Determinants of Shared Leadership in Management Teams

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This study investigated the extent to which behaviors in a team and structure of a team influence the willingness of team members to share in leadership. The results indicated that empowering team behaviors related positively with shared leadership. Horizontal team structure had limited effects on shared leadership. The development of shared leadership in a management team depends largely on increasing the perception of empowering behaviors that team members experience. Implications for the practice of shared leadership, as well as ideas for future research, are discussed.

Historically, organizations have been arranged and led hierarchically (Halal, 1994; Hatch, 1997). In these institutions, the individual at the "top" of the organization is a central figure who sets the vision for the company, communicates organizational policy, and enforces institutional control (Bass, 1990; Hatch, 1997). In many cases today, top management teams (TMTs), rather than CEOs alone, guide organizations. In this arrangement, members share the responsibility in leading, rely on others for social support, and benefit from the physical assistance of others when faced with significant challenges. Since shared leadership is an increasingly powerful leadership approach within TMTs, it is important to identify what specific factors may contribute to team members being willing to take on leadership responsibilities. Shared leadership refers to the state or quality of mutual influence in which team members disperse the leadership role throughout the group, participate in the decision-making process, fulfill tasks traditionally reserved for a hierarchical leader, and, when appropriate, offer guidance to others to achieve group goals (Caramanica & Rosenbecker, 1991; Cohen, Chang, & Ledford, 1997; Harrison, 1996; O'May & Buchan, 1999; Pearce & Conger, 2003a).

Zaccaro, Ritman, and Marks (2001) suggested that the process of sharing leadership within a team develops as a result of many factors. This current study investigated two possible components contributing to shared leadership: team behaviors that encourage individual empowerment and team structure that is horizontal in nature. Team behaviors denote the attitudes and actions expressed by members of the team, in a collective fashion, toward other members of the team, while team structure refers to the structures and framework of authority that exists among members of a team.

Theoretical Development

Shared Leadership

Previous research indicated that an essential distinction between shared leadership and more traditional, hierarchical forms of leadership is that the shared approach to leadership emphasizes lateral, peer influence rather than the downward influence of an appointed leader upon subordinates (Conger & Pearce, 2003) (see Table 1).

Table 1
Differences between Shared Leadership and Traditional Forms of Leadership

Issues Related to Leadership Style	Shared Leadership	More Traditional Leadership
Behavior expressed	Aggregated behavior (Cox, Pearce, & Perry, 2003; Cox, Pearce, & Sims, 2003)	Singular or multiple behavior (Yukl, 2001; Pearce, 1997)
Type of structure	Lateral and decentralized (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996; Pearce, 1997; Pearce & Sims, 2000)	Hierarchical and centralized (Hatch, 1997; Yukl, 2001)
Actions of member	Autonomous and self-led (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Porter-O'Grady, Hawkins, & Parker, 1997)	Dependent and instructed (Hatch, 1997; Yukl, 2001)
Actions of team	Collaborative and consensus-driven (Graham & Barter, 1999; Spooner, Keenan, & Card, 1997)	Responsive to desires of leader (Hatch, 1997; Yukl, 2001)

Team members engaging in shared leadership exhibit particular traits. First, Barker (1993) identified that members of teams with shared leadership frequently displayed behaviors *in concert* with one another. In other words, teams express an aggregated behavior so as to intentionally influence other members. A failure to respond to this expressed, concertive influence leads the members expressing the concertive behavior to take corrective measures against those individuals not responding to it. The goal of this expressed influence is to either have unresponsive members adjust to the desired behavior or to leave the team.

Another distinction of shared leadership is the autonomy exhibited by team members (Kennerly, 1996). Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995) noted that members engaged in sharing leadership used this enhanced sense of autonomy to address issues that directly affected their specific role within the team. Team members experiencing leadership characteristics may feel an implied permission to resolve problems they encounter without the guidance of an immediate supervisor. Thus, rather than relying on a supervisor to offer insight and lend support, team

members sharing in leadership personally address issues that affect their work. It is important to note, however, that the ability to act autonomously does not automatically guarantee a team will practice shared leadership. Team members with increased autonomy may function in a way that makes their own desires a higher priority than the needs of the team. Therefore, members of teams with shared leadership balance personal autonomy with collaboration among members (Blase & Blase, 1999; Coluccio & Havlick, 1998; Harrison, 1996).

