



Effect of Shared Leadership and Employees' Creativity: Meaning at Workplace as a Mediation

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objectives: This study aims to discover more about the relationship between shared leadership and employees' creativity. **Background Problems:** The main question of this research is whether shared leadership enhances employees' creativity via meaningful at a workplace. **Novelty:** Empirical evidence that explains how shared leadership may enhance employees' creativity in the Indonesian context, especially in Indonesian technology companies is unexplored. Thus, a study that discovers such a mechanism is still needed. **Research Methods:** This study collected surveys with these employees by utilizing the convenience random sampling technique and utilizing PLS analysis to test hypotheses. **Finding/Results:** This study reveals that shared leadership affects employees' creativity. Furthermore, the study finding also explains that meaning at the workplace mediates the link between shared leadership and employees' creativity. **Conclusion:** The study finding provides an additional contribution, namely the importance of the shared leadership function in shaping positive employee behavior in the organization.

1. Introduction

The company's dependence on machinery and technology in carrying out company activities is increasing rapidly. However, it cannot replace humans in the creative functioning of the individual. Humans have an extraordinary capacity for creativity (Nijstad et al., 2010). The creativity shown by humans is unmatched by any other species. It has come up with creating arts and poetry, developing technology, developing hypotheses, and flying to the moon (Simonton et al., 2003). People naturally possess the ability to think creatively. This is seen through their ability to manipulate objects mentally and their ability to categorize experiences into new mental constructs. People also creatively use language by forming new concepts (Nijstad et al., 2010). In order to gain an edge over their competitors, top businesses always look up to their employees for new ideas and innovations. This is why they constantly seek ways to take advantage of these ideas (Hunter et al., 2018).

A company's success depends on creativity (Zhou & Shalley, 2008). Companies need people with creative ideas and support from coworkers who possess that talent—this is why creativity and innovation are key to success (Anderson et al., 2014). Empirical evidence has shown the importance of employees' creativity. This is recognized in employees' ability to generate new and valuable creativities for the company (Zhou et al., 2019). Thus, organizations need creativity to become new ideas and solutions (Zhou & Hoever, 2014). Organizational management studies always focus on finding strategies that produce results. One obvious consideration is leadership - the need for it is often recognized in research (Mainemelis et al., 2015; Hunter et al., 2018).

Research streams in the field of management and organization have identified several leadership factors that can trigger employees' creativity (Hunter et al., 2018; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Van Knippenberg, 2017). These studies primarily focus on leadership positions with higher formal positions such as team leaders, managers, and supervisors. Obviously, such leadership positions naturally come into common minds. In addition to empirical evidence on leadership, such as teams have been shown to lead themselves regardless of their leader's position. Teams can dynamically share leadership roles through an interactive process of influence. This is referred to as "shared leadership" (Nicolaidis et al., 2014). Studies on shared leadership have confirmed that it can coexist with "vertical leadership," i.e., leadership that arises from formal positions of authority. These two types of leadership can interact and influence team performance and processes independently, as per research conducted (Wang et al., 2014). Shared leadership should not be seen as a competitor to vertical leadership influence mechanisms. Rather, it's a complementary focus that is worth developing alongside the dominant vertical leadership approach.

Research advances in the co-leadership perspective provide many benefits for the literature on the relationship between shared leadership and creativity. Recent empirical evidence in China companies found that shared leadership can drive individuals' creativity (Liang et al., 2021). However, empirical evidence that explained how shared leadership may enhance employees' creativity in the Indonesian context, especially in Indonesian technology companies is still unexplored. Thus, a study that tries to explain such a mechanism is still

needed. Specifically, to advance our knowledge in empirical generalization about such empirical evidence.

Creativity is an essential thing for employees who are working in technology companies because such companies really need innovation for the progress of their companies. In jobs as varied as software development, hardware design, data analysis, project management, and more, the creativity of employees in technology companies is critical. Creative employees are able to generate new ideas, solutions, and product designs that provide opportunities for companies to excel in competition.

