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# Multilevel social predictors of employee feedback-seeking behavior: A cost–benefit perspective

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In this study, we examined the two distinct dimensions of feedback-seeking behavior (FSB), namely, feedback-seeking frequency and feedback-seeking breadth. We focused on work team properties and team members' social characteristics, and identified the multilevel social contextual predictors for each FSB dimension in an organizational team setting. Participants were 187 employees in 45 work teams in various industries in South Korea. Results show that feedback-seeking frequency was significantly positively related to three individual or team characteristics (i.e., emotional competence, team reflexivity, and task interdependence), but feedback-seeking breadth was significantly positively related to only one dimension, team reflexivity. Our findings provide an understanding of the multilevel emergent process of FSB in work teams, and the impact of the multilevel antecedents on the two FSB dimensions. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

**Keywords**
feedback-seeking behavior; emotional competence; team reflexivity; task interdependence; organizational team setting

In the contemporary unpredictable and complex business environment, organizations cannot always provide clearly specified roles and goals to guide employee behavior (Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett, 2015). Hence, the self-regulatory and goal-directed proactive effort of employees to set their own standards and evaluate their progress across changing circumstances is imperative to ensure their adaptation to varying tasks and social demands (Whitaker & Levy, 2012). *Feedback-seeking behavior* (FSB), which refers to "voluntary actions that employees undertake to obtain information and evaluations" (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 11), is a proactive behavior particularly conducive to the enhancement of learning, motivation, and performance. FSB assists employees to clarify task-related ambiguities, identify desirable performance strategies, and adapt to fluctuating performance expectations (Dahling & Whitaker, 2016).

Previous researchers of FSB predictors have primarily focused on individual characteristics such as attitudes toward feedback, self-efficacy, and ambiguity tolerance (Anseel et al., 2015). However, researchers have acknowledged that feedback seeking should be interpreted as individual social behavior nested within team and organizational contexts (Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2014). In addition, the major cost associated with FSB involves social risks that feedback seekers incur during interactions, namely, losing face and damaging their pride and ego (Parker & Collins, 2010). This situation highlights the importance of an examination of the factors that affect feedback seekers' cost–benefit analysis in the work team context. Researchers need to systematically investigate the multilevel social antecedents of employee proactive behavior, particularly FSB

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(Ellis, Nifadkar, Bauer, & Erdogan, 2017). Therefore, we aimed to extend the literature by analyzing the social and environmental dynamics pertinent to FSB and by offering a multilevel contextual explanation of FSB in work teams.

In addition, we analyzed the two FSB dimensions as outlined by Ashford, Blatt, and VandeWalle (2003): feedback-seeking frequency, which represents how often, and feedback-seeking breadth, which reflects how broadly, employees seek feedback from different sources such as supervisors, teammates, and people from outside their work teams. The FSB dimensions reflect the intensity and diversity of feedback sources, that is, the feedback source variety (Sijbom, Anseel, Crommelinck, De Beuckelaer, & De Stobbeleir, 2018) of individual employees' FSB. As there is a clear theoretical distinction between the two dimensions, we identified the multilevel social antecedents (i.e., emotional competence, team reflexivity, and task interdependence) that we expected would exert a different impact on them.

## Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

We explored potential multilevel antecedents of FSB, such as feedback attitudes and feedback motives, in the work team context, a topic that has been neglected in previous individual-focused FSB studies (Anseel et al., 2015). We employed a cost–benefit framework as the main theoretical perspective to explain the emergence of FSB (Anseel, Lievens, & Levy 2007; Ashford & Cummings, 1983). The cost–benefit framework shows that the primary motive underlying FSB is the informational value that assists employees to meet their goals and regulate their behavior, thereby facilitating subsequent task adjustment (Ashford et al., 2003). However, this instrumental motive can substantially atrophy in the presence of FSB-related costs such as effort cost in attaining feedback, losing face, and inference cost, which refers to possible incorrect interpretation of the feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). As a trade-off between the benefits and costs associated with FSB is inevitable, employees engage in cost–benefit comparison analysis. They choose whether to pursue informational value and sacrifice their self-esteem or to forgo the instrumental benefits of FSB to protect their ego and self-image.