Third, O'May and Buchan (1999) stated that the ability of members to participate in the decision-making process of a team is one of the core values of shared leadership. They noted that this participation is particularly important when the decision-making process involves elements of administrative oversight. Participation in decision-making, then, may range from the rotation of leadership responsibilities among various team members to the building of a consensus among all members of that team (Fielding, 1999; Yeatts, Hyten, & Barnes, 1998).

A fourth characteristic of shared leadership is an increase in the accountability that members experience with one another (Laschinger & Wong, 1999; Spooner et al., 1997). Accountability refers to the willingness of individuals to accept responsibility for the tasks and roles that they fill on the team (Laschinger & Wong, 1999). In other words, members participate in decision-making and goal-setting, but they also accept responsibility for the consequences of those decisions and "pull their own weight" in reaching those goals. Among members sharing leadership, no one individual is too important or too expendable for the team to function appropriately. Likewise, no one member is completely responsible or completely exonerated should the group fail to meet its obligations. Consequently, for team members engaging in sharing leadership, there is a balance of autonomy and accountability, and these characteristics are distributed among all individuals on the team.

Empowering Team Behaviors

Behaviors experienced by members of teams range on a continuum between two extremes: behaviors that are more empowering in nature and behaviors that are more controlling (Pearce & Sims, 2002). Behaviors that are more controlling in nature may lead team members to sense a greater degree of instruction and oversight regarding job tasks and personal roles within the team. Conversely, behaviors that are more empowering in nature may lead team members to sense an encouragement to function in a more self-led manner and participate in the leadership of the team (Pearce, Perry, & Sims, 2001).

In a study that examined the effects of behaviors upon team effectiveness, Pearce and Sims (2002) noted that experiencing *more empowering* team behaviors generated greater feelings of motivation and aroused positive emotions among team members. This finding was consistent with the previous empowerment research. Kirkman and Rosen (1999) stated that empowered individuals feel as though they are performing meaningful work that advances the organization as a whole. This sense of psychological empowerment moves team members beyond the point where they only feel the freedom to function autonomously. This type of empowerment motivates members to act upon that freedom.

Another distinctive of teams that exhibit empowering behaviors is the emphasis placed upon mutual and self-influence among employees (rather than external, top-down control) (Cox, Pearce, & Perry, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002). Members experiencing more empowering behaviors within their team feel encouraged to develop greater competency and breadth in their own work roles (Short, 1994). For example, members recognize that different individuals, at

different times, make valuable contributions to the group. While each member may have an area of expertise, all members of the team strive to familiarize themselves with tasks performed by other members. This practice minimizes the quandary of a team having only one individual who is capable of providing important services to stakeholders as well as functioning as the *resident expert* on certain tasks. Functionally, a team expressing more empowering behaviors promotes task development among several members to help insure that the team meets increasingly complex and time-consuming requirements. Developing such competencies allows members to expand their own skill level as well as expand the competencies of other members so that the group operates as a high-functioning team (Cox, Pearce, & Sims, 2003; Klenke, 1997; Perry, Pearce, & Sims, 1999). Furthermore, this practice helps members sense their added value to and increased identification with others on the team (Hackman, 1992; Spreitzer, 1996). Consequently, as members increase their contributions to the team, they likely begin to feel a greater sense of investment regarding the function of that group and will take an active part in helping the group adequately complete its tasks.

Horizontal Team Structure

Authority structure within a team usually exhibits characteristics that range on a continuum from vertical (hierarchical) to horizontal (level). In a structure that is more vertical in nature, a hierarchy exists where an appointed leader serves as the primary source of instruction, oversight, and control for others (Houghton, Neck, & Manz, 2003). Traditionally, these leaders project influence in a downward, *one-to-many* fashion (Yukl, 2001). Individuals in the higher levels of this hierarchy may serve as the source of control and oversight for others on the team (Bass, 1990; Houghton et al., 2003; Yukl, 2001). Correspondingly, the appointed leader in the vertical team structure delegates specific tasks to other members. Essentially, the leader oversees the activities of the group and the group executes the desires of this leader. In this type of structure, the individual at the top of the hierarchy is the primary source of information for members rather than multiple individuals who evaluate information and reach a consensus concerning a decision (Northouse, 2001). In a structure that is more horizontal in nature, however, there is a greater diffusion of influence, guidance, and instruction among members throughout the team. A team with such a structure promotes relational connection and mutual influence rather than one assigned leader overseeing the function of the team (Cox, Pearce, & Perry, 2003). Thus, there is no one individual at the top of a hierarchy, but each member interacts with other members of the team as a colleague (Houghton et al., 2003). Seibert, Silver, and Randolph (2004) argued that, whereas psychological empowerment influences an individual's subjective experiences of empowerment on work practices, structures and policies create an *empowering climate* that supports the objective sense of employee empowerment.

