

Power, Optimism and Risk-taking in the case of Mongolia

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DOI 10.21697/p.9985

Abstract

This research aimed to analyze the correlation between the sense of power, optimism, and the proclivity for risk-taking, using the research method described by Anderson and Galinsky in their article “Power, optimism, and risk-taking” in 2006.

This research examines power within interpersonal communications by analysing the correlation of power, the behavioural approach/inhibition, optimism, and the inclination for risk-taking, using methods of interview, experiment, and testing.

The research was conducted in 4 sequential studies. Study I examined the concept of power consciously and examined its effect upon the tendency in motivation through the behavioral approach and inhibition system. Study II examined the concept of power unconsciously, and measured its effect in risk-taking tendencies through the gain/loss frame. Study III focused on the correlation between a general sense of power and an optimistic attitude. Study IV specifically selected persons in supervisory positions in both the private and public sectors, assuming them to be practicing positions of relative power and control; and then measured their tendencies in risk-taking through the gain/loss frame and the behavioral approach and inhibition system. Finally, we attempted to make basic comparisons of our findings with similar findings in the cases of the USA, China and Japan.

Although we proposed a similar hypothesis as Anderson and Galinsky, our research findings revealed that results of Mongolian participants strongly contrasted with theirs. While recognizing our limitations in customizing this research methodology to our local context, we may have to consider other contextual factors such as the feeling of freedom inherent in a nomadic culture, overwhelmingly unstable mid-level managerial positions (both in Government and the private sector), the heavy responsibility and limitations imposed upon those in supervisory positions, and last but not least, that our sample of participants were mostly between 18-40 years of age and brimming with optimism and self-efficacy.

Keywords

power, nonconscious priming, behavioural approach system / behavioural inhibition system, optimism, risk-taking inclination

In principle, understanding the behaviour of people in power would shed light on the interesting aspect of human mentality. As Keltner notes in his book *The Power Paradox* (Keltner, 2017), “The fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense that Energy is the fundamental concept in physics... The laws of social dynamics are laws which can only be stated in terms of power” (Russell, 1938, p. 10).

Therefore, we assume that the perception of power is constant in individuals’ overall perception, both towards others and towards themselves. Many studies on power have examined various psychological effects upon the power holders, expressed in many forms and measured by the method of behavioural approach and inhibition systems (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003).

Some researchers have argued that a lower sense of power or feeling of powerlessness tends to move individuals to exhibit riskier behaviour. Similarly, a lower socioeconomic status is related with more precarious activities, including drug use and other habits (Adler et al., 1994; Capaldi, Stoolmiller, Clark, & Owen et al., 2002; Marmot, Shipley, & Rose, 1984). On the other side of the equation, this logic implies that the people in high positions of power tend to avoid risks, aware of the underlying threat of losing their advantages related with their power positions, as proposed by the prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979).

On the contrary, the study of Anderson and Galinsky argues that the more power an individual possesses, the more inclination she/he has towards risky behavior. According to their study, the main factor that causes this influence is the greater feeling of optimism they described.

In this context, we have tried to examine the correlations between a sense of power and behavioral motivations (BAS/BIS system); a sense of power and optimism; and a sense of power and a risk-taking proclivity. In order to clear the hesitation concerning the validity of both conscious and nonconscious priming which we used, we also included

individuals who are working in relatively powerful or supervisory roles, such as company managers and CEOs, branch managers of a bank, mid-level public servants and a few members of parliament.

This research draws on previous studies conducted in the USA, Japan and China and conducts similar tests and surveys in order to establish links between the sense of power and its influence upon the optimistic view. Hereby, in accordance with the study of Anderson and Galinsky, they only accept and see positive results – *their optimism level increases* – and are more inclined to make risk-taking decisions. Further, it is attempted to establish links between this optimistic view and the inclination to make risk-taking decisions in the case of Mongolian respondents.

