

Power motives, personality correlates, and leadership outcomes: A person-centered approach

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Abstract

Objective: We investigated how these motivations combined within individuals to form unique profiles, and how these different profiles relate to personality traits and team behaviors.

Background: Dominance, prestige, and leadership motives each play a key role in shaping social success or failure in gaining social rank and influence.

Method: We used latent profile analysis across two samples (engineering student project teams, $N_{\text{student}} = 1088$; working adults, $N_{\text{worker}} = 466$) to identify profile configurations and how such profiles related to important outcomes.

Results: We identified qualitatively distinct profiles: ultra-dominance profile (prominent dominance motive with high prestige and leadership motives); prestigious leadership profile (moderately high prestige and leadership motives, low dominance motive); and weak social power motive profile (low on all three motives). Individuals with the prestigious leadership profile were more likely to emerge as leaders, compared to those with a weak social power motive profile. People with an ultra-dominance profile scored higher on narcissism and tended to perceive themselves as leaders, despite not being deemed more leader-like by teammates.

Conclusion: Using a person-centered approach allowed us to identify three power motive profiles across independent samples and generate insights into how these profiles manifest different social behaviors and outcomes.

KEYWORDS

dominance, latent profile analysis, leader emergence, leadership, prestige

1 | INTRODUCTION

From tribal warfare to covert competition for promotion in the modern workplace, the desire for social rank and influence drives an array of human behavior (Anderson

et al., 2015). Although much work has explored the strategies, behaviors, and attributes that contribute to the actual acquisition of influence and formal or informal leadership within groups (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Cheng et al., 2013), the motives that underlie people's desire to

obtain social power are complex, multidimensional, and still not well-understood.

Earlier work on power motives has focused on a unidimensional construct that represents one's general desire to gain influence (e.g., McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982; Veroff, 1957; Winter, 1988). More recently, Suessenbach et al. (2019) drew on evolutionary theories of human social status (Cheng et al., 2013; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Zeng et al., 2022) to propose three inter-related motives that underpin the acquisition of these distinct types of social status and influence in social groups: dominance, prestige, and leadership motives (i.e., the DoPL taxonomy). Although research highlights the distinct consequences tied to each social power motive (e.g., Suessenbach et al., 2019), much less is known about how these motives jointly contribute to a person's rank acquisition. In this paper, we take a person-centered approach (i.e., a holistic approach to investigate the different configurations of scores) to gain insight into (1) how social power motives manifest within people; (2) the personality correlates of power motive profiles; and (3) the social outcomes associated with these power motive profiles, in terms of how people view themselves and behave toward others in highly interdependent yet leaderless groups.

1.1 | Social power motives: A unitary or multidimensional construct?

Social power motives energize, direct, and sustain behaviors relevant to obtaining power (Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008). As a unitary construct, it is commonly defined as a "disposition directing behavior towards satisfactions contingent upon the control of the means of influencing another person(s)" (Veroff, 1957, p. 1). Despite multiple studies identifying a relation between a global power motive and behaviors that signify influence (e.g., Winter, 1988), defining social power in this manner can obscure the possibility that people may qualitatively differ in their desire for power. As noted by Suessenbach et al. (2019), definitional ambiguity coupled with the lack of a high-quality measure has limited research. Drawing from lines of inquiry on how people acquire social rank (e.g., Cheng et al., 2013; Cheng & Tracy, 2014) and the nature of leader-follower relationships (Van Vugt, 2006), the DoPL taxonomy was introduced as a theoretically grounded framework for evaluating the three distinct social power motives of dominance, prestige, and leadership (Suessenbach et al., 2019).

Integrating insights from evolutionary perspectives of social influence, scholars have drawn attention to the distinct roles of dominance, prestige, and formal leadership (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Van Vugt, 2006). Henrich and Gil-White (2001) identified dominance and prestige as two

fundamental pathways to human social rank that evolved through different selection pressures. Dominance-related behavior provides a reproductive advantage for human and non-human primates and is arguably the most direct strategy to attain social influence. Dominance-oriented individuals introduce fear by withholding resources and forcing subordinates to comply (Maner, 2017). Accordingly, the *dominance motive* is defined as a desire to coerce others into compliance with one's will (Suessenbach et al., 2019). The *prestige motive*, in contrast, is the drive to obtain influence via possessing and imparting valuable knowledge and skills, which is perhaps observed most elaborately among humans. Cultural learning and shared knowledge are important drivers for human society. Prestige emerged from voluntary deference to acquire cultural knowledge to maximize one's fitness (Boyd & Richerson, 1985), as social learners pay deference and voluntarily confer influence to prestigious individuals from whom they seek to acquire locally valued information, knowledge, and know-how (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). Theorizing by Van Vugt (2006) provided the basis for the *leadership motive*, representing the drive for influence to help individuals achieve shared goals, independent of the desire to gain respect (prestige motive) or gain coercive control (dominance control). Individuals belonging to a group that concedes leadership to members who are able and willing to steer the group toward collective goals gain an adaptive advantage.

Although work on dominance, prestige, and leadership provides a rich theoretical basis from which to conceptualize social power motives, it is important to distinguish the motives underlying social power from the behaviors that result in prestige, dominance, and leadership. For example, a professor may possess expertise and others come to them for advice—ultimately conferring prestige upon this individual. However, this person might not be particularly motivated to seek prestige. A similar example can be seen with leadership, whereby an individual may speak frequently during meetings—a behavior that facilitates gaining actual leadership (i.e., babble hypothesis, MacLaren et al., 2020)—despite lacking a strong desire to unify and mobilize individuals toward a collective outcome (i.e., leadership motive). To provide a more nuanced understanding of the social power motive configurations and the behaviors involved in the complex motive systems, our study aims to examine the combination of social power *motives* and their *behavioral* consequences.

Supporting the value of a multidimensional perspective, the motives for dominance, prestige, and leadership differentially relate to personality, emotion, and behavior. For example, individuals scoring higher on the dominance motive tend to be more calculative and prone to categorize others dichotomously as allies or foes (Mead & Maner, 2012). They are also oriented toward accruing or protecting their

own power, even if it means sacrificing the group's well-being (Mead & Maner, 2012). Despite the faults of these individuals, dominance-oriented leaders can be effective and are preferred during times of intergroup conflict (Mead & Maner, 2012). On the contrary, the prestige motive involves exerting influence by displaying skills and knowledge, authentic pride, and other indicators of confidence (Maner, 2017). Leaders with prominent prestige motives are more inclined to care about cultivating positive relationships with group members and, as such are preferred in times of intragroup conflict (Cheng et al., 2010; Mead & Maner, 2012). However, their desire for respect and admiration may translate into a hyper-vigilance to potential signs of social disapproval in situations where their level of approval is at stake (Case et al., 2021). Consequently, a prestige-motivated person may opt to make the popular decision rather than the right decision. Finally, individuals with a strong leadership motive tend to be predominantly concerned with the overall group goal rather than forcing their will upon others or gaining social approval. Specifically, the leadership motive is positively linked to prosocial behavior when such behavior supports group goal achievement (Suessenbach et al., 2019; Van Vugt, 2006). These findings highlight how each motive produces different behaviors within and across situations. However, such findings do not consider the combined influence of these social power motives on behavior. Scholars have argued that motives rarely operate in isolation, but rather combine and coalesce into a broader system to energize and direct how people navigate social interactions (McClelland, 1965; Meyer et al., 2022). In the following sections, we consider the interplay between differing levels of social power motives and their implications for social behavior.

