.05**							
6. Co-workers' network size (friendship)	9.45	3.99	.21**	.12**	.02	.12**	.33**						
7. Co-workers' betweenness centrality (friendship)	18.04	24.52	.04*	.05**	.16**	.08**	−.01	.30**					
8. Co-workers' network size (workflow)	16.08	5.86	.04**	.21**	.17**	.04*	.35**	.43**	.28**				
9. Co-workers' betweenness centrality (workflow)	13.47	10.85	.03*	.10**	.11**	.13**	.25**	.27**	.27**	.49**			
Level-1 Criteria													
10. Intention to seek justice-related information	2.51	0.90	.55**	.28**	.06**	.00	.15**	.23**	.09**	.22**	.10**		
11. Intention to accept justice-related information	2.47	0.86	.57**	.24**	−.11**	.09**	.19**	.22**	−.01	.01	.01	.60**	
12. Intention to provide justice-related information	2.59	0.81	.56**	.18**	−.08**	.07**	.12**	.20**	.02	.03	.02	.61**	.60**
Level-2 Controls													
1. Gender	0.07	0.46											
2. Formal status	0.19	0.40	.05										
3. Network size (friendship)	9.51	3.96	−.02	.31**									
4. Betweenness centrality (friendship)	17.30	24.16	.18	−.00	.29**								

Table 1. (*Continued*)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
5. Network size (workflow)	15.52	6.08	.16	.30**	.46**	.27**							
6. Betweenness centrality (workflow)	13.33	11.57	.10	.33**	.21	.22**	.42**						
7. Average of intention to seek justice-related information	2.49	0.60	−.01	−.09	.12	.35**	.21	.26*					
8. Average of intention to accept justice-related information	2.54	0.62	−.11	−.15	.10	.20	−.23*	.02	.26**				
9. Average of intention to provide justice-related information	2.64	0.61	−.18	.10	.09	.15	.01	.24*	.32**	.33**			
Level-2 Predictor													
10. Self-monitoring	3.46	0.54	−.10	.11	.08	.05	.01	.15	.38**	.44**	.41**		

Notes. *p < .05; **p < .01. The top half of the table includes the descriptive statistics for, and correlations among, the Level 1 variables (*N* = 4, 011). The bottom half of the table includes the descriptive statistics for, and correlations among, the Level 2 variables (*N* = 84).

Table 2. Hierarchical linear modelling results in the friendship network

| | | Intention to seek | | | Intention to accept | | | Intention to provide | | |
| | | Justice-related information | | | Justice-related information | | | Justice-related information | | |
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Controls										
Friendship tie[a]	γ_{10}	1.28**	1.22**	1.21**	1.08**	1.02**	1.02**	1.07**	1.01**	1.01**
Co-workers' gender[a]	γ_{20}	.07*	.06*	.06*	.04	.03	.03	.01	.01	.01
Co-workers' self-monitoring[a]	γ_{30}	.01	.00	.00	.00	−.00	−.00	.01	.00	.00
Gender[b]	γ_{01}	.06	.05	.05	.07*	.06*	.06*	.07*	.06*	.06*
Formal status[b]	γ_{02}	.05	.05	.05	.03	.06	.06	.07*	.07*	.07*
Network size[b]	γ_{03}	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.01	.02	.02
Betweenness centrality[b]	γ_{04}	−.16**	−.14**	−.14**	−.15**	−.14**	−.14**	−.14**	−.13**	−.13**
Average of outcome variable[b]	γ_{05}	.99**	.99**	.99**	.95**	.99**	.99**	.97**	.99**	.99**
Predictors										
Co-workers' formal status[a]	γ_{40}		.21**	.21**		.23**	.23**		.09**	.09**
Co-workers' network size[a]	γ_{50}		.07**	.07**		.07**	.07**		.06**	.06**
Co-workers' betweenness centrality[a]	γ_{60}		.01	.01		.00	.00		.01	.01
Self-monitoring[b]	γ_{06}		−.00	.00		−.01	−.02		−.01	−.01
Cross-level interactions										
Self-monitoring × co-workers' formal status[c]	γ_{41}			−.02			.02			.01
Self-monitoring × co-workers' network size[c]	γ_{51}			.03**			.02*			.02**
Self-monitoring × co-workers' betweenness centrality[c]	γ_{61}			.01			.02*			.00

Note. *p < .05; **p < .01.

