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A Conceptual Framework of Self-leadership in Teams

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on self-leadership in teams; extend self-leadership theory by focusing on the underlying processes in teams and moderating team context variables; and relate self-leadership in teams to a set of differentiated member work role behaviors including proficiency, adaptivity, and proactivity. After a review of research on individual and team members' self-leadership, the underlying motivational processes of individual self-leadership in teams are examined. Building on these, moderating team context variables on the self-leadership work role-performance relationship are proposed. A summarizing multilevel framework is presented which relates self-leadership in teams to a differentiated set of team member work role behaviors including proficiency, adaptivity, and proactivity. Additionally, motivational processes are proposed which mediate self-leadership-behavior relationships. Finally, research implications are discussed. The framework extends current theories by (1) examining individual self-leadership in teams, (2) using a comprehensive and differentiated set of team member work role performance, and (3) applying an individual-level model of motivation in teams to explain effects of self-leadership in teams.

Keywords: Self-leadership, Work role behavior, Teams.

1 Introduction

Self-leadership refers to a pattern of self-influence intended to increase individual effectiveness. Based on the self-management concept (Luthans & Davis, 1979; Manz & Sims, 1980), self-leadership combines considerations of behavioral reinforcement (Bandura, 1977), goal-setting, intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1975), and constructive thought pattern strategies (Ellis, 1977; Neck & Manz, 1992) to improve individuals' self-regulation and self-direction.

Self-leadership theory is designed to improve personal effectiveness by influencing and enhancing individuals' affect, cognitions, and behaviors and has been predominantly validated in organizational domains. Pertaining organizational behavior research has shown that self-leading people demonstrate high levels of job performance (Konradt, Andreßen & Ellwart, 2009), make more creative suggestions (Carmeli, Meitar, & Weisberg, 2006; Stewart, Carson, & Cardy, 1996), and express high levels of self-efficacy, positive affect and job satisfaction (Neck, 1996; Neck & Manz, 1996).

However, during the last two decades of self-leadership theory (Manz, 1986; see Neck & Houghton, 2006, for a review) work in organizations has undergone significant changes. A main difference is that work is typically not organized among employees performing separate tasks, but rather to a growing degree in teams where members have to share goals, tasks, and behaviors (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Salas, Burke, & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Moreover, task autonomy, which requires not only task-related but also extra-role behavior, has become practically and theoretically more important (Langfred, 2000; Stewart, 2006). As a consequence, a team member's work role no longer emphasizes only individual task behavior. Additionally, individual goals and behaviors need to be synchronized and coordinated with possibly competing team goals (DeShon, Kozlowski, Schmidt, Milner, & Wiechmann, 2004). Although individuals' self-regulation in teams therefore may substantially differ from self-regulation in individual work settings, surprisingly little research has concerned itself with the effects of self-leadership of team members. Initial empirical evidence suggests a positive relationship between self-leadership and team members' overall performance (e.g. Konradt et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998), and scholars have proposed positive effects of individual self-leading team members (e.g. Bligh, Pearce, & Kohles, 2006). Additionally, self-leadership has been discussed to have potential positive effects in the context of team leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003) and shared leadership (see Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2006, for a review).

The aim of this research is to provide a framework for considering individual self-leadership in teams. After a brief review of research on individual self-leadership, a multilevel framework is proposed which highlights the importance of team level and motivational

variables for the relationship between self-leadership and team member work role performance. After discussing the conditions under which self-leadership is assumed to increase work role performance, a wider range of outcome behaviors than previously considered in research on self-leadership in teams is proposed by relating self-leadership to a differentiated set of team member work role performance behaviors (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007), i.e., proficiency, adaptivity, and proactivity.

2 Self-leadership: Construct, Consequences and Gaps

Self-leadership theory assumes a set of behavioral and cognitive strategies to positively influence one's own behavior. These strategies are grouped into three secondary factors including behavior focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies (e.g. Manz & Neck, 2004; Neck & Houghton, 2006; Prussia, Anderson, & Manz, 1998).

The first group of secondary factor strategies, behavior focused strategies, refers to the observation and change of one's own behavior through the primary factor strategies of self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, and self-cueing. Self-observation fosters self-awareness and understanding for the when and how of one's own behavior, thus providing a departure point for identifying and improving ineffective or unproductive behaviors (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Self-goal setting describes the process of identifying goals for oneself which lead to an improvement of personal performance (Manz, 1986; Manz & Neck, 2004). Self-reward, self-punishment and self-cuing serve to shape behavior in the following of these goals.

The second secondary factor denotes natural reward strategies, which are primarily aimed at garnering motivation for disagreeable tasks by building on the inherent pleasurable aspects of an activity. Aimed at increasing intrinsic motivation, natural reward strategies allow the task itself to be the reward by either focusing attention on the already existing pleasant aspects or by introducing more enjoyable features (Manz & Neck, 2004; Manz & Sims, 2001; Neck & Houghton, 2006).

