Who Doesn't Want to Share Leadership? The Role of Personality, Control Preferences, and Political Orientation in Preferences for Shared vs. Focused Leadership in Teams

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Summary

An increasing number of institutions decide to adopt the premises of shared or distributed leadership models and reduce the level of organizational hierarchy. Such models were shown to positively affect employee well-being, creativity, and – indirectly – effectiveness. However, while shared leadership assumes a relatively equal division of control in interdependent situations, some people display preferences to dominate or submit. What is more, unequal/equal division of power may be preferable to people with a more conservative/liberal political orientation. In the current research we examine whether the shared leadership model is likely to be equally attractive to all employees. We focus on the effect of personality traits, control preferences, and political orientation on preferences for shared vs. focused leadership. One-hundred-and-eighty-four participants declared their team preferences (focused vs. shared leadership), as well as answered questions regarding their personality (HEXACO), control preferences, and political orientation through the Amazon Mechanical Turk platform. Control preferences, as well as political orientation were related to preferences for shared vs. focused leadership. Specifically, while dominance and conservative political orientation was associated with higher preference for focused leadership, collaboration predicted higher preference for shared leadership. Personality traits did not predict the preferences for focused vs. shared leadership.

Keywords: shared leadership, distributed leadership, teal organizations, HEXACO, control preferences, political orientation

JEL: M12, O15, J24, J28

INTRODUCTION

The first action of Ricardo Semler, when he first took over SEMCO (Semler and Co., a manufacturing company founded by his father), was to fire all senior managers. Semler challenged the status quo and asked questions such as: Why should a few managers decide on the allocation of parking slots or office desks, or what the new shop floor or social area should look like, instead of letting the employees decide on their own? Why is the management board a closed group – can we keep 1-2 seats free in each session for the first employee who asks to join and be the voice of the other workers? Why shouldn't all members of the organization take a share of the leadership (including decision making and responsibility) within the group, team, or organization (Semler, 2001)?

Semler was not the only one to question the organizational status quo. Frederic Laloux (2014) identified similar examples, listing so-called teal organizations that emphasize – among others – self-management in their activities. In consequence, they choose a leadership style that is more distributed or shared. While having little or no formal hierarchy, these organizations seem to be highly effective and outstanding in customer and employee satisfaction (Laloux, 2014; Semler, 2001).

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Scientific interest in these new forms of management comes at a time when more and more studies point at the interpersonal risks of having power over others. Those in power are more likely to treat others as means to their ends, take risks, categorize others, and break social norms (e.g. Anderson, & Galinsky 2006; Bendahan, Zehnder, Pralong, Antonakis, 2015; Fiske, 1993). They are less trustful, cooperative, and empathetic – which is even evident in their brain responses (e.g. Gonzaga, Keltner, & Ward 2008; Guinote, Judd, & Brauer, 2002; Hogeveen, Inzlicht, & Obhi, 2014; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Kipnis, 1972; van Kleef, Oveis, van der Löwe, LuoKogan, Goetz, & Keltner, 2008). Maybe sharing leadership within a team or an organization is one way of counteracting these negative effects by balancing the source of power?

In the scientific literature, the phenomenon of shared leadership is still relatively new and understudied. Although incoming research results suggest its positive consequences on performance, innovation, and employee satisfaction (e.g. Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006; Hoch, 2013; Wang et al., 2013), it is not certain what is the role of situational or individual difference factors (such as employees' personalities or preferences). Not everyone likes to take on additional responsibilities. Some people like clear hierarchical structures (e.g. Grzelak, 2001). Would such people feel comfortable participating in shared leadership?

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the current paper is twofold. First, in order to reduce the definitional chaos observable in the literature, we try to untangle the concept of shared leadership, as well as review its antecedents and consequences towards organizational outcomes and employee wellbeing. Second, we investigate whether shared leadership is equally preferred by everyone. In other words, are there individual differences that could predict preference for such an organizational model? Since this subject has not yet – to our knowledge – been undertaken in empirical research, we start by focusing on three factors – personality, control preferences, and political orientation as predictors of preference for shared vs. focused leadership in teams.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Shared Leadership as a Form of Collective Leadership

The broadest definition of shared leadership is that of the plurality of leadership: the combined influence of multiple leaders in specific organizational situations. Collective forms of leadership started to gain more research attention some 2–3 decades ago and are becoming a more and more prominent subject of research in the leadership domain (e.g. Denis, Langley, & Sergi 2012; Gibb, 1954; Gronn, 2002; Lord, Day, Zaccaro, Avolio, & Eagly, 2017; Pearce, 2007; Thorpe, Gold, & Lawler, 2011). The focus was shifted from an individual, trait based approach to leadership to that of a continuum between focused and shared/distributed leadership (Gibb, 1954). On this continuum:

- concentrated and focused leadership refers to a dominant influence by one person, while
- distributed or shared leadership refers to mutual & reciprocal influence of different participants.

