

From System Justification to System Condemnation: Antecedents of Attempts to Change Power Hierarchies

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The Powerful Seem To Take Assertive Action

Political Actions



Business Actions



System Justification (Jost & Banaji, 1994)

Lower power individuals psychologically help maintain systems that subordinate them.

Stereotyping + False Consciousness:

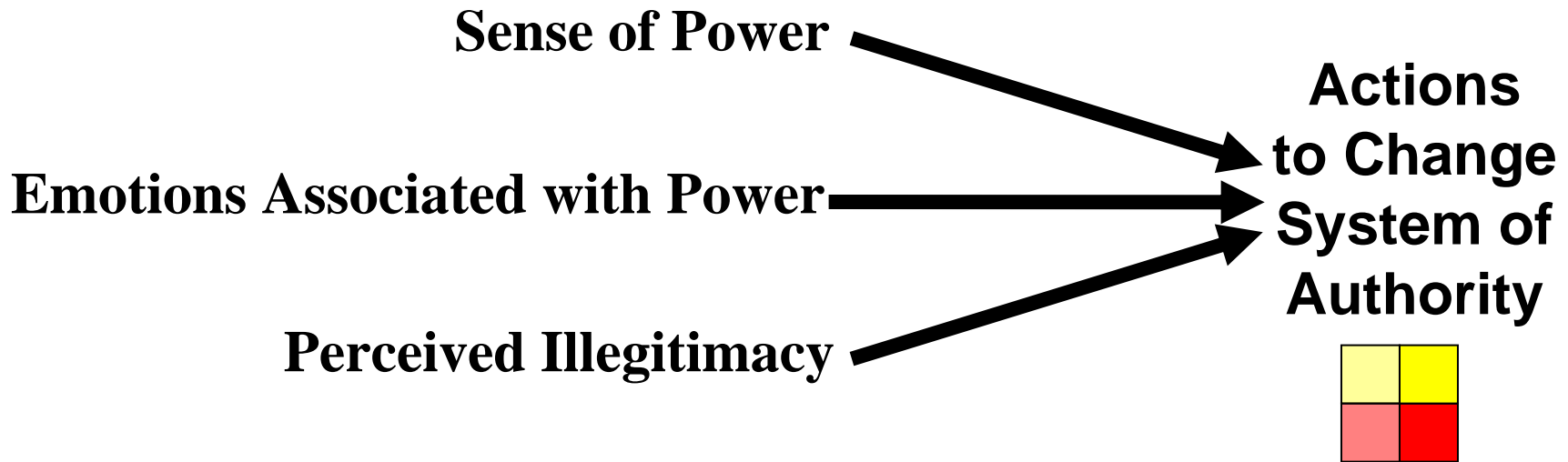
Low power individuals perpetuate beliefs that maintain their disadvantaged position

From Powerless to Action?



Model of Action

What factors lead low power individuals to maintain their subordinated position in a hierarchy or attempt to alter the power hierarchy and its policies?



From Power to Approach and Action

Power is positively associated with Behavioral Approach and negatively associated with Behavioral Inhibition Keltner et al. 2003

- High power individuals are more attentive to rewards and less attentive to threats compared to low power individuals

Positive relationship with

- Variability and range of behaviors Guinote, Judd, & Brauer, 2003
- Approach; extraversion Smith & Bargh, 2007, Anderson et al., 2001
- Action Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003
- Negotiating Magee, Galinsky, & Gruenfeld, 2007
- Risk-taking Anderson & Galinsky, 2006, Maner et al., 2007

Hypothesis 1: Low power individuals who have a high sense of power will be more likely to act against those in positions of authority over them and attempt to change their position in the hierarchy.