Finally, the third group of secondary factor strategies includes constructive thought pattern strategies or thought self-leadership (Neck, 1996) designed to facilitate the management of cognitive processes and influence thinking patterns. Three first-order strategies are distinguished, including self-analysis and improvement of belief systems, mental imagery, and positive self-talk (Manz & Neck, 2004). It is assumed that dysfunctional cognitions such as all-or-nothing thinking or overgeneralization (Manz & Neck, 1991) can be

identified and replaced with more appropriate thoughts. Mental imagery or rehearsal lays a cognitive basis for later behavior and has been found to be effective in several areas (Anthony, Bennett, Maddox, & Wheatley, 1993; Driskell, Copper, & Moran, 1994; Manz & Neck, 2004; Neck & Houghton, 2006). Ample evidence suggests factorial validity of the hierarchical strategies model (Andreßen & Konradt, 2007; Houghton & Neck, 2002).

Self-leadership theory suggests that its strategies lead to improved self-regulation, which should result in an array of positive consequences, e.g., positive affect (Neck & Manz, 1996), job satisfaction (Roberts & Foti, 1998), organizational commitment, independence (Manz & Sims, 2001), empowerment (e.g. Houghton & Yoho, 2005; Manz, 1992), self-efficacy (Manz, 1986; Manz & Neck, 2004; Neck & Manz, 1992, 1996) and instrumentality (Konradt et al., 2009), as well as creativity and innovation (e.g. DiLiello & Houghton, 2006; Manz & Sims, 2001).

Empirical research on self-leadership has mainly focused on performance and motivational outcomes. Early studies investigated the impact of thought self-leadership training for airline employees aimed at enhancing self-efficacy and found it to be effective (Neck, 1996; Neck & Manz, 1996). Subsequent studies found self-efficacy to mediate the self-leadership - performance relationship, with Prussia et al. (1998) examining students' course performance, and Konradt et al. (2009) and Andreßen, Konradt and Neck (2009) analyzing individual task performance of organizational team members. Through the use of self-leadership strategies, beliefs that the goal in question (course or team goal) could be reached or contributed to by participants were strengthened, which in turn did in fact lead to higher levels of performance. Moreover, positive relationships between self-leadership and proactive performance have been demonstrated including self-and supervisor-rated innovative behaviors (Cameli et al., 2006), work role innovation (Cural & Marques-Quinteiro, 2009), and organizational initiative taking (Stewart et al., 1996).

In summary, self-leadership research has argued for a plethora of positive organizational outcomes, mostly for the individual, and has provided clear empirical evidence for predictive validity. However, there are also several flaws which should be mentioned. First and most important, the few existing studies which consider team contexts (e.g. Konradt et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998) focus on overall and compounded measures of job-related performance. Organizational role theory (Griffin et al., 2007; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Welbourne, Johnson, & Erez, 1998) suggests that the embeddedness of individual employees in a social context (i.e., a team) creates new sub-roles that require different behaviors than the former individual role. Thus, pertaining research is limited to a narrow set of job-related behaviors and results which do not take into account the full array of work role performance behaviors, e.g. team-oriented behaviors as well as adaptive and proactive aspects. Second, as teamwork

is increasingly implemented in the workplace, team-related factors which might moderate the self-leadership-performance relationship become more important. Recent research has recognized the significance of the team context for team members' and leaders' behavior (cf. Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Liden & Antonakis, 2009). Related theory should acknowledge the potential role of moderators of self-leadership performed in teams. Finally, self-leadership is a normative concept prescribing how and what should be done (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Therefore, the focus has, up to now, been on the description and prediction of effects. In a team context, however, few attempts have been made to clarify the mechanisms through which self-leadership influences employee behavior in teams. Some theoretical and empirical analyses have indicated the importance of self-efficacy and instrumentality (cf. Hertel, 2002) in explaining the relationships proposed by self-leadership theory. None of these, however, have been tested in a team context with a differentiated set of individual outcome variables.

3 A Multilevel Framework of Self-leadership in Teams

Conceptual Foundations

Self-leadership theory is conceptually based on control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1998) and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991; Diefendorff & Lord, 2008). Self-leadership strategies are designed to support effective individual self-regulation through increased self-focus, accurate feedback perceptions, appropriate goals and higher levels of self-efficacy (Manz, 1986; Neck & Houghton, 2006). Additionally, self-leadership draws on content theories of motivation and behavior, namely, cognitive evaluation and self-determination theory (Deci, 1972), to increase both the recognition and implementation of intrinsically rewarding goals as well as the perception of externally set goals as intrinsically rewarding (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Taken together, self-leadership strategies are aimed at increasing the effectiveness of individual self-regulation.