So we wanted to ask if the feeling of power or the opposite the powerlessness help explain specific attitudes of individuals following similar research attempts in our case in the example of Mongolian subjects. Once the results are finalized, this would help efforts to explain distinct behavior of politicians, CEOs of large corporations and vice versa specific behaviors of other masses who are feeling powerless.

Therefore, our hypothesis is that power has a crucial impact upon the attitudes of individuals. From a multitude of variables, we have chosen to limit our research to the following variables: behaviour approach and inhibition systems, optimism and risk-taking inclination. Therefore our research consists of 4 researches each with its own specific research objectives. We conduct 4 studies on the one to confirm the results of power influence in multiple a slightly different aspects upon the attitudes and perception of our subjects because due to specific limitations of special studies below, there might be some issues regarding the hypothesized effects. Therefore, we believe that 4 studies are not too few to be easily denied and not too much to unnecessary complications.

This research is the initial component of a larger research effort on the influence of power on individuals and their behaviour from the perspective of political psychology using existing methodology developed by such scholars as Anderson, Galinsky, and Keltner.

Study I

Objective

A power and behavioural activation/inhibiting system – model designed by Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson – reveals that increasing one’s sense of power causes a person to be more proactive in meeting her or his own needs (Keltner, Gruenfeld, Anderson, 2003). In other words, a sense of power will contribute to a reduction in controlling and inhibiting actions, and encourage the pursuit of rewards and the seeking of new opportunities.

On the other hand, a sense of powerlessness leads to certain inhibiting behaviours (behaviour inhibition system, BIS): the person begins to control and inhibit his own behaviour, giving placing more emphasis on situations in which threats and punishment might occur. Therefore, this first study aimed at testing whether or not a sense of power(lessness) inhibits behaviour.

Methodology

This study consists of two phases: (1) participants’ mindset is primed; followed by (2) a behavioural approach/inhibition system.

1. The test subjects were reminded of a situation, in which *they* possessed power, or *someone else* possessed power over them (mindset priming). A group of respondents was asked to recall and write a short essay about a situation in which they exerted power and influence over other people’s opinions or actions. To incite a sense of powerlessness, the second group was assigned to recall and write an essay about a situation in which someone else had power and influence over them through supervision, control, or evaluation of their activities and opinions. As for the control group, they were given a task to write an essay about the main events of their lives in the past year for the purpose of assignment only.
2. Using the behavioural approach and inhibition system developed by Carver and White, we examined how the sense of power affected behaviour. A behavioural approach system (BAS) is believed

to regulate inclinations and motives in which the goal is to move toward something desired. A behavioural avoidance (or inhibition) system (BIS) is said to regulate aversive motives, in which the goal is to move away from something unpleasant. Within BAS there are three types of motives: One for Impulsive drive (BASD); a second for Reward Responsiveness (BASR); and third for fun-seeking motives (BASF). This system for defining behavioural approaches and inhibition tendencies is comprised of 20 questions, of which 13 relate to the behavioural approach, and questions relate to behavioural inhibition. Each question has choices ranging from “extremely unlikely” to “extremely likely” (1-5 scale). In this survey, we translated and used template questionnaires from previous experiments in the USA, Japan, and China.

Procedure

After selecting participants randomly and dividing them into 3 groups, we gave the narrative essay assignments which were used to generate senses of power, powerlessness, and neutral feelings in the test subjects. After this, we asked them to fill out the BAS/BIS questionnaires.

Experimental Design

The independent variable: the sense of power in three levels (high-power group, low-power group, and neutral-power group)

The dependent variable: Motivation tendency measured in Behavioural approach (BAS), and behaviour inhibition (BIS).

Participants

Out of 87 university students who participated in the study, 38 students' responses qualified (6 male students, 32 female students; $M_{age} = 20.13$, $f = 20.00$). The students were selected randomly and divided into three groups. The sense of power (“high-power”) group had 10 students; the sense of powerlessness (“low-power”) group 12 students and the control group (“neutral-power” group) consisted of 16 students.