1.2 | Social power motive profiles: A person-centered approach

Researchers have long called for a more holistic view of social power motives. This sentiment is apparent in the theory of motive acquisition suggesting social power motives might coexist within individuals, and different motives can be activated to differing extents (McClelland, 1965). Further, social power motives may exhibit some contextual flexibility despite their evolutionary origins (Buss, 2009). One motive may be more or less salient in different contexts; therefore, people might possess motives to various degrees. One way to investigate such combinations of motives is via a person-centered approach (Asendorpf, 2015; Howard & Hoffman, 2018). Although a variable-centered approach such as moderated multiple regression can enable insight into the interplay between multiple predictors, higher-order interactions are difficult

to interpret, require large sample sizes to detect an effect, do not establish the nature of how the variables combine within individuals, and one set of main relationship needs to be specified (e.g., the interacting variables are limited to a predictor in the model). Person-centered approach relaxes these requirements and describes qualitatively meaningful variable configurations within individuals.

Despite the possibility that dominance, prestige, and leadership motives may coalesce and combine within individuals to collectively drive power-seeking psychology and behavior, previous research has largely used a variable-centered approach. Researchers have traditionally sought to investigate how traits (e.g., Big-Five personality dimensions) are correlated with social behaviors or outcomes (e.g., leader emergence), often using analytic techniques such as regression or structural equation modeling. Although such variable-centered analyses indicate that these motives are moderately and positively correlated with each other (Suessenbach et al., 2019), this approach assumes (incorrectly) that the relation between any two motives is homogenous throughout a given population. Even with a moderately strong correlation between two constructs, subgroups of individuals may deviate from this pattern.

As a complementary approach¹ to a variable-centered analysis, a person-centered approach focuses on different configurations of personality traits and attributes by grouping individuals into similar clusters that are distinct from other groups. Such a focus on personality profiles comprised of several traits, rather than on individual traits, has recently attracted considerable interest in personality research. For example, researchers have used LPA to identify five personality profiles, showing that high levels of conscientiousness tend to co-occur with high levels of honesty and humility (e.g., socially adjusted personality profile; Espinoza et al., 2020). Compared to a variable-centered approach, profiles or typologies offer a more holistic portrait of the individual (and their outcomes) because everyone in an identified type shares a configuration of traits, and the typology identifies the entire pattern of traits. Applying this approach to dominance, prestige, and leadership motives enables the identification of distinct subgroups of individuals who are “similar to each other and different from those in other groups” (Marsh et al., 2009, p. 193). To illustrate this point, some individuals may endorse a general desire for social power, scoring highly on all three motives. Some may have minimal interest in wielding influence or leading others (e.g., weak social power motive). And yet others may seek to acquire influence through specific avenues, such as gaining respect and admiration (e.g., prestige-motivated profile) or force (e.g., dominance-motivated profile).

To gain insight into the nature of such social power motive combinations, we begin by identifying sub-populations

of people characterized by distinct configurations of scores on a set of social power motives (LPA; Meyer & Morin, 2016; Meyer et al., 2013). Although we did not specify hypotheses for which profiles would emerge due to the data-driven nature of LPA, advocates of this methodology emphasize the importance of outlining the theoretical appropriateness of investigating social power motive profiles (Spurk et al., 2020). In considering which profiles may emerge, it may be the case that profiles differ in their overall desire for social power, such as a profile characterized by a strong desire for social power (i.e., scoring highly on dominance, prestige, and leadership) versus a profile characterized by a minimal desire for social power (i.e., scoring low on dominance, prestige, and leadership). However, we also expect qualitative differences in how social power motives combine within people across different subgroups (i.e., certain profiles characterized by a predominant motive). Several studies delineate ‘dominance-oriented’ from ‘prestige-oriented’ leaders when describing someone who scores highly on a particular dimension (Case et al., 2021), which carries a tacit assumption that individuals have a predominant motive—that is, they are either dominance-oriented or prestige-oriented, not both simultaneously. Diverging from this assumption, however, is evidence indicating a moderately strong positive correlation among all three social power motives (Suessenbach et al., 2019). This suggests that qualitatively distinct social power motives profiles might be rarer than theorized. If there are subgroups in which the strength of one social power motive diverges from the others, this would clarify the extent to which individuals actually possess a predominant motive toward social power (e.g., a truly prestige-motivated leader who does not desire dominance). Nonetheless, the absence of profiles with a predominant motive would also be informative and equip researchers with a better understanding of how such motives operate in relation to one another.

1.3 | How social power motives relate to personality and social behavior

Beyond identifying distinct power motive profiles, an important and related question is how power motive profiles relate to personality and successes or failures in navigating social hierarchies. Personality describes trait-like stable tendencies in a person's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses when interacting with environmental factors (Hughes & Batey, 2017). Profiles characterized by a strong dominance motivation (and relatively weaker prestige and leadership motives) are expected to concomitantly score lower in honesty-humility and agreeableness. This is because people higher in honesty-humility tend to value modesty (Ashton et al., 2014; Barends et al., 2019), in contrast

to those high in dominance motive who instead prioritize getting ahead using coercive control and self-aggrandizing (Cheng et al., 2010). Additionally, agreeableness captures “the motivation to maintain smooth interpersonal relationships” (Tobin & Graziano, 2020, p. 105). Such individuals would likely refrain from pursuing influence through force and intimidation (in other words, dominance). Consistent with this, agreeable leaders tend to avoid using forceful tactics to exert influence (Anderson et al., 2020; Blake et al., 2022). Moreover, those who exhibit a pronounced dominance motive may also score lower on emotionality because its facets entail fearfulness, anxiety, and dependence on others (Ashton et al., 2014). Extraversion is also important to consider due to its consistent effect in predicting leadership emergence (Anderson & Cowan, 2014; Judge et al., 2002), as well as its positive links with a desire for status and it being uniquely predicted by leadership motives when controlling for dominance and prestige motives (Grosz et al., 2020; Suessenbach et al., 2019). Whereas other broad dimensions of personality have been empirically linked to social success in terms of leadership effectiveness and team member performance (e.g., conscientiousness, openness to experience, Hogan et al., 1994), there is a lack of conceptual and empirical support to suggest specific links to social power motives.

In addition to the major personality dimensions, we also considered two distinct forms of positive self-regard that are tightly connected to how people view and navigate social relationships, including status-based relationships: narcissism and self-esteem (Benson & Giacomini, 2020). Narcissism corresponds to beliefs of superiority and viewing relationships through a zero-sum lens, whereas self-esteem is linked to beliefs of adequacy and valuing affiliation (Brummelman et al., 2016). Narcissistic individuals—who consistently emerge as leaders across diverse studies (Grijalva et al., 2015)—prioritize getting ahead over getting along (Campbell et al., 2006), and thus are likely also possess a strong drive for all three power motives.² In contrast, profiles characterized by predominant prestige and leadership motives (relative to dominance) likely score higher on self-esteem, consistent with work indicating that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to acquire prestigious but not dominant reputations (Cheng et al., 2010). Overall, comprehensive answers to these questions require going beyond a variable-centered approach. Due to the reliance on a variable-centered approach, previous work cannot address the role of power profiles in which multiple motives coexist within a given individual. As we have argued throughout, documenting different configurations of power motives may yield meaningful differences in terms of how social power motives relate to personality traits.