Over the last decades a number of concepts and terminologies were used to describe collective forms of leadership within a team or an organization (see Table 1 and the review of Ulhøi & Müller, 2014). However, the most commonly used terminologies are: distributed leadership and shared leadership. Although the meaning of those two concepts is to a large extent the same and they are sometimes used interchangeably (Goksoy, 2016), for our purposes we decided to use the concept of shared leadership, because it is most recognized in management literature. In the current work we will understand shared leadership 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. This influence process often involves peer, or lateral influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1).

Importantly, the existence of shared leadership does not mean the absence of vertical leadership (Pearce & Sims, 2002). These two concepts exist in parallel, which means that “group members actively and intentionally shift the role of a leader to one another as necessitated by the environment or circumstances in which the group operates” (Pearce, Hoch, Jeppesen, & Wegge, 2010, p. 151) no matter of the level of verticality of the leadership structure. Also, it might involve a certain degree of supervision from a vertical or an external leader, balanced with a certain degree of team's self-direction (Gibb, 1954).

Table 1. Different concepts of collective forms of leadership in the literature (Ulhøi et al., 2014)

Concept	Author(s)
Shared cognition	Ensley & Pearce, 2001
Distributed leadership	Barry, 1991; Brown et al., 2002
Participative leadership	Bass, 1990, in Carte et al., 2006; Collins, 1995
Relational leadership	Uhl-Bien, 2006
Participatory management	Wu, Lee, 2001
Concertive action	Gronn, 2002
Collective leadership	Denis et al., 2001; Hiller et al., 2006
Collaborative leadership	Finch, 1977; Vangen et al., 2003
Collaborative governance	Huxham et al., 2000
Informal leadership	McCrimmon, 2005
Emergent leadership	Pearce & Sims, 2002
Co-leadership	Sally, 2002
Dual leadership	Etzioni, 1965; Etzioni et al., 1968
Split management	Choi & Beamish, 2004
Connective leadership	Klakovich, 1994, 1996

Shared/distributed leadership follows three premises (Bennett, Wise, Woods, & Harvey, 2003).

- It is not just a result of structural relationships, but emerges through a network of interacting individuals, contributing their initiative and expertise in a variety of ways over time.
- The boundaries of leadership are open, which allows to constantly raise the question of “Who” will be the leader. A leader can be found within, but also outside of the respective group.
- Expertise is distributed across many members of the team. Leadership capabilities and perspectives are distinct, numerous, and spread within the group of individuals. The result is more than the sum of the individual contributions.

Consequences of Shared Leadership

In order to be competitive in terms of effectiveness and innovativeness, organizations need to leverage their human and social capital. Although yet understudied, research already indicates shared leadership as a strong candidate to address these challenges. “As organizations have steadily progressed into the knowledge economy we can no longer rely on simple notions of top-down, command-and-control leadership, based on the idea that workers are merely interchangeable drones” (Pearce, 2007, p. 1).

Creativity and innovation. Shared leadership environments enable employees to enact their collective psychological capital and support knowledge sharing, which leads to a more participative and innovative organizational culture (Nonaka, Hirose, & Takeda, 2016). For example, shared leadership was found to be a predictor of a teams’ level of innovative behavior (Hoch, 2013). Shared leadership was also found to positively impact creativity on a team and individual level – a relationship partially mediated by knowledge sharing (Gu, Chen, Huang, Liu, & Huang 2018; Lee, Lee, & Seo, 2015). On a team level, these effects were even more pronounced when tasks required greater interdependence (Gu et al., 2018).

A study of engineering design teams found that creativity within the team was higher when the team leadership network was high in density and low in centrality – indicators of the distribution of leadership activities (Wu & Cormican, 2016). The more leadership ties between team members in the network, the higher is the density of the leadership network. A higher density is predictive of more knowledge sharing and higher creativity. The more the network is dominated by one or a few members of the team, the more centralized it is. Lower centralization predicts higher cooperation among team members. Shared leadership may contribute towards increasing the level of creativity, also by weakening the negative effects of team conflicts (relational conflicts and task conflicts) (Hu, Chen, Gu, Huang, & Liu, 2017).