N = 4,011 dyads.

[a] Level 1 relationship-level predictors.

[b] Level 2 person-level predictors.

[c] Cross-level interaction predictors.

Table 3. Hierarchical linear modelling results in the workflow network

		Intention to seek			Intention to accept			Intention to provide		
		Justice-related information			Justice-related Information			Justice-related Information		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Controls										
Workflow tie[a]	γ_{10}	.49**	.42**	.42**	.40**	.34**	.34**	.29**	.25**	.24**
Co-workers' gender[a]	γ_{20}	.06	.04	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.02	.02
Co-workers' self-monitoring[a]	γ_{30}	.02	.01	.01	.02	.01	.01	.02*	.01	.01
Gender[b]	γ_{01}	.05*	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.04*	.03*	.02*
Formal status[b]	γ_{02}	.03	.03	.03	.01	.02	.02	.03*	.03*	.03*
Network size[b]	γ_{03}	−.01	−.01	−.01	−.00	−.00	−.00	−.01	−.01	−.01
Betweenness centrality[b]	γ_{04}	−.05**	−.04**	−.04**	−.04**	−.04**	−.04**	−.03**	−.02*	−.02*
Average of outcome variable[b]	γ_{05}	1.03**	1.02**	1.02**	1.01**	1.01**	1.01**	1.01**	1.01**	1.01**
Predictors										
Co-workers' formal status[a]	γ_{40}		.20**	.20**		.23**	.23**		.10**	.10**
Co-workers' network size[a]	γ_{50}		.09**	.09**		.08**	.08**		.07**	.07**
Co-workers' betweenness centrality[a]	γ_{60}		−.01	−.00		−.01	−.01		−.00	−.00
Self-monitoring[b]	γ_{06}		.00	.02		.00	.01		.00	.01
Cross-level interactions										
Self-monitoring × co-workers' formal status[c]	γ_{41}			−.06			−.02			−.03
Self-monitoring × co-workers' network size[c]	γ_{51}			.04**			.04**			.03*
Self-monitoring × co-workers' betweenness centrality[c]	γ_{61}			−.02			−.02			−.00

Note. *p < .05; **p < .01.
N = 4,011 dyads.
[a] Level 1 relationship-level predictors.
[b] Level 2 person-level predictors.
[c] Cross-level interaction predictors.

to justice-related information. That is, individuals are more likely to seek and accept justice-related information from, and provide it to, supervisors and co-workers with larger friendship and workflow networks. In contrast, the main effects of self-monitoring and co-workers' betweenness centrality on the outcome variables are not significant in the multivariate analyses.

The tests of our hypotheses are found in the third model in Tables 2 and 3. In the friendship network (Table 2), the results show that none of the cross-level interactions between self-monitoring and co-workers' formal status are significant (intention to seek: $\gamma_{41} = -.02$, *ns*; intention to accept: $\gamma_{41} = .02$, *ns*; and intention to provide: $\gamma_{41} = .01$, *ns*). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not supported. The interaction of self-monitoring and co-workers' network size is significantly related to intention to seek ($\gamma_{51} = .03$, $p < .01$), accept ($\gamma_{51} = .02$, $p < .05$), and provide ($\gamma_{51} = .02$, $p < .01$) justice-related information. Following Hofmann, Griffin, and Gavin (2000), we calculated the percent of the variation in slopes for Level 1 relationship between co-workers' network size and the outcome variable that was accounted for by self-monitoring. This ratio – the ΔR^2 in Level-2 slope model – represents the amount of the residual variation in slopes that is explained by self-monitoring. The calculations show that self-monitoring explains 14% of the slope variance between co-workers' network size and intention to seek, 2% for intention to accept, and 11% for intention to provide justice-related information. Plots of these significant interactions are shown in Figure 1. The graphs indicate that the positive relationships between co-workers' network size and an individual's intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information are stronger among high self-monitoring individuals. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was fully supported. The interaction of self-monitoring and co-workers' betweenness centrality in the friendship network is significant only in predicting intention to accept justice-related information ($\gamma_{61} = .02$, $p < .05$). The form of the interaction is such that the relationship between co-workers' betweenness centrality and intention to accept the information is stronger for high self-monitoring individuals, as predicted. However, Hypothesis 3 receives very little support in the friendship network tests.