One important dynamic of horizontal team structure is that members experience greater freedom to voice their opinion regarding matters affecting the team. Researchers affirm that a more horizontal authority structure emphasizes a lateral relationship of leadership among fellow team members (Pearce & Conger, 2003b; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Rather than feeling forced to function only within their chain-of-command, each member operates more freely across lines of authority. For example, a positional leader may exist in a team that is structured more horizontally, but members on the team will likely view and interact with this leader as a peer rather than a person of positional authority.

The significance of a more horizontal structure also influences the function of diversely-trained members serving on the same team. For example, if highly skilled members feel the freedom to cross over boundaries that might otherwise exist within a hierarchical structure, then they may more adequately contribute to problem solving when the team experiences significant need. Because members are more than mindless cogs completing tasks within a hierarchical structure, these members function as participants in a highly-functional team (Klenke, 1997). A leveling of the team structure, therefore, allows members to function in a manner that benefits the overall success of the team (Porter-O'Grady & Wilson, 1995). This factor encourages members to provide significant, proactive contributions to the team regardless of their pre-assigned roles.

Research Question

Based upon theory development and previous observations regarding empowering team behaviors, horizontal team structure, and the occurrence of shared leadership, this project investigated, "To what extent are team behaviors and team structure determinants of shared leadership within top management teams?" This study tested two specific hypotheses. A model representing the conceptualization of this study is presented in Figure 1.

> *Hypothesis 1*. Team members who experience more empowering team behaviors will be more likely to share in leadership of their teams.

> *Hypothesis 2*. Team members who experience more horizontal team structure will be more likely to share in leadership of their teams.
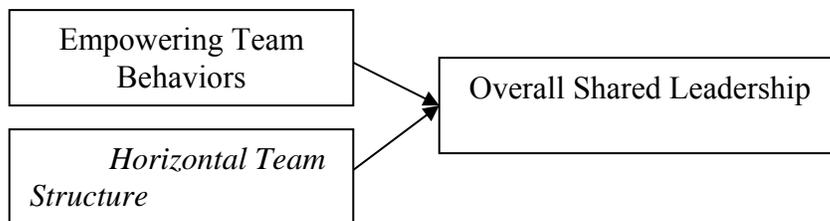
Figure 1. A theoretical model of potential antecedents to overall shared leadership.

Method

Sample

The sample for this study was comprised of members of top management teams from churches with three or more full-time vocational pastors within the Independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in the states of Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri. The Independent Christian Churches are not

generally subjected to a predetermined hierarchical structure within the congregation that might occur within other church denominations. In other words, individual congregations have the freedom to establish shared leadership within their respective church management teams.

A search of *ANUKAN* (1999) (A Network Uniting Knowledge and Need) and the *Directory of the Ministry* yearbook (Noll, 2004) indicated that 485 pastors qualified for this study by serving on a top management team consisting of three or more individuals within the geographic region. Out of the 485 potential respondents, 200 pastors participated in this study for an overall response rate of 41%. An evaluation of the study sample indicated that it was representative of pastors in the sampling frame with respect to job role and gender, but over-represented pastors working in smaller leadership teams.

Measures

Dependent variables. The occurrence of shared leadership experienced by pastors within church management teams was assessed by the Shared Leadership Perception Survey. The items of this instrument were based on questions derived from the theory of Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995) as well as questions adapted from the leadership questionnaire of Hiller (2002). Questions from Hiller's instrument were rephrased to better capture the occurrence of shared leadership within top management teams of churches. Items 2, 4, and 8 on the survey were reversed-scored because the questions sought to determine the directive (rather than empowering) nature of leadership within the team. The 19 items of this shared leadership instrument measured perception of shared leadership on a 4-point Likert-type scale. The answers ranged from 1 (*definitely not true*) to 4 (*definitely true*). The items used to measure shared leadership are shown in Appendix A.

The questions used to measure overall shared leadership were factor analyzed using SPSS to determine if the measure contained multiple dimensions of shared leadership. The factors were extracted using the *maximum likelihood* method of question extraction as this method assures unbiased estimates of the factor loadings for data whose underlying distribution is unknown (Harmon, 1967). Due to the possibility of correlation among the dimensions of this instrument, the extracted factors were subjected to *direct oblimin rotation*. The results of the factor analysis are shown in Table 2. The rotated factor solution indicated that 18 questions loaded on four factors while one question loaded equally on two factors. That question was dropped from the scale.