Effectiveness and performance. Compared to focused leadership approaches, shared leadership was shown to be a better predictor of higher performance, although the relationship seems to be indirect (Han, Lee, Beyerlein, & Kolb, 2018; Mathieu, Kukenberger, D’innocenzo, & Reilly, 2015; Robert & You, 2018). Research indicated that the relationship is mediated by team cohesion (Mathieu et al., 2015), team-satisfaction (Robert et al., 2018), coordination activities, goal commitment, and knowledge sharing (Han et al., 2018). A meta-analysis on team-cohesion and performance in teams varying in their level of shared leadership suggested that higher levels of team-cohesion predict higher performance (Mathieu et al, 2015). While shared leadership had no direct impact on performance, it played an important role in enhancing team-cohesion.

Similarly, surveys conducted among graduate and undergraduate students in project teams indicated that shared leadership indirectly affected teams’ performance through coordination activities, goal commitment, and knowledge sharing (Han et al., 2018). Other studies supported the positive effect of shared leadership on performance. Shared leadership was shown to work better than vertical leadership in change management teams (Pearce & Sims, 2002), new venture top management teams (Ensley et al., 2006), and virtual teams (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014).

Employee well-being. Compared to focused leadership, shared leadership predicted lower levels of conflict and greater consensus, as well as higher intragroup trust and cohesion in teams (Bergman, Rentsch, Small, Davenport, & Bergman, 2012). It was also shown to facilitate team satisfaction in virtual teams and moderate the impact of trust and autonomy on satisfaction (Robert et al., 2018). In creative contexts, shared leadership mediated the relationship task and team characteristics (such as task cohesion) and task satisfaction (Serban & Roberts, 2016). In a study of top management team members in Christian church organizations shared leadership negatively related to team member role overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and job stress (Wood & Fields, 2007). It was also positively related to job satisfaction.

The antecedents of Shared Leadership

Since shared leadership was shown to give rise to many of the above-mentioned positive organizational consequences, research investigated factors facilitating its emergence. So far, the antecedents of shared leadership emergence uncovered by scholars include supporting team and organizational factors and behaviors of vertical leaders.

Team and organizational factors. Internal team environment, interdependence and team integrity, as well as task cohesion and ambiguity were identified in the literature as the antecedents of shared leadership on a team and organizational level.

Internal team environment. The overall team environment comprised of shared purpose, social support, and voice was shown to enable shared leadership emergence in teams (e.g. Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Daspit, Tillman, Boyd, & McKee, 2013). These three dimensions collectively create a context, in which team members are more open to offer their own leadership and to rely on other members' leadership. Shared purpose is a sense of similar understanding of the primary objectives among team members. Social support is a mutual emotional and psychological support of each other. Voice is a degree of participation and input into the team's purpose. Voice is also associated with participative behaviors, such as being part of the decision-making process and debating around alternative approaches to the team's procedures and tasks. Several studies confirmed the positive relationship between internal team environment and the level of shared leadership in a team (e.g. Carson et al., 2007; Daspit et al., 2013).

Interdependence and team integrity. Interdependence is defined as a degree to which team members rely and depend on the skills of others and interact to complete the team's tasks. Interdependence was found to be positively related to shared leadership emergence by enhancing solidarity among team members (Fausang, Joensson, Lewandowski, & Bligh, 2015). Team integrity, also referred to as social responsibility, consists of reliability and trustworthiness which enable transparent communication among team members. If team members show a higher level of reliability and trust, as well as a tendency to behave fairly, ethically and transparently, the emergence of shared leadership is more likely (Hoch, 2013).

Task cohesion and ambiguity. Task cohesion is defined as a team's shared interest in a task, based on the collective perception of skillfulness and ability to perform the task. Task ambiguity appears when team members carry out their roles in the absence of necessary task-related information. It was found that task cohesion facilitates the emergence of shared leadership, while task ambiguity impedes it (Serban & Roberts, 2016). Shared leadership affected team and task satisfaction only when task ambiguity was low.

Vertical leadership behaviors. As mentioned above, shared leadership does not necessitate a context devoid of any form of vertical leadership, as it exists on a continuum (Gibb, 1954). The sharing of leadership and verticality of leadership are independent constructs (a team could be very high or very low on both of these dimensions). Such a vertical leadership can, however, either facilitate or impede the emergence of shared leadership in an organization or a team, as presented below.

External leadership. External leadership is a guidance provided by a leader within an organization, who is not a part of the team. For instance, in the study of Carson et al. (2007), an external leader acted as a partner in a consulting organization, helping to supervise multiple projects. It was shown that coaching by an external leader may enable shared leadership by providing encouragement and reinforcement (Carson et al., 2007). External leaders may use these strategies when team members demonstrate leadership behaviors.