Similarly, both theory and empirical evidence converge on the ways prestige, dominance, and leadership motives

independently relate to distinct types of social behavior (e.g., Case & Maner, 2014; Suessenbach et al., 2019). However, the behaviors of someone who is both prestige- and dominance-motivated may be different from another person who is purely prestige-motivated. As social power motives represent individuals' need for social influence, we focused our investigation on markers of leader-like behaviors, such as general assertiveness and the tendency to motivate others and delegate responsibilities (Yukl, 2012). Adopting this complex perspective that considers how multiple social power motives may combine within a person may yield important insights into the interplay between all three social power motives, personality, and social outcomes. As such, the second objective of this work was to explore how social power motive profiles relate to personality variables (i.e., HEXACO model of personality), markers of leader behavior (i.e., assertiveness, task delegating and motivating), affiliation (i.e., liking), rank attainment processes (i.e., prestige and dominance), and leader emergence.

1.4 | Overview of current research

We documented social power motive profiles and their correlates across two phases with a first sample of university students in leaderless project design teams (Sample 1) and a second sample of working adults (Sample 2). Participants in Sample 1 worked in task-oriented teams to develop an engineering-based product for an organizational partner located in the same city as the university. These teams did not have a formally appointed leader and were formed by the course instructor. Team members provided peer ratings in which they evaluated each other using a round-robin design, which allowed us to gain insight into how people's self-reported social power motives related to their peer-rated social behaviors in an ecologically valid team context. Sample 2 relied on self-ratings (no peer ratings) to evaluate how different profiles relate to other stable personal variables.

As latent profile analysis (LPA) is data dependent, the number and nature of the profiles cannot be determined beforehand. Aligned with previous work, we did not propose any formal hypotheses regarding the profiles (e.g., Espinoza et al., 2020). As outlined above, however, we have general expectations for how specific configurations of social power motives relate to individual differences and social outcomes. In Phase 1, we used latent profile analysis (LPA) to identify social power motive profiles in both samples. In Phase 2, we evaluated how the social power motive profiles related to personality and individual difference variables (Sample 1) and social

outcomes (Sample 2). All code and data required to reproduce our results can be found at <https://osf.io/2ms8k> (Li et al., 2023).

2 | METHOD

2.1 | Participants and procedure

2.1.1 | Sample 1

Participants were undergraduate university students enrolled in an engineering project design course. Data were collected across two years of separate cohorts. Social power motives were assessed before team assignment during an intake questionnaire (i.e., September 2020/2021). Individuals were assigned to teams at the beginning of the winter term (i.e., January 2021/2022). The criterion testing phase (i.e., evaluating the personality correlates and leadership outcomes of the profile solutions), which used round-robin data, was collected two weeks prior to the final project deadline (i.e., March 2020/2021). The course instructor randomly assigned teams. Due to the gender composition of the sample (i.e., 72.3% being male), the instructor assigned none or at least two females in each team to avoid having groups with a sole female.

After exclusions based on response acquiescence, 1088 participants (94.44%) were retained for the primary analyses of social power motives ($M_{age} = 18.09$ years, $SD = 0.95$ years; male = 72.3%, female = 26.7%, non-binary = 1%). Participants self-reported their work experience ($M = 16.65$ months, $SD = 19.91$) and ethnicity (46.52% white; 19.71% Asian; 12.76% South Asian). We extracted target effects, perceiver effects, and self-ratings (more on each of these below) for the social behavior measures from 964 individuals across 237 teams (each team consisted of 4–7 teammates). As the upper bound of the sample size was constrained by course enrolment in the team-based project design course, the maximum number of eligible participants was targeted for recruitment in the present research.

2.1.2 | Sample 2

Participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk for a brief survey and paid \$1.00 USD. To eliminate bots and increase data quality, participants completed a math equation to access the questionnaire and another to receive their validation code upon completion (e.g., $3 + 7 = ?$). An instructional attention check (e.g., please select disagree) was built into the survey to

detect response acquiescence and exclude low-quality responses. After excluding 187 participants who failed these procedures, the final sample included 466 participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.74$ years, $SD_{\text{aged}} = 11.51$; male = 54.80%; female = 43.20%, no gender declared = 2%) The majority of the sample was either a paid employee (75.5%) or self-employed (15.7%), with a variety of industries represented (e.g., retail = 11.4%, scientific or technical services = 9.9%, finance or insurance = 8%, health care or social assistance = 7.7%; professional, educational services = 5.6%, manufacturing = 5.2%).

Statistical power in LPA relies on class separation and the number of classes. However, researchers rarely know the exact class to aim for before conducting the analysis (Tein et al., 2013). Research has generally pointed to a sample size of 500 to extract stable profiles (Espinoza et al., 2020; Spurk et al., 2020). This leads us to believe that the 1088 participants in sample 1 and 466 participants in sample 2 are sufficient to extract meaningful profiles.

2.2 | Measures

2.2.1 | Dominance, prestige, and leadership motives (Samples 1 and 2)

Participants in both samples completed the Dominance, Prestige, and Leadership social power motives questionnaire (DoPL; Suessenbach et al., 2019). Each motive is measured by six items: dominance (e.g., “I enjoy bending others to my will” and “I enjoy manipulating others”, Sample 1: $\alpha = 0.82$; Sample 2: $\alpha = 0.90$), prestige (e.g., “I feel sad if nobody recognizes my unique talents and abilities” and “I am happy when I can present my achievements to others.”; Sample 1: $\alpha = 0.76$; Sample 2: $\alpha = 0.83$), leadership (e.g., “I make a good leader” and “I feel confident when directing the activities of others.”; Sample 1: $\alpha = 0.85$; Sample 2: $\alpha = 0.90$). All items were anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), except for two prestige items that were anchored by 1 (*not important to me*) to 6 (*extremely important to me*).³

2.2.2 | Social behavior in teams (Sample 1)

To assess the *actual* acquisition of social rank in the eyes of peers (beyond the motives that people might hold), participants completed an abridged version of the dominance and prestige peer-report measure using a round-robin design (Cheng et al., 2013). Two items assessed dominance (i.e., “[name] is willing to use aggressive tactics to get their way”; “[name]” often tries to get their

own way regardless of what others in the group may want”) and two items assessed prestige (e.g., “members of your group respect and admire [name]”; “[name]’s unique talents and abilities are recognized by others in the group”). Response options ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*).

Participants also rated their group members on three markers of leadership: assertiveness (e.g., “[name] is assertive”), directive behaviors (e.g., “[name] delegates tasks to other”), and ability to motivate others (e.g., “[name] motivates other team members”). Participants also completed round-robin ratings of likeability (“I find [name] likeable”) and leadership emergence (“I view [name] as a leader of our team”). Response options for these variables ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) in the year 2021–2022 and from 1 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very much*) in the year 2020–2021. To combine data from both cohorts, we calculated standardized scores prior to the social relations modeling. Social relations modeling via the TripleR package (Back & Kenny, 2010; Schönbrodt et al., 2012) was used to extract target effects (i.e., how someone is generally perceived by others), perceiver effects (i.e., how someone generally perceives others), and self-ratings. Dyad-specific variance and error variance are confounded for the single-item peer ratings. However, these two sources of variance were partitioned using a latent variable approach when estimating prestige and dominance target effects.