Results and Discussion

As can be seen from the figure below, the high-power group encompassed 26.3%; the low-power group 31.6%; and the control group (did not generate a sense of power) 42.1%.

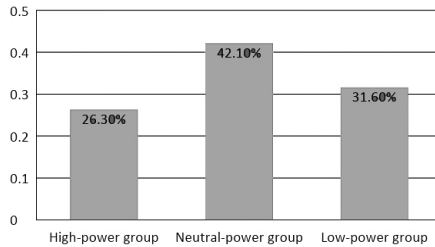


Fig. 1. Group participation percentage

The mean of BAS/BIS is 2.75-4.84 and its standard deviation is 0.53-1.36. A correlation between each scale of each question and total scale is 0.072-0.671. We excluded questions 1, 2, 7, and 18 because their correlation was lower than 0.3 ($P > 0.05$). In addition, cases were excluded where the standard score of Z was found within the range of ± 2.5 in order to ensure a representative sample. Thus,, we selected 38 as qualified responses for calculating test results.

Each one of the BAS/BIS internal reliability is $ab_{is} = 0.803$, $ab_{as} = 0.779$ (0.616, 0.581). The following table shows scales of the high-power group, the low-power group, and the neutral group on the basis of BAS/BIS.

Table 1. BAS/BIS scales of 3 groups of participants

	High-power group	Neutral-power group	Low-power group	Chi-Square	P
BIS	21.00	20.47	20.15	.030	.985
BAS	15.15	22.59	21.88	2.843	.241
BASR	18.45	19.24	23.73	1.549	.461
BASD	13.65	24.03	21.15	5.280	.071
BASF	14.15	24.24	20.50	4.769	.092

The statistical analysis (Kruskal Wallis Test) in Table 1 reveals no significant differences between the three groups as regards BIS, BAS, and BASR. As for BASD ($p=0.071$) and BASF ($p=0.092$) for the three groups, these were close to the significant level. In terms of BASD and BASF, both neutral and low-power groups are inclined to be more proactive compared to high-power group.

Study II

Objective

The results of the studies by Anderson & Galinsky (2006), Maner Gailiot, Butz & Peruche (2007), and Ronay & Hipper (2010) indicate that an increase in the sense of power leads to a greater inclination toward risk-taking decisions and actions. Thus, this study's objective is to determine if there are any correlations between the sense of power and risk-taking.

Method

1. We used a power concept inciting method (conceptual priming) when generating a sense of power. The conceptual priming generated a sense of power on the unconscious level. We gave the respondents the task of composing fourteen sentences choosing four words (out of five proposed words). The participants were divided into three groups: the high-power group, the low-power group, and the neutral power group. The participants in the high-power group were given fourteen words to compose sentences from. While seven of them consisted of words inciting a sense of power (e.g. power, authority, supervision, lead, etc.), the other sentences were not meant to generate such feelings. For the low-power group, seven sentences out of fourteen contained the meaning of powerlessness (e.g. subordination, fear, to be tolerant, to follow the lead etc) while the neutral group was offered sentences inciting neither a sense of power nor powerlessness.

2. We used a risk-perception- behaviour task, which had been used in the surveys of Tversky & Kahneman, 1981 (GAIN/LOSS frame); Anderson, et al, 2006. The participants were given situations and had to choose one of the two alternatives offered. Participants were instructed to “imagine that you work for a large construction company, which has recently been hit with a heavy economic crisis. It appears as though three construction projects need to be closed down and 6000 employees need to be laid off. As the Vice President for Construction Projects, you have been exploring alternative ways to avoid this crisis”. In the **gain frame**, participants were told “Plan A will save one of the three projects and 2000 jobs. Plan B has a $\frac{1}{3}$ probability of saving all three plants and all 6000 jobs, but has a $\frac{2}{3}$ probability of saving no projects and no jobs”. In the **loss frame**, participants were told “Plan A will result in the loss of two of the three projects and 4000 jobs. Plan B has a $\frac{1}{3}$ probability of losing no projects and no jobs, but has a $\frac{2}{3}$ probability of resulting in the loss of all three projects and 6000 jobs”. After they made their choices, their confidence was reassessed on a scale of 1-6 , score 1 (Very much prefer program A) indicating the lowest risk option, with score 6 (Very much prefer program B) being the highest risk option.