Additionally, fair rewards strategy was shown to directly influence shared leadership by stimulating and initiating team members' participation (Grille, Schulte, & Kauffeld, 2015). External leaders can provide general encouragement, help when internal conflicts arise, and – if needed – suggest or contribute to the team's strategies and processes (see also: Carson et al., 2007).

Vertical empowering leadership. Vertical empowering leadership can be carried out by an external or internal leader and can be performed on a regular basis or when needed. Such a leader provides motivational support and empowerment to the team members. Studies on the relationship between vertical empowering leadership and the emergence of shared leadership show mixed results. Some document a positive effect of empowering leadership on shared leadership (Fausing et al., 2015; Hoch, 2013), while others find no effect whatsoever (Grille et al., 2015).

Leader humility. Leader humility signifies a leader's willingness to admit to their own mistakes, be open to advice, ideas, and feedback from other employees, as well as highlight team members' unique skills. Leader humility was shown to stimulate the interaction between leaders and followers and – as a result – contribute to the development of shared leadership (Chiu, Owens, & Tesluk, 2016). Consequently, to facilitate the development of shared leadership in teams, a leader should: (1) admit the lack of knowledge or expertise, (2) acknowledge that someone else has more knowledge or skills, and (3) be open to new ideas.

Transformational leadership and gatekeeping leadership. Transformational leadership is focused on strengthening the motivation and morale of team members, whereas gatekeeping leadership is based on a leader's ability to perform internal and external communication effectively. This ability is exemplified by using external communication skills to acquire technical information and transmit it to the team members (Ishikawa, 2012).

Gatekeeping leadership (but not transformational leadership) was shown to positively affect the emergence of shared leadership (Ishikawa, 2012). Also, results suggest that gatekeeping leadership is promoting the internal and external communication of team members, which encourages them to display leadership behaviors, and consequently, enhances a shared leadership environment.

Who Does Not Want to Share Leadership?

Prior literature has advanced our knowledge on consequences and antecedents of shared leadership. However, one question remains unattended: Is everyone equally willing to work in shared leadership environments? Prior literature largely ignores potential individual differences in whether people desire share leadership in an organizational context. Given our knowledge on a variety of social orientations, control preferences, habits, and situational factors people's willingness to get involved in leadership activities might be dramatically affected. To function properly, shared leadership teams need – to a much greater extent than hierarchically governed teams – highly involved individuals. Individuals who are willing to balance between taking control (when the team needs direction) and letting go of control (when other team members oppose one's idea). People who do not believe in a given management method (especially if it involves change) are likely to engage in counterproductive behaviors. In the current study we would like to look at three sets of factors that might predict people's preference for shared vs. focused leadership – personality, control preferences, and political orientation. The rationales for this selection are provided below.

Control preferences. Control over our environment enables us to reach desired outcomes – avoid events we consider unpleasant and obtain things we desire. However, previous research shows that being in control is not equally attractive to everyone (Grzelak, 2002). Some people prefer to submit to control of others, especially in the context of uncertainty, as predicted by the theory of Defensive Orientation (Dolinski, 1993). Getting rid of personal control protects one's self-esteem by transferring the responsibility for the potentially negative outcomes of the situation to a different agent (Dolinski, 1993; Zinserling & Winiewski, 2011).

In the current study we adopt the framework of control preferences developed by Grzelak (2001) and based on Kelley and Thibaut's (1978) theory of interdependence. Control preferences signify

a relatively stable (but situationally dependent) inclination towards a certain division of control in an interdependent situation. Each interdependent actor, in an interaction with others might try to intensify:

- 1) "one's control over one's own outcomes: self-control preference (proactive autonomy)
- 2) one's control over others' outcomes: power preference (dominance)
- 3) others' control over one's own outcomes: dependence preference (submissiveness)
- 4) others' control over others' own outcomes: respect preference (respect for autonomy)
- 5) joint, one's and others' control over one's own and others' outcomes: collaboration preference¹" (Grzelak, 2001).

Studies of Grzelak (2001) indicated one additional preference – that of reactive autonomy, characterized by strong reactance or a lack of acceptance for others' control over one's own outcomes.

Control preferences determine the interest of individuals to stay in, or to exit from, the particular relationship or situation (Grzelak, Kuhlman, Yeagley, & Joireman, 2010). For instance, some will look for jobs which allow them to control both own and other people's outcomes, while others will prefer to give up control to a competent boss. Indeed, dominance predicts placing greater value at success and job promotion (Modrzejewska, 2004), while collaboration is related to a higher pro-ecological orientation (Grzelak, 2002), which is characterized by a joint social effort.