This study has the main objective of finding out more about the effect of shared leadership and employees' creativity. Therewithal, this study aims to explain and analyze the mechanisms underlying the link between shared leadership and employees' creativity via employees' meaning at workplace. Investigating such mechanisms can offer some benefits to theoretical and managerial points of view. First, the theoretical point of view from this study aims to broaden scientists' understanding of the process mechanisms that form the basis of the relationship between shared leadership and employees' creativity. In particular, this study seeks to explain the mechanisms of meaning in workplace variables, with the aim of explaining how and why shared leadership can facilitate individual employees' creativity. Second, empirically, this study selected employees who worked for technology companies in Indonesia. The prior study only used a sample of employees working in companies in China (Liang et al., 2021). This study also aims to broaden the generalization of understanding about the benefits of using shared leadership in encouraging employees' creativity,

especially in the context of organizations in Indonesia. Third, from a managerial perspective, the importance of shared leadership roles in facilitating employees' creativity, as shown in this research, provides an understanding for management and organizations that they need to strive for sustainable performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Shared Leadership and Employees' Creativity

A very important point in production at work is that it requires primarily autonomy. More or less strictly, following instructions or following routines is not creativity. Creativity is the result of products, services, business models, work methods, or management processes that are new and useful in improving work performance (Liang et al., 2021; Zhou & Hoever, 2014). Creativity requires actions that are individualized and not something that is imposed externally. This doesn't mean that creativity can only occur when the individual is free from restrictions. Self-direction is a spectrum that encompasses both not working independently and being creative and does not conflict with leadership or direction (Mainemelis et al., 2015; Hunter & Cushenbery, 2011). Actually, moderate restrictions serve to direct creative endeavors (Pickles et al., 2019). However, there must be enough space to orient oneself for creativity to occur (Pickle et al., 2019; Kearney et al., 2019). This is exemplified by Hirst's research (2011) which documented how bureaucratic restraints can impede creativity. This dedication to personal autonomy is coupled with a significant emphasis on creativity research on why people are creative (van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2020; Amabile & Pratt, 2016). The focus on motivating motivation in

workplace creativity is consistent with the concept that creativity is basically driven by individuals, where motivation is an important factor that generates such unique ideas. Considerations about the importance of self-guidance and motivation in creativity also share relevance with leadership, which is an important factor in influencing creativity in a workplace.

Discussion regarding how leadership can affect employees' creativity is an essential issue in management and leadership studies. The importance of leadership to organizational management is central to Selznick's article (1957) on leadership. Leadership is a more flexible and adaptive method of directing, guiding, and inspiring people instead of aspects of the organization that are more structural. Not surprisingly, research into creativity has documented the various aspects of leadership that are positively associated with creativity (Mainemelis et al., 2015; Hunter & Cushenbery, 2011; van Knippenberg, 2017). This study does not intend to challenge the general focus on "vertical leadership" in a workplace but aims to recognize that teams can also have a leadership process that involves teamwork and active participation of all team members (Pearce and Sims, 2002). It is called "lateral leadership" (shared leadership).

Pearce and Conger (2003, p. 1) define shared leadership as "a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals." The discussion about the relationship between shared leadership and creativity is an important point that is different from the main focus on "vertical leadership" in research on the relationship between leadership and creativity in a

workplace. This research states that co-leadership is also very important in the context of leadership and creativity because the focus on self-direction is an important element in creativity, which can be achieved through co-leadership.

The study of shared leadership is primarily concerned with the performance of a team. The meta-analysis demonstrated that co-leadership is positively associated with team performance (Nicolaidis et al., 2014; D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2014). This positive association can be attributed to the fact that people value autonomy. Autonomy in workplace has the effect of increasing meaningfulness and the experience of meaning, both of which are motivating states (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Additionally, independent work promotes team autonomy and flexibility in the face of challenges to work and helps to avoid some of the more detrimental effects of power hierarchies in the team (Greer et al., 2017). The understanding of the relationship between leadership and creativity is still not significantly developed (Ali et al., 2020; Hoch, 2013; Turban & Roberts, 2016), and research that attempts to connect the two is also limited (Liang et al., 2021). The development of a methodology for analyzing this shared leadership and creativity is of paramount importance. It is important to recognize that often individuals are involved in projects or teams individually or independently. This is important because the teamwork process can have a significant impact on an individual's overall performance (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). Based on research, it is proven that there is an interaction between team levels and their influence on individual creativity (Richter et al., 2012; Hirst et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2012;

Hirst et al., 2011). Evidence shows that shared leadership can have both vertical and horizontal effects on the functioning of individual team members (Liu et al., 2014). This study aims to study the interaction between shared leadership and individual creativity at an interrelated level so that it is in accordance with the general concept that team processes can influence individual performance.