The team context poses self-regulative requirements that have not been considered in self-leadership theory. Based on Carver and Scheier's (1998) model of self-regulation, DeShon et al. (2004) propose an expanded model of self-regulation in teams which is centered on multiple goals and feedback. In this model, two feedback loops – one with the individual goal, the other with the team goal as reference value – are assumed to direct individuals' behavior. A behavioral choice has to be made between individual-directed effort, i.e., individual role performance, and team-directed effort, i.e., team member role performance. Individual role performance furthers the attainment of the individual goal,

whereas team member role performance is aimed at decreasing the discrepancy to the team goal.

Self-regulation in a team therefore poses the challenge of self-regulation with regard to numerous quasi-simultaneous goals which have to be fulfilled. Furthermore, team members' role performance behavior does not only affect a single goal, but influences individual and team goal simultaneously. Additionally, team members may also find themselves confronted with individual goals and team goals which place competing demands on their behavior and can lead to resource conflicts between individual role demands and team member role demands (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

We propose that self-leadership strategies can support team members in the effective handling of both individual and team goals. Because self-leadership strategies enable team members to be efficient in their expenditure of resources to the pursuit of individual goals, self-leading team members should have more excess resources which they can direct at the pursuit of team goals. Given that employees have limited resources (e.g., energy, time) to draw from (e.g., Kanfer & Ackermann, 1989), self-leadership can thus free team members from time and resource constrictions that under other circumstances could prevent individuals from contributing to the team goal. Similar arguments have been made to explain the cooperative behavior of experts in team meetings, and empirical evidence indicates that high performers show more contributions in problem-solving during meetings (Sonnentag, 2001; Sonnentag & Volmer, 2009). Therefore, self-leaders who draw on their spare resources to contribute effort towards the team goal and demonstrate leadership should show higher performance, as the individual self-leadership strategies which contribute to higher performance in the pursuit of individual goals are equally suited for the pursuit of other goals. As, for team members, it is presumably the team and not the organization that is the most identity-forming, the work roles that are likely to be the most salient are those as an individual and that of a team member and, as such, most probable to govern motivational and behavioral processes (Riketta & van Dick, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000). Self-leadership is therefore likely to have the greatest impact on behavior directed at the individual work role and at the team member role.

Proposition 1: Team members' individual self-leadership is positively related to team member work role performance (i.e., proficiency, adaptivity, and proactivity).

Motivational Processes

The underlying assumption behind the proposed enhancing effect of self-leadership on team member role performance is that the self-leaders are motivated to fulfill their roles as team members. Self-leadership can increase team-directed effort and support the team

member in the pursuit of team goals only if he or she is accordingly motivated. The VIST-model of motivation (Hertel, 2002) is a model of motivation in teams, building on and extending previous expectancy-value models of individual motivation in teams (VIE model, Vroom, 1964; Collective Effort model, Karau & Williams, 1993, 2001) to include three expectancy components (i.e. instrumentality, self-efficacy, trust) and one value component (i.e., valence). Expectancy-value models of motivation assume that an individual's motivation for a certain behavior is a multiplicative function of the expectation of success and the ascribed value of a possible outcome. Elements of the VIST model have found empirical support and have been successfully used to describe motivational processes in face-to-face and virtual teams and explain central output factors (Hertel, 2002; Hertel, Deter, & Konradt, 2003; Hertel, Konradt, & Orlikowski, 2004; Konradt et al., 2009).

Instrumentality. Instrumentality is an indicator of the perceived (in-)dispensability of one's own effort for the team's success, i.e. the perceived linkage between one's own behavior and the group outcome (Hertel, 2002). If the team member assumes that his or her efforts do not contribute to success, an effort reduction ensues. We assume that self-leadership strategies strengthen team members' beliefs about the importance of their own contributions to the team. The behavioral strategy of self-observation, for instance, should heighten the awareness for the consequences of one's own behavior. In a similar manner, the strategy of mental imagery should foster to imagine outcomes before performing them (Anthony et al., 1993). This should also increase awareness for the ramifications of the team member's behavior for the other team members and the team goal. Self-talk, self-cuing, and self-analysis should aid the team member in identifying and preventing negative thoughts such as "it doesn't matter what I do anyway", which undermine perceived instrumentality (Neck, 1996; Manz & Neck, 1991). Self-leadership strategies should therefore build and support perceived instrumentality in team members, resulting in more effort directed towards the team. Instrumentality for behaviors directed at the team, in turn, is expected to lead to more according behaviors.

Experimental studies have clearly shown that instrumentality lead to higher performance of individual members in groups (Hertel et al., 2003; Hertel, Kerr, & Messé, 2000), a finding which could be replicated with team members of virtual teams in a field setting (Hertel et al., 2004). Additionally, instrumentality has been found to mediate the self-leadership performance relationship in a team context (Konradt et al., 2009).