2.2.3 | HEXACO personality assessment (Sample 2)

The 60-item HEXACO personality measure (Ashton & Lee, 2009) was used because it expands on the Big-Five personality traits by adding honesty-humility as a fundamental dimension, which is particularly relevant to social power motives. As such, we assessed individual differences in honesty-humility (e.g., “I wouldn’t use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if I thought it would succeed.”; $\alpha = 0.73$), emotionality (e.g., “I would feel afraid if I had to travel in bad weather conditions.”; $\alpha = 0.81$), extraversion (e.g., “I prefer jobs that involve active social interaction to those that involve working alone.”; $\alpha = 0.83$), agreeableness (e.g., “I rarely hold a grudge, even against people who have badly wronged me.”; $\alpha = 0.80$), conscientiousness (e.g., “I plan ahead and organize things, to avoid scrambling at the last minute.”; $\alpha = 0.81$), and openness to experience (e.g., “I’m interested in learning about the history and politics of other countries.”; $\alpha = 0.81$). Participants indicated their agreement with various self-referential statements,

with response options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

2.2.4 | NARQ and self-esteem assessment (Sample 2)

The 18-item Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire was used because it assesses both the agentic (i.e., admiration) and antagonistic (rivalry) forms of narcissism (Back et al., 2013). A sample item for narcissistic admiration was “I deserve to be seen as a great personality.” ($\alpha=0.89$) and for narcissistic rivalry was “Most people won’t achieve anything.” ($\alpha=0.91$). Self-esteem was measured using a 10-item questionnaire developed by Rosenberg (1965). Sample item was “I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.” ($\alpha=0.94$). Participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

2.3 | Analyses

2.3.1 | Phase 1: Identifying social power motive profiles

Mplus 8.7 with maximum likelihood estimation with standard errors robust to non-normality was used throughout (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017). Factor scores were used as indicators for the latent profile analysis to control for measurement error (Morin et al., 2016). We extracted factor scores for dominance, prestige, and leadership motives measured using exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM) with target rotation. ESEM with target rotation was used because it does not assume zero cross-loadings while nevertheless enabling researchers to capitalize on a priori knowledge of the factor structure (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2009). With oblique target rotation, items load freely onto their theoretically intended factor and cross-loadings are set to approximate zero (Browne, 2001). We evaluated previously validated three-factor structure to ascertain if dominance, prestige, and leadership motives could be statistically distinguished. The factor scores were used as indicators in the subsequent latent profile analysis to control for measurement error (Morin et al., 2016).

To identify subgroups who differed in their motives for dominance, prestige, and leadership, we used LPA to generate an increasing number of profile solutions—ranging from two to eight profiles. Multiple starting values were used to protect against converging on a local maximum rather than a true maximum likelihood solution, with

5000 random sets of start values, 200 iterations for each random start, and the 200 best solutions retained for the final solution (Hipp & Bauer, 2006). To evaluate the best-fitting profile solution, we assessed multiple fit values. For the Akaike Information Criteria, the Consistent AIC, the Bayesian Information Criterion, and the sample-size adjusted BIC, lower values indicate better model fit. Following recommendations by Meyer and Morin et al. (2016), we plotted these statistical values to determine when decreases in statistical fit criteria began to flatten. We also considered nested model tests (i.e., Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio Test and the Lo, Mendell, and Rubin [2001] likelihood ratio test [LMR]), which establish whether a solution with k profiles fits the data better than a profile solution with $k-1$ profiles (McLachlan & Peel, 2000). Although not a primary factor in our decision-making process, entropy provides insight into the accuracy with which individuals can be classified into their true profile. Once a range of potential profile solutions were identified, we considered how theoretically meaningful profiles were in terms of their shape and distinctiveness. As profiles with a small number of cases may not be meaningful, we avoided solutions where the smallest profile membership was below 1% (Spurk et al., 2020).

Note that rather than assuming profile invariance across samples, we generated profile solutions for Sample 1 (student project design team sample) and Sample 2 (adult working sample) separately. If an equal number of profiles were identified as the optimal solution for each respective sample, this would meet the criterion for configural invariance and provide a basis for imposing additional model constraints to evaluate multi-group profile invariance (i.e., structural similarity, and distributional similarity). However, as conditions for configural invariance were not met, we did not proceed with additional profile similarity tests.

2.3.2 | Phase 2: How social power motives relate to social behavior in teams and personality

The next phase entailed evaluating the personality correlates and leadership outcomes of the profile solution. Using the bias-adjusted automatic BCH procedure in Mplus (Bolck et al., 2004; Vermunt, 2010), we assessed mean-level differences across pairs of profiles for markers of leadership, likeability, leader emergence, prestige, and dominance (Sample 1), and personality variables (Sample 2). We also report the zero-order associations between social power motives, social behaviors, leadership outcomes, and personality traits.

3 | RESULTS

In Phase 1, we tested the profile configurations in both samples. In Phase 2, we evaluated how profiles differed in terms of social behavior in teams (Sample 1) and personality variables (Sample 2).

3.1 | Phase 1 profile analyses

The three-factor ESEM model generally fit the data well in both Sample 1 ($\chi^2(102)=555.98$, CFI=0.92, TLI=0.88, SRMR=0.04, and RMSEA=0.06, 90% CI [0.06, 0.07], $N=1088$), and Sample 2 ($\chi^2(102)=319.91$, $p<0.001$; CFI=0.94, TLI=0.91, SRMR=0.03, and RMSEA=0.07, 90% CI [0.06, 0.08], $N=466$). The three social power motives correlated with each other. Prestige was positively associated with dominance (Sample 1: $r=0.40$, $p<0.001$; Sample 2: $r=0.34$, $p<0.001$) and leadership (Sample 1: $r=0.42$, $p<0.001$; Sample 2: $r=0.32$, $p<0.001$). Dominance is also positively related to leadership (Sample 1: $r=0.22$, $p<0.001$; Sample 2: $r=0.14$, $p<0.001$). The factor scores from each ESEM were then used as indicators for the profile analysis.

For both samples, we conducted latent profile analysis with two to eight profiles solution iteratively in MPlus (Meyer & Morin, 2016). The profile solution fit indices are shown in Tables 1 and 2 for Samples 1 and 2, respectively, which were used to determine the optimal number of profiles (Nylund et al., 2007). In Sample 1, the magnitude of decrease in model fit statistics leveled off when moving beyond the three-profile solution. The minimum profile size was 12.89% and the entropy value was 0.63, which indicates each participant could be classified into one of the profiles with a reasonable degree of accuracy. In Sample 2, the magnitude of decrease in model fit statistics leveled off when moving beyond the four-profile solution. The minimum profile size was 18.88% and the entropy value was 0.74. Figures 1 and 2

depict the social power motive profiles extracted from Samples 1 and 2.

3.2 | Social power motive profiles (Sample 1)

Three distinct profiles emerged from Sample 1. The *weak social power motive profile* accounted for 21.42% of the sample, which was characterized by below-average levels of dominance, prestige, and leadership motives. The *prestigious leadership profile* accounted for 64.72% of the sample, making it the most prevalent profile. Participants who fit in this profile were characterized by above-average levels of prestige and leadership motives and below-average dominance motives. Finally, the *Ultra-dominance profile* was characterized by a high level of dominance and an above-average level of prestige and leadership motive, which had the smallest size with 13.86% of the sample.