We have responded to calls for contextualized multilevel explanations of FSB (e.g., van der Rijt, Van den Bossche, van de Wiel, Segers, & Gijselaers, 2012) by highlighting the significance of the social aspects that refer to the individual and team-related employee characteristics relevant to their FSB cost–benefit comparison in the organizational team setting. In our investigation of the FSB antecedents that encourage employees to seek feedback and feel comfortable with their actions (Steelman, Levy, & Snell, 2004), we specifically examined individual emotional competence, team reflexivity, and task interdependence. The overall theoretical framework is shown in Figure 1.

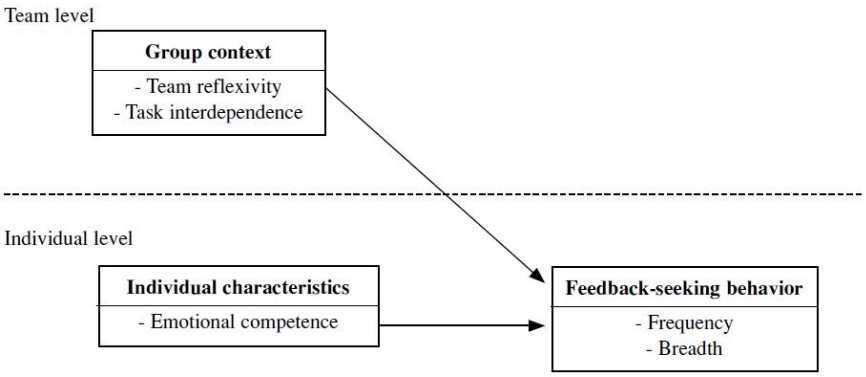


*Figure 1.* Multilevel antecedents of team members' feedback-seeking frequency and breadth.

## Emotional Competence of Team Members as an Individual-Level Predictor of Feedback-Seeking Behavior

At the individual level, we identified the emotional competence of team members as a critical determinant of FSB in work teams. FSB represents a social process because it inherently involves interpersonal exchange and explicit and implicit communication among feedback seekers and providers. Feedback seeking thus requires social skills (Chen, Lam, & Zhong, 2007). *Emotional competence* refers to individuals' integrative social skills in the awareness and regulation of their own and others' emotions, and in the use of this affective information to guide tasks and social conduct (Matute, Palau-Saumell, & Viglia, 2018). Emotional competence also assists individuals to enhance their empathy and sensitivity to social cues, thereby enabling them to accurately interpret social cues during interpersonal interaction. Thus, individuals with high emotional competence can correctly read the emotions, goals, and needs of feedback givers, and understand the content of the feedback (Delcourt, Gremler, van Riel, & van Birgelen, 2016). Because a major cost to feedback seekers is the misinterpretation or wrong inference of the feedback, emotionally competent employees, with their capability to reduce such costs, would be strongly motivated to ask for feedback. Thus, as emotional competence enables feedback seekers to effectively attain informational input, this leads them to the intended instrumental benefits of FSB (Ashford, De Stobbeleir, & Nujella, 2016).

Similarly, high emotional competence is likely to diminish ego and image concerns when employees decide whether to seek feedback. A paramount challenge for feedback seekers is the fear of encountering negative feedback and thus impairing their self-esteem (Ashford et al., 2003). Therefore, employees' ego and image defense motives lead them to avoid feedback (Delcourt et al., 2016). However, emotionally competent employees are immensely resilient, with a broad and flexible capability to manage difficult situations (Kim, Cable, Kim, & Wang, 2009) and can effectively control their ego and image concerns (Kim et al., 2009). Thus, they are likely to feel confident that they would attain the intended instrumental values through the feedback-seeking process, at a low social cost. Therefore, we proposed the following hypotheses:
***Hypothesis 1a:*** Individual emotional competence will be positively related to feedback-seeking frequency.
***Hypothesis 1b:*** Individual emotional competence will be positively related to feedback-seeking breadth.

## Team Reflexivity and Task Interdependence as Group-Level Predictors of Feedback-Seeking Behavior

At the group level, we isolated important feedback environments that represent socionormative and task contexts pertinent to FSB in teams. Team reflexivity and task interdependence, in particular, may make feedback seeking desirable and highly valued in a work team, thereby promoting team members FSB.