Nine items loaded on a factor that represents the *joint completion of tasks* dimension. Two items loaded on the *mutual skill development* dimension. Four items loaded on the *decentralized interaction among personnel* dimension. Finally, three items loaded on the *emotional support* dimension.

Independent variables. Team behaviors were assessed with the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire IV (LBQ IV) developed by Pearce (1997) and used by Pearce and Sims (2002). This measure originally contained 63 questions that estimated the tendencies of team members to express aversive, directive, transactional, transformational, or empowering styles of behavior. Because this study considers team members capable of expressing behaviors that range on a continuum from directive to empowering in nature, only questions from the directive (6 questions) and empowering dimensions (12 questions) of the LBQ IV were chosen for this project (18 total questions). Responses to each item were measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale

with answers ranging from 1 (*definitely not true*) to 4 (*definitely true*). The items used to measure behaviors are shown in Appendix B.

Table 2
Factor Analysis of the Shared Leadership Perception Measure (Direct Oblimin Rotation)

	Dimension			
	1	2	3	4
Share in goal establishment	.842			
Share in framing vision	.654			
Share in problem diagnosis	.584			
Mutual accountability	.560			
Share in decision making	.549			
Share in determining resource allocation	.528			
Share in determining team action	.525			
Share in fulfillment of team obligations	.400			
Opinions count regardless of titles (*dropped*)	.367			-.345
Share important information	.347			
Members learn job skills from others		-.820		
Members help others develop job skills		-.647		
There is no pecking order			-.919	
Equality regardless of job "titles"			-.457	
There is no one person who makes all the decisions			-.364	
There is not a feel of "everyone for himself/herself"			-.301	
Team members encourage one another				-.759
Team members display patience with one another				-.670
Team members experience a relational connection				-.401

Note. Pattern Matrix (Loadings <.30 are not included).

        Team structure was measured with a three-item instrument designed specifically for this study. This team structure survey focuses exclusively on the presence of a structure emphasizing strict chains-of-command within church management teams. Because the nature of the questions address a top-down structure, the items were reversed-scored to assess the lateral structure within the team. The items in the scale used a 4-point Likert-type scale with answers ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). The items for the team structure survey are included in Appendix C.
        Cronbach alphas were calculated for the overall shared leadership (18 items), empowering team behavior (17 items), and team structure (3 items) scales. The reliability of each of these scales exceeded a .70 standard. These alphas are shown in Table 3. Furthermore, a reliability test was conducted on the sub-scales of the overall shared leadership measure. These alphas are also shown in Table 3. The inter-correlation of the two questions concerning the overall shared leadership dimension of mutual skill development was .75.
        To ensure that the measures of overall shared leadership and empowering team behaviors were empirically distinct, one from another, a factor analysis was conducted on the items in the

Shared Leadership Perception Survey and the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire. The factor analysis indicated that overall shared leadership and empowering team behaviors loaded on the dimensions described above and did not cross-load on measures of other constructs.

Table 3
Reliability Results for the Overall Shared Leadership, Empowering Team Behavior, and Horizontal Team Structure Measures

Reliability Results	Cronbach's Alpha, α
Measure of Shared Leadership Dimensions	
Overall Shared Leadership (18 items)	.91
Joint completion of tasks (9 items)	.87
Mutual Skill Development (2-item intercorrelation)	*.75*
Decentralized interaction among personnel (4 items)	.71
Emotional support (3 items)	.74
Measure of Team Behavior Dimensions	
Empowering Team Behavior Measure (17 items)	.82
Measure of Team Structure Dimension	
Horizontal Team Structure Measure (3 items)	.71

Control variables. This study controlled for four demographic variables (age, ethnicity, gender, and educational attainment) and four team-situation variables (team size, job role, job tenure, and team tenure) that could affect team member willingness to share in team leadership. Previous research indicated that these variables can influence personal perception and group interaction, and thus, member participation in shared leadership (Cox, Pearce, & Perry, 2003; Lawson, 2000; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Pil & MacDuffie, 1996; Watson, Johnson, & Merritt, 1998; Westing, 1997). Four questions asked respondents to identify their team size, age, job tenure, and team tenure. The team size item offered five responses on a range from 1 (*3 to 4*) to 5 (*greater than 12)*. The age item offered six responses on a range from 1 (*less than 25*) to 6 (*66 or greater*). The job tenure item offered six possibilities on a range from 1 (*less than 1 year*) to 6 (*greater than 30 years*). The team tenure item offered five responses ranging from 1 (*less than 1 year*) to 5 (*greater than 16 years*).

