

## LEADERSHIP IN SELF-MANAGED TEAMS

- Self-Managed Teams (SMTs) are prevalent in organizations and leadership is important to their optimum functioning (Barry, 1991; Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008; Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010; Taggar, Hackew, & Saha, 1999)
- Leadership in this context is shared, distributed, and emergent rather than vertical, dyadic, and person centered (Karriker, 2005) and defined as satisfaction of the team's needs in the service of team effectiveness. Anyone who assumes responsibility for doing whatever is required to meet the group's needs is deemed to take on a leadership role (Morgeson, et al., 2010).
- SMT leadership is complex and many acts of leadership are required. There is a need to maximize the number of people in a team who exhibit leadership behavior as one individual who displays leadership behavior may not be able to compensate for a lack of leadership behavior in other team members (Taggar et al. 1999).

## PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY

- Psychological flexibility (PF) refers to the ability to accept the present moment without needing to regulate associated thoughts and emotions, and adapt behavior to the situation as needed in the pursuit of chosen goals (Hayes, Luoma, Bond, Masuda, & Lillis, 2006)
- PF is an ability that can be developed through ACT (Hayes, , & Wilson, 1999)

## PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY FACILITATES LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR IN SMTs THROUGH INCREASED PERCEPTIONS OF JOB CONTROL

- Based on extant research on PF in other domains it is likely that it will be linked to leadership in the unstructured SMT context because psychological flexibility increases perceptions of control (Bond, Flaxman, & Bunce, 2008), which we theorize gives individuals a distinctive advantage in an unstructured context without formal leadership.
- Individuals that have high levels PF have more attention resources to notice the degree to which they have control in any given situation and because they engage in less avoidant behavior, they, through trial and error, better learn how they can effectively use this control. Consequently, it is likely that PF provides an advantage in situations where individuals have high levels of job control or discretion over their work environment as is the case in SMTs (Bond & Bunce, 2003; Bond, et al., 2008).

## PF LEADS TO BETTER PEER REVIEWED AND SELF-REPORTED OUTCOMES

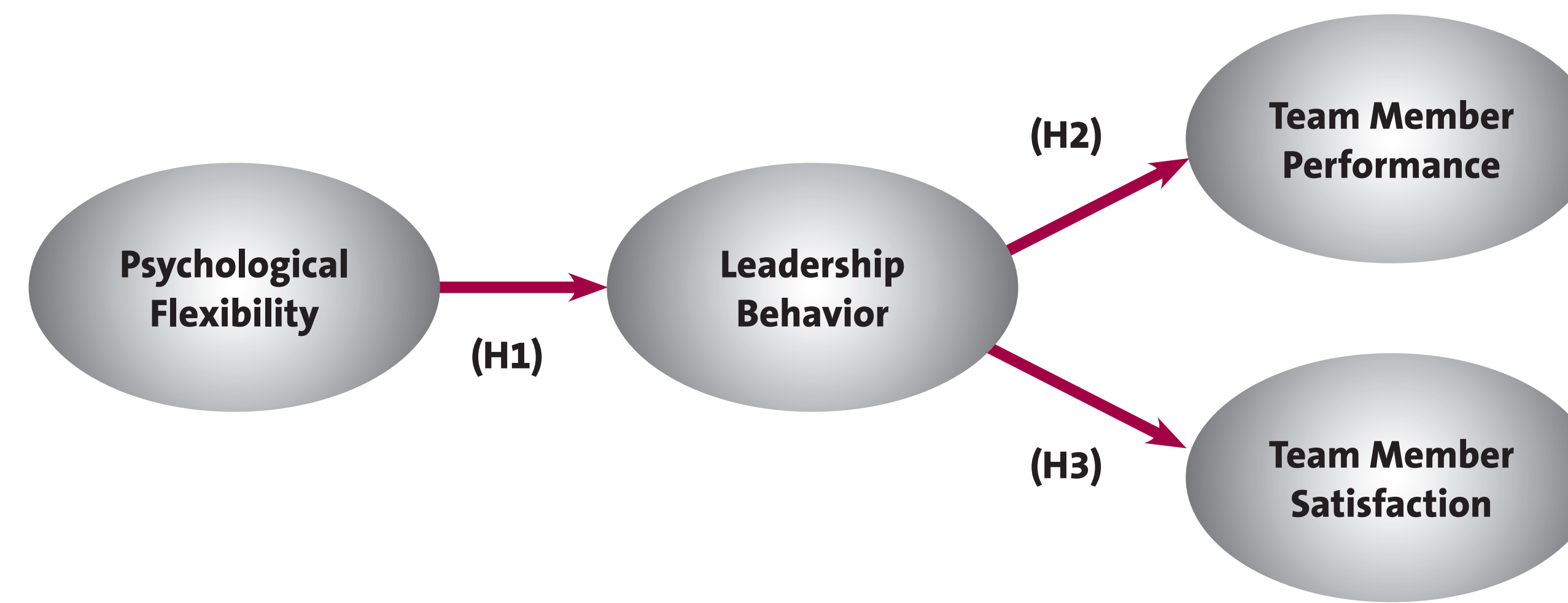
- Past research indicates that leadership behavior is linked to performance in SMTs (Morgeson et al., 2010) and PF is linked to in performance in situations that provide opportunities for greater job control (Bond & Bunce, 2003).
- Job control creates feelings of mastery linked to satisfaction (Lachman & Weaver, 1998) and mitigates stress from task demands (Dwyer & Ganster, 1991; Karasek, 1979).
- Consequently, high PF individuals are likely to receive higher peer reviews of their leadership behavior and performance and higher self-rated satisfaction with the team experience.