3.3 | Social power motive profiles (Sample 2)

As presented in Figure 2, the four-profile solution for the working adults sample consists of the following: *Weak social power motives profile* is the least prevalent profile (18.88%). As indicated by its very low levels of dominance, prestige, and leadership, participants who fall into this profile have weak motivation to gain social power. *Below-average social power motives profile* is distinct based on its moderately below-average levels of dominance, prestige, and leadership motives, and is the most prevalent profile with 34.55% of participants. The *prestigious leadership profile* is the second most prevalent profile (26.18%). It is characterized by moderately high levels of prestige and leadership motives with slightly below-average level of dominance motive. The *ultra-dominance profile* is distinctive for its extremely

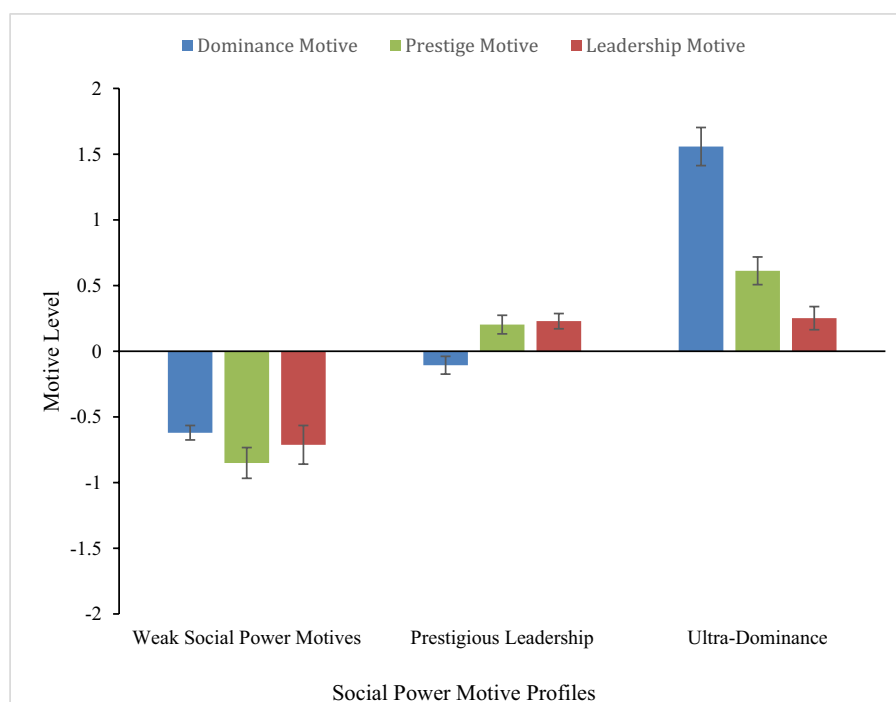
TABLE 1 Model fit for the 2- to 8-profile solutions of social power motives for Sample 1.

	LL	AIC	CAIC	BIC	Entropy	LMR	Min. class
2 Profiles	-4261.57	8543.14	8582.70	8593.06	0.73	200.25***	18.47%
3 Profiles	-4198.96	8425.91	8481.29	8495.80	0.63	120.91***	12.89%
4 Profiles	-4180.87	8397.74	8468.94	8487.60	0.63	34.92*	4.96%
5 Profiles	-4170.62	8385.25	8472.27	8495.07	0.68	19.79*	0.46%
6 Profiles	-4161.52	8375.03	8477.88	8504.83	0.71	17.59	1.56%
7 Profiles	-4148.31	8356.62	8475.29	8506.38	0.74	25.50*	1.10%
8 Profiles	-4141.23	8350.46	8484.95	8520.19	0.75	13.673	1.10%

*** $p<0.001$; ** $p<0.01$; * $p<0.05$.

TABLE 2 Model fit for the 2- to 8-profile solutions of social power motives for Sample 2.

	LL	AIC	CAIC	BIC	Entropy	LMR	Min. Class
2 Profiles	−1773.50	3566.99	3606.55	3608.43	0.71	271.39***	40.13%
3 Profiles	−1706.12	3440.24	3495.62	3498.26	0.76	129.48***	20.17%
4 Profiles	−1683.13	3402.27	3473.47	3476.86	0.74	44.18*	18.88%
5 Profiles	−1665.84	3375.68	3462.70	3466.85	0.74	33.24	17.60%
6 Profiles	−1652.07	3356.15	3458.99	3463.89	0.73	26.45	13.09%
7 Profiles	−1641.31	3342.63	3461.30	3466.95	0.73	20.68	12.88%
8 Profiles	−1629.92	3327.85	3462.34	3468.75	0.74	21.89	7.30%

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.**FIGURE 1** The three-profile solution of social power motives with standard error bars for Sample 1.

high level of dominance motive, moderately high level of prestige, and slightly above-average leadership motives (20.39%).

3.4 | Phase 2: How social power motives relate to social behavior, leadership, and personality traits

Table 3 shows the zero-order correlations between social power motives (i.e., dominance, prestige, and leadership motives) and peer-rated social outcomes in Sample 1. Taken individually, dominance and prestige motives did not correlate significantly with any peer-rated social outcomes (except for dominance motive and acquired dominance). Only leadership motive (and less so the prestige motive) was correlated with markers of key leadership

behavior, including assertiveness, delegation, motivating others, and acquired leadership.

Table 4 summarizes the zero-order correlations between the social power motives and personality variables in Sample 2. All three motives positively correlated with narcissistic admiration and rivalry. However, dominance was also negatively related to self-esteem. Furthermore, all three social power motives negatively correlated with honesty-humility, but the strongest negative association was found for the dominance motive. Whereas both dominance and prestige motives negatively correlated with conscientiousness, only the dominance motive negatively correlated with agreeableness and openness to experience. Whereas both prestige and leadership motives positively correlated with extraversion, only the leadership motive negatively correlated with emotionality.

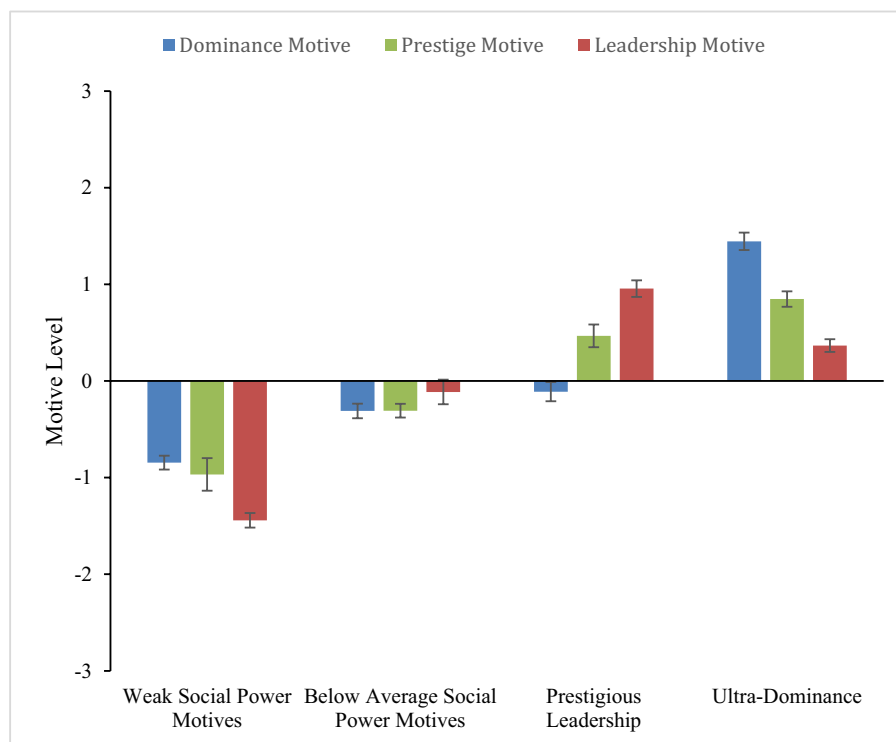


FIGURE 2 The four-profile solution of social power motives with standard error bars for Sample 2.