Proposition 2: The relationship between team members' self-leadership and team member role performance is mediated by members' perceived instrumentality.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy describes the belief that one has the necessary resources (knowledge, skills) to meet the demands for reaching the team's goals. Self-efficacy has been proposed as "the primary mechanism through which self-leadership affects performance" (Neck & Houghton, 2006, p. 29). Several studies have shown single strategies (goal-setting) or the complete concept of self-leadership to be related to self-efficacy (Bandura & Cervone, 1986; Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Neck, 1996; Neck & Manz, 1996). The accomplishment of self-set goals, self-rewards, and the elimination of dysfunctional thoughts increases people's beliefs in their own capabilities.

Prussia et al. (1998) and Konradt et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between self-leadership and self-efficacy in a team context and also found a positive relationship. Self-efficacy is a strong predictor of effort and persistence in goal pursuit; people who believe they are capable of performing a task will spend more energy on it (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is also a strong predictor of proactive behavior (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Accordingly, empirical studies have shown the self-leadership performance relationship to be mediated by self-efficacy perception both in a learning context (Prussia et al., 1998) and in the context of organizational teams (Konradt et al., 2009). Self-leadership strategies are therefore expected to also increase team members' self-efficacy perceptions for team-oriented performance behaviors, resulting in more effort directed towards the team.

Proposition 3: The relationship between team members' self-leadership and team member role performance is mediated by members' perceived self-efficacy.

The assumed positive influence of self-leadership strategies on team-directed behavior is thus assumed to be due to an increase in instrumentality and self-efficacy. Self-leadership can support effective self-regulation with regard to a team goal in this way, paralleling enhanced self-regulation with regard to an individual goal. However, heightened levels of instrumentality and self-efficacy alone will not suffice in increasing team members' team-directed effort.

Valence and trust. The VIST model of motivation in teams assumes that all four motivational components (valence, instrumentality, self-efficacy, and trust) must be present to at least a minimal degree to initiate motivated action towards the team (Hertel, 2002). If this is not the case, self-leadership will not lead to team-directed effort; especially as individuals' motivation to pursue their own goals will likely be high. Because self-leadership strategies are not expected to influence team members' valence (of the team goal) and trust in other team members, it is crucial to ensure that at least a minimal importance is assigned to the team goal and that self-leading team members trust in their colleagues and the system. This reasoning corresponds with findings on multiple goal regulation that the

importance and salience of goals influences goal choice (Kernan & Lord, 1990). If team members do not value the team goal at all and fear that their colleagues may not contribute to it, self-leadership could become detrimental to team functioning due to self-leaders' concentrating on their individual goals. This risk is obviously not only present for self-leaders, but, as these will have a higher motivation to pursue their individual goals, the effects may be stronger than for non-self-leading team members. While this does not mean that self-leadership is only expected to lead to team-directed behavior when the self-leader belongs to only a single team, it does highlight the necessity for meaningful, commonly shared team goals that possess a high valence for the team member and a team context that fosters trust in the other team members. Valence of the team goal and trust in the team are therefore important variables in ensuring that self-leading team members' motivation for increased performance is, as intended in a team context, in fact directed at the team.

Self-leadership thus offers potential to develop high performing team members by influencing perceptions of self-efficacy and instrumentality. However, as the other determining motivational variables valence and trust are not assumed to be influenced by self-leadership, an appropriate team environment is needed to afford importance to the team goal and foster trust among team members. In this way, individual self-leadership in a team context can be considered as a "catalyst": it accelerates and strengthens team members' self-regulation. Whether this self-regulation is beneficial for the team or leans towards the dysfunctional (e.g., withdrawal behavior) is influenced by external circumstances in the team context.

Proposition 4: The relationship between team members' self-leadership and team member role performance is moderated by valence of the team goal and trust in other team members so that the relationship is positive under conditions of high valence and trust and negative under conditions of low valence and trust.

The Team Context

Task interdependence. A key team characteristic is task interdependence because of its wide-reaching implications for team processes and outcomes (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). Task interdependence refers to the degree to which team members' work is reliant on other team members (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993) and has been shown to be an essential moderator of the relationship between team processes and outcomes (LePine, Piccolo, Jackson, Mathieu, & Saul, 2007). In highly interdependent teams, team members are reliant on other team members' contributions to adequately perform their own job, whereas team members' contributions in teams with a low level of task interdependence can make up the team effort additively by simply combining individuals' results. Under conditions of high task

interdependence, it is therefore of particular importance that team members coordinate their individual work with colleagues (Wagemann & Baker, 1997). Under conditions of high task interdependency, individual and team goals are more likely to be compatible, thus increasing the valence of the team goal. Additionally, team members are more likely to perceive their efforts directed at the team instrumental for goal achievement. Self-leaders in highly interdependent teams are thus more likely to expend effort towards the team, thus demonstrating higher levels of team member role performance.

Proposition 5: The relationship between team members' individual self-leadership and team member work role performance is moderated by task interdependence so that the relationship is stronger under high task interdependence.