Likewise, four questions were coded 0 and 1 in order to identify significant differences between pastors who classified themselves as Caucasian (0) or non-Caucasian (1), as male (0) or female (1), as attaining baccalaureate (0) or post-baccalaureate (1) education, and serving as associate-level (0) or senior-level (1) pastors within the team.

Procedures

The data collected in this study occurred in two phases. The first phase of this process involved contacting senior pastors of each qualifying church by telephone in order to secure their individual participation as well as to obtain permission to contact the other pastors on the staff of

that church. If individual email addresses were not available for these associate pastors, an email containing a link to the survey was sent to the senior pastor to forward directly to each individual pastor in the church. If individual emails were provided, an email was sent directly to the senior pastor as well as to each individual pastor on the top management team. The email introduced the purpose of the study, provided instructions for participation, and included a web link that redirected the participant to a web-based survey linked to SurveyMonkey.com via the Nebraska Christian College website. The email introducing this study also contained six letters of endorsement by recognized leaders within the Independent Christian Church movement that encouraged participation. The overall survey consisted of 88 questions. It was designed in a manner that prohibited pastors from skipping individual questions.

The second phase of the data collection process involved contacting each church leader 30 days after the first contact and inviting them again to participate in the study. A reminder email was sent to each pastor that qualified for this study; thus, each of the 485 pastors was contacted twice regarding his or her participation in the study. The survey link remained open for 13 weeks to allow each pastor a total of 2 months to respond to the participation request.

Results

The correlations among the study variables are shown in Table 4. Some of the correlations were large enough to indicate multicollinearity, but these correlations were only among the *dimensions* of shared leadership and its overall measure. For example, the dimension of decentralized interdependence had a significantly high correlation with only the overall measure of shared leadership (which might be expected).

Determining whether empowering team behaviors or horizontal team structure positively related to overall shared leadership involved estimating the parameters of regression models predicting shared leadership using the independent variables of empowering team behaviors and horizontal team structure (see Table 5). Table 5 shows that empowering team behaviors positively related with overall shared leadership and supported Hypothesis 1. Table 5 shows that empowering team behaviors also positively related with each dimension of shared leadership (joint completion of tasks, mutual skill development, decentralized interaction among personnel, and emotional support). Conversely, Table 5 shows that horizontal team structure did not relate significantly with overall shared leadership and did not support Hypothesis 2. Table 6 also shows that horizontal team structure related with only the shared leadership dimension of decentralized interaction among personnel. Furthermore, contrary to expectations, the relationship between horizontal team influence and decentralized interaction among team personnel was negative.

Table 5 also indicates that gender influenced the overall practice of shared leadership while Table 6 indicates that gender influenced the specific dimension of emotional support. These regression models indicated that females perceived less shared leadership and emotional support than did their male counterparts.

Discussion

First, the results indicate that the behaviors experienced by members within a team may influence team member willingness to undertake shared leadership. Consistent with expectations, behavior within a team that is empowering in nature is strongly related to overall shared leadership. Contrary to expectations, though, horizontal team structure did not relate significantly

with the occurrence of overall shared leadership. In fact, horizontal team structure related significantly with only one of the four dimensions of shared leadership (e.g., decentralized interaction among personnel), and that relationship was negative in nature. This suggests that flatter team structures do not significantly relate to overall shared leadership occurring among members of teams. This finding appears counterintuitive. For example, one might anticipate that a flatter organizing structure would accentuate the feelings of empowerment and autonomy. It is possible in this study, however, that the behaviors experienced by pastors within their respective teams were more influential than the structure organizing that team. Furthermore, because a negative relationship existed between horizontal team structure and the shared leadership dimension of decentralized interaction, it is possible that a flatter organizing structure created communication problems among teammates. For example, lateral structures within the team might actually decrease the amount of interaction that members desire or need with other colleagues. Structure that is more horizontal in nature may create turf issues that inhibit personal interaction and thus, contributes to conflict among members of the team.