Other-focused E



Self-focused E

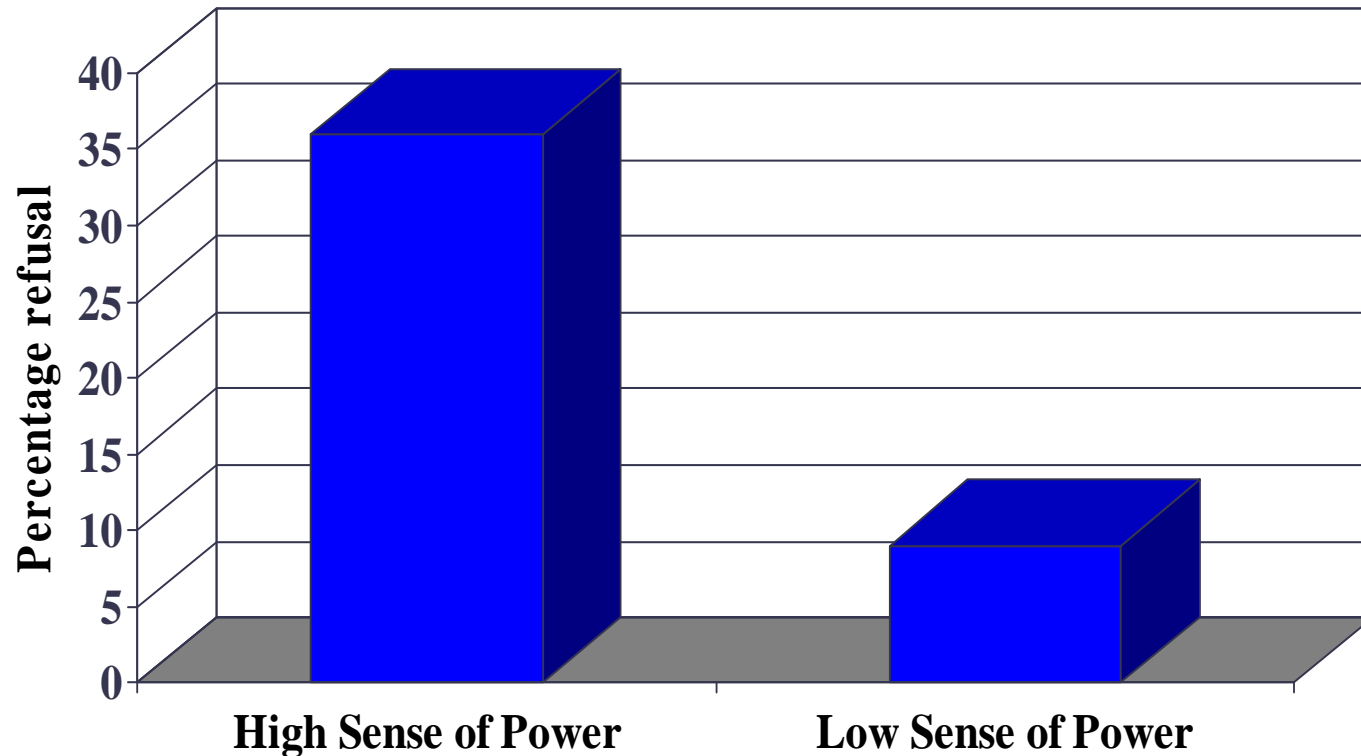


Disobedience to Authority



Sense of Power → Authority Resisted

Priming High Power → Refuse experimenter request to draw an E on forehead



Power primed can be authority resisted.

Emotions and Action

Emotions associated with power

Anger and pride are associated with high power (Tiedens, 2001)

Fear, sadness, and gratitude are associated with low power (Tiedens, 2001)

Emotions associated with action

Fearful individuals passively resign to subordinating situations (Martin, Scully, & Levitt, 1990) and is associated with inaction (Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001).

Anger is associated with assertiveness (Buss & Perry, 1992) and action (Martin, 1993) and produces the same brain activity as other factors in the behavioral approach system (Harmon-Jones & Allen, 1998)

Hypothesis 2: Emotions associated with high power (anger, pride) will predict more actions against a system of authority compared to emotions associated with low power (sadness, fear, gratitude)

Perceived Illegitimacy and Action

Perceived Illegitimacy of a system leads individuals to

- Seek redress through activism Davis & Thompson, 1994
- Appeal court rulings Fuller, Edelman, & Matusik, 2000; Tyler, 1994
- Voice concerns Hirschman, 1970; Morrison & Milliken, 2000
- Change power Tajfel & Turner, 1986

Hypothesis 3: Perceptions of the illegitimacy of the hierarchy will predict more actions against a system of authority.

What Type of Action?

Overt (action is visible and public)

Covert (action is invisible and private)

Normative (act within the rules of the system)

Non-normative (act outside or supersede the rules of the system)

A Typology of Actions to Change System

Covert

Overt

Normative

- Complain in private with colleagues
- Send anonymous e-mail expressing concerns

- Openly discuss grievances
- Proxy statements at annual shareholder meetings

Non-Normative

- Covert sabotage (delete computer files)
- Compensatory or justice-motivated theft.

- Argue loudly with supervisor
- Join a wildcat strike

Exit: Physical and psychological/neglect

Loyalty: Individual mobility

(Hirschman, 1970; Martin, 1986; Morrill, Zald, and Rao, 2002)

World Values Survey

213,211 participants in international field survey

6,521 U.S. participants

Independent Variable: Sense of Power

“Indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out.”

10 point Likert scale

Dependant Variable: Actions to Change System (all overt)

Normative (Sign a petition)

Non-normative (Join a boycott, Demonstrate illegally, Strike illegally)

Sense of Power → Actions to Change System

	International Survey	National Survey
Sign a petition	.077***	.084***
Join a boycott	.037***	.047***
Demonstrate illegally	.034***	.058***
Strike illegally	.033***	n.s.