Procedure

Participants were given the task of composing sentences to generate a sense of power (unconscious mindset- priming) followed by the task of selecting options in a certain context to define their risk-taking proclivity.

Experimental Design

The independent variable: the power levels of the three groups (high-power group, low-power group, neutral group) x task (GAIN/LOSS frame)

The dependent variable: Risky or less risky choices (GAIN/LOSS frames).

Participants

Of the 340 student participants, 315 responses were qualified (67 male, 248 females; $M_{age}=18.79$, $M_d=18.5$). The students were selected randomly and divided into three groups. The first group with a higher sense of power had 122 students; the second group with an incited sense of powerlessness had 84 students, and the neutral group had 102 students.

Results and Discussion

The figure below shows that the high-power group covers 38.7%, the low-power group 26.7% and the neutral group (did not generate the sense of power) 34.6%.

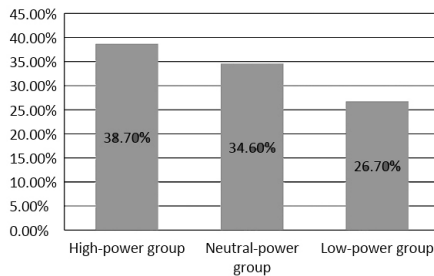


Fig. 2. Group participation percentage

A multi-factor analysis (two-way ANOVA) was conducted to reveal the different senses of power, risk or gain/loss tendency of the three groups that had been affecting the participants' choices. The analysis showed that neither the sense of power and gain/loss situation ($F_{power}=1.172$, $P>0.05$; $F_{gain, loss}=0.638$, $P>0.05$) nor their interaction ($F_{power*gain, loss}=0.638$, $P>0.05$;) alone affects the participants' choices, according to the survey (Table 2).

Table 2. Two-way ANOVA result

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.055 ^a	5	.611	.969	.440	.038
Intercept	2871.137	1	2871.137	4552.354	.000	.974
Power	1.479	2	.739	1.172	.313	.019
Gain/loss	.533	1	.533	.845	.360	.007
power gain/ loss*	.805	2	.403	.638	.530	.010
Error	76.945	122	.631			
Total	3122.000	128				
Corrected Total	80.000	127				

Dependent Variable: Response selection of Option B (Riskier version)

On the other hand, when we did multi-factor analysis (two-way ANOVA) to determine whether the groups with different senses of power and gain/loss tendency had been affected in the low-risk taking, the results showed that only the gain/loss situation ($F_{\text{gain, loss}} = 2.925$, $P < 0.09$, $\eta^2 = 0.017$) proved to be a strong factor in choosing low risk options (Table 3). The study determined that the gain frame does play a stronger role, which supports the Prospect Theory in this case.

Table 3. Two-way ANOVA result

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	6.723 ^a	5	1.345	1.835	.108	.050
Intercept	700.723	1	700.723	956.452	.000	.846
Power	.259	2	.129	.177	.838	.002
Gain/loss	2.143	1	2.143	2.925	.089	.017
power * gain/ loss	5.369	2	2.684	3.664	.028	.040
Error	127.477	174	.733			.050
Total	928.000	180				.846
Corrected Total	134.200	179				.002

Dependent Variable: Response selection of Option A (Safer version)

Table 4. Gain/loss tendency

	High-power	Neutral	Low-power
Gain: A option	2.64	2.41	2.14
Gain: B option	4.57	4.60	4.41
Loss: A option	2.38	2.61	2.26
Loss: B option	4.57	4.5	4.63

(Plan A is less risky and Plan B is the riskier option)

Overall, the sense of power is determined as not showing any singular effect upon the proclivity to take risks, but combined with other factors (including this task condition), may have an impact on the risk-taking. It is worth noting that, in this case, most participants chose option B (the riskier version) in both the Gain and loss frameGain and loss frames, which is quite interesting given that, especially in the Gain frame, individuals are usually expected to choose the A option due to its certainty and gain terms according to the Prospect theory.