Autonomy. Autonomy can be conceived as an individual-level variable, pertaining to the latitude an individual employee has in shaping his or her own work, or as a team-level concept translated to the whole group. In this sense, highly autonomous teams possess a great degree of control over the way they accomplish tasks set by the organization. Less autonomous teams, in contrast, are subject to rules and regulations on procedures and process that dictate how they should achieve their goal (Langfred, 2005).

Although team-level autonomy has been shown to be related to group effectiveness (Stewart, 2006), it has been noted that individual and team-level autonomy should be considered simultaneously (Langfred, 2000; van Mierlo, Rutte, Kompier, & Dooreward, 2005). While the two may complement each other and thus increase performance, a mismatch can lead to a loss of team effectiveness (Langfred, 2000, 2005). With regard to self-leadership, we propose that it is also important to achieve a balance between individual and team-level autonomy. On the individual level, it has been shown that self-leading employees report higher levels of job satisfaction when working in a more unstructured environment (Roberts and Foti, 1998). It seems reasonable to assume that effects on individual performance are similar: self-leading team members who are inclined to exercise a high level of self-determination and thus shape their own work roles will have a more positive effect in organizations which grant them an according amount of autonomy in their individual jobs. For self-leading members of a team, however, a *lesser* degree of individual and a higher degree of team-level autonomy may be a more valid approach to elicit self-leading team members' *team-oriented* behavior. In such a situation, team-level autonomy can affect the salience of group membership by focusing the attention of the members on the team (cf. Langfred, 2005). Self-leading team members who, due to restrictions regarding their individual work roles (low individual autonomy) cannot change their own work roles much can turn their attention towards the team and take advantage of the greater flexibility at the

team level by directing their efforts towards the team, changing what can be changed rather than fighting individual role restrictions.

Proposition 6: The relationship between team members' individual self-leadership and team member work role performance is moderated by individual task and team-level autonomy so that the relationship will be strongest under high levels of team-level autonomy and low levels of individual task autonomy.

Due to detrimental effects of self-leadership when team circumstances are not adequate, encouraging self-leadership may not seem very promising and other means of motivating team members may appear more fruitful. However, self-leadership of team members, when geared in the right direction, offers great potential in developing active, engaged employees. Self-leadership theory has long focused on the benefits of self-leadership that go beyond pure task performance. This is, in fact, a main differentiation point from self-management theory (Manz 1986; Manz & Sims, 1980). Research on self-leadership in teams, however, has neglected to investigate a broader scope of work role performance behaviors. Job performance is a multidimensional concept (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993), and increasingly, workplace behavior that goes beyond individual task requirements but is nonetheless beneficial for the organization, such as adaptivity and proactivity, has been included in models of workplace performance (Griffin et al., 2007). Therefore, the following will propose previously neglected outcome variables that warrant closer attention in the research of self-leadership in teams.

Broadening the Performance Outcome Domain

Team members, from a work role perspective (Griffin et al., 2007), can contribute to team performance in several ways: by fulfilling the requirements of the team member work role central for task execution, i.e., displaying high team member proficiency, as well as by adapting to and initiating changes to the way the team works (adaptivity and proactivity).

Proficiency. In order to effectively work together as a team, members need to collaborate during task execution. Task related collaboration involves coordination, cooperation and information exchange (Rousseau, Aubé, & Savoie, 2006). Coordination refers to integrating other team members' activities and contributions for the sake of synchronized completion of a task within a given time frame. Cooperation is defined as "the act of working together during task execution" (Rousseau et al., 2006, p. 551) and is aimed at mutual facilitation. Information exchange labels the act of sharing and communicating task-related information between team members.

These collaborative performance behaviors have often been investigated on the team-level (see Rousseau et al., 2006, for a review). Conceptualized in this way, teamwork

represents how the team as a whole acts. However, individual contributions to work in teams have been receiving increasing attention (Sonnentag & Volmer, 2009; Tasa, Taggar, & Seijts, 2007). The identification of individuals' contributions to teamwork and team functioning which sees team processes and outcomes as at least partially due to the behaviors of its individual team members allows for a detailed investigation of individual behaviors. Conceptualized in this way, individual task-related collaborative performance behaviors represent how well the individual team member fulfils his or her role as a team member, i.e., team member proficiency (Griffin et al., 2007).

The effect of self-leadership on individuals' team member proficiency has not been conclusively investigated, although there are theoretical suggestions that individual team members' self-leadership can benefit team functioning (Bligh et al., 2006). As team members' collaborative efforts basically parallel in-role behavior in a team context, it seems reasonable to expect that team members higher motivation will firstly display itself in higher in-role efforts directed at the team.

Proposition 7: Team members' individual self-leadership is positively related to team member proficiency.

Proactivity. Besides fulfilling the requirements prescribed by their role(s), team members can make active attempts to change their role and environment, as work arrangements become ever-changing (Ilgen & Pulakos, 1999). This behavior falls into the category of behavioral proactivity (Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Proactive behavior is defined as self-starting, future oriented action with the aim to change the situation and/or oneself (Bindl & Parker, 2010). The target of this change-oriented behavior can vary (Bindl & Parker, 2010). Belschak and den Hartog (2010) differentiate between self-oriented, social and organizational proactive behaviors; similarly, Griffin et al. (2007) distinguish between proactivity directed at the individual task, the team, or the organization.