These results suggest that experienced behaviors, as opposed to implemented structure, are more important in determining whether members will share leadership. In other words, whereas structure creates the framework through which team members interact, the experienced behaviors lead people to feel as though they are sharing the responsibilities of leadership. This issue challenges team leaders to frequently evaluate the type of behaviors members experience within their assigned teams. Leaders seeking to promote shared leadership within their teams must discern whether they are relying on structure or behaviors to promote the sharing of leadership responsibilities. Leaders hoping that the implementation of a less centralized structure will automatically create shared leadership within a team are likely to be disappointed. This is especially the case if those leaders exhibit a less empowering style of behavior. Team leaders implementing a flatter organizational structure, but acting in a domineering fashion, will likely inhibit members from practicing shared leadership. Essentially, the structure of a team might be designed to promote shared leadership, but behaviors experienced within the team are what influence members to share leadership.

In addition, the results tended to support the suggestion of Pearce and Sims (2000) that the construct of shared leadership is multi-dimensional. Because the research on shared leadership is developing, this adds further clarification to its theoretical conceptualization. This research identified four distinct dimensions contributing to the overall practice of shared leadership (i.e., joint completion of tasks, mutual skill development, decentralized interaction among personnel, and emotional support). These four dimensions are modestly similar to the characteristics that others identify as pertinent to the practice of shared leadership (see Table 1).

An interesting issue arising from the results of this study is the apparent lack of inclusion women feel in the shared leadership processes occurring within church management teams. In this study, females perceived less shared leadership and social support than their male counterparts. Considering previous research highlighted the lack of social support (McDuff, 2001) and discrimination (Ingersoll, 2003) female pastors encounter in the Christian vocation, it is reasonable to suppose that female pastors participating in this study experienced similar realities. For example, although male pastors may value the contributions of their female teammates when it regards task completion, female pastors may perceive that their male counterparts place little value on their contributions when it involves mutual influence or team leadership.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among the Study Variables (N=200)

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Shared Leadership (Overall Measure)	3.02	.44	---														
2. Shared Leadership—Joint Completion of Tasks	3.00	.49	.87**	---													
3. Shared Leadership—Mutual Skill Development	2.89	.60	.77**	.59**	---												
4. Shared Leadership—Decentralized Interaction	2.85	.61	.78**	.59**	.36**	---											
5. Shared Leadership—Emotional Support	3.35	.50	.82**	.66**	.53**	.53**	---										
6. Empowering Behaviors	2.87	.32	.58**	.54**	.39**	.47**	.49**	---									
7. Horizontal Structure	3.08	.58	-.14*	-.07	.01	-.32**	-.06	-.03	---								
8. Number of pastors on staff	5.13	2.22	.06	.04	-.02	.13	.06	.08	-.08	---							
9. Role on Staff	.25	.43	-.10	-.04	-.03	-.12	-.12	-.04	.13	-.06	---						
10. Age	4.50	11.00	-.13	-.09	-.07	-.12	-.14*	.03	.08	-.04	.09	---					
11. Ethnicity	.04	.19	-.07	-.06	-.12	-.05	.01	-.03	.06	.33**	-.07	-.21**	---				
12. Gender	1.14	.34	-.10	-.13	-.04	-.12	-.05	.03	.19**	.07	-.04	.01	.06	---			
13. Educational Level	.32	.47	.18*	.22**	.10	.15*	.12	.11	-.08	.45**	-.11	-.23**	.22**	-.21**	---		
14. Job Tenure	14.94	8.22	.18*	.22**	.10	.16*	.11	.20**	-.07	.47**	.03	-.06	.18*	-.05	.42**	---	
15. Team Tenure	5.67	3.12	-.03	.03	-.03	-.06	-.04	-.15	.03	.17*	.14*	-.07	-.02	-.21**	.17*	.07	---

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 5
Hierarchical Regression Results for Team Behaviors and Team Structure with Overall Shared Leadership (N = 200)

Variables	B	$SE\ B$	β
Step 1: Controls			
Age	.00	.00	-.01
Ethnicity	-.15	.14	-.06
Gender	-.17	.08	-.13*
Educational Level	-.09	.06	-.10
Team Size	-.02	.01	-.08
Job Role	.07	.07	.07
Job Tenure	.00	.00	.05
Team Tenure	.00	.01	.02
R^2	.10		
Step 2: Independent Variables			
Empowering Team Behaviors	.80	.08	.57**
Horizontal Team Structure	-.06	.04	-.08
ΔR^2	.30**		

Note. *p<.05. **p<.01.