Social outcomes (peer-reported)	Dominance motive	Prestige motive	Leadership motive
Assertiveness	0.02	0.07	0.25***
Delegation	-0.07	0.08	0.21***
Motivating	-0.09	0.01	0.18***
Likeability	-0.07	-0.02	0.07
Leadership acquired	-0.04	0.05	0.24***
Prestige acquired	-0.04	0.08	0.05
Dominance acquired	0.20***	0.03	0.03

Note: Factor scores of self-reported social power motives and group-mean-centered target effects of social outcomes were used in the analysis.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

TABLE 3 Zero-order correlations between social power motives and social outcomes in Sample 1.

To illustrate the ways leadership behaviors, likeability, leadership emergence, and dominance and prestige processes differed across social power motive profiles, we conducted Wald's tests mean-level comparisons between profiles. The detailed results of the Wald's tests are reported in Table 5. We provide a brief summary of key findings in the following section.

The ultra-dominant profile scored higher on peer-rated assertiveness and dominance than the weak social power motive profile. Although people in the ultra-dominant profile also saw themselves exhibiting more leadership behaviors (i.e., delegation, and motivating) and emerging as the team leader, the actual reputation of these individuals (i.e., target effects) diverged from

these positive self-views. In fact, those in the ultra-dominance profile were viewed as less motivating than those in the prestigious leadership profile. In contrast, the positive self-views associated with the prestigious leadership profile were more aligned with their actual reputation in the team. The prestige leadership profile scored higher on both self and peer ratings of assertiveness and leader emergence compared to the weak social power motive profile. The prestigious leadership profile was also viewed as more dominant than people with weak social power motives. As it pertains to perceiver effects, ultra-dominant individuals tended to view others as more dominant, suggesting they see interactions through a more antagonistic and hostile lens.

TABLE 4 Zero-order correlations between social power motives and personal traits in Sample 2.

Personality traits (self-reported)	Dominance motive	Prestige motive	Leadership motive
Self-Esteem	−0.24***	−0.02	0.34***
Narcissistic admiration	0.65***	0.70***	0.58***
Narcissistic rivalry	0.81***	0.45***	0.16***
Honesty-humility	−0.61***	−0.46***	−0.19***
Emotionality	−0.04	0.07	−0.25***
Extraversion	0.02	0.25***	0.61***
Agreeableness	−0.36***	−0.09	0.01
Conscientiousness	−0.42***	−0.17*	0.10
Openness to new experiences	−0.30***	−0.07	0.03

Note: Factor scores of self-reported social power motives and aggregated raw scores of self-reported personalities were used in the analysis.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

TABLE 5 Mean factor score differences in social outcomes across profiles (Sample 1).

Social outcomes	Source of outcome data	Weak social power motive profile (P1)	Prestigious leadership profile (P2)	Ultra-dominance profile (P3)	Statistically significant profile comparisons
Assertiveness	Target	−0.15 (0.07)	0.10 (0.03)	0.10 (0.08)	P3 > P1; P2 > P1
	Self	−0.35 (0.11)	0.10 (0.05)	0.15 (0.12)	P3 > P1; P2 > P1
	Perceiver	−0.06 (0.10)	−0.05 (0.05)	0.08 (0.10)	~
Delegation	Target	−0.13 (0.06)	0.11 (0.03)	−0.00 (0.08)	P2 > P1
	Self	−0.21 (0.12)	0.08 (0.05)	0.17 (0.13)	P3 > P1
	Perceiver	0.03 (0.11)	−0.04 (0.05)	0.07 (0.11)	~
Motivating	Target	−0.02 (0.07)	0.10 (0.03)	−0.08 (0.08)	P2 > P3
	Self	−0.18 (0.08)	0.03 (0.03)	0.17 (0.09)	P3 > P1
	Perceiver	−0.05 (0.07)	−0.01 (0.03)	−0.02 (0.08)	~
Likeability	Target	0.01 (0.05)	0.04 (0.02)	−0.09 (0.06)	~
	Self	−0.21 (0.08)	0.06 (0.03)	0.01 (0.10)	P2 > P1
	Perceiver	−0.06 (0.07)	0.03 (0.03)	−0.12 (0.09)	~
Leader emergence	Target	−0.16 (0.09)	0.18 (0.04)	0.03 (0.11)	P2 > P1
	Self	−0.39 (0.11)	0.14 (0.04)	0.18 (0.11)	P3 > P1; P2 > P1
	Perceiver	0.11 (0.09)	−0.06 (0.03)	0.01 (0.09)	~
Prestige	Target	−0.02 (0.06)	0.10 (0.03)	−0.05 (0.06)	~
	Self	−0.28 (0.09)	0.06 (0.04)	0.10 (0.11)	P3 > P1; P2 > P1
	Perceiver	−0.16 (0.08)	0.04 (0.04)	−0.11 (0.10)	~
Dominance	Target	−0.09 (0.04)	0.03 (0.02)	0.11 (0.07)	P3 > P1; P2 > P1
	Self	−0.16 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.05)	0.64 (0.19)	P3 > P2; P3 > P1
	Perceiver	−0.17 (0.10)	−0.04 (0.05)	0.43 (0.16)	P3 > P2; P3 > P1

Note: P1: weak social power motive profile; P2: prestigious leadership profile; P3: ultra-dominance profile; social outcomes were group-mean-centered; $N = 964$; standard error in brackets.

In the work sample, we examined the mean differences among profiles in terms of self-esteem, narcissism, and the HEXACO personality dimensions. Results are summarized in Table 6.

The prestigious leadership profile reported significantly higher self-esteem than the other profiles. Relative to all other profiles, ultra-dominant individuals tended to have an inflated self-view (i.e., higher levels of narcissistic

TABLE 6 Mean raw score differences in personality across profiles (Sample 2).

