**Assessment 2**

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**The impact of Rotating Leadership on Employee Performance and Career Development in Self-Managing teams**

**1. Introduction**

*“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.”* This is a famous quote from Lao Tzu (604 BC – 531 BC). The quote speaks to the idea that employees can manage their own work. In recent times, the concept of self-managing teams has gained popularity in different work industries and disciplines, including healthcare, manufacturing, retail, IT, etc. Self-managing teams are not limited to remote work but have also been found in hybrid and in-office work situations. Self-managing teams have been linked to many positive work outcomes, such as higher productivity, cost savings, and better employee satisfaction (Cohen & Ledford, 1994; Cohen et al., 1996, as cited in Doblinger, 2022). However, the effectiveness and efficiency of self-managing teams highly depends on the ability of individual employees to function well within a self-managing framework (Doblinger, 2022). As a result, different leadership styles have emerged within self-managing teams, including permanent, shared, rotating leadership, etc. (Eseryel et al., 2021)

As early as 1996, data from the American National Employer Survey showed that 17% of non-managerial employees were part of independent teams that decides how they will carry out their tasks, or for short, self-managing teams (Cappeli & Neumark, 2001, as cited in Doblinger, 2022). . Despite these new emerging styles, there is still a lack of detailed information on how each leadership style performs. This raises the question of how rotating leadership specifically affects self-managing teams, particularly regarding employee performance and career growth opportunities.

This research paper aims to explore the effects of rotating leadership within self-managing teams, with a more focus in how it affects employee performance and career development. This research paper will first find the impact of rotating leadership itself, followed by an analysis of its specific effects on self-managing teams. The insights from the analysis will be based on the arguments and findings presented in twelve articles. We believe that this will be beneficial in applied management when deciding what is the best type of leadership model and capability framework to use.

**2. Methods**

In this paper, we present a thematic literature review by studying different articles related to rotating leadership and self-managing teams, employee performance, and career development. The thematic literature review was used to address different subtopics, such as leadership styles, team dynamics, knowledge sharing, to build a good understanding of the title of this paper. We conducted an extensive search using Google Scholar and ProQuest as our main search platforms. The articles found contains one of the following keywords: tacit knowledge, rotating leaders, rotating leadership, and self-managing teams. Using the following keywords, around 80 related articles are retrieved initially, then it was slimmed down to twelve articles to supply what was needed. For the primary article, ABDC Journal Quality List A or A\* rated peer reviewed article was used, and made sure it was published within 5 years. For the three articles that contains quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods study, one article that was most related to rotating leadership and tacit knowledge was selected for each methodology. For the remaining articles, the articles with most relevance to rotating leadership were selected.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria to decide which articles would be accepted in the review were also developed in this step in discussion between the authors. For the quantitative research article, one study (Markulis et al., 2010) measured the impact of different leadership styles with specific team dynamic aspects. This study was included because it represented quantitative research in the field. Markulis et al. (2010) designed their research around quantifiable variables and did not rely on nuances of individual experiences, such as survey to gather numerical data on factors like workload balance and the present of conflict within their teams. This allowed statistical analysis and identification of patterns and relationships within the data gathered. For the sampling methods and