



## Shared leadership and commonality: A policy-capturing study



Gesche Drescher<sup>a,\*</sup>, Yvonne Garbers<sup>b,1</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Technical University of Munich, TUM School of Management, Arcisstr. 21, 80333 Munich, Germany

<sup>b</sup> Kiel University, Institute of Psychology, Work and Organizational Psychology, Olshausenstr. 40, 24098 Kiel, Germany

### ARTICLE INFO

Available online 16 March 2016

Editor: Francis J. Yammarino

#### Keywords:

Shared leadership  
Hierarchical leadership  
Commonality  
Virtual teams  
Policy-capturing

### ABSTRACT

Although research has extensively examined the relationship between shared leadership and performance outcomes, little is known about the interaction with other team variables such as commonality and communication mode. Moreover, nearly all research on shared leadership has adopted a cross-sectional approach. Accordingly, this research examined the effects of shared leadership, commonality, and communication mode on work performance and satisfaction. Using an experimental policy-capturing design, shared leadership, commonality, and communication mode were manipulated. Students (sample 1) and employees (sample 2) evaluated their performance and satisfaction. The results of multilevel analyses revealed that both shared leadership and high commonality had positive effects on team members' intended performance and predicted satisfaction. Moreover, we found that commonality and communication mode had interactive effects. Interestingly, commonality was more important for face-to-face teams than for virtual teams. The results both emphasize the importance of shared leadership and prompt significant recommendations for virtual teamwork.

© 2016 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

In recent years, collective leadership approaches have attracted the attention of both researchers and organizations (Friedrich et al., 2014; Yammarino, Salas, Serban, Shirreffs, & Shuffler, 2012). One of the most prominent forms of collective leadership is *shared leadership* (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Research has repeatedly demonstrated that shared leadership responsibilities are related to positive organizational outcomes such as performance and satisfaction (e.g. D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2014; Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). Teams have access to a larger knowledge pool than do individuals, and team members' commitment increases (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). Thus, teams with shared leadership can better respond to the demands of today's knowledge-based, creative, and complex work environment (Pearce, Yoo, & Alavi, 2004).

However, little is known about the causal effects of shared leadership (Wang et al., 2014). Moreover, it is necessary to consider more carefully the conditions under which shared leadership operates most effectively (Grille, Schulte, & Kauffeld, 2015), and researchers have noted that deeper insights into moderating factors are required (Wang et al., 2014). Thus, this study aimed both to replicate and build on prior findings by including commonality and communication mode as moderating factors on shared leadership-based relationships.

Shared leadership, which is hierarchical leadership's counterpart, focuses on conjoint management by the work team itself (Carson et al., 2007). Shared leadership emphasizes the team unit as a whole; it does not focus exclusively on a single leader. Therefore, shared leadership adds a more interactive and independent component to the team. Accordingly, team members' contributions are acknowledged, and they feel more valued (Fletcher & Käufer, 2003). Moreover, the combined knowledge and competencies of individual team members lead to high performance potential for teams with shared leadership (Ensley, Hmieleski, &

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +49 89 289 24800; fax: +49 89 289 24805.

E-mail addresses: [g.drescher@tum.de](mailto:g.drescher@tum.de) (G. Drescher), [garbers@psychologie.uni-kiel.de](mailto:garbers@psychologie.uni-kiel.de) (Y. Garbers).

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +49 431 880 1825; fax: +49 431 880 4878.

Pearce, 2006). Thus, shared leadership can contribute not only to high team-performance outcomes but also to more satisfied team members (Nicolaidis et al., 2014).

Given that successful communication and interactions significantly contribute to effective teamwork and shared leadership, interpersonal variables have become a focus of attention (Carson et al., 2007). In this context, the role of commonality, namely, commonality of personalities should be investigated. Commonality is understood as perceived similarity to others (Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009). Conflicting theories have made inconsistent predictions regarding the effects of perceived similarity. In the diversity literature, it is assumed that less similarity among team members leads to more discussion and thus, more innovation (Horwitz & Horwitz, 2007). In contrast, the similarity-attraction hypothesis (Byrne et al., 1971) predicts that commonality facilitates communication and cooperation among team members. In accordance with the latter, we assume that perceived commonality helps establish a high-quality relationship that fosters performance (Cox, Pearce, & Perry, 2003). Consequently, commonality will be directly related to teams' performance and satisfaction and will moderate the relationship between shared leadership and team outcomes (performance and satisfaction).