The hypothesis tests in the workflow network show a similar pattern of findings. No support is found for Hypothesis 1, as none of the interactions of self-monitoring and co-workers' formal status are significant. Strong support is found for Hypothesis 2. The interactions of self-monitoring and network size are significant in all three equations (intention to seek: $\gamma_{51} = .04$, $p < .01$; intention to accept: $\gamma_{51} = .04$, $p < .01$; and intention to provide: $\gamma_{51} = .03$, $p < .05$). In the workflow network tests, self-monitoring accounts for 9% of the slope variance in the relationship between co-workers' network size and intention to seek, 4% for intention to accept, and 13% for intention to provide justice-related information. Plots of these interactions (Figure 2) show that the relationship between co-workers' network size and justice-related information behaviours are stronger when self-monitoring is high, as predicted. No support is found for Hypothesis 3 in the workflow network tests. The interaction of self-monitoring and co-workers' betweenness centrality is not a significant predictor of the three outcome variables.

Discussion

For many years, researchers have been interested in understanding the role of self-monitoring in work performance, effective leadership, and differential career trajectories. Despite the accumulation of research findings that tie self-monitoring to
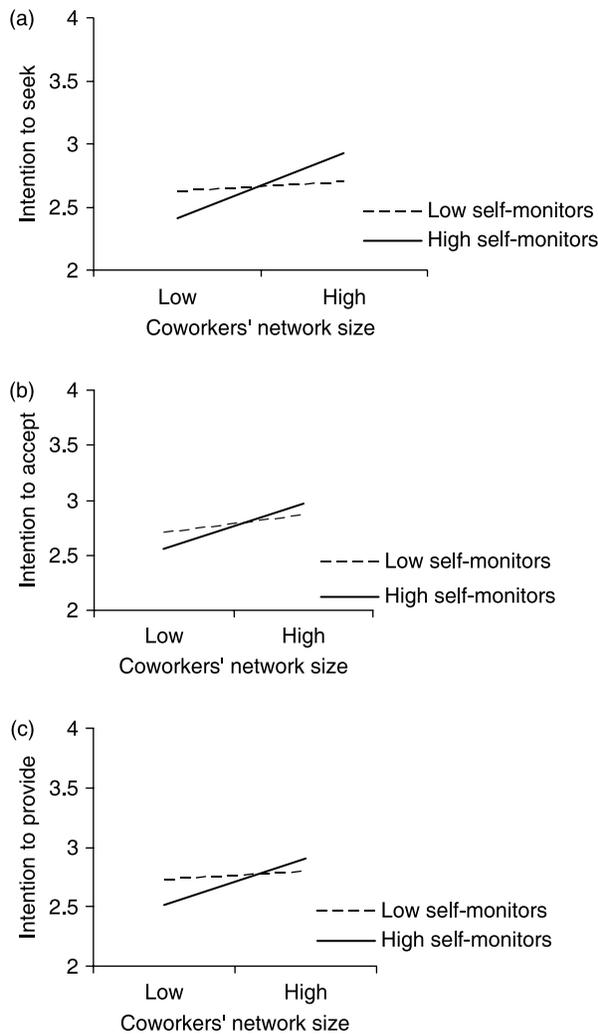
Figure 1. Interaction between self-monitoring and co-workers' network size in the friendship network in predicting intention to seek (a), accept (b), and provide (c) justice-related information.

these distal outcomes, only scant empirical attention has been paid to the way in which self-monitoring influences behaviours or behavioural intentions of individuals in the flow of information on sensitive issues in organizations. In this study, we explored whether self-monitoring would influence the way individuals reacted to the formal and informal status of their co-workers in their intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information.