Table 6
Hierarchical Regression Results for Team Behaviors and Team Structure with Shared Leadership Dimensions (N = 200)

Variables	Joint Completion of Tasks	Mutual Skill Development	Decentralized Interaction	Emotional Support
	β	β	β	β
Step 1: Controls				
Age	-.10	-.06	.09	.01
Ethnicity	-.02	-.03	-.06	-.09
Gender	-.07	-.09	-.11	-.14*
Educational Level	-.07	-.14	-.08	-.02
Team Size	-.08	-.03	-.09	-.06
Job Role	.13	.07	.00	.01
Job Tenure	.10	.05	.02	-.01
Team Tenure	.07	.01	-.02	.02
R^2	.10**	.05	.10**	.05
Step 2: Ind. Variables				
Empowering Team Behav.	.52**	.38**	.45**	.50**
Horizontal Team Structure	-.02	.05	-.26**	-.01
ΔR^2	.25**	.14**	.25**	.23**
Total R^2	.35	.19	.35	.28
	(*F*=10.35**)	(*F*=4.37**)	(*F*=10.02**)	(*F*=7.25**)

*p< .05. **p< .01.

Implications of this Study

This study adds to the theoretical implications of shared leadership by revealing that behaviors experienced within a team are more significant to determining the practice of shared leadership than the presence of a specific organizing structure. In addition, horizontal team structure appeared to have little to no influence on team members engaging in the practice of shared leadership. Horizontal team structure did exhibit a relationship with the decentralized interaction component of shared leadership, but this relationship was negative in effect. Consequently, although one might anticipate that a flatter team structure will reduce the bureaucracy among team members, it appears that the flatter structure actually inhibits the communication and interaction needed for members to engage in an effective sharing of team leadership. Essentially, it appears that a flatter team structure accentuates structural decentralization but equally inhibits personal interaction.

This finding raises a practical implication for leaders of teams as well. Leaders of top management teams should guard against relying on team structure alone to encourage members to engage in the practice of shared leadership. Simply decreeing to members, "We're going to have more shared leadership within our team" will not induce such a reality. This study suggests that members engaging in shared leadership must perceive they are also empowered to function as the leader within the team's organizing structure. Consequently, team leaders should intentionally introduce roles and situations that allow members to express and experience a greater sense of empowerment within the team.

A second theoretical contribution this study makes to current research is that it affirms previous conceptualization that shared leadership is multi-dimensional in nature. The results of this study indicated that shared leadership exhibited four distinct dimensions (i.e., joint completion of tasks, mutual skill development, decentralized interaction among personnel, and emotional support). Although it is unclear whether these four dimensions are additive to the perception of overall shared leadership, this research provides future researchers with a starting point for ascertaining whether one or more of these dimensions are essential to its practice within top management teams.

Limitations of the Study and Areas for Future Research

A first limitation of this study is the possibility that common method variance explained a significant percentage of the correlation between variables. This type of variance stems from measurement methodology (i.e., common measurement context, common items context, and characteristics of the items) rather than the constructs measured (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Common method variance is "particularly powerful in studies in which the data for both the predictor and criterion variables are obtained from the same person in the same measurement context using the same item context and similar item characteristics" (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 885). Admittedly, such conditions existed in this study. This study used self-reports to determine personal perception of the independent and dependent variables; thus, this methodological approach might have inflated common method variance in the regression models. A corollary limitation to this research was that the cross-sectional design of this study did not allow for strict causal conclusions. Consequently, it is inappropriate to state unequivocally that empowering team behaviors are a causal variable to the practice of shared leadership.

A second limitation of this study involved the use of a non-validated instrument by which

to assess the team structure of the church management team. Although the reliability estimate of this 3-item scale did reach the threshold of .70, it is possible that the lack of relationship between horizontal structure and shared leadership resulted from the instrument inadequately assessing the nature of team structure.

This study also raises issues for further investigation. First, future research should determine if empowering team behaviors exhibit a causal relationship with shared leadership. Future research could use a longitudinal design to help assess the presence and direction of causality between these two variables.

Secondly, qualitative research with focus groups and personal interviews should be used to determine whether members of teams consider empowering behaviors and horizontal structure as equally significant determinants to the practice of shared leadership. This study suggested that the influence of empowering behaviors and horizontal structure on overall shared leadership were significantly different. Future studies could clarify and reinforce the influence of the two (or other variables) upon the occurrence of overall shared leadership. The process of such studies might involve gathering observations and responses from individuals participating in top management teams within churches or other service organizations. In fact, because members of the clergy face unique leadership situations and stresses (Paulsell, 1987), a study designed to investigate the effects of team behaviors and team structure on the occurrence of shared leadership in other vocations is an important step in this stream of research.