## HYPOTHESES

- **Hypothesis 1:** Psychological flexibility capability is positively related to SMT leadership emergence as indicated by high levels of leadership behavior
- **Hypothesis 2:** Emergent leadership behavior is positively related to peer ratings of individual performance.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Emergent leadership behavior is related to individual team member self-reported satisfaction

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The role of Psychological Flexibility in effective emergent leadership behavior in SMT



## METHOD

### Sample

- 395 MBA students, comprising 76 student self managed project teams (ranging from 4-8 members per team) working on a term project
- Average age 30.7 years; average full-time work experience 7.7 years; 67% male

### Procedures

- 3 Surveys
  - T1
    - » first week of the MBA class when the teams were initially being formed
    - » measured individuals' self-reported psychological flexibility
  - T2
    - » 10 weeks later after presentations and research projects
  - T3
    - » 2 weeks after survey 2
    - » measured individuals' self-reported satisfaction with the team experience.
- » measured team members' evaluations of each individuals leadership behaviors and peer ratings of each team members performance.

## MEASURES

### Psychological Flexibility

- AAQ-II measure taken from Bond et al. (2011). Sample item 'It is OK if I remember something unpleasant'
- 5-point scale (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree), 10 items
- Reliability .84

### Leadership Behaviors

- Adapted from Carson (2006). Sample item 'Communicates and reminds team of its overall purpose'
- Each team member rated the extent to which the focal individual engaged in each of the four leadership behaviors using the response format of 1 = not at all to 5 = a very great extent.

- Inter-rater agreement rwg was .81, ICC value for the 4 item measure was .63, Reliability .86

### Team Member Performance

- Team member performance was measured by asking each team member to rate the overall contributions of each of their team members on a scale of 0-100. An individual's score for performance was calculated by averaging his or her peer ratings.
- The average rwg index for the peer performance evaluations was .86; average ICC value for the team member performance variable was .69.

### Team Member Satisfaction

- Participants responded on a 1 - 5 Likert-type scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree, 5 items
- Reliability .93.