Based on the above, we predict collaboration to be positively related to shared leadership preference, with dominance and submissiveness positively related to focused leadership preference. With respect to the autonomy scales, it is not easy to predict a clear direction. On one hand, those with high preference for autonomy might want to share leadership in teams because of the willingness to influence their own outcomes (proactive autonomy) and to respect others' independence (respect for autonomy). On the other hand, being in a shared leadership team requires giving up at least some degree of control as one needs to allow other members of the team to influence one's outcomes as well. This might reduce the perceived control over the situation to a similar or greater extent than in focused leadership teams. In a focused leadership team one needs to win over one boss, in a shared leadership team there is a need to convince a greater number of team members to one's point of view. Finally, individuals high in reactive autonomy might want to reduce the possibility for any sort of interdependence.

H1: Control preferences predict preference for shared leadership in teams.

H1a: Higher preferences for collaboration predicts higher preference for shared leadership in teams.

H1b & H1c: Higher preferences for (b) submissiveness and (c) dominance predict higher preference for focused leadership in teams.

Political orientation. In the current study we treat political orientation as a proxy for a variety of opinions on social and economic issues it was shown to predict (Jost, 2006). For instance, conservatives are more likely to believe that individuals need to be constrained by authorities and rules to guarantee social order (Sowell, 2002). They prefer familiarity, stability, and predictability (McCrae, 1996), are more resistant to change and likely to accept inequality (Jost, Glaser, Sulloway, & Kruglanski, 2003; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994). Such beliefs might predict a higher preference for more traditionally adopted focused leadership, in which order is guaranteed by a hierarchical structure.

¹ Grzelak (2001) distinguishes between two collaboration preferences: (1) joint, one's and others' control over one's own outcomes: *collaboration* preference A and (2) joint, one's and others' control over others' outcomes: *collaboration* preference B".

Liberals, on the other hand, are more likely to believe that individuals should have as much influence over own lives as possible without hurting others (Sowell, 2002). They were also shown to be more open to experience, and endorse change and novelty (McCrae, 1996). It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that liberals would endorse the novelty of the shared leadership approach as a means to greater self-expression of individual team members.

H2: Conservative political orientation predicts higher preferences for focused leadership in teams.

Personality. In the current study we also explore the relationship between personality traits and preference for shared vs. focused leadership. Shared leadership teams need to function in a climate of constant collaboration, engagement, and a need to balance the needs and visions of all team members. Because of that, we believe that such an environment might be easier to deal with by extraverts rather than introverts because of their participative and communicative nature and lower emotional reactivity (McCrae & John, 1992). What is more, openness to experience, which involves curiosity, openness to new ideas, and adaptability to changing situations might predict higher willingness to try a different style of management (McCrae & John, 1992). Finally, emotional stability, associated with higher leadership performance expectations and higher stress-resistance (McCrae & John, 1992), might predict better compatibility with complex team environments, such as teams with shared leadership.

However, it is not clear whether personality traits are associated with preferences for different environments, since people are often unaware of their internal states (Lambie & Marcel, 2002). It is possible that people of certain personality traits feel and fare worse in shared/focused leadership environments, but are unaware of their psychophysiological costs beforehand. For this reason, our inclusion of personality traits in this study is merely exploratory.

METHOD

Participants

We recruited one-hundred and eighty four participants (63% men, ages 20-71, $M = 33.48$, $SD = 10.41$, median = 30 years) via the Amazon Mechanical Turk platform. None were excluded. Most participants were currently employed (80.4% full-time, 10.9% part-time). Mturk participants were all US nationals. Data was collected between August, 24, 2018 and August, 30, 2018. Due to recent reports of automated responses to Mturk questionnaires (Kennedy, Clifford, Burleigh, Jewell, & Waggoner, 2018) we used an option offered by Mturk to (1) verify worker country location and (2) block duplicate IP addresses. What is more, we used two red herring items to check for the randomness of the answers: (1) what is the current year and 2) "Please mark a strongly agree to answer for this questions". In all studies, participants each received \$0.50 as a reward for their participation.

Materials and Procedure

After reading and accepting an informed consent, participants filled in their sociodemographic information (age, gender, and occupational status). On the following pages participants filled in the following measures, the order of which was assigned randomly.