***** = .0001**

Experimental Manipulation of Sense of Power and Illegitimacy

57 paid undergraduate students

2 x 2 research design

Independent variables:

Sense of Power High or low sense of power autobiographical recall prime

Legitimacy Legitimate or illegitimate promotion policy in scenario

Dependant variables: Behaviors towards Apex

Voice: Overt/covert x normative/non-normative 

Exit: Psychological and physical

Loyalty: Individual mobility

Anger and fear measured

Independent Variable: Sense of Power

Autobiographical recall prime (Galinsky, Gruenfeld & Magee, 2003)

High Sense of Power:

Recall a particular incident in which **you had power over another individual** or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you controlled the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position to evaluate those individuals. Please describe this situation in which you had power—what happened, how you felt, etc.

Low Sense of Power:

Recall a particular incident in which **someone else had power over you**. By power, we mean a situation in which someone had control over your ability to get something you wanted, or was in a position to evaluate you. Please describe this situation in which you did not have power—what happened, how you felt, etc.



Scenario: Shared Info

Apex is a 200-person information services and consulting services firm. Apex has been serving a similar client base for 25 years and its profits, size and market have remained relatively stable. You have been an employee of Apex Corporation for 3 years. You are a Service Representative, which means that you supervise Junior Service Representatives and manage accounts. You have reached the highest position you can reach before entering upper management. Your responsibilities differ from those of Senior Managers (one level above you) because Senior Managers make the final decisions concerning hiring and salaries and create and implement initiatives.

The CEO/founder has maintained the same organizational structure and promotion structure since the firm's inception. Individuals are not promoted from within to Senior Manager positions. Instead, he has filled all previous upper level management positions from the outside.


Independent Variable: Illegitimacy of the Hierarchy

Manipulated perceived illegitimacy of the hierarchy

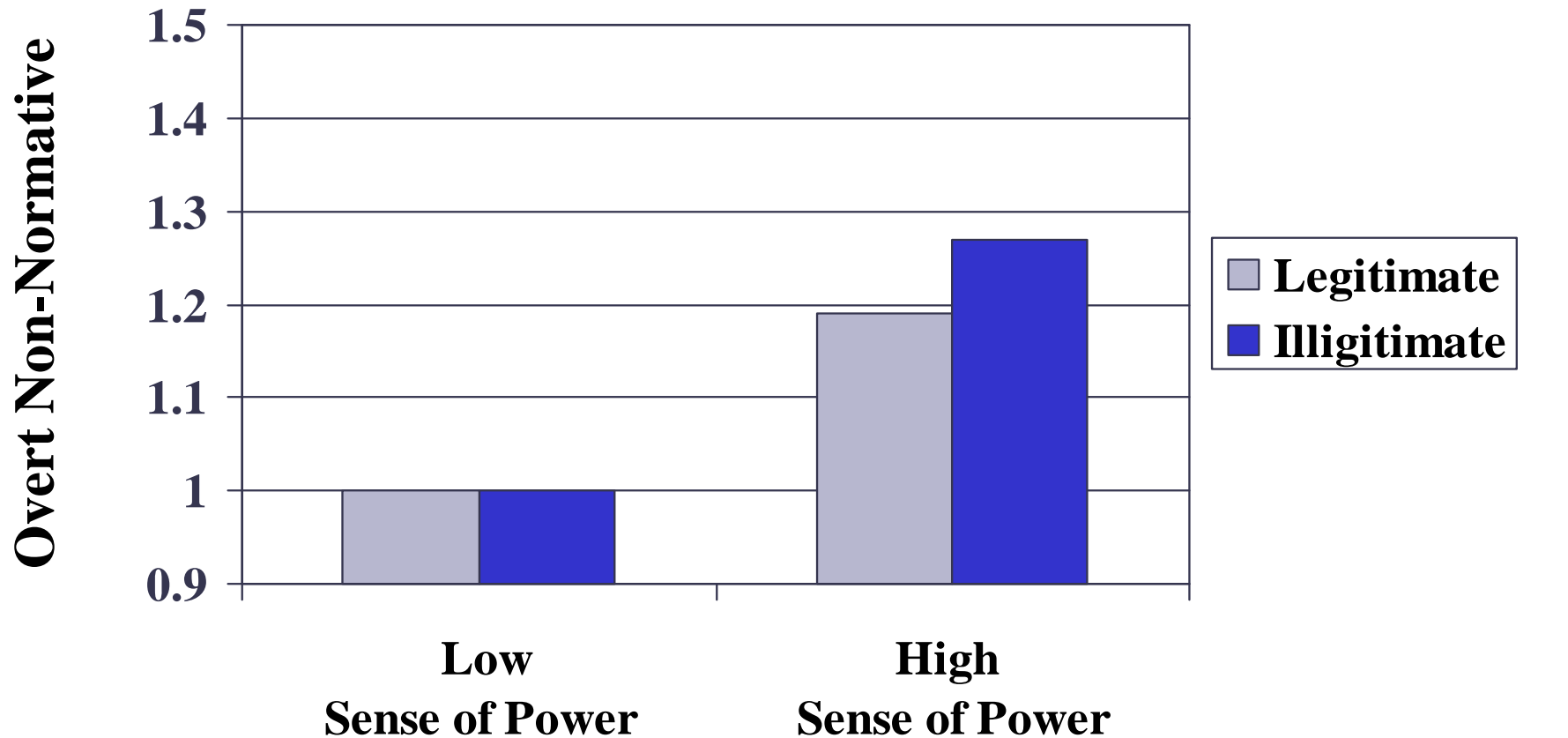
Legitimate Prior knowledge of the promotion policy;
Lack of skills necessary to advance.