	Weak social power motive profile (P1)	Below-average social power motive profile (P2)	Prestigious leadership profile (P3)	Ultra-dominance profile (P4)	Statistically significant profile comparisons
Self-esteem	4.73 (0.18)	5.06 (0.13)	6.10 (0.13)	4.42 (0.12)	P1,2,3 > P4; P3 > P1&P2
Narcissistic admiration	2.13 (0.07)	3.08 (0.08)	4.04 (0.11)	4.63 (0.10)	P4 > P3 > P2 > P1
Narcissistic rivalry	1.99 (0.11)	2.47 (0.09)	2.18 (0.11)	4.63 (0.14)	P4 > P1,2,3; P2 > P1
Honesty-humility	3.90 (0.08)	3.53 (0.06)	3.43 (0.07)	2.77 (0.05)	P1 > P2 = P3 > P4
Emotionality	3.29 (0.11)	3.08 (0.07)	2.85 (0.08)	3.07 (0.05)	P1 > P3; P4 > P3
Extraversion	2.53 (0.09)	3.06 (0.06)	3.92 (0.08)	3.16 (0.05)	P3 > P4 = P2 > P1
Agreeableness	3.59 (0.09)	3.32 (0.06)	3.64 (0.08)	3.06 (0.06)	P3 = P1 > P2 > P4
Conscientiousness	3.87 (0.08)	3.79 (0.05)	4.13 (0.07)	3.22 (0.07)	P3 > P1 = P2 > P4
Openness to new experiences	3.68 (0.10)	3.70 (0.07)	3.84 (0.08)	3.18 (0.07)	P3 = P2 = P1 > P4

Note: $N = 466$. Standard error in brackets.

admiration and rivalry) coupled with lower self-esteem. These findings are consistent with prior variable-centered evidence pointing to elevated narcissism among dominant individuals and higher self-esteem among prestigious individuals (Cheng et al., 2010). In terms of the HEXACO personality dimensions, people with a weaker drive for social power (i.e., P1) scored higher on honesty-humility relative to the other profiles. The ultra-dominant profile scored the lowest on honesty-humility relative to the other profiles. The prestigious leadership profile scored low on emotionality (thus higher on emotional stability) relative to other profiles. Furthermore, the prestigious leadership profile showed higher levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience than ultra-dominant individuals, broadly consistent with prior findings (Cheng et al., 2010).

4 | DISCUSSION

Researchers have long alluded to how people differ in the extent to which they hold unique combinations of different power motives (Cheng & Tracy, 2014; McClelland, 1965), yet such motives have traditionally been examined through a unidimensional lens. Although moderate and positive correlations between the dominant, prestige, and leadership social power motives have been observed under a variable-centered approach, it is unclear how such motives combine within people. Adopting a more holistic, multidimensional view of social power motives under a person-centered approach (Suessenbach et al., 2019), this study documented power motive typologies that classify individuals on the basis of the similarity in their scores on dominance, prestige, and leadership

motives. Across samples, we identified profiles characterized by an ultra-dominance profile (i.e., highest levels of dominance relative to the sample means alongside strong motives for prestige and leadership), a prestigious leadership profile (i.e., above-average levels of prestige and leadership motives with an attenuated drive for dominance), and a weak social power motive (i.e., low on all three motives). Moreover, these distinct configurations of social power motives were systematically associated with differences in personality traits and social outcomes.

The profile solutions suggest, despite the urge to view dominance and prestige as mutually exclusive motives, those with the strongest prestige orientation also tend to have the strongest dominance orientation (i.e., ultra-dominance profile)—a finding replicated across both samples. Such individuals appear to have a general desire for social influence by whatever means necessary. Pursuing status, to them, can involve an amalgamation of the coercive tactics associated with dominance and garnering respect from the prestige strategy (Cheng et al., 2022; Suessenbach et al., 2019; Zeng et al., 2022). The indiscriminate pursuit of power suggests a link between the desire to gain social influence and the dominance behavioral system. This system is a biologically based rank regulation system linked to psychopathology when present at excessive levels (Johnson et al., 2012). In the profile solutions, our results did not reveal an ultra-prestige profile. That is, the highest levels of prestige are accompanied by a strong dominance orientation, and the profile with the strongest social power motive is characterized by an excessive desire to dominate others. The dominance behavioral system, guiding goals, and influencing psychological factors (Johnson et al., 2012) may help explain the ultra-dominance profile. Thus, combining our results with the

previous theorizing suggests that a desire for dominance lies at the core component of highly motivated individuals regarding social power motives.

With the highest levels of prestige accompanying high levels of dominance, these profiles may clarify why some dominant leaders induce both fear and respect (Chen et al., 2021; Cheng et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2022). Individuals who fit this profile are likely less concerned with “how” status is attained, as long as they are climbing up the social ladder. As mentioned above, pursuing status can involve a combination of coercive tactics and garnering respect (Suessenbach et al., 2019). However, the extent to which they can effectively employ each strategy is questionable. In the sample of students involved in project design teams, although those in the ultra-dominant profile rated themselves as more motivating than others, their teammates did not see them as better at achieving these outcomes. People may be blinded to their shortcomings by a desire to maintain their standing (e.g., Sedikides & Gregg, 2008). Moreover, despite being seen as dominant (and assertive)—a reliable predictor of social rank attainment (Cheng et al., 2013)—the ultra-dominance profile did not predict leader emergence within the group. As dominance wanes in effectiveness across time in cooperative group settings (Redhead et al., 2019), the acquaintance-level and egalitarian context in the current sample might explain the inability of those with an unbridled desire for coercive control to acquire such influence, which instead depends on whether others deem one as possessing coercive threat (Cheng et al., 2022).

Out of all the profiles, the prestigious leadership profile highlights how some individuals are discriminant in their desire to influence others, pursuing specific avenues. As the prestigious leadership profile was characterized by above-average levels of prestige in the absence of high levels of dominance, this suggests it is possible to have one without the other. This supports the notion that some individuals prefer to influence others through respect and admiration, rather than shows of force (Case et al., 2018). Despite the potential role of dominance in precarious times (Kakkar & Sivathan, 2017) and competitive settings (McClanahan et al., 2021), in our sample of egalitarian teams, this profile may be more effective in navigating the social hierarchy. In these teams, the prestigious leadership profile predicted leader emergence and markers of leader behaviors. An important point to emphasize is that this profile tended to have a weaker drive for both prestige and dominance than the ultra-dominance profile, but this profile was characterized by being preferentially attuned to acquire influence via prestige and leadership, rather than dominance. As such, properties of the group and the social context (e.g., level of competition within

the group, presence or absence of external threats to the group, degree to which there is the potential for inequality of resources between members) may influence the effectiveness of each social power motive profile in moving up a given hierarchy.

Beyond the structural characteristics of the profiles, evaluating how these profiles related to a range of outcomes in undergraduate student project design teams (Sample 1) points out that these characteristics may be more influential in how individuals view themselves and are viewed by others, rather than how they view others. For example, all three profiles viewed their teammates the same regarding their levels of delegation, motivation, likeability, and prestige. In other words, there are minimal significant difference in perceiver effects across the profiles. The only notable difference is that those who tend to be classified as fitting in the ultra-dominance profile tend to view others as higher in dominance. These results suggest individuals high in dominance are viewed as more dominant and tend to be more sensitive to dominance in others. Two potential processes may help explain this phenomenon. These individuals may lean toward viewing interactions through a hostile lens, having their own personal attributes impacting how they see others and others' actions. Additionally, ultra-dominance individuals may evoke dominant reactions from others. In contrast, there are consistent differences between the profiles on how they view themselves on the leadership behaviors/characteristics.