Shared leadership has the basic concept that each team member works independently and together to direct the team toward their desired goals (Carson et al., 2007). In co-leadership, team members have the freedom and autonomy to make decisions and take action, which is different from the sense that there is no leadership within the team. However, team self-direction is considered sufficient to achieve common goals (Chiu et al., 2016; Pearce & Conger, 2003). This implies that team members can design processes for the team because they believe that they are most effective at addressing work challenges and taking a proactive approach to leverage the contributions of others. As a result, they have the ability to be innovative in their jobs. Subsequently, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. Shared leadership positively affects employees' creativity.

2.2. The mechanism of Meaning at Workplace

With reference to psychological empowerment theory (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995) and understanding of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), this study hypothesizes that shared leadership can create an environment that is highly motivating and has the potential to encourage creative engagement to challenges in workplace.

Psychological empowerment theory emphasizes that people have a natural desire to value their work when they are independent. Because people value independent work, it inspires work that has meaning (meaning) (Ros et al., 1999; May et al., 2004; Shamir, 1991). Meaningfulness in work experience is a condition that gives birth to motivation that comes from within oneself (intrinsic) (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). Conceptually, meaning at work (meaning at work) refers to employees' perceptions that work has a significant contribution to their personal lives and professional development, as well as bringing a net to others (Steger et al., 2012).

The subjective experience of doing meaningful work can motivate people intrinsically to participate actively in their work and strive to achieve high-quality results because they value the value of the work itself (Liden et al., 2000; Hooker & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; van Knippenberg, 2020; Spreitzer et al., 1997). During the process of shared leadership, each member participates collectively in leading the team. This means that in the context of a team, individual members still have relatively large responsibilities and autonomy in taking action and making decisions on their own. In other words, they have a significant independent role in achieving team goals collectively. Because team members are considered to have independent roles, it can be concluded that shared leadership has a positive influence on the extent to which team members' work experiences are considered meaningful. Subsequently, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2. Shared leadership positively affects meaning at the workplace.

Employees' experience in meaning at workplace has important importance that can motivate individuals (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreizer, 1995) and is positively related to the ability to be creative. Amabile and Pratt (2016) explained the analysis of motivating creativity that showed circumstances are intrinsically the main drivers in encouraging individual creativity. Amabile & Pratt (2016), in this context, showed the importance of recognizing the role of experience in providing meaning. Individuals who feel that their work has meaning tend to be more motivated to achieve high-quality performance, compared to individuals who feel that "enough" performance is sufficient. In addition, they are also more persistent in facing setbacks in their efforts to achieve high performance (van Knippenberg, 2020). Paying attention to high-quality performance and persistence is critical in encouraging creativity, as it motivates individuals to seek unusual performance opportunities outside the routine of work and opens the door to creativity. Perseverance also plays an important role in sparking creativity because when individuals are faced with setbacks and failures in pursuing new ideas, the ability to continuously seek and pursue these ideas can help achieve creative results. Subsequently, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

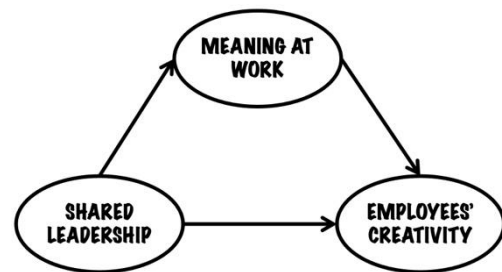
Hypothesis 3. Meaning at the workplace has a positive effect on employees' creativity.

Based on the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), relatedness plays an essential role in fostering individual intrinsic motivation. A sense of connection resulting from shared leadership can give a meaningful experience to employees in their

job. A strong relatedness occurs in a workplace because of shared leadership, reflecting in employees' experience in the form of a sense of meaning at workplace, which in turn, may foster employees to be creative. Subsequently, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4. Meaning at the workplace mediates the influence of shared leadership on employees' creativity.