Illegitimate No prior knowledge of the promotion policy;
Possession of skills necessary to advance.

Dependent Variable: Types of Actions

- **Voice** 
 - Non-Normative: e-mail a virus, delete computer programs
 - Normative: send a letter, talk, sign a petition
 - Overtly
 - Covertly
- **Exit**
 - Physical Exit: job search
 - Psychological Exit: work slow down
- **Loyalty**
 - Individual mobility: Accept polity: have an have an exception made for oneself to attain individual mobility within the firm

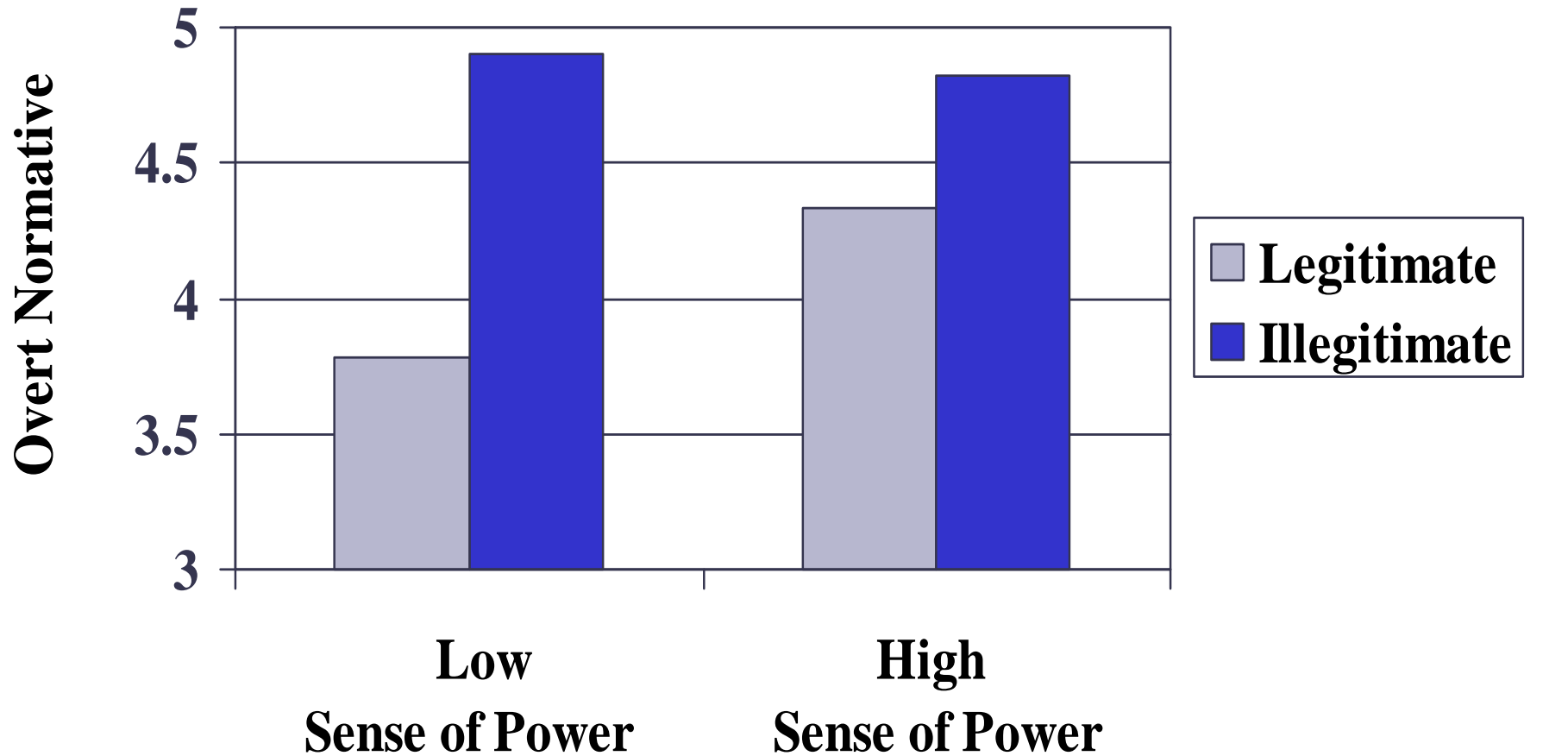
Sense of Power → Overt Non-Normative Actions