Among our predictions for formal and informal status, the interactive results strongly support our hypothesis for network size – the self-monitoring by co-workers' network size interactions were significant and in the expected directions in all six equations. In each significant case, the relationship between co-workers' network size and behavioural intentions with regard to justice-related information was stronger among high self-monitoring individuals. It is important to note here that the effects were observed above and beyond the effects of formal status and the friendship or workflow
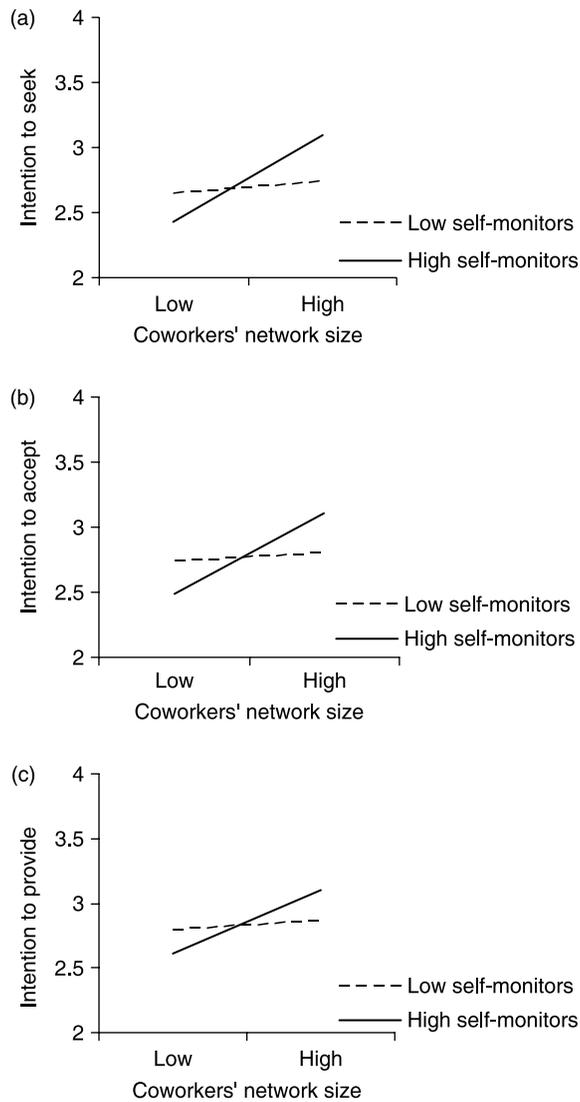
Figure 2. Interaction between self-monitoring and co-workers' network size in the workflow network in predicting intention to seek (a), accept (b), and provide (c) justice-related information.

tie of the two individuals. However, the prediction that self-monitoring would moderate the relationship between co-workers' formal status and the three types of behavioural intentions was not supported. Formal status sends a strong signal about influence and power, and perhaps high levels of knowledge about sensitive justice-related procedures and decisions. It is likely that this 'strong' situational cue overpowered the effects of personality. The main-effect results showed that co-workers' formal status has strong and consistent impact on the three behavioural intentions across both social networks. Even individuals low in self-monitoring, those who are less sensitive to social cues in the work environment, would be able to recognize formal status differentials. Although we expected that low self-monitoring individuals lack expressive control and are less

concerned with social standing, supervisors may still represent the most reliable source of information that low self-monitors would approach to clarify ambiguity on organizational justice-related issues.

The predictions for self-monitoring by co-workers' betweenness centrality interaction were generally not supported in all equations except for intention to accept justice-related information in the friendship network. Power and status signal sent by betweenness centrality was simply too weak for other individuals in the workplace to interpret effectively (Kilduff, Tsai, & Hanke, 2006). It may be difficult even for high self-monitors to recognize those betweenness-central co-workers in the social networks. Although replications are needed, it is likely that the non-significant interactive results for formal status and betweenness centrality provide evidence of the boundary conditions for the influence of self-monitoring. Formal status may represent an upper boundary in terms of strong situational cues, and betweenness centrality may represent a lower boundary in terms of weak situational cues.