Figure 1. Theoretical model



3. Method, Data, and Analysis

3.1. Samples and Research Design

The collection of research data was carried out by distributing questionnaires to research respondents. The respondents in this study were 86 employees who worked in one of the companies engaged in technology located in one of the cities in Indonesia. This study collected surveys with these employees by utilizing the convenience random sampling technique. The priority of this study is to collect data from a sample, namely employees and supervisors in companies that have been determined to be criteria for testing research hypotheses. Thus, the generalization or external validity of the results will be relatively high.

3.2. Instrumentation

Shared leadership is measured through an instrument adopted from Chiu et al. (2016) which has a 5-item question using a

Likert scale. Samples of those questions include “my team members help each other with the team planning process within our organization” and “my team members take advantage of the time to develop abilities and mentor other team members.” Meaning at workplace is measured through an instrument adopted from Spreitzer (1995) which has a 3-item question using a Likert scale. Samples of those questions include “the work I do is very important to me” and “the work I do means a lot to me.” Employees’ creativity is measured through instruments adopted from Baer et al. (2006) derived from Zhou and George (2001) who have 4-item questions by using a Likert scale. Respondents will be asked to recall how often (frequency level) they experienced several events (four questions) in the past year. Samples of those questions include “providing many creative ideas to improve performance in the company” and “providing ideas on new ways to do a job.”

3.3. SEM-PLS Analysis

The purpose of using SEM-PLS analysis (“structural equation modeling-partial least squares”) in this study is to test the hypotheses that have been described. This analysis will be carried out in several stages. First, the analysis was carried out by looking at the value of the fit and quality indices model (Wetzal et al., 2009). Second, the purpose of the analysis is to ensure that the research results are not influenced by “common method variance” (CMV) (Podsakoff et al., 2012; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Third, the analysis was carried out to test the convergent and the discriminant validities, as well as the reliability of research data as part of the measurement model evaluation (Hair et al., 2014). Fourth, the result of the analysis is a structural evaluation model to

test the hypotheses that have been proposed (Anita et al., 2021).

4. Result and Discussion

The investigation took place simultaneously from multiple perspectives. The potential for common method variance (CMV) in these data must be considered (Podsakoff et al., 2012, 2003). As a precaution against general method bias, this study used full collinearity of variance inflation factors (VIFs) to check for possible CMV issues in the data (Kock, 2015).

Table 1. Full collinearity VIFs test results

Shared leadership	Meaning at workplace	Employees’ creativity
1.271	1.351	1.274

The findings in Table 1 demonstrate that each variable has a VIF lower than 3.3 and is therefore considered fully collinear. Data analysis showed that there was no indication of the occurrence of “common method variance” (CMV) in this study (Kock, 2015).

4.1. Test Results of Fit Model and Quality Index

The fit index and the quality of the PLS analysis in this study can be seen in Table 2, which includes the average R-square (ARS), average path coefficient (APC), and average variance inflation factor (AVIF). The test results show that the model in this study fits the data, with an average R-square (ARS) of 0.222 ($p < 0.001$), an average path coefficient (APC) of 0.325 ($p < 0.001$), and an average inflation factor variance (AVIF) of 1,227. In addition, a VIF value that is less than or equal to 3.3 indicates that the model is free from multicollinearity problems (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2. Test results of fit model and quality index

Quality index criteria	Value	Rule of thumb
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.325***	p-value < 0.05
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.222***	p-value < 0.05
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.227	< 3.3
Tenenhaus GoF	0.405	≥ 0.10 (small effect size), ≥ 0.25 (medium effect size), and ≥ 0.36 (large effect size)
Coefficient Q-squared (Q ²):		> 0 (predictive models are acceptable)
• Meaning at Workplace	0,234	
• Employees' creativity	0,236	

Notes: ***Significant at 0.001

The test produces a Goodness of Fit (GoF) index which aims to measure the suitability of the outer and inner models in PLS (Tenenhaus et al., 2005). The permissible limits for GoF are 0.1 (small), 0.25 (medium), and 0.36 (large) (Wetzels et al., 2009). According to Wetzels et al. (2009), the GoF value in this investigation was 0.405, which is equal to the threshold value of 0.36. These findings suggest that the models in this study were effective. In addition, the test results in Table 4.5 show that the Q² value exceeds zero, an indication of the model's ability to make valid predictions (O'Cass and Weerawardena, 2010).