Team preferences. The measure investigated preferences for working in a team characterized by focused vs. a shared leadership. The scale was adapted from Wood and Fields (2007) who measured the perception of actual shared leadership in a team on a four-point Likert-type scale. The scale was

transformed for the purpose of this study and measured preference between two types of teams, e.g. 'Team A: Each member of the team participates in establishing the goals for the organization. Team B: A leader of the team establishes the goals for the organization.' Items were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = I would definitely like to work for Team A, 5 = I would definitely like to work for Team B.). Cronbach's alpha for the scale equaled $\alpha = .84$. On the scale level, the higher the score, the higher the preference for focused leadership in teams. The entire scale can be found in the appendix.

Control preferences were measured with scale developed by Grzelak, 2001. The shortened, 28-item scale consists of five sub-scales measuring: Collaboration (5 items, e.g. "I like being in a group in which everyone has something to say"), Dominance (5 items, e.g. "I like to have influence on what others do"), Proactive Autonomy (4 items, "I like choosing goals for myself"), Reactive Autonomy (5 items, "I don't like it when someone makes decisions about my business"), Respect for Autonomy (5 items, "It would be good if everyone were responsible for their own decisions"), and Submissiveness (4 items, "I like it when someone makes decisions for me"). Items were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). The entire scale can be found in the appendix. Cronbach's alpha for the scale ranged from $\alpha = .80$ to $\alpha = .86$. The three autonomy scales were correlated at a very high level ($r = .60$ for proactive autonomy and reactive autonomy, $r = .60$ for reactive autonomy and autonomy respect, and $r = 0.77$ for autonomy respect and proactive autonomy). They also formed one factor in a factor analysis explaining 77.32% of total variance. For this reasons we decided to compute one Autonomy indicator out of the above three scales – a decision deemed appropriate in certain situations (Zinserling & Winiewski, 2001).

Political orientation was measured with two items: "How would you describe your political outlook with regard to economic/social issues?" (Talhelm, Haidt, Oishi, Zhang, Miao, & Chen, 2015). Response scale ranged from 1: very liberal to 7: very conservative). An indicator was computed by averaging these two items ($r = 0.74$). A higher score meant a more conservative orientation.

Personality. A 24-item Brief HEXACO Inventory (BHI) was used to measure personality (De Vries, 2013). Recent research suggests that the Big Five model fails to encompass an additional dimension that was shown to form a separate factor – Honesty-Humility (e.g. Ashton et al., 2004). The HEXACO model consists of the following personality scales: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, eXtraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience. Each of these domain scales is measured by 4 facets that capture behaviors associated with a given personality domain. The HEXACO model was shown to be a good predictor of workplace delinquency, status-driven risk-taking, egoism, narcissism, Machiavellianism, or psychopathy – all related to Modesty-Humility domain, not included in the Big Five model (Ashton, Lee, Pozzobon, Visser, & Worth, 2010; De Vries, De Vries, De Hoogh, & Feij, 2009; De Vries & Van Kampen, 2010; Lee, Ashton, Wiltshire, Bourdage, Visser, Gallucci, 2013). The BHI scale measures six personality domains with 1 item per facet. The alpha reliability coefficients are rather low, however the scales perform well in terms of test-retest stability and self-other agreement. It was also shown to have relatively high convergent correlations with full-length scales. Items were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree).

RESULTS

To test our hypotheses we used a hierarchical multiple regression. We used multiple regression analysis in order to determine which of the individual difference variables are best at predicting participants' preference for shared leadership, while controlling for other variables. We regressed team preference (high values equal higher preference for focused leadership) on 1) gender (1 = male, 2 = female) and age in the first step in order to rule them out as alternative explanations,

2) personality variables in the second step, 3) control preferences in the third step, and 4) political orientation in the fourth step. The results can be seen in Table 2.

For the analyzed sample, age and gender had no relationship to the team preference and neither did any of the personality variables. Among control preferences, the strongest effect could be observed for collaboration – the higher the preferences for joint outcome control, the higher the preference for shared leadership in teams, $\beta = -0.40$, $p < .001$. Additionally, focused leadership was preferred by those higher in preference for dominance, $\beta = 0.30$, $p = .002$. Autonomy was not related to team preference. Finally, political orientation also predicted team preference – a more conservative (social and economic) outlook was related to higher preference for focused leadership in teams, $\beta = 0.21$, $p = .007$.