**Team reflexivity.** From various group social contextual factors, we identified *team reflexivity*, which refers to the extent to which members reflect team objectives and dynamics and adapt them to wider contexts, such as external environments (Shin, 2014), as the predominant initiator of FSB in teams. Team reflexivity is particularly relevant to members; FSB cost–benefit analysis because it represents a group climate and social norms that encourage members to continually review and modify their performance strategies by seeking evaluative input (Choi, Anderson, & Veillette, 2009). Team reflexivity produces a favorable feedback environment by normatively requiring members to discuss new ways of collaborating and to regularly modify goals and procedures. In this group context, members may perceive the high instrumental value of FSB and seek further feedback. This helps members identify and modify the shortcomings of their current task strategies in changing circumstances. In addition, when members are exposed to such a feedback-inducing social context, they may believe that feedback seeking constitutes normal legitimate behavior. Thus, they would perceive that the possible cost of feedback seeking (e.g., losing face and revealing task incompetence) to be low. Therefore, we proposed the following hypotheses:
***Hypothesis 2a:*** Team reflexivity will be positively related to feedback-seeking frequency.
***Hypothesis 2b:*** Team reflexivity will be positively related to feedback-seeking breadth.

**Task interdependence.** We identified task interdependence as the most critical group task environment that promotes FSB among team members. *Task interdependence* indicates the extent to which team members must cooperate to perform their tasks (Saavedra, Earley, & Van Dyne, 1993). Such interdependence denotes the reciprocal interrelatedness of tasks among members and imposes a strong, apodictic reason for seeking informational input, thereby providing increased need and legitimacy for FSB in the team (Steelman et al., 2004). Moreover, as members in interdependent situations are often evaluated and rewarded according to their contribution to collective goal achievements (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007; Saavedra et al., 1993), this increases the instrumental value of feedback seeking.

Task interdependence may also reduce concerns regarding the social costs and image risks of FSB, because FSB is attributed to legitimate task-driven needs rather than to a member's incompetence or anxiety (De Stobbeleir, Ashford, & Buyens, 2011). Task interdependence promotes mutual acceptance of FSB as a necessary and beneficial task-related behavior (De Stobbeleir et al., 2011; Griffin et al., 2007), and may reduce the perceived cost of feedback seeking. In addition, team members who perform highly interdependent tasks tend to have broad concerns and interests beyond the narrow focus of their own individual tasks. As they are inclined to pursue input from diverse constituents, they gain an improved understanding of the broad context of their task, and develop methods to coordinate their effort with others (Kirkman, Mathieu, Cordery, Rosen, & Kukenberger, 2011). Thus, we considered that task interdependence would exert a cross-level effect on each team member's FSB. Therefore, we proposed the following hypotheses:

***Hypothesis 3a:*** Task interdependence will be positively related to feedback-seeking frequency.
***Hypothesis 3b:*** Task interdependence will be positively related to feedback-seeking breadth.

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

We conducted a multisectional survey of companies in South Korea. The surveys were sent by postal mail to 51 managers for distribution to their 254 subordinates. After completing the surveys, 209 employees returned their responses directly to the researchers using a prestamped return envelope (response rate = 82.3%). Reponses that were incomplete and insincere or without team-matching information were excluded, resulting in a final sample of 187 members from 45 work teams. As the average team size was 4.16 members (*SD* = 2.73), this was a sufficient size to analyze our individual- and cross-level hypotheses (Liao & Rupp, 2005). Participants were from private business organizations in various industries, including finance, consulting, manufacturing, software, and service industries.

The average age of the participants was 35.3 years (*SD* = 6.94; range 21–55). The average organizational tenure was 6.7 years (*SD* = 6.38), and 35.5% of the participants were women. Participants' education levels comprised high school (3.7%), two-years at college (8.6%), undergraduate degrees (61.0%), and graduate degrees (26.7%). They performed various functions, namely, general management (49.7%), research and development (24.1%), sales (14.4%), manufacturing (4.3%), and other (7.5%).

### Measures

All survey items were translated into Korean using a standard translation–back translation procedure (Brislin, 1986). Items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) unless otherwise stated.

**Emotional competence.** To assess employees' emotional competence, we adopted six items ($\alpha = .73$) from the 33-item scale developed by Schutte et al. (1998). We measured the three dimensions of emotional competence: appraisal, expression, and regulation of one's own and others' emotions. Sample items are "I am aware of my emotions as I experience them," "I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send,"

and "I have control over my emotions."

**Team reflexivity.** To assess team reflexivity, we adopted four items, α = .83, $r_{wg(j)}$ = .85, intraclass correlation (ICC; 1) = .12, ICC(2) = .36, $F$ = 1.55, $p$ < .05, with the highest factor loadings from the eight-item measure of team task reflexivity developed by Carter and West (1998). We aggregated the individual responses to the team level to evaluate the hypothesized cross-level effects. Sample items are "The team often discusses getting the job done," and "We regularly discuss whether the team is working effectively."