4.2. Measurement Model Test Results

The validity scale for each variable measured in the SEM-PLS analysis evaluates the measurement model (Hair et al., 2014). The first stage in the evaluation of the measurement model consists of assessing the internal consistency or reliability of each variable. Variables that have CR and alpha values above 0.70 are considered to have good reliability on a measurement scale. Table 3 shows that each variable has a CR

and α value that exceeds 0.70. It can be assumed that the variable measurement scale in this study has a high reliability consistency.

Next, the next step is to ensure the validity of each variable. Variable validity test was carried out in two different stages: (1) a convergent validity test; and (2) a Discriminant Validity Test. In testing convergent validity, an item is said to be valid if its loading value is greater than or equal to 0.50 (Chin, 2010). All questions in this study appear to have a loading value higher than 0.50 in table 3. Additionally, the average variance extract (AVE) value can also be used to assess convergent validity. If the AVE value of a variable exceeds 0.50, then the variable is considered to meet the convergent validity requirements (Chin, 2010). The AVE value of each variable can be seen in Table 3 and all of them are greater than 0.50. Based on the findings on loading and AVE values, it can be concluded that questions about variable measurement in research have sufficient convergent validity.

Table 3. Evaluation of reflective measurement models

Variable	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	α
SL	SL01	0.777	0,614	0,888	0,842
	SL02	0.794			
	SL03	0.783			
	SL04	0.846			
	SL05	0.713			
MW	MW01	0.906	0,831	0,937	0,898
	MW02	0.910			
	MW03	0.919			
EC	EC01	0.849	0,770	0,930	0,900
	EC02	0.931			
	EC03	0.857			
	EC04	0.870			

Notes: SL = Shared leadership, MW = Meaning at work, EC = Employees' creativity, CR = Composite reliability, α = Cronbach alpha, AVE = average variance extracted, significant at 0.001

The discriminant validity test is the second test conducted, which tests whether

the questions on the curated scale have discriminatory validity or not. Discriminative validity is achieved if the measured variable does not have a strong or insignificant relationship with other variables (Neuman, 2014). Table 4 shows that all the measurement variables in the study have a higher association with their own variables compared to the other variables, indicating strong discriminatory validity.

Additionally, “Fornell-Larcker criteria” is a method that can be used to validate discriminant validity in research (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The discriminative validity of a scale measurement variable can be determined by comparing the square root of the AVE with the correlation between variables. It can be concluded from Table 5 that the square root of AVE on shared leadership variable (0.784) is higher than the correlation of joint leadership variable with meaning variable at work (0.462) and individual creativity variable (0.232). Additionally, based on the values given, the correlation between meaning at work and creativity (0.463) has a smaller value than the correlation between meaning work and employees’ creativity (0.912). The results showed that the measurement of the variables in this study met the discriminatory criteria based on the loading and cross-loading findings of the “Fornell-Larcker” criteria.

Table 4. Results of Loadings and Cross-Loading

	Shared leadership	Meaning at Workplace	Employees’ Creativity
SL01	0.777	0.010	0.024
SL02	0.794	-0.009	0.055
SL03	0.783	0.191	-0.053
SL04	0.846	-0.061	0.115
SI05	0.713	-0.140	-0.165
MW01	0.084	0.906	0.025
MW02	-0.107	0.910	-0.050
MW03	0.022	0.919	0.024

EC01	-0.014	-0.115	0.849
EC02	-0.060	0.120	0.931
EC03	-0.054	-0.012	0.857
EC04	0.132	-0.004	0.870

Table 5. Test results “Fornell-Larcker Criterion”

	Shared leadership	Meaning at Workplace	Employees’ Creativity
Shared leadership	(0.784)		
Meaning at Workplace	0.462	(0.912)	
Employees’ Creativity	0.232	0.463	(0.877)

Notes: The square root of the average variances extracted (AVE) is shown on the diagonal

4.3. Structural Model Test Results

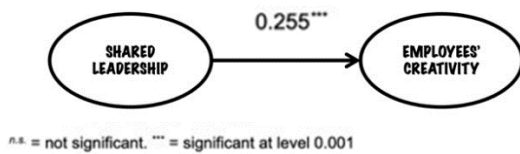
We assessed the structural model after reviewing the measurements of the model used in this study. Like we discussed before, the purpose of evaluating structural models is to evaluate all the proposed hypotheses. Next, the path coefficient results of the proposed research model can be seen in Table 6, Figure 2, and Figure 3 produced by the SEM-PLS analysis.