Study III

Objective

The objective of the third part of the study was to examine if the sense of power is correlated with optimism.

Method

1. We used the “general sense of power” measurement developed by Anderson, John & Keltner (2012). This measurement has eight questions, and the answers to four questions are calculated in reverse. If the scale is high, the sense of power is also considered to be high.
2. The optimism test is divided into two sections. The first section – outward optimism – relates to events outside of personal life; and the second section – personal optimism (inward) – regards the test subject’s personal future life events, emulating the model developed by Weinstein (1980). The first part has an assessment of death rates on seventeen potential causes of death by the approximate amount each year, adapting a similar model involving eighteen death-risks

developed by Johnson and Tversky (1983). In this assessment, we have adopted and customized the eighteen death risks to the local context by, for example, changing “terrorism” and “airplane crash” to the common diseases that are the main causes of death in Mongolia according to National Statistics Office records. The personal optimism (inward) is defined through sixteen questions and scaled from very unlikely (-4) to very likely (+4). The higher the total scale, the higher is the level of optimism toward the outside world and personal life events.

Procedure

After the participants were randomly selected, they were divided into two groups: One for the outward optimism test; and the other for the personal optimism test. The participants took the optimism test after they have completed the general sense of power test.

Experimental Design

The independent variable: 2 senses of power (high-power and low-power)

The dependent variable: two levels of outward optimism (high-outward optimism and low-outward optimism) X two levels of inward optimism (high-inward optimism and low-inward optimism).

Participants

Out of 60 university students who participated in this study, 55 tests were qualified for the power measurement and outward optimism study (23 male, 32 females; $M_{age}=19.22$, $M_d=19$). 80 university students participated in the power and inward optimism survey, all of whom were qualified as valid (14 male, 66 females; $M_{age}=19.04$, $M_d=19$).

Results and Discussion

The mean scale of the general power measurement was 39.85. Scales lower than the mean are considered to be in the low-power group. On the contrary, scales equal to and higher than the mean are considered

as the high power group. According to the statistical analysis, there is a significant difference between the high-power group and the low-power group ($t=9.332, P=.000$).

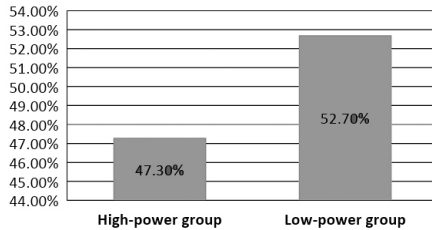


Fig. 3. Group participation percentage

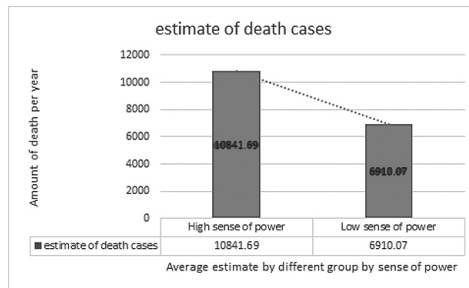


Figure 4. Outward optimism by different groups by sense of power using the model developed Johnson and Tversky (1983)

The results of the study showed a significant difference between the group with a higher sense of power and the group with a lower sense of power in regards to their optimism scale ($t=9.332, P=.000$). The group with the higher sense of power was inclined to view the outside world less optimistically, while the group with a lower sense of power tended to view the outside world more optimistically, as shown in figure 4.

The general power measure is $\alpha=0.643-0.745$ and the personal optimism is $\alpha=0.599$.