**Task interdependence.** We used three items, α = .89, $r_{wg(j)}$ = 0.84, ICC(1) = .22, ICC(2) = .54, $F$ = 2.17, $p$ < .001, from the perceived task interdependence four-item scale in Bishop and Scott's (2000) study, and aggregated individual answers to generate the team-level construct. These items assess the extent to which the tasks of the participants are structured and organized to be interdependent with those of other people. Sample items are "To do my task well, I frequently need to coordinate with others," and "To do my task well, I must communicate well with others."

**Feedback-seeking behavior.** We measured the two dimensions of FSB with items from De Stobbeleir et al.'s (2011) study. First, we employed two items to measure feedback-seeking frequency from each of the three sources (direct supervisors, team colleagues, and coworkers in other teams). The two items were "How frequently do you ask for feedback about your work?" and "How frequently do you ask for advice for better ways of doing your work?" Participants assessed their FSB frequency on a scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 5 = *quite often*. This six-item measure demonstrated a sufficiently high reliability (α = .71), thereby enabling the aggregation of these items to represent the overall frequency of FSB. We thus calculated feedback-seeking frequency by averaging the six items from the three sources.

For the feedback-seeking breadth, we adopted the previously used operationalization based on the Herfindahl index (De Stobbeleir et al., 2011; Sijbom et al., 2018). This index determines the distribution of a person's feedback seeking across each source (Sijbom et al., 2018). The following formula shows that the proportional share of an individual's feedback seeking from each of the three sources is calculated against the total share of feedback seeking. Thus, we computed the extent to which an individual's feedback seeking is spread over each source rather than being dominated by a specific source (De Stobbeleir et al., 2011; Sijbom et al., 2018). The Herfindahl index is computed using the following formula:

$$\text{Herfindahl index} = \left(1 - \left[\left\{\frac{\text{seeking from supervisor}}{\text{total seeking}}\right\}^2 + \left\{\frac{\text{seeking from team peers}}{\text{total seeking}}\right\}^2 + \left\{\frac{\text{seeking from peers in other departments}}{\text{total seeking}}\right\}^2\right]\right).$$

**Control variables.** We controlled for the demographic characteristics of education level, gender (0 = women; 1 = men), and organizational tenure. The types of tasks allocated to employees were also controlled for with a binary measure (0 = production and engineering; 1 = clerical, marketing, and general management). Further, we used a meta-analytic review of the antecedents of feedback seeking (Anseel et al., 2015) as a basis to control for the effect of task uncertainty (Ellis et al., 2017; three-item measure, α = .64, e.g., "During my work, I have to deal with difficult problems for which there are no immediate or apparent solutions.") and performance goal orientation (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; six-item measure, α = .71, e.g., "I'm concerned with showing that I can perform better than my coworkers.") that may affect employee FSB.

## Results

We conducted confirmatory factor analysis with the four study variables. The four-factor model

demonstrated a reasonably good fit, $\chi^2(df = 143) = 259.94$, $p < .001$; comparative fit index (CFI) = .92; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .066. In comparison with plausible alternative models, our hypothesized model showed a statistically better fit, and all items loaded on their respective dimensions with loadings above .40. Means, standard deviations, Cronbach's α, and intercorrelations among the variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables*

| Variables | *M* | *SD* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gender | 0.65 | 0.48 | – | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Education level | 3.11 | 0.70 | .05 | – | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Organizational tenure | 6.69 | 6.34 | -.01 | -.12 | – | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Task type | 0.88 | 0.32 | .01 | .36** | -.05 | – | | | | | | | |
| 5. Performance goal orientation | 3.07 | 0.58 | -.12 | .00 | .00 | -.12 | – | | | | | | |
| 6. Task uncertainty | 3.07 | 0.68 | .11 | .05 | -.11 | .05 | .19** | – | | | | | |
| 7. Emotional competence | 3.64 | 0.55 | -.06 | -.01 | .01 | -.12 | .23** | .01 | – | | | | |
| 8. Team reflexivity | 3.22 | 0.78 | -.22** | -.17* | .10 | -.09 | .20** | .18* | .28** | – | | | |
| 9. Task interdependence | 3.99 | 0.57 | -.05 | -.21** | .11 | -.10 | .07 | .13 | .37** | .47** | – | | |
| 10. Feedback-seeking frequency | 3.40 | 0.58 | -.05 | -.15* | .17* | .05 | .06 | -.03 | .25** | .31** | .33** | – | |
| 11. Feedback-seeking breadth | 6.44 | 0.03 | .15* | -.05 | .07 | .15* | -.10 | .04 | -.15* | .03 | .01 | .47** | – |