Another recent trend that affects cooperation and communication is the implementation of communication technologies and virtual teamwork. As a result of globalization and technological advancement, virtual teams (or non-co-located teams) have been implemented in most organizations (Grille et al., 2015). Despite the advantages of virtual teamwork, team members who are required to rely on information technology must overcome certain communication barriers that impact how well individuals can work and lead together (Au & Marks, 2012).

In a virtual setting, the above-mentioned aspects of leadership and cooperation become even more important. Both shared leadership and commonality of personalities provide virtual teams with the opportunity not only to find common ground but also to overcome the constraints of asynchronous, sometimes problematic communication (Hoch, Pearce, & Welzel, 2010).

In summary, shared leadership in teams offers many advantages over hierarchical leadership. However, other moderating factors must be considered to assess the influence of shared leadership in teams, and researchers have called for greater insights into team variables (Carter, DeChurch, Braun, & Contractor, 2015; Wang et al., 2014). Accordingly, this study addresses the roles of the commonality of personalities and communication mode in shared leadership. These variables could help us understand better when and how shared leadership works most effectively in teams.

This study contributes to the literature in the following ways: a) it replicates and builds on prior results on the relationship of shared leadership and organizational outcomes by adding an experimental policy-capturing approach; b) it investigates the role of commonality of personalities as an important moderator for shared leadership, and c) it transfers its results to the virtual teamwork sector to better understand shared leadership and commonality in different team contexts.

## Collective and shared leadership

Recently, attention has shifted from hierarchical leaders to more collective forms of leadership (Contractor, DeChurch, Carson, Carter, & Keegan, 2012; Cullen, Palus, Chrobot-Mason, & Appaneal, 2012; Yammarino et al., 2012). Collective leadership is defined as a process of influence in which multiple members of an organization simultaneously perform leadership behaviors (Carter & DeChurch, 2012; Yammarino et al., 2012). Collective leadership theories were developed to contrast with the leader-centric view, and they include a variety of leadership theories (Yammarino et al., 2012). Most of these theories espouse the view that leadership is either shared across different agents or can emerge in systems and network connections among people engaged in shared work (for overviews, see Contractor et al., 2012; Yammarino et al., 2012). The need for more collective forms of leadership arose out of increasing task complexity and growing demands for teamwork paired with high performance expectations (Carter et al., 2015; Grille et al., 2015).

As a team-level phenomenon, shared leadership is part of the more general theory of collective leadership. Shared leadership is defined as "a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both" (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1). Shared leadership focuses on the team's independence and temporary shifts in power distribution among team members. At any given time, team members' roles are determined based on their expertise and knowledge (Pearce & Conger, 2003). In other words, team members are part of the leadership process, in which they lead themselves (Cox et al., 2003) and share responsibilities (Yammarino et al., 2012).

Shared leadership is the opposite of hierarchical leadership, in which a leader placed at a higher level has influencing power (Ensley et al., 2006). Nevertheless, hierarchical and shared leadership can co-occur (e.g., independent work teams within a department both lead themselves and are led by a department manager who functions as a hierarchical leader). We understand shared leadership as a team construct in which all team members have leading and decision-making powers and lead themselves.

Empirical results have demonstrated a positive relationship between shared leadership and team performance. Three recent meta-analyses (D'Innocenzo et al., 2014; Nicolaidis et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014) have concluded that shared leadership is more predictive of team performance than hierarchical leadership is. Because shared leadership involves the sharing of important leadership roles and team members being more connected, it reduces power differences (Pearce & Manz, 2011). Similarly, communication and cooperation have been established as important components of shared leadership (Aime, Humphrey, DeRue, & Paul, 2013). These processes lead to increased trust among team members, which then enhances the team's performance (Drescher, Korsgaard, Welp, Picot, & Wigand, 2014).

The process of sharing leadership has been shown to be related to affective processes such as trust, personal interactions, role clarity, and satisfaction (Drescher et al., 2014; Wood & Fields, 2007). Accordingly, Wang et al. (2014) have concluded that shared

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/887679>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/887679>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)