Although not hypothesized, individuals with high betweenness centrality were found to be less likely to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information in both networks. On one hand, the bridging positions enable betweenness-central individuals to access and control information flow throughout the networks (Burt, 1992). Therefore, they have information necessary to clarify ambiguity and need not seek and accept additional information from co-workers. On the other hand, the bridging positions directly gain them influence and power. Therefore, they need not actively provide information to others to gain social standings through asymmetric information exchange (e.g. Flynn *et al.*, 2006). It is also possible that their lower intentions to provide information is because even these individuals themselves lack accuracy in perceiving their bridging positions among unconnected others (Burt, 2005). Instead, individuals with high formal status were found to be more likely to provide justice-related information to others, but not to seek and accept the information. This finding is consistent with our expectation that such individuals are more knowledgeable about organizational justice-related issues.

Theoretical and managerial implications

This current study has important theoretical implications for research on self-monitoring. It is the first to test directly the assumptions underlying the linkage between self-monitoring and distal outcomes in a workplace setting. Specifically, high self-monitors, relative to low self-monitors, are better at managing their behavioural intentions concerning information flow and identifying with whom to talk with and what to talk about. In terms of network size, in particular, the results provide direct evidence in support of these assumptions. In this study, we heeded the calls of researchers to incorporate the role of status relationships in understanding the *behavioural* or *behavioural intention* criterion variables in self-monitoring research (Gangestad & Synder, 2000). We demonstrated that status relationships do play an important role in regulating behavioural intentions of individuals with different levels of self-monitoring. Moreover, these results indicate the necessity of simultaneously examining formal and informal status and examining the boundary conditions of the effects of individual difference variables.

The findings of this study also shed light on theory and research on the social construction of organizational justice. Within the framework of social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), research suggests the importance of social

cues in individual justice judgments, yet it fails to illustrate the process through which justice-related information flows to and from individuals. The literature is also remarkably vague regarding the relevant characteristics of the social relationships involved in the processes. Our study extends this line of research by exploring how co-workers' formal hierarchical status and informal social network positions (network size and betweenness centrality) influence an individual's behavioural intentions concerning the flow of justice-related information. Not only is the exploration of this process critical to our understanding of how justice perceptions are socially constructed (Degoey, 2000), but it also provides evidence in support of social information processing theory, which is rarely addressed directly (Umphress *et al.*, 2003).

At the same time, this study has implications for social network research. The finding that high self-monitors adjust their behavioural intentions by being sensitive to status-related cues provides direct support for the role that individuals' network perceptions and network learning play in terms of leveraging network resources. Therefore, our study corresponds to the call that researchers should articulate the way in which individuals' perceptions, cognitions, and personality shape the influences of social network structures on individuals' behaviours and outcomes (Kilduff & Tsai, 2007).

This study has managerial implications as well. First, this study reveals the powerful influence of formal status on employees' intentions to seek, accept, and provide information on sensitive justice-related issues. Combined with previous findings that timely managerial information is very important in influencing employees' attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Greenberg, 1994), this study highlights how important it is for managers or supervisors to be available and approachable when employees need more information to clarify ambiguity and make judgments about justice-related issues. Second, the findings that employees with larger social networks played an important role in influencing others' behavioural intentions in information management suggest such employees to be an important informal alternative source of social information. Therefore, managers may be well-advised to work through these informal central employees to manage timely information flow throughout the organization.

Strengths and limitations

This study is among the first to illustrate the prominent joint effects of status and self-monitoring in estimating how information about justice-related issues flows in organizations. We were also able to obtain extensive social network data from actual workers in two field settings. By analysing our data at the dyadic level, we were able not only to capitalize on a large Level 1 sample size, but also to capture the dynamics of ongoing, long-term relationships in response to scenarios about behavioural intentions in sensitive judge-related information situations. Using a cross-level analysis approach, we examined status and self-monitoring interactions after controlling the friendship and workflow ties, the formal and informal status of the focal individual, and the overall tendencies of the focal individual to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information. We would argue that these controls made for 'tough tests' of our hypotheses and that the persistence of the significant interaction between network size and self-monitoring, in particular, speaks to the underlying strength of the effect.