*Note*. $N$ = 187. Task type (0 = production and engineering; 1 = clerical, marketing, and general management); gender (0 = women; 1 = men); education level (1 = high school, 2 = two years of college, 3 = undergraduate degree, 4 = graduate degree).
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

## Multilevel Predictors of Feedback-Seeking Behavior

All participants were employees nested within teams. This nested structure implies that the relationships between multilevel antecedents and FSB in our model may not be independent. Thus, we employed hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to test our hypotheses.

First, we entered the six control variables (i.e., gender, education level, organizational tenure, task type, task uncertainty, and performance goal orientation). We then entered emotional competence, team reflexivity, and task interdependence as predictors into the equations predicting feedback-seeking frequency and breadth (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Results of Hierarchal Linear Modeling Predicting Feedback-Seeking Frequency and Breadth*

| Variables | Feedback-seeking frequency Model 1 | Feedback-seeking frequency Model 2 | Feedback-seeking breadth Model 3 | Feedback-seeking breadth Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Step 1: Control** | | | | |
| Gender | .03 (0.09) | .08 (0.08) | .14 (0.04)** | .15 (0.05)** |
| Education level | -.09 (0.06) | -.08 (0.05) | -.03 (0.02) | -.02 (0.02) |
| Organizational tenure | .01 (0.01)** | .01 (0.01)* | -.00 (0.01) | -.00 (0.01) |
| Task type | .20 (0.10)* | .29 (0.09)** | .11 (0.07) | .14 (0.07)* |
| Task uncertainty | -.03 (0.07) | -.08 (0.06) | -.01 (0.05) | -.03 (0.04) |
| Performance goal orientation | .09 (0.07) | .03 (0.07) | -.01 (0.06) | -.02 (0.06) |
| **Step 2: Main effects** | | | | |
| Individual level | | | | |
| Emotional competence | | .16 (0.08)* | | -.07 (0.04) |
| Group level | | | | |
| Team reflexivity | | .29 (0.08)** | | .12 (0.04)** |
| Task interdependence | | .18 (0.08)* | | .03 (0.03) |
| Pseudo $R^2$ | .14 | .27 | .42 | .50 |

*Note*. $N$ = 187. Values in parentheses represent standard errors.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Emotional competence was positively significantly related to feedback-seeking frequency (γ = 0.16, $p < .05$) but not to feedback-seeking breadth (γ = -0.07, *ns*). Thus, Hypothesis 1a was supported and Hypothesis 1b was not supported. Team reflexivity exerted a positive significant cross-level effect on feedback-seeking frequency (γ = 0.29, $p < .01$) and feedback-seeking breadth (γ = 0.12, $p < .01$). Hypotheses 2a and 2b were thus supported. Task interdependence exhibited a positive significant cross-level effect on feedback-seeking frequency (γ = 0.18, $p < .05$) but not on feedback-seeking breadth (γ = 0.03, *ns*). Thus, Hypothesis 3a was supported and Hypothesis 3b was not supported.

### Post Hoc Analysis

We conducted a post hoc analysis to explore additional empirical patterns that involve emotional competence. As the measure of emotional competence represented multiple dimensions, we performed an analysis to compare their strength of prediction with feedback-seeking frequency. The results showed that, of the three subdivisions, emotion appraisal was the most strongly related to feedback-seeking frequency (γ = 0.17, $p < .01$).

## Discussion

Our results theoretically and empirically extend the FSB literature by identifying the multilevel social contextual antecedents of FSB from a cost–benefit perspective in an organizational team setting, thereby enriching the nomological network of FSB in the workplace. In this study, the team member and team properties of emotional competence, team reflexivity, and task interdependence exerted individual- and cross-level effects on feedback-seeking frequency. However, only team reflexivity was a significant group-level predictor of feedback-seeking breadth.