Table 6. Hypothesis testing results

Model 1: Without mediation variable			
Direct Influence			
Shared leadership	→	Employees’ creativity	0.255***
R ² (Employees’ creativity)			0.065
Model 2: Full Model			
Direct Influence			
Shared Leadership	→	Employees’ creativity	0.064 ^{n.s.}
Shared leadership	→	Meaning at workplace	0.468***
Meaning at Workplace	→	Employees’ creativity	0.443***
Indirect Influence			
Shared Leadership	→	Meaning at workplace → Employees’ creativity	0.208***
R-squared			
R ² (Meaning at workplace)			0.219
R ² (Employees’ creativity)			0.225

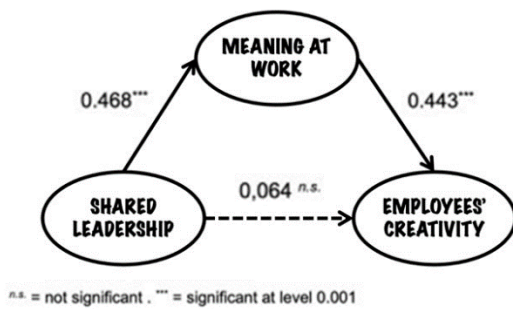
Notes: ^{n.s.} = insignificant, ***significant at the level of 0.001

Figure 2. Direct influence without a mediating variable



The first hypothesis (H1) states that shared leadership has a positive effect on this creativity. The data in table 6 and figure 2 show that the first hypothesis (H1) is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.255, p < 0.001$). The chart demonstrates that without the mediation of variables directly shared leadership has a positive effect on employees' creativity.

Figure 3. Full model



The second hypothesis (H2) states that shared leadership has a positive influence on work significance. The data in Table 5 and Figure 3 demonstrate that this theory is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.468, p < 0.001$). The data in the graphs show that the characteristics of shared leadership have a positive influence on meaning at work. The third hypothesis (H3) states that the meaning that is derived from work has a positive impact on employees' creativity. The data in Table 6 and Figure 3 demonstrate that this theory is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.443, p < 0.001$). The chart demonstrates that the significance of meaning at the workplace has a positive impact on employee creativity. Additionally, the fourth hypothesis (H4) hypothesizes that meaning at workplace

serves as a mediator of the association between shared leadership and employees' creativity. The statistics in Table 5 demonstrate that this theory is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.208, p < 0.001$). The figure shows that job meaning plays a significant mediator role in the correlation between leadership and employees' creativity. The table also demonstrates that when the mediator variable (meaning at workplace) is incorporated into the equation, the influence of shared leadership on employees' creativity decreases from 0.255 to 0.064 and is no longer statistically significant. These findings suggest that the variable meaning at workplace is responsible for the entire effect of shared leadership on employee creativity.

5. Discussion

This research seeks to investigate the relationship between shared leadership and employees' creative abilities by examining meaning at work as mediating variable. The process of shared leadership involves interaction between individuals who influence each other in directing others toward group or organizational goals (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Shared leadership involves informal influence originating from team members, who influence one another to achieve team success, in contrast to formal leadership which is based on direct communication between leaders and followers (Liu et al., 2014). Co-leadership involves interactions between team members who work together to achieve group goals by leveraging their leadership influence. In addition, they also participate in the decision-making process and take on responsibilities that are usually the duties of formal leaders (Shane & Fields, 2007). This study attempts to explain why and how shared leadership can result in employees'

perceptions that their work has a significant impact on their personal lives and professional progress, based on the theory of psychological empowerment developed by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Spreitzer (1995). Specifically, the study's findings suggested that shared leadership has an indirect role in creating employee creativity.

Additionally, meaning at workplace is recognized to have a role in psychological processes that facilitate the influence of shared leadership on employee creativity. The results of this study have significant value in expanding the understanding of the purpose of shared leadership in creating positive attitudes and behaviors in the workplace that previous researchers have documented (Nicolaidis et al., 2014; D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2014). Additionally, the theoretical and practical value of this research will be discussed.