In contrast, the statistical analysis of personal optimism showed that there is a significant difference between the high-power group and

the low-power group ($t=10.696, P=.000$). This means that a higher sense of power does not apparently affect the heightened personal optimism in contrast to previous studies, but people with a lower sense of power are inclined to show higher inward optimism, as is evident from our study.

Overall, our regression analyses indicate that a sense of power does not affect optimism, either inward nor outward $\beta=-0.495, t=-0.098, p>0.05$. $\beta=-0.803, t=-0.299, p>0.05$)

Study IV

Objective

This part of the study aims to determine any potential correlation between the sense of power and the inclination to take risks. This time we engaged individuals who are exercising some level of supervision or authority over others, such as company CEOs, Vice Presidents, Branch Managers, Parliamentary Members etc.

Method

1. We utilized the gain and loss framework that was used by Tversky and Kahneman, and Anderson (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981; Anderson et al, 2006). The respondents were asked to select one of the possible alternatives. Afterwards, they had to evaluate their confidence in their choice using a scale of 1-6, with a score of 1 being the lowest risk option while a score of 6 was the highest risk alternative.
2. Using the behavioural approach and inhibition system system developed by Carver and White, we examined how the sense of power affected behaviour. The behavioural approach system (BAS) is believed to regulate appetite motives, in which the goal is to move toward something desired. The behavioural avoidance (or inhibition) system (BIS) is said to regulate aversive motives, in which the goal is to move away from something unpleasant. Within BAS, there are three types of motives: One for Impulsive drive (BASD); a second for Reward Responsiveness (BASR); and a third for fun-seeking motives

(BASF). This system defines the behavioural activation approach and inhibition tendency and encompasses 20 questions, of which 13 questions are related to the behavioural approach, and 5 questions relate to behavioural inhibition. Each question has choices ranging from “extremely unlikely” to “extremely likely” (on a 1 to 5 scale). In this survey, we translated and used questionnaire templates from previous experiments in the USA, Japan, and China.

Experimental Design

The independent variable: 3 senses of power (high-sense of power and low-sense of power and neutral) x task (GAIN/LOSS frame)

The dependent variable: Risky or less risky choice frames (GAIN/LOSS frames) x Motivational tendency measured BAS and BIS.

Participants

The sample covered 47 persons in relatively authoritative positions, who either evaluate others or supervise a certain number of employees. (Males 32, Females 15, Mage=38.19, Md=36.00).

Results and Discussion

In the gain/loss frame, 41.7% of the respondents selected the less risky options in the loss frame of Plan A, while 58.3% chose risky options in the loss frame of Plan B. On the contrary, in the gain frame 69.6% chose the less risky and more probable options, while only 30.4% chose the risky version.

Although each plan offered the same outcome regardless of the way it was framed, as argued in the gain and loss Framing model, similarly a clear majority of participants selected the certain plan in the gain frame, but the risky plan in the loss frame.

In further analysis through one-factor ANOVA, neither gain nor loss frames influence the choice of risky options. ($F_{\text{gain/loss}}=0.565, P>0.05$)

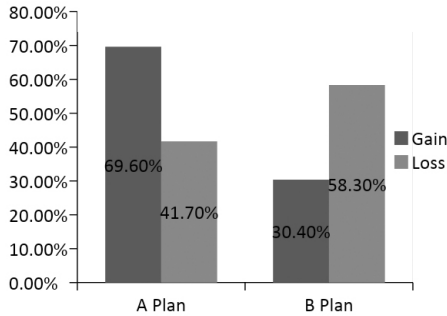


Figure 5. Risk-taking tendency

Table 5.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
BASR	47	5.00	20.00	16.3830	2.55847
BASD	47	7.00	19.00	14.3404	2.55612
BASF	47	9.00	19.00	13.8936	2.26729
BIS	47	5.00	20.00	14.1702	3.47237
BAS	47	35.00	58.00	48.0213	4.98907

As for the persons with power, they tend to show a higher behavioural approach for rewards. When they expect a reward, they have an especially high proclivity towards certain actions.