### Theoretical Implications

Our findings show that emotional competence, a critical social skill in the self-regulation literature (Porath & Bateman, 2006), is positively related to feedback-seeking frequency. Of the three subdimensions of emotional competence, emotion appraisal was the most strongly associated with feedback-seeking

frequency. This result implies that during FSB-related interactions, employees' ability to adequately evaluate their own and others' emotions is essential, as it enables them to understand the social situations that involve FSB. Further, emotionally competent employees can avoid the potential risks of FSB, because being able to manage their emotions facilitates their maintaining a confident image. An employee's emotional competence to evaluate others' emotions also maximizes the benefits of FSB because such competence clarifies the interpretation of nuanced feedback (Kim et al., 2009).

In contrast to team reflexivity being a significant group-level predictor of both feedback-seeking frequency and feedback-seeking breadth of employees in organizational teams, in this study task interdependence exerted a positive cross-level effect only on feedback-seeking frequency. Researchers have emphasized the role of a feedback environment that either encourages or impedes employees' feedback seeking (Ashford et al., 2003; Steelman et al., 2004). In the workplace, the most significant factor that thwarts employees' feedback seeking is the ego and self-presentation costs that involve a negative self-image characterized by self-doubt, incompetence, and the need for others' help to perform their own work (Devloo, Anseel, & Beuckelaer, 2011). Our findings show that a team social and task context characterized by reflexivity and task interdependence establishes the legitimacy and role expectancy of FSB, thereby forming a group-level context for individual-level FSB.

In this study, emotional competence and task interdependence improved the instrumental value of FSB and liberated team members from image concerns, thereby increasing feedback-seeking frequency (van der Rijt et al, 2012). They were not, however, related to feedback-seeking breadth. Nevertheless, additional features may stimulate team members to diversify their feedback sources intentionally. For example, our results showed that a group climate, such as team reflexivity or an open and market-oriented team culture, may increase the need for, and acceptance of, members' broad information search and feedback seeking (Choi et al., 2009; Patterson et al., 2005). The possibility of other predictors of feedback-seeking frequency versus feedback-seeking breadth indicates a need for further conceptual and empirical development.

## Practical Implications

Our findings demonstrate that to stimulate employees' FSB, managers need to develop a team context in which members feel confident and psychologically safe when performing FSB, thereby minimizing social costs (Ashford et al., 2003). The apparent needs held by employees for mutual coordination and adjustment of task processes incurred by an interdependent task structure should also encourage employees to bear ego and image costs willingly and initiate FSB proactively. To encourage employee proactive behavior, business team leaders should also serve as role models. Leadership with an appropriate direction can have a positive impact on employees' behavior through the cascading effect, which stimulates a chain of reactions from subordinates (Shin, Sung, Choi, & Kim, 2015). Thus, a leader who takes the initiative and sets a good example is critical for the cultivation of a climate that encourages employee proactive behavior (Steelman et al., 2004).

## Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are several limitations in this study. First, there is possible reverse causality because all the variables in our research model were measured and responded to simultaneously. Although the proposed predictive relationships were driven by the well-established cost–benefit perspective in the FSB literature and were consistent with those in prior studies (Anseel et al., 2015; Ashford et al., 2003; De Stobbeleiret al., 2011; Sijbom et al., 2018), it would be beneficial in future longitudinal research to clearly establish the causal relationships.

Second, although our theoretical foundation was based on a cost–benefit perspective, with a particular focus on multilevel social contextual factors, we did not directly assess participants' perceptions in regard to instrumental benefits and ego and image costs. Future researchers could thus explore the implications of

employees' value and cost perceptions associated with these multilevel predictors in shaping their FSB.

Finally, this study is set in South Korea, where the national culture has been categorized as collectivistic with high power distance (Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005). The cultural context affects employees' decision to engage in FSB (Grant & Ashford, 2008). This may explain our nonsignificant effect results of emotional competence and team interdependence on feedback-seeking breadth. That is, cultural cues guided participant employees to ask for feedback from credible sources only, rather than relying on a wide variety of sources. Future researchers can investigate the generalizability of our results to other cultures.

Our findings contribute theoretically and empirically to the literature. Anseel et al. (2015) have urged researchers to exert a systematic effort to map and integrate the antecedents of FSB. We responded to the call for research on multilevel predictors of FSB as a social process (Steelman et al., 2004; van der Rijt et al., 2012) by identifying and validating the multilevel social and task drivers that account for organizational team members' FSB. Therefore, our findings complement those of existing FSB studies in which researchers have generally overlooked the multilevel social processes in explaining the formative process of FSB. Future researchers could further elaborate on the distinct formative process, functions, and contingencies related to the frequency and breadth of FSB.

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