Sense of Power: $p = .040$

Illegitimacy: $p = .708$

Illegitimacy → Overt Normative Actions



Sense of Power: $p = .544$

Illegitimacy: $p = .046$

Summary

	Covert	Overt
Normative	Low Power Emotion	Illegitimacy
Non-Normative	Low Power Emotion	Sense of Power High Power Emotion

- Sense of Power** → **Overt Non-Normative Actions**
Physical Exit
Individual Mobility
- Low Power Emotion** → **Covert Actions**
- High Power Emotion** → **Overt Non-Normative actions**
Physical Exit
- Perceived Illegitimacy** → **Overt Normative Actions**

Experimental Manipulation of Emotions

69 paid undergraduate students

2 x 2 research design

Independent Variable: Emotions

Anger: High power emotion, negative valence

Pride: High power emotion, positive valence

Sadness: Low power emotion, negative valence

Gratitude: Low power emotion, positive valence

Experimental Context: Apex Company

Dependant Variable: Behaviors towards Apex

Voice: overt/covert – normative/non-normative

Exit: psychological and physical

Loyalty: individual mobility



Dependant variable: Donation

Donate \$1 to a Charity that supports Workers' or Managers' interests

Independent Variable: Emotion

Anger

Please relive and vividly recall a particular event in your life that made you feel angry towards someone and continues to make you angry whenever you think about it, even today.

Pride

Please relive and vividly recall a particular event in your life that made you feel personally proud and continues to make you proud whenever you think about it, even today.