Table 2. Results of hierarchical linear regression predicting shared leadership preferences

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	β	SE	<i>p</i>	β	SE	<i>p</i>	β	SE	<i>p</i>	β	SE	<i>p</i>
Age	.01	.01	.558	.01	.01	.201	.01	.01	.221	.01	.01	.449
Gender	-.13	.12	.283	-.10	.13	.435	-.07	.12	.582	-.09	.12	.439
Honesty				-.06	.08	.449	.12	.08	.148	.15	.08	.069
Emotionality				.04	.09	.660	.05	.08	.488	.04	.08	.577
Extraversion				-.09	.08	.270	-.07	.08	.387	-.07	.08	.408
Agreeableness				.04	.07	.547	.03	.07	.727	-.01	.07	.900
Openness to Experience				-.10	.08	.230	.01	.08	.863	.07	.08	.384
Conscientiousness				-.19	.10	.066	-.10	.10	.299	-.11	.10	.268
Autonomy							-.10	.11	.359	-.08	.10	.435
Submissiveness							.13	.08	.114	.10	.08	.226
Dominance							.28**	.08	.001	.26**	.08	.002
Collaboration							-.38***	.08	.000	-.40***	.08	.000
Political Orientation										.10**	.04	.007
R ²	0.01			0.11			0.29			0.32		
F(dt)	0.8 (2.173)			2.46* (8.167)			5.49*** (12.163)			5.86*** (13.162)		

DISCUSSION

The primary objective of the present study was to investigate if shared leadership is a form of organizational order that would fit everybody. If people want to work in teams that share leadership, the probability of the emergence of shared leadership will be higher and the application of shared leadership would lead to better organizational effects. We were interested in checking whether individual differences predict preference for shared vs. focused leadership. Specifically, we analyzed the relationship between personality traits, control preferences, and political orientations and preferences for shared vs. focused leadership.

Control Preferences

Consistent with our expectations, preference for collaboration predicted higher preference for shared leadership (H1a). Grzelak (2001) argued that collaboration preference promotes democracy by accepting joint effort and coordination among individuals and social groups in attaining their interests. Collaboration requires one to give up at least some element of control over one's outcomes and accept the influence of others. Hence, those high in collaboration preference need to believe in other people's competence and good will – strong prerequisites for shared leadership.

Preference for dominance predicted higher preference for focused leadership in teams (H1c). Dominant individuals were previously shown to value success and promotion (Modrzejewska, 2004), the potential for which is arguably higher in focused leadership teams. What is more, such individuals – even if not yet in leadership positions – might envision themselves occupying one in the future – a prospect diminished in shared leadership teams. Contrary to our expectations, submissiveness was not related to preference for focused leadership in teams.

We did not form any predictions with regards to the autonomy scales. In our study the three autonomy scales (proactive autonomy, reactive autonomy, and respect for autonomy) were highly correlated, which justified collapsing them into one autonomy measure. The results of our study did not show any relationship between joint autonomy scale and preference for shared leadership. Individuals high in preference for autonomy prefer situations in which personal freedom is not limited. We can imagine both shared and focused leadership teams to promote or limit individual freedom of team members. Hence, the relationship between preference for autonomy and preference for shared leadership might be more complex and dependent on personal construal.

Political Orientation

As predicted, a conservative political orientation – in contrast to a liberal political orientation – was related to higher preferences for focused leadership in teams (H2). Conservatives may be less open to shared leadership in teams as such teams violate the hierarchy of authority and social order conservatives tend to endorse (Sowell, 2002). Such teams might also be perceived as less stable and predictable (Friesen, Kay, Eibach, & Galinsky, 2014) – attributes considered more valuable by conservatives (McCrae, 1996). In contrast, liberals were more likely to prefer shared leadership in teams. Such teams guarantee greater equality and freedom of expression – values endorsed by liberals (Sowell, 2002).

Personality

Finally, we decided to explore whether personality traits of individuals predict their preferences for shared leadership in teams. None of the personality variables proved to significantly predict preference for shared vs. focused leadership in teams. However, it is possible that people of certain personality traits might feel and fare worse in shared/focused leadership environments, without being able to predict their psychophysiological costs beforehand. Therefore, as a follow up it may be interesting to consider whether personality variable predict behavior or emotions experienced in a shared leadership context.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Our results implicate several directions for future research. First, although in the current study control preferences were measured as relatively stable dispositions, it is important to note that they are situationally dependent (Grzelak, 2001). It is possible that individuals want to give up control in the work environment, but assume it with close others, or vice versa. Even at work, one's control preferences might depend on the level of personal significance of issues decided on by the

team or the extent to which one's job relates to personal interests. Further research could explore these caveats.

What is more, previous research showed that a feeling of the lack of personal control might influence people's preferences for more hierarchical structures at work (Friesen et al., 2014). Further research could investigate whether perceived job or economic instability affects preferences for hierarchy via affecting people's control preferences.