A third area of future research involves adequately identifying other determinants that might influence the practice of overall shared leadership. While this study investigated the influence of empowering behaviors and horizontal structure upon the occurrence of shared leadership, the conceptualization of the shared leadership construct is still relatively new in its development. Future studies should determine the most significant variables contributing to team members engaging in the practice of shared leadership.

A fourth issue for future research involves testing for *intra*-team correlation regarding the influence of empowering team behaviors, horizontal team structure, and shared leadership. Such research will help determine if members perceiving greater empowering team behaviors within the same team more readily participate in sharing leadership.

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Appendix A

Shared Leadership Perception Survey

	Definitely Not True	Generally Not True	Generally True	Definitely True
The opinion of each member counts when they share their perceptions regarding a situation facing the team.	1	2	3	4
There is a "pecking order" within this leadership team. (r)	1	2	3	4
Team members collaborate with one another in making decisions that affect this organization.	1	2	3	4
A good slogan for this leadership team would be "Every man/woman for himself/herself." (r)	1	2	3	4
Each team member helps to frame the vision for this organization.	1	2	3	4
A relational and vocational connection exists among members of this leadership team.	1	2	3	4
Despite the job "titles" used within this organization, each member is considered an "equal" to the others on this team.	1	2	3	4
There is one individual on this team that decides what other members will do. (r)	1	2	3	4
Each member shares information with others on the team so that *all members* can work more effectively.	1	2	3	4
Each member chips in (even if it's outside an area of personal responsibility) to insure the team fulfills its obligations.	1	2	3	4
Each member is evaluated by, and is accountable to, all other members of this leadership team.	1	2	3	4
Each team member of the leadership team shares in establishing the goals for this organization.	1	2	3	4
Each member has a say in deciding how resources are allocated in regard to the team's priorities.	1	2	3	4
Each member shares in deciding on the best course of action when a problem faces the team.	1	2	3	4
Each member helps to identify, diagnose, and resolve the problems that face this leadership team.	1	2	3	4

Team members encourage one other during challenging times at work.	1	2	3	4
Members display patience with others on the team.	1	2	3	4
Members commonly learn important job skills from the others on the team.	1	2	3	4
Members help one another develop their job skills	1	2	3	4

Appendix B
Leadership Behavior Questionnaire

	Definitely Not True	Generally Not True	Generally True	Definitely True
Assigning Goals				
Another member within the leadership team establishes my performance goals.	1	2	3	4
Another member sets the goals for my performance.	1	2	3	4
Another member within the leadership team establishes the goals for my work.	1	2	3	4
Instruction and Command				
When it comes to my work, another member of the leadership team gives me instructions on how to carry it out.	1	2	3	4
Another member on the leadership team gives me instructions about how to do my work.	1	2	3	4
Another member on the leadership team gives me commands regarding my work.	1	2	3	4
Encourages Teamwork				
I receive encouragement to work with other individuals who are part of the team.	1	2	3	4
I am urged to work as a team with other members who are part of the team.	1	2	3	4
I am advised to coordinate my efforts with other members who are part of the team.	1	2	3	4
Participative Goal-Setting				
I work together with other members to decide what will be my performance goals.	1	2	3	4
Other members and I sit down together and reach agreement on my performance goals.	1	2	3	4
Other members work with me to develop my performance goals.	1	2	3	4
Encourage Independent Action				

I receive encouragement to search for solutions to my problems without supervision.	1	2	3	4
I receive encouragement to solve problems when they pop up without always getting a stamp of approval from another member on the team.	1	2	3	4
Encourage Opportunity Thinking				
I receive advice to look for the opportunities contained in the problems I face.	1	2	3	4
I receive encouragement to view unsuccessful performance as a chance to learn.	1	2	3	4
I am urged to think of problems as opportunities rather than obstacles.	1	2	3	4

Appendix C
Team Structure Survey

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The senior pastor is clearly the "one in charge" when it comes to directing to the pastoral staff. (r)	1	2	3	4
The senior pastor sets the agenda for leading the congregation. (r)	1	2	3	4
There is a chain of command through which authority is delegated among pastors on staff. (r)	1	2	3	4