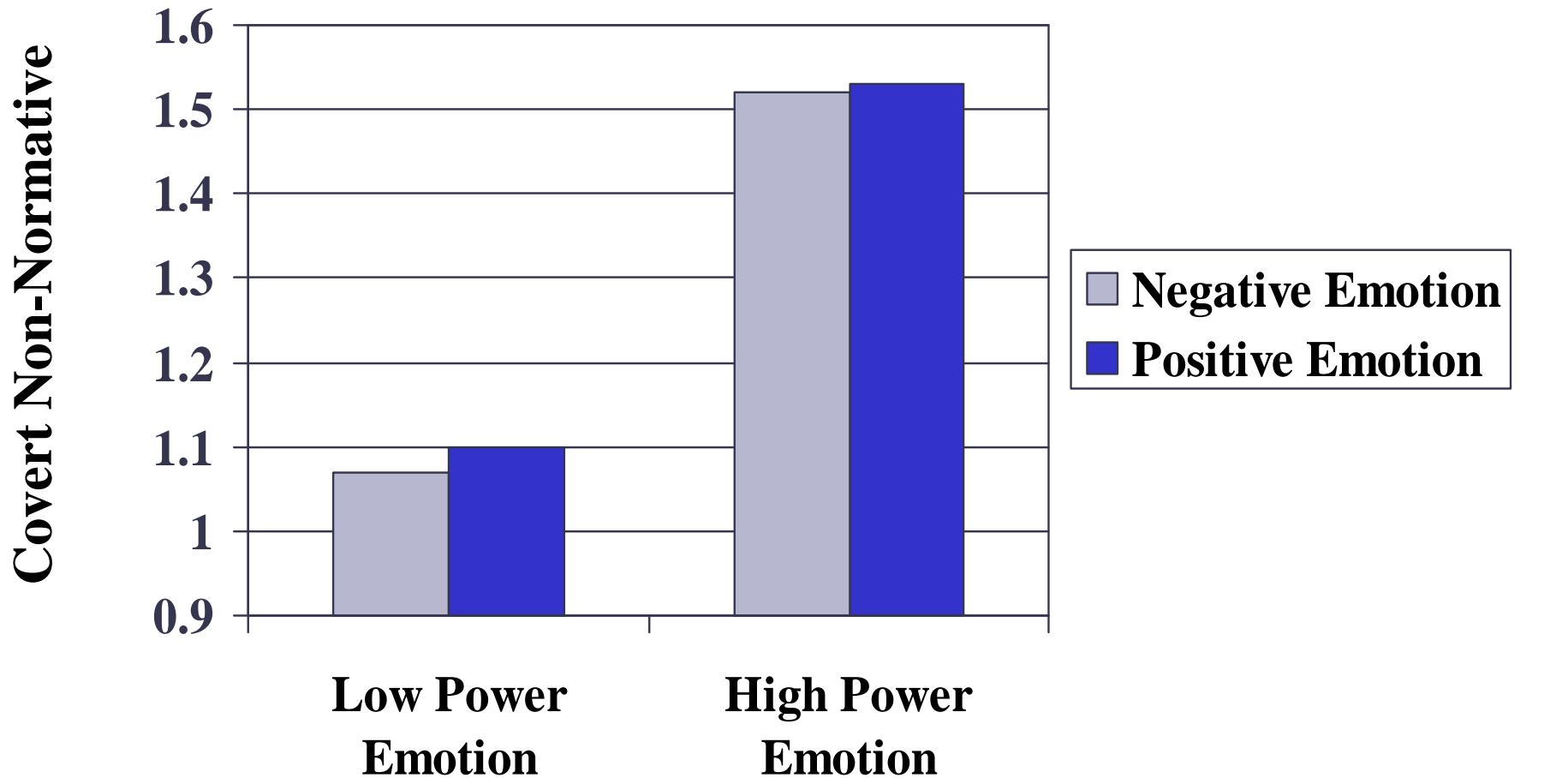
Sad

Please relive and vividly recall a particular event in your life that made you feel personally sad and continues to make you sad whenever you think about it, even today.

Gratitude

Please relive and vividly recall a particular event in your life that made you feel grateful to someone and continues to make you feel grateful whenever you think about it, even today.

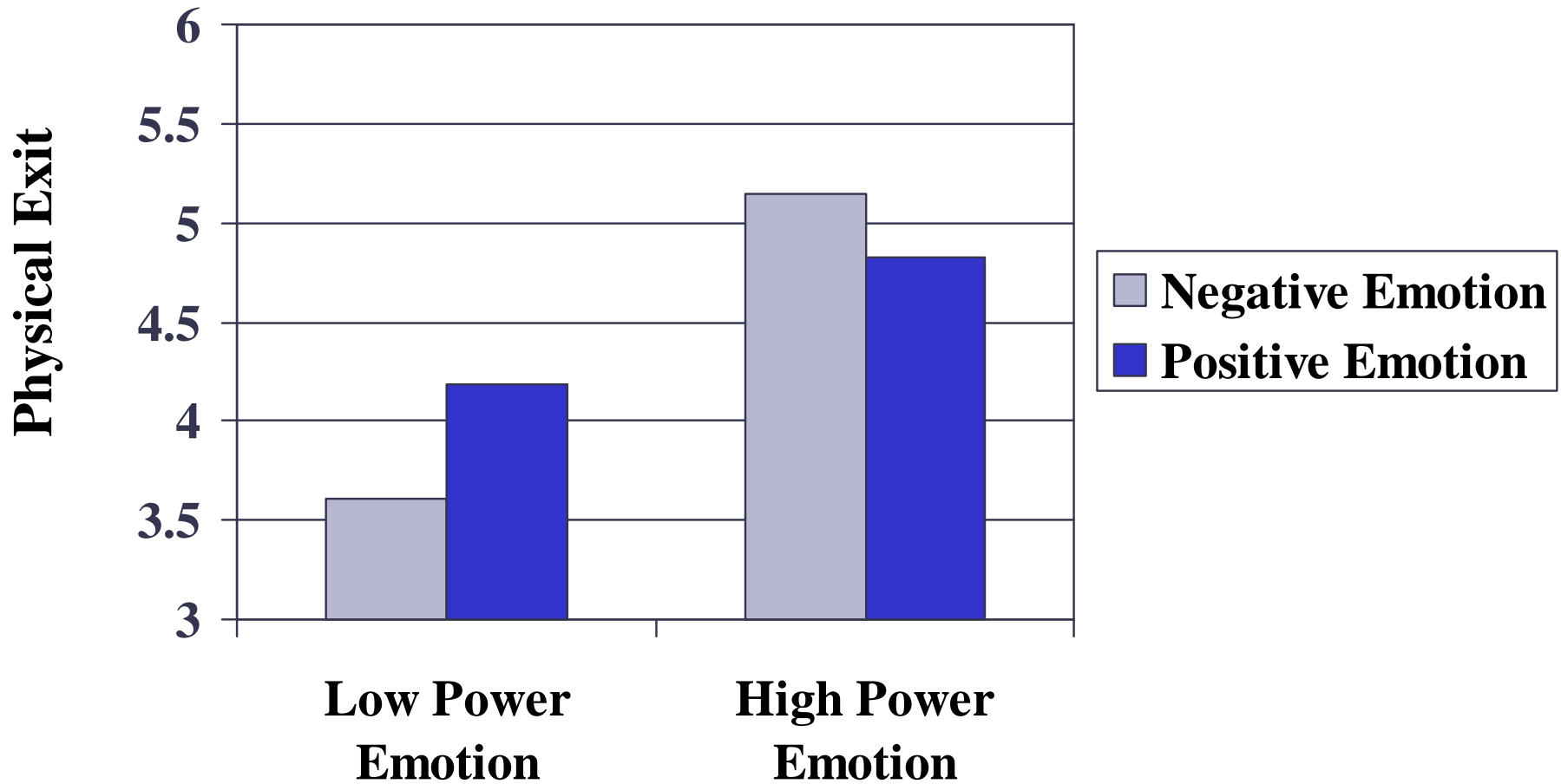
Powerful Emotions → Covert Non-Normative Actions