The social power motive profiles differed across a range of individual differences, including narcissism, self-esteem, and the HEXACO personality dimensions (Sample 2, working adults). The ultra-dominance profile possessed a sense of superiority and entitlement, reporting the highest levels of both narcissistic admiration and rivalry, despite reporting a lower self-esteem than the other profiles. This finding supports the notion that narcissism and self-esteem do not always go together (Brummelman et al., 2016). Despite not assessing leadership behaviors in Sample 2, based on the similarity of this profile to the ultra-dominance profile in Sample 1, we can speculate that as getting ahead and getting along are important to leadership (Marinova et al., 2013), being low on desirable qualities (e.g., self-esteem, honesty-humility, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness) may help explain why these individuals, who covet power, may not always succeed in their efforts to lead. Similarly, the prestige and leadership profile of the student sample is rated higher on leader emergence and tends to possess positive qualities in the work sample (e.g., self-esteem, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness). However, this is constrained to a more egalitarian context. Although ultra-dominance

may be problematic in egalitarian settings, it could be more 'functional' for getting ahead when the context de-emphasizes 'getting along'. Overall, the personality differences further support the distinctiveness of the profiles.

Highlighting the benefits of the person-centered approach, focusing on one motive in isolation disregards the influence of other motives that may exist within an individual. This difference is visible when contrasting the profile comparisons to the zero-order correlations. Regarding Sample 1, for example, profiles with the highest leadership motive would be anticipated to be the most likeable and most likely to emerge as a leader due to the modest positive zero-order correlations (Table 3). However, the profile comparisons indicate this is only the case when the leadership motive is accompanied by lower, rather than higher, levels of dominance (Table 4). Another example, regarding Sample 2, those lower in dominance should be higher on agreeableness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (see Table 4). Upon looking at the profile comparisons, it is evident that the relation between personality traits and dominance is influenced by the presence of the other social power motives (Table 6). Even if someone has above-average dominance, when accompanied by prestige and leadership, they tend to be rated similar to those with lower dominance on these traits. Succinctly, the effect of an individual motive is altered by the presence of other motives. As summarized by Bergman and Magnusson (1997), the variable-centered approaches "treat the variable, not the pattern, as the main analytical unit" (p. 311).

The support for the covariation within individuals emphasizes the potential value of the person-centered approach. As with other multidimensional concepts, measuring one global factor (e.g., one social power motive) or each variable in isolation does not provide a complete understanding of how social power motives manifest within people. In this case, using a variable-centered approach paints an incomplete picture of an individual's pursuit of influence. Uncovering the different profiles adds to our understanding individuals' behavior in gaining and maintaining social influence and acknowledges the interplay between these distinct social power motives. As seen in this study, depending on the combination of motives, individuals may be more or less inclined to engage in certain behaviors.

4.1 | Limitations and future directions

Studying ecologically valid teams allowed us to examine the interpersonal outcomes associated with social power

motives. However, this study used project design teams comprised of a specific demographic, first-year engineering students. Such a specific demographic does not allow for smooth generalizations to the rest of the population. When we examined the profile solution for a work-related sample, we found similarities between the two samples. However, a different number of profiles emerged. Future research should examine different populations, in different environments, and regarding different factors (e.g., leader effectiveness). Additionally, with the evidence that social power motives do covary within individuals, future research should revisit old studies accounting for the covariation.

Although, as mentioned, the project design teams provided a rich source of information, these egalitarian teams did not have any formal hierarchy or assigned leaders. Future research should replicate the student sample study with organizational leaders and their subordinates. Possessing a formal leadership position may alter how the different profiles enact leadership behaviors and how often. Regarding workplace samples, the levels of intragroup competition and conflict, as well as the level of inequality in resource distribution may be important contextual factors that could influence the effectiveness of different strategies/motive combinations. Additionally, investigating an organizational sample in this manner would allow for the detection of who/which profile is related to obtaining formal leadership positions.

Considering the differences found in the profile solutions of the student and work samples, we can only speculate on any overlap. Future research could benefit from examining key criterion variables across different populations to detect any differences. Furthermore, analyzing a larger, more diverse, and representative sample, may help make more general conclusions about the results. A related point is the probabilistic and sample-specific nature of LPA for identifying subgroups within a sample population (Espinoza et al., 2020). As such, there is the possibility that other profile combinations exist. For example, individuals may possess other hypothetical profiles such as ultra-prestige or ultra-leadership orientations. The profile solutions in the current study, although potentially not completely generalizable, are still informative. A worthwhile future direction may be systematically examining the conditions under which the profile solutions change and why the shift occurs. Although possessing a different number of profile solutions, similarities can be seen between certain profiles. As we did not have access to the same criterion variables for both samples, future work should build upon this making more connections and distinctions between groups.

5 | CONCLUSION

In summary, the present study's results illustrate how social power motives covary within individuals. Taking a person-centered approach, this study explored the structure of social power motives, providing a foundation for future research to build on. Additionally, we identified three profiles that were consistent across our two samples: weak social power motives, prestige leadership, and ultra dominance. These profiles are related to personality characteristics and social outcomes in meaningful ways. Whereas those in the prestigious leadership profile were more likely to emerge as a leader, those classified as ultra-dominance profile tended to (inaccurately) believe they acquired influence in the group. Moreover, the social power motive profiles also differed on variables of self-regard (self-esteem, narcissism) and the HEXACO personality dimensions, with ultra dominance generally corresponding to the lower levels of agreeableness, honesty-humility, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, and higher on the potentially "double-edged" traits (i.e., narcissism). Overall, the current study suggests the relationship between the social power motives is more complex and dynamic than previously described. These findings highlight the tremendous utility and promise for future work to adopt a person-centered approach to complement the prevailing variable-centered perspective.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Zhuo Li: Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing original draft; Jennifer Lynch: Formal analysis, Writing original draft; Tianlu Sun: Writing – review and editing; Qamara Rizkyana: Data curation, Writing – review and editing; Joey T. Cheng: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Writing – review and editing; Alex J. Benson: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Supervision, Methodology, Writing – review and editing.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available at <https://osf.io/2ms8k>.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The study was approved by the non-medical research ethics board of Western University.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Although considering the confluence of multiple variables within individuals can provide a richer picture of social power motives, an important critique of latent profile analysis is that reducing a dataset to a small number of probabilistic profiles overlooks the continuous nature of psychological variables and thus carries the risk of oversimplifying the focal construct. We view these analytical approaches as complementary tools and thus report both person-centered and variable-centered analyses to capitalize on their distinct advantages.

² The modest positive association between narcissism and self-esteem primarily applies to agentic narcissism rather than antagonistic narcissism. As such, we used the narcissistic admiration and rivalry concept (Back et al., 2013) to distinguish between the agentic (i.e., admiration pathway of assertive self-promotion) and antagonistic (i.e., rivalry pathway of other derogation) aspects of narcissism. Although both forms of narcissism are strongly attuned to status pursuit, those who score high on narcissistic rivalry may be more inclined to acquire influence through caustic and aggressive means.

³ Astute readers will notice that—while all three motives were administered on 6-point scales—following the original scale development work (Suessenbach et al., 2019), the prestige motive items used different scale anchors from the dominance and leadership motive items. Prior work indicates that elements of a Likert-scale item, including the anchor text and range of numerical ratings, can produce differences in participants' responses (Hartley & Betts, 2010; Heggstad et al., 2019; Schwarz et al., 1991). Thus, future work should attend to this anchor issue and examine whether the current conclusions regarding motive profiles are obtained even when the anchor appearance is standardized across all motive items.

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