Although our theory focuses on how an individual's self-monitoring level influences sensitivity to social cues in terms of co-workers' formal and informal status characteristics, future studies could explore interactions between the respective status characteristics (formal status, network size, and betweenness centrality) and self-monitoring attributes

of individuals and their co-workers. For example, this investigation can reveal whether an individual high in formal status would react differentially in justice-related information seeking, accepting, and providing if the others were high or low status. At the same time, the dyadic-level similarity or dissimilarity perspective suggests that future study can examine how differential status (formal and informal) influences the behavioural intentions regarding justice-related information behaviours.

In terms of limitations, the cross-sectional design of this study does not allow us to rule out the possibility that an individual's behavioural intentions influence his or her final standing in social groups or social networks in organizations. Taking the assumption that social networks constrain or facilitate behaviours (Wasserman & Faust, 1994), our study focused on the direction from informal network positions (network size and betweenness centrality) to behavioural intentions. Indeed, social network scholars have argued that behaviour and network structure have reciprocal causal links: network structures constrain or facilitate behaviours, and in-turn, behaviours also contribute to the development of network structures (e.g. Barley, 1990). Future studies can examine how behaviours develop or change standing in social networks over time. For example, studying newcomers as they proceed through organizational socialization processes may be one way for researchers to better understand these causal dynamics. Second, we found similar patterns of interactive results in friendship and workflow networks, thus failing to capture the distinct relational content in these two networks. One possible reason is the large extent of overlap between these two networks in our sample. The quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) correlation analysis using UCINET 6 (Borgatti *et al.*, 2002) showed that the correlation between these two networks was moderate in the securities trading company ($r = .42$) and large in the electricity plant ($r = .72$). These significant correlations are perhaps because the organizations were small and many employees had worked together for many years. It is also possible that similar patterns were observed because Chinese employees tend to conflate friendship and workflow networks – the cultural issue of *guanxi* networks – and use both networks for social support and work-related information. Future studies can examine whether the pattern of relationships across networks differ when tests are conducted in Western cultures. Third, as one reviewer pointed out, our behavioural intention measures failed to completely capture that employees actually seek, accept, and provide justice-related information (i.e. behavioural measures). Despite high correlations of behavioural intentions and behaviours, the scores of our behavioural intentions should be interpreted with caution. Similarly, we followed the common use of self-report self-monitoring measure in most studies, which raises the concern whether self-report of self-monitoring accurately captures the dimension of ability to modify behaviours based on the situations. Future studies that examine actual employee behaviours and use alternative measures of self-monitoring behaviour are needed. Fourth, common method bias is a concern, although common method does not provide a viable explanation for significant higher-order interactions that are consistent with theory (e.g. Evans, 1985). We also used the sociometric method (Marsden, 1990) to measure network variables and behavioural intentions regarding justice-related information; although this is the clearly preferred method in the network literature, network calculations may be positively biased (Shah, 1998). Unlike most network studies, we were able to collect multi-item measures of behavioural intentions. But the use of single-item measures for the friendship and workflow networks may raise the question whether such measures can adequately cover the construct space of the conceptual variables. We tried to strike a balance between adequate measurement of key constructs and limiting factors such as questionnaire

length and participant fatigue effects. Although network scholars have argued that single-item measures are appropriate when the construct being measured is sufficiently unambiguous and when situational constraints limit scale use (e.g. Wanous, Reicher, & Hudy, 1997), we encourage future researchers to devise ways to measure constructs more precisely.

Conclusion

The goal of our study was to forge a better understanding of the process through which high self-monitors manage their behavioural intentions in terms of seeking, accepting, and providing justice-related information. Adopting a structural view of social status, we found significant and consistent main-effect of co-workers' formal status and interactive effect of self-monitoring by co-workers' network size in predicting intentions to seek, accept, and provide justice-related information. The results suggest that high self-monitors, relative to low self-monitors, more effectively manage their information behavioural intentions, and, by extension, their better information management contributes to their more successful career trajectories.

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