This study explores the role of shared leadership in behaviors on the job such as creativity. Specifically, the study examines the psychological processes underlying the link between shared leadership positions via meaning at the workplace. Study findings reveal that shared leadership has a positive impact on the creativity of employees. Additionally, these results also demonstrate that the influence of shared leadership on employee creativity is mediated by meaning at the workplace.

The findings of this study enrich empirical generalization on the function of shared leadership in shaping subordinates' positive behavior (Nicolaidis et al., 2014; D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2014). It shows that shared leadership plays an essential role in achieving desired goals of the group or organization. The conclusions of this study suggest that shared leadership has a direct effect on employee creativity (the

first hypothesis was confirmed). These findings explain that a dynamic and reciprocal process of influence between individuals that seek to lead one another toward the goal of the group or organization can lead to positive behaviors like individual creativity. Conversely, low scores on shared leadership may minimize individual creativity.

Based on Spreitzer's (1995) psychological empowerment theory, as well as Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory, this study hypothesized that shared leadership positively affects meaning at work (hypothesis 2), meaning at the workplace positively affects employees' creativity (hypothesis 3), meaning at the workplace serves as a mediator of the link between shared leadership and employees' creativity (hypothesis 4). These findings have a significant impact on the psychological mechanisms that underlie the association between shared leadership and employees' creativity. These findings explain that shared leadership demonstrated with teams that assist each other in planning processes, solving problems, providing support and input, and collaborating, can create a sense of importance and value in work that employees believe is significant and meaningful to them. Additionally, the perception of employees that meaningful work can help them better understand the way and why shared leadership can promote creativity in the workplace. Additionally, the results of this study may also augment the understanding of the purpose of shared leadership in promoting positive behavior toward the job. This is because previous researchers have documented the function of shared leadership in this regard (2016; Nicolaidis et al., 2014; D'Innocenzo et al., Wang et al., 2014).

5.1. Limitations

The conclusions of this study have multiple flaws and can be utilized as a basis for future research. First, this study only surveyed employees who worked in a technology company (profitable organization) in one of the cities in one of the provinces in Indonesia. As a result, the findings may be confined to generalizations that are contextual, such as the characteristics of the organization or culture. As a result, for future investigations, factors such as organizational and cultural characteristics were recommended as potential confounders in this investigation. Second, because the study is “cross-sectional” in nature, it cannot provide a compelling portrait of the results that show “causality”. As a result, future investigations should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to justify the theoretical models of this study. Third, the study employs the “self-measurement” technique, which collects data from the same source simultaneously, that is, employees who measure all variables simultaneously. As a result, although CMV can be suppressed (Podsakoff et al., 2003), for a more complete investigation, different sources and times are recommended to remove the problem of CMV data. Fourth, this investigation employs the function of shared leadership to promote employee creativity in the workplace exclusively through the psychological process of meaning derived from work that employees perceive. As a result, future research should consider additional situational or environmental functions, such as altruism-driven leadership (Abdillah, 2021; Abdillah et al., 2020).

5.2. Practical Implications

The conclusions of this study, which suggest that meaning at the workplace serves as a mediator of psychological processes that influence the behavior of employees in

response to shared leadership, have an impact on management in the company. They should focus on creating a sense of meaningfulness in the workplace. Improving the perception of meaningfulness in a workplace can be accomplished through a variety of efforts, including: (a) creating situations that make employees believe that their work is significant and has value, this will increase their sense of importance and their personal growth; (b) creating situations that make employees believe that their work has an impact on others and society as a whole, this will increase their sense of importance and inspire them to grow personally.

6. Conclusion and Suggestion

This research can provide significant benefits to research streams in management, especially in topics such as organizational behavior, leadership, and human resources. Based on psychological empowerment theory and self-determination theory, the results of this study illustrate how and why the meaning at work mechanism affects the behavior of employees in the workplace, this mechanism is mediated by the shared leadership that promotes employee creativity in the workplace. The conclusions of this study can also be beneficial to management in companies in the form of suggestions on how to promote employee creativity. The findings of the study also have an additional significance regarding the importance of the shared leadership role in the organization in promoting positive behavior among employees. Ultimately, the current investigation is intended to instigate a greater focus on future academic research and practitioner efforts in explaining the purpose of shared leadership and employee behavior in a workplace.

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