The conceptualization of proactivity as performance behavior rather than as a personality variable entails that it is a motivation driven construct (Bindl & Parker, 2010). Self-efficacy has been found to be a key motivational predictor of proactivity in several studies (see Bindl & Parker, 2010, for a review). Role-breadth self-efficacy, which refers to the individual's perceptions of his or her own capabilities to carry out behaviors that expand the technical core of the work role (Parker, 1998), plays a particularly important role in predicting proactive behaviors in the workplace (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Griffin et al., 2007).

Self-leadership theory is related to work on proactivity in that it emphasizes the employee's active role in questioning and guiding direction. Neck, Ashcraft, and Vansandt, (1998) have proposed self-leadership as a means of fostering active, empowered employees who proactively shape and influence their work environment by creating new standards and effective procedures. We argue that self-leadership can be an important antecedent of proactivity in teams. Empirical support exists for a relationship between self-leadership and performance behaviors that are not part of the traditional inrole performance concept. In a study with employees, Carmeli et al. (2006) demonstrated significant positive relationships between self-reported self-leadership behaviors and innovative behavior as self-ratings and supervisor ratings. Other proactive behaviors connected with self-leadership include work role innovation (Cural & Marques-Quinteiro, 2009) and initiative taking (Stewart et al., 1996). In a team context, however, the relationship between self-leadership and proactive behavior has not been empirically investigated. We argue that self-leadership provides employees with the necessary skills to prepare motivate, and execute proactive behavior in teams. Grant and Ashford (2008) portray proactive behavior as the end result of a process with the stages anticipation and planning. Self-leadership strategies can support the employee in anticipating and preparing the proactive behavior. For the required thinking ahead and imagination of future outcomes and behaviors, self-leadership's constructive thought pattern strategies may be used, especially mental imagery (e.g., Anthony et al., 1993; Carmeli et al., 2006). Natural reward strategies can help in identifying desired changes that increase intrinsic motivation for the self-leader (Manz, 1986). In the planning phase, especially behavior-oriented strategies can guide behavior, for example by self-setting goals, self-rewarding intermediate steps, or making notes and plans. In addition to these direct influences self-leadership can have, self-leadership strategies have an impact on self-efficacy (Konradt et al., 2009; Prussia et al., 1998, Neck & Houghton, 2006), an important antecedent for proactive behavior. Employees who feel capable of behaving proactively will be more likely to transform intentions into action. Taken together, self-leadership strategies appear to be a valuable tool to support team members' proactive behavior.

Proposition 8: Team members' individual self-leadership is positively related to team member proactivity.

Adaptivity. Not all changes in the workplace are initiated by proactive employees. Often, team members will find themselves confronted with changes affecting their work and/or their working environment initiated by others. Because of this, employees' adaptivity, i.e. the degree to which they constructively react to changes in their work environment, has become an important requirement (Griffin et al., 2007; Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000). Like proactivity, adaptivity or adaptive behavior can be differentiated with

regard to the target of adaptation. Individual task adaptivity refers to the degree individuals adapt to changes affecting their individual work roles. Team member adaptivity “reflects the degree to which individuals cope with, respond to, and/or support changes that affect their roles as members of a team” (Griffin et al., 2007, p. 331).

In a theoretical model of adaptive performance, Ployhart and Bliese (2006) identify situation perception and appraisal, appropriate strategy selection, self-regulation, and active coping as central for adaptive performance. Self-leadership should therefore support the employee in fulfilling adaptive requirements of their individual and team member role. Self-leadership’s behavior- focused strategies (Manz, 1986) can be used to plan, monitor and implement the actual adaptation behavior, facilitating accurate situation perception, strategy selection, and self-regulation. Constructive thought pattern strategies can be a useful coping resource. Empirically, thought self-leadership training of airline employees trained in the self-leadership strategies of self-talk, mental imagery, managing beliefs and assumptions and thought patterns (constructive thought pattern strategies) could be shown to increase positive affect and job satisfaction and reduce negative affect as well as negative perceptions of the change situation, bankruptcy (Neck, 1996; Neck & Manz, 1996). This provides support for the usefulness of constructive thought pattern strategies in supporting active coping in response to environmental change. Focusing on the pleasurable aspects of the new experience through natural reward strategies can increase intrinsic motivation (Manz, 1986). Taken together, all three self-leadership strategies should support the individual’s capability and motivation to adapt to changes in their work role in the team environment. Drawing on this reasoning, it is proposed:

Proposition 9: Team members' individual self-leadership is positively related to team member adaptivity.