A comparison between the persons in supervisory positions and people without such power positions yielded the following results.

Table 6.

	BASR	BASD	BASF	BIS	BAS
Mann-Whitney U	11.500	414.000	351.000	396.500	581.500
Wilcoxon W	1139.500	1542.000	1479.000	1524.500	1709.500
Z	-7.033	-2.533	-3.220	-2.684	-0.597
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.011	.001	.007	.550

It has been statistically proven that there is a definite difference between people with and without power regarding their behavioural approach preference, with a statistical significance held valid below 0.05. (Table 6). In other words, people with less power are shown to have a more behavioural approach motives in contrast to persons in supervisory positions. Moreover, persons with lower power – in contrast to persons in supervisory positions – tend to inhibit their behaviour more. (Table 7).

Table 7.

		Mean	Std. Deviation
BASR	high power	11.7021	2.13577
	low power	18.1481	1.68029
BASD	high power	7.1702	1.59236
	low power	8.1481	1.19948
BASF	high power	9.6596	2.06710
	low power	11.2963	1.72793
BIS	high power	14.1702	3.47237
	low power	16.8889	4.09815
BAS	high power	32.0638	4.41048
	low power	32.6667	3.41940

As the results shown in Table 7 indicate, in almost all indicators of BASR, BASD, BASF, and BIS, persons with a lower sense of power tend to have more risk-taking inclinations.

Comparison

Research results in China

In western cultures where there is a greater emphasis upon the “self” concept, individuals focus more on the opportunities beneficial for the “self” rather than on cooperation. Anderson also suggested that if someone’s sense of power is correlated with a high sense of responsibility, then that individual is less likely to take risks even though they have a high sense of power. As for the Oriental culture, individuals tend to uphold values of collectivism, cooperation, and consensus.

The results of the BIS/BAS surveys conducted in China show that people with higher power have lower inhibitions of their behavior when it comes to acting to achieve what is needed compared to the people with lower power. This finding is similar to the results of Anderson and Galinsky's research in 2006.

Research results in Japan

The research sample included 86 respondents in total: 63 males and 23 females. The average age of the sample was 30.88 (SD=9.086, Me=28), and the average working experience was 7.16 years.

The research results indicate that people with a higher sense of power and influence are inclined to choose more risk-taking alternatives than people with a lower sense of power. This difference in proclivity to take risky actions is similar to the results of the research done by Anderson. Nevertheless, this does not mean that powerful people are bluntly inclined to take the more risky actions, but rather that they tend to consider the issues from various perspectives and calculate various factors when making decisions.

Moreover, one interesting finding of the research was that people with a lower sense of power tended to choose medium risk options instead of the lowest risk alternatives.

Individuals with a higher sense of power tend to be more confident and more action-oriented, as the results show. In contrast, individuals with a weaker sense of power tend to be more defensive and cautious (a higher BIS). This is also shown in cases of instant decision-making, due to the emotional motives of the higher officials within the organization.

The research findings also prove that a high sense of power helps build more self-confidence and powerful people are proven to have certain beliefs and methods.

The exercise of power by powerful people seems to be constrained due to considerations of the groups or organizations within their society, whereas the exercise of power outside an organization can be freer. This finding correlates to the consideration of a sense of responsibility

(Anderson 2006), which also has a curbing effect on the risk-taking decision-making.

Moreover, the features of decision-making by the powerful within an organization (group) may differ in western and eastern cultures due to the “self” concept, regional context, and cultural factors. This difference is called “power distance”. According to the research of Torelli and Shavitt (2010), due to the above-mentioned factors the perceptions of power are divided into two categories: personalized and socialized power. Also, according to other research (van Dyne and Pierce, 2004), the decision-making is largely influenced by how the decision-maker grasps the problem, i.e. whether it is her or his personal issue or her or his group’s issue.

As research has established, if powerful people view the issues as her or his personal ones, they tend to make decisions in the common interest. On the contrary, if they view it as someone else’s issue, they tend to be passive, ignorant, and make improper decisions.