Powerful Emotion: $p = .059$

Valence of Emotion: $p = .926$

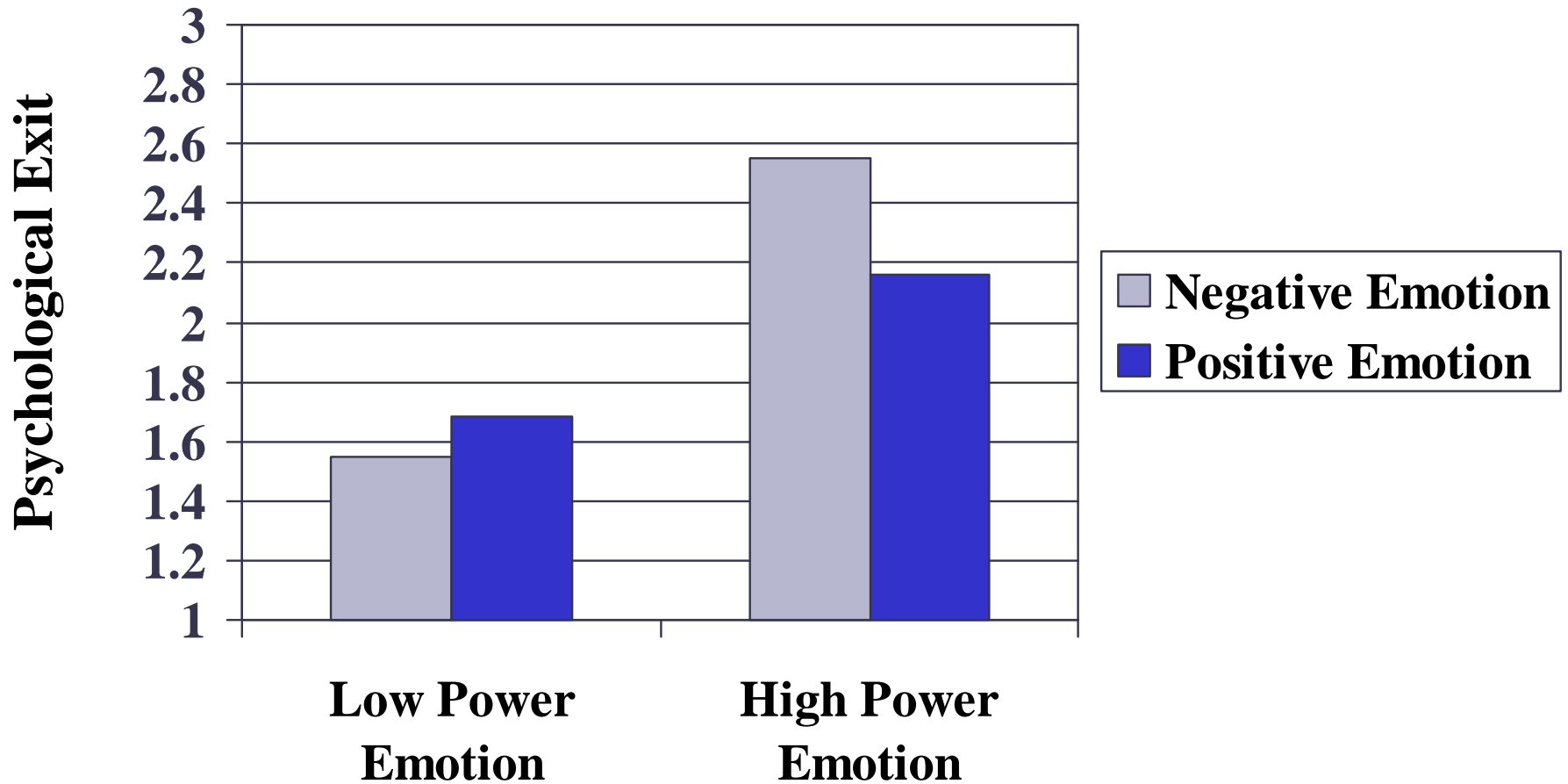
Powerful Emotions → Physical Exit



Powerful Emotion: $p = .007$

Valence of Emotion: $p = .745$

Powerful Emotions → Psychological Exit



Powerful Emotion: $p = .033$

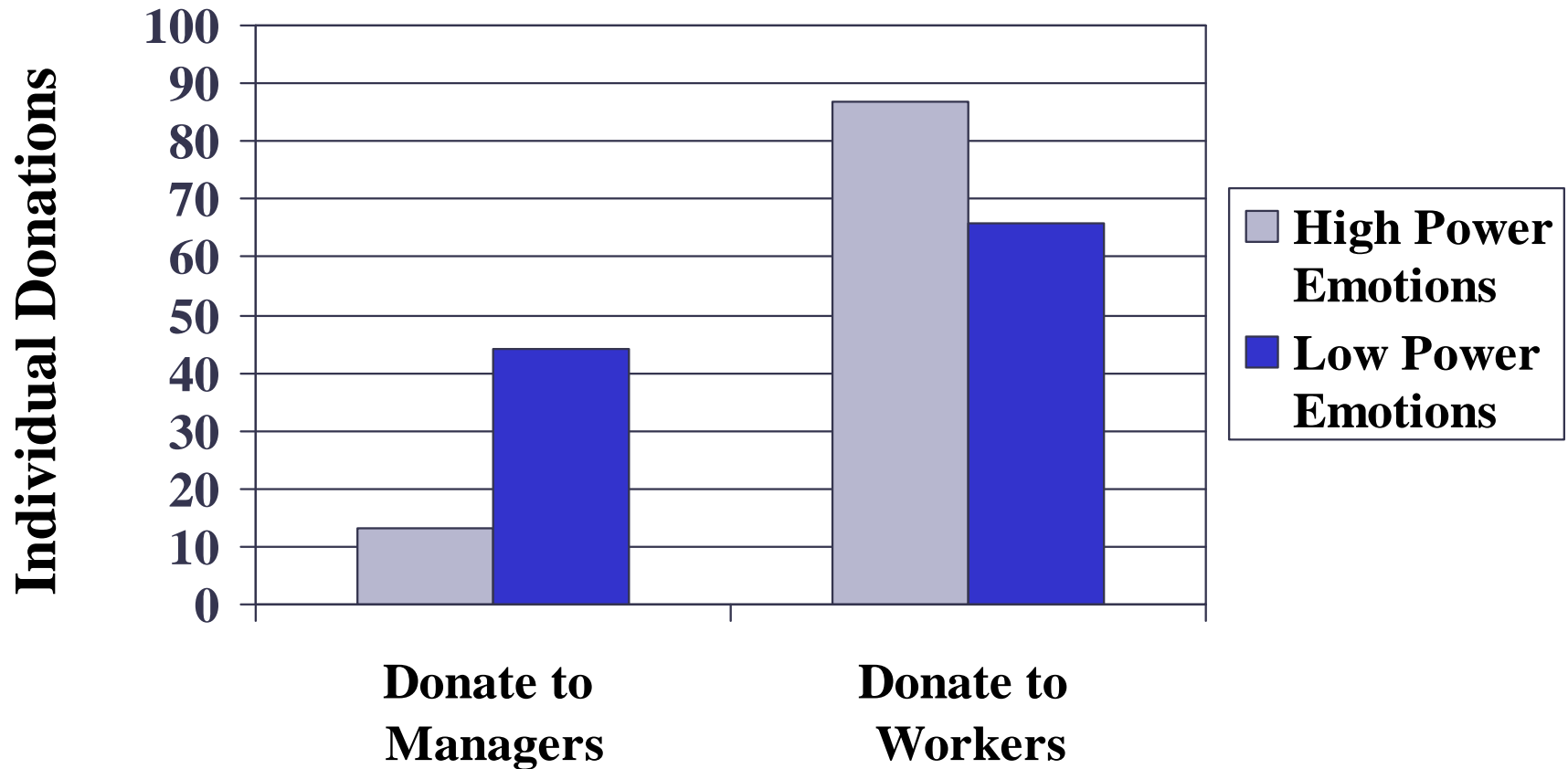
Valence of Emotion: $p = .703$

Which Organization to Donate \$1

One set of organizations advocate for ability to manage without excessive constraints and generally supports firms like Apex having the organizational policies that it does. They consider rules and regulations as placing burdensome constraints that drain firm wide resources.

The other set of organizations advocate for laws and regulations that support workers' rights within firms like Apex. They work to ensure that all workers have equal opportunity to move up within firms like Apex. Again, you can choose any one of the organization to have us donate \$1.

Powerful Emotions → Donate to Workers



High Power Emotion Prime: $p = .04$

Overall Summary

	Covert	Overt
Normative	Low Power Emotions	Illegitimacy
Non-Normative	High Power Emotions	Sense of Power High Power Emotions

Sense of Power → **Non-Normative Actions**

High Power Emotion → **Overt Actions**

Perceived Illegitimacy → **Overt Normative Actions**