Summarizing Framework

In summary, neglected work role performance aspects of team member proficiency, adaptivity and proactivity introduced above provide promising research avenues for the investigation of self-leadership in teams. Combining self-regulation theory in teams (DeShon et al., 2004) with conceptions of work role performance behavior (Griffin et al., 2007) allows a comprehensive examination of behavior and is well suited to describe the previously proposed positive individual effects of self-leadership for team members. Figure 1 outlines the proposed framework of individual self-leadership in teams. Because team performance is increasingly seen as dynamic, consisting of several team performance episodes which cyclically unfold over time (cf. Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt, 2005; LePine et al., 2008; Marks, Mathieu & Zaccharo, 2001; Rousseau et al., 2006; Williams & Allen, 2008) with results

of one episode influencing the next, the framework is conceptualized as comprising one given performance episode.

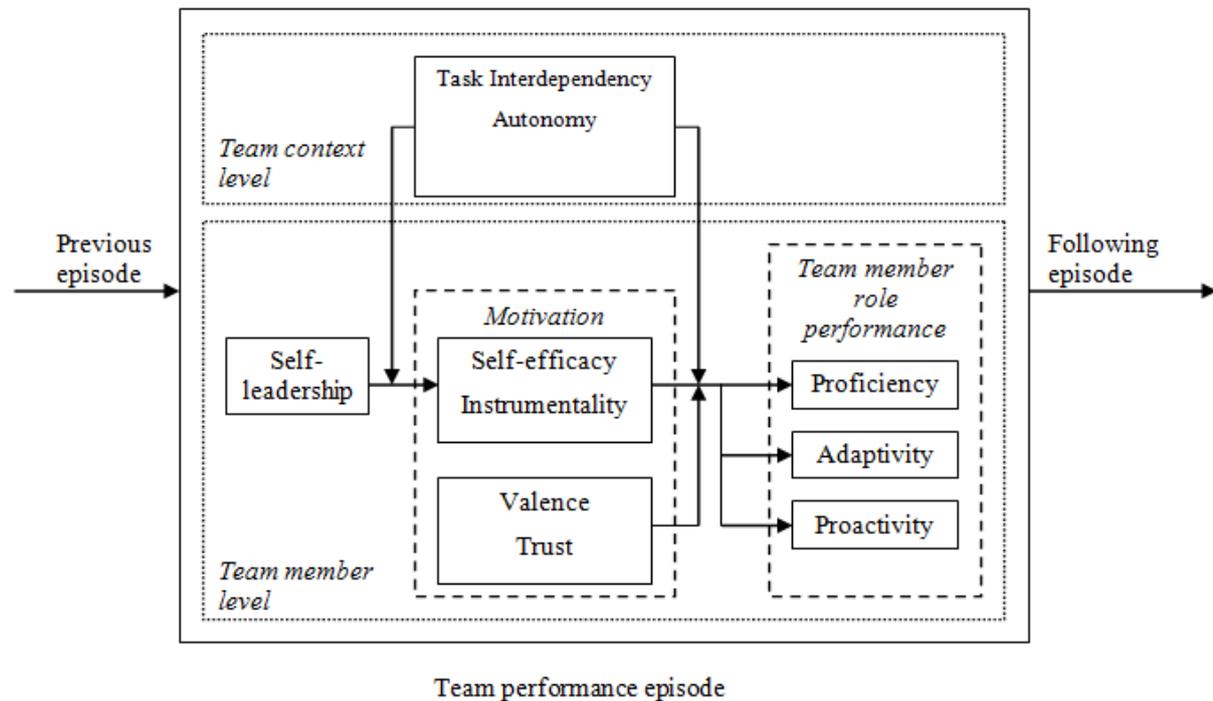


Figure 1: Research Framework: The Relationship of Self-leadership and Team Member Role Performance in a Given Team Performance Episode

A main contribution of the present framework is that it clearly focuses on individual self-leadership and individual team member role performance in a team context. Previous research has often neglected the distinction between individual and team self-leadership, making it difficult to understand the behavior of self-leading team members. The model presented integrates self-leadership theory and empirical research by considering the relationship between self-leadership and a comprehensive and differentiated conceptualisation of team member work role performance (Griffin et al., 2007), including team member proficiency, adaptivity and proactivity. By applying the individual-level model of motivation in teams to explain how challenges of self-regulation with regard to multiple goals are met, insights into the processes underlying self-leading team members' contributions to team performance are gained. Of particular research and process interest is the resulting importance of valence and team trust, which in the framework determines whether team members' self-leadership has the assumed positive effects or may lead to dysfunctional withdrawal behavior.

When considering whether a higher degree of employee self-leadership in teams should be aimed for, be it implemented via self-leadership training sessions or systematic

staffing of teams with strong self-leaders, two questions should be considered. The first is: what is needed? As outlined, self-leadership not only increases employees' inrole performance, but emphasizes employees' active role in determining their work environment and task. This may not be suitable in team in which self-leaders trying to implement new team procedures may actually hinder team goal attainment by drawing resources off the task at hand. Moreover, morale and job satisfaction may suffer as situational factors limit the influence the self-leader can exert, leading to a clash between desire and reality. It is therefore important to consider whether self-directed behavior is actually desired and effective in a given situation to prevent possible mismatches between the person and the job.