In short, we have shown a brief comparison of key results of relevance in the countries mentioned in the following table. (Table 8)

Table 8.

Correlations	USA	Japan	China	Mongolia
Higher sense of power and Higher BAS and lower BIS	YES	YES	YES in BAS; but Opposite in BIS	NO, opposite was true
Higher sense of power, higher optimism	YES	YES inward optimism but outward optimism not covered in the research cited here	The cited research did not cover	YES for inward optimism but not for outward optimism
Higher sense of power and more inclination to risk-taking	YES	YES	NO	NO

Correlations	USA	Japan	China	Mongolia
Attenuating effect of responsibility for risky decision	YES	YES	YES	Not studied

Conclusions

Our research suggests that the less power someone has, the more she or he tends to pursue rewards and needs without inhibiting her or his own behaviour and gains satisfaction from what he/she acquired. On the contrary, the survey shows that the more power someone has, the more she or he tends to inhibit her or his own behaviour.

Further, we found that persons with a lower sense of power tend to have stronger inward and outward optimism, which is proven to be statistically significant.

In Study IV, we involved persons who were currently holding supervisory positions and the majority of them chose less risky alternatives, as shown in our research findings. From this we can conclude that respondents who represented powerful people are bound by responsibilities to their organization and their employees, and are not inclined to make risky decisions. Perhaps this may have to do with political appointment, nepotistic appointment, or the more centralized power structure of a given organization. This research is an initial part of the long-term research initiative that, perhaps for the first time, attempts to apply research methods that have been used in the USA, PRC, and Japan to the Mongolian respondents. It is recognized that there might have been some errors or mistakes in translating and customizing the tests and questionnaires into the Mongolian language, mentality, and culture.

The overall goal of this research was to confirm the hypothesis that persons with a higher sense of power tend to be more optimistic in their actions as well as their decisions, and that they tend to give greater focus to results and gains rather than threats and risks related to the decision. In other words, people with a higher sense of power are more inclined

to make risky decisions. Within the framework of our research, we can say that our hypothesis, in general, was not proven. This may be related to the several factors. First, majority of our participants were aged between 18-40 years, which may have contributed to a more optimistic tendency and self-efficacy in the research findings. Second, while we included people with real authority and in supervisory positions, they still have shown less of BASR, BASD, BASF optimism and less proclivity towards risk-taking, which may be related to their heavy responsibility, the instability of managerial positions, and other numerous limitations. Third, overall participants with a lower sense of power tended to show more optimism and risk-taking tendencies, which can also be related to the nomadic legacy of Mongolians, who for centuries had only themselves to count on during natural hardships.

Finally, in his research conclusion Anderson stated that a sense of responsibility, which is a perception that her or his decisions may have an effect upon others, has attenuating effects upon the risky choices of powerful persons. Similar effects have been shown by the perception of stability in the power position. In other words, if persons with a high sense of power believe that they could lose their power at any time, they are inclined to choose less risky alternatives (Keltner et al. 2003). Our study determined that outward optimism and personal optimism were not correlated to the sense of power.

Especially in the case of Mongolia, and among the public officials who participated in our research, this feeling may have influenced the results significantly. The uncertainty and instability of public servants' positions have become a pervasive problem due to the inappropriate penetration of partisan politics into the public administration, causing frequent changes and abrupt overhauls of government policies in every sphere in the recent decade.

Therefore, more studies must be conducted before the entire research initiative can be considered complete. The causal link between the sense of power, optimism and risky choices must also be clarified.

Moreover, another interesting course of this research would be to continue Keltner's suggestion and study how power has a corrupting effect upon the individuals who are exercising it (2017).

In conclusion, it is certain that power is a moving force in social relationships, and it is ubiquitous in social settings. In addition, depending on the position of individuals vis-à-vis this power, it has a great impact upon the psyche, world view, and problem-solving approach of individuals.

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