In the current study, attitudes towards shared leadership were measured only on a declarative, hypothetical level. Such a situation – devoid of context, such as the number of people in the team, area of functioning, interpersonal relationships between team members, etc. – is too abstract. For instance, research showed that although self-management increased organizational citizenship behavior, if the employees did not believe that the organization trusts them, the only consequence of self-management was an increase in counterproductive work behaviors (Jensen & Raver, 2012).

As mentioned above, due to limitations in people's ability to introspect and predict one's emotional reactions, we cannot be sure how our participants would feel in the actual shared or focused leadership teams. A study measuring employees' satisfaction and experienced emotions in shared vs. focused leadership teams would be valuable to understand the real impact of employees' individual differences (including that of personality and temperamental differences). What is more, it would be of interest to investigate the work performance of employees who either fit or do not fit into given organizational structures.

Finally, we need to address a relatively small size and homogeneity of our sample. Our participants were predominantly in full-time employment (80.4%) and US based. A replication on different populations would be of value for generalizability of the obtained results.

CONCLUSIONS

Recent publications on shared leadership praise its ability to make employees more satisfied and organizations more effective. However, we believe that it is dangerous to assume the homogeneity of preferences. While one person finds meaning and joy in taking on responsibility at work, another one might find it a burden that pulls them away from their family or hobby. In order to prevent counterproductive behaviors from the employees forced to take on control they do not want, it is essential to identify the potential obstacles to introducing a more collaborative and egalitarian organizational structure.

Our study was aimed at investigating three individual difference variables that we assumed might predict preferences for the leadership structure. We found that both control preferences, as well as political orientations, predict preferences for shared leadership in teams. However, personality variables were not related to preferences for shared leadership. Control preferences explain individuals' willingness to enter situations of different interdependence structures. When those preferences are not met, people might experience discomfort and engage in counterproductive work behaviors. Further research should investigate to what extent control preferences can be situationally affected, as well as their impact on employee outcomes and wellbeing in shared vs. focused leadership environments.

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APPENDIX

Shared vs. Focus Leadership Scale

- Team A: Each member of the team participates in establishing the goals for the organization. Team B: A leader of the team establishes the goals for the organization.
- Team A: The team has one leader who takes on the responsibility for the team outcomes and guides the team members. Team B: Each team member shares the responsibility for the team outcomes and helps in guiding others. (Reversed)
- Team A: Each team member helps to frame the vision for the organization. Team B: A leader of the team frames the vision for the organization.
- Team A: The team has one person in charge who ensures that the work is well organized. Team B: The team members collaborate to organize the workflow. (Reversed)
- Team A: Each member shares in deciding on the best course of action when a problem faces the team. Team B: A leader decides on the best course of action when a problem faces the team.
- Team A: A leader insures the team fulfills its obligations. Team B: Each member chip in (even if it is outside an area of personal responsibility) to insure the team fulfills its obligations. (Reversed)
- Team A: Each member is evaluated by and is accountable to all other members of the team. Team B: Each member is evaluated by and is accountable to a leader of the team.
- Team A: A leader decides how resources are allocated in regard to the team's priorities. Team B: Each member has a say in deciding how resources are allocated in regard to the team's priorities. (Reversed)
- Team A: Team members collaborate with one another in making decisions that affect the organization. Team B: A leader makes decisions that affect the organization.
- Team A: A leader identifies, diagnoses, and resolves the problems that face the team. Team B: Each member helps to identify, diagnose, and resolve the problems that face the team. (Reversed)

Control Preferences Scale (Grzelak, 2001)

Collaboration	I like being in a group in which everyone has an influence on what happens I like being in a group in which everyone has something to say It is best to solve a problem together with others I like being in a group in which everyone makes decisions together I like working in a team
Dominance	I like making decisions for others I like leading other people I think I have leadership tendencies I like to have influence on what others do I like to wield power
Proactive Autonomy	I like taking care of my own business myself I like controlling my own fate I like choosing goals for myself I like taking care of myself
Reactive Autonomy	I don't like it when someone interferes in my life I don't like it when someone rules over me I don't like it when someone makes decisions about my business I don't like it when someone forces their opinion on me I don't like it when someone butts into what I'm doing
Respect for Autonomy	I like people who lead their own lives I like people who are masters of their own fate It would be good if everyone were responsible for their own decisions I like people who are autonomous, independent from others I like it when other people can think for themselves
Submissiveness	I like it when someone directs me in various things I am readily subordinate to others on a day to day basis I like it when someone makes decisions for me I like it when someone is responsible for me