## RESULTS: CORRELATIONS, MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

Table 1. Correlations, Means and Standard Deviations

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
1. Psychological Flexibility	3.91	0.60	1.00			
2. Leadership Behaviors	3.19	0.62	.12*	1.00		
3. Team Member Performance	93.24	9.94	.07	.70**	1.00	
4. Team Member Satisfaction	3.87	0.95	-.01	.10*	.27**	1.00

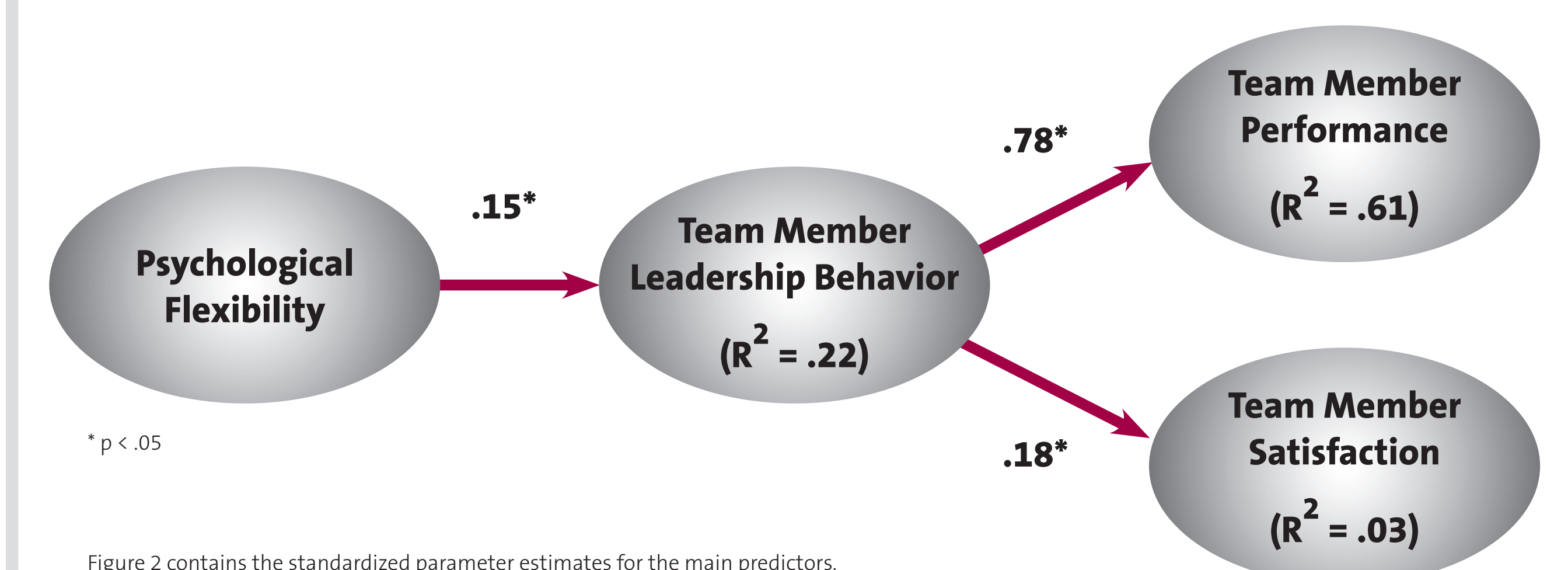
N = 395 \*p < .05

## RESULTS: SEM

- We conducted a structural equation model using LISREL 8.53.
- We assessed overall fit of the model to the data using the NFI, CFI and the IFI. Our results with all these tests supported the conclusion that the hypothesized model had adequate fit to the data (NFI .93, CFI .96 and IFI .96).
- Consistent with predictions
  - PF had a significant positive relationship with leadership behavior ( $\gamma = .15$ ).
  - Leadership behavior had a significant positive relationship with team member performance ( $\beta = .78$ ).
  - Leadership behavior also had a significant positive relationship with team members satisfaction ( $\beta = .18$ )

## RESULTS: SEM

Figure 2. Path Coefficients for Hypothesized Model...all hypotheses supported



## DISCUSSION

- PF is an ability that can be developed in all team members in training interventions which facilitates the emergence of shared leadership in the SMT which will contribute to team cohesiveness and outcomes of performance and satisfaction.
- This contribution is significant because:
  - leadership behavior must emerge and be shared rather than be concentrated in one person.
  - the few studies that have focused on SMTs have concentrated on the rigid traits of cognitive ability and personality, which have less practical application because managers have limited capacity to select team members on these characteristics.