The second question concerns the team context. Does it provide adequate conditions to motivate the self-leading team member? Teams which fail to attract self-leading team members' effort may suffer as self-leaders pursue their own goals at the expense of the team. If, however, active, high-performing team members are desired and the team surroundings adequate, self-leadership can be a powerful tool in strengthening individual and team performance as well as team member satisfaction and morale.

4 Limitations and Future research

There are several final points that are worth addressing. First, although the search for moderators was well informed by previous empirical and theoretical research (e.g., Andreßen et al., in press; Hertel et al., 2004; Langfred, 2000, 2005), our framework is not intended to be exhaustive or comprehensive with regard to all dependent and contingency factors. To start with, employee work role behaviors provide only a part of the suggested relationships by self-leadership theory neglecting other surmised variables of affective commitment, positive affect, and job satisfaction. Moreover, additional situational factors may moderate any theoretical relationship. High environmental uncertainty (Duncan, 1972), for instance, which refers to the degree to which task requirements are changing and variable, might strengthen the relationship between self-leadership and adaptive and proactive behavior as the environment is more accommodating to these kinds of behavior. Likewise, mediators (e.g., self-efficacy) which were conceptualized at the individual level might also play a role at the team-level (e.g. a team's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments; Bandura, 1997). Also, our model includes the aggregate concept of self-leadership. However, based on the second-order structure of the construct, it seems particularly promising to include specific factors of self-leadership to broaden the consequences of self-leadership in teams. Finally, self-leadership is conceived as an individual level construct and the model is entirely focused on

individual outcomes. Further examinations of the model which take team outcomes including team performance or collective efficacy in teams (Tasa et al., 2007) into account will help address this potential limitation.

Future research should continue to investigate how reward and performance-appraisal issues are related to self-leadership. Providing people financial incentives such as profit sharing, gainsharing, and team-based rewards has been shown to motivate individuals and to improve their performance in teams (see Jenkins, Mitra, Gupta, & Shaw, 1998; DeMatteo, Eby, & Sundstrom, 1998; Honeywell-Johnson & Dickinson, 1999; Rynes, Gerhart, & Parks, 2005, for reviews). It might be intriguing to examine possible compensatory, enhancing, or neutralizing impacts on self-leadership. Also, from a staffing and training perspective, the investigation of individual variables that might affect the relationship between self-leadership and team member work role performance might also prove valuable. On the individual level, for example, self-leadership training effectiveness has been shown to be moderated by trainees' conscientiousness, with self-leadership training having greater effects on less conscientious employees (Stewart et al., 1996). Within a team context, psychological collectivism orientation (Jackson, Colquitt, Wesson, & Zapata-Phelan, 2002; Wagner & Moch, 1986) and agreeableness (cf. Hogan & Holland, 2003) as an individual-difference variable might work in a similar manner. In a similar vein, investigating the interactive effects with personality traits which might determine a person's inherent self-leadership abilities (D'Intino, Goldsby, Houghton, & Neck, 2007; Stewart et al., 1996; Williams, 1997) might prove worthwhile.

Additionally, in terms of methodology, future research should not rely on cross-sectional data obtained at one point in time only but use experiments and longitudinal studies to prove predictions about causal relationships. A first attempt at this has been made by two studies of Hauschildt and Konradt (in press), who show that self-leadership positively effects team member performance and team member proficiency, adaptivity, and proactivity using a field-experimental design. Longitudinal research in field settings might also be valuable to examine the impact of self-leadership over time on processes and outcome variables, which has been so far often ignored in organizational research (Mitchell & James, 2001). Moreover, as the majority of studies conducted on leadership have relied on retrospective self-report measures which are vulnerable to various biases (Le, Schmidt, & Putka, 2007), other methods and sources might capture more specific and potentially more accurate reflections of events and reactions, including diary methodology and asking reference persons. Finally, to enhance external validity, future research should also use heterogeneous samples in different domains to show the correctness of the relations across different settings, treatment, and measures.

Ultimately, while our framework suggests possible detrimental effects of self-leadership of team members, a detailed description and framework of possible counterproductive behaviors (e.g., withholding of effort; Felps, Mitchell, & Byington, 2006) is beyond the scope of this paper. The investigation of team members' counterproductive behaviors as a result of self-leadership in inappropriate team conditions (e.g., high individual and low team autonomy, low interdependence) might provide a promising research avenue.

Concluding, the current framework presents an important first step to deal with individual self-leadership in teams. We hope that our multilevel framework will make a contribution to the description and understanding of the effects of self-leadership in teams and that it offers a promising and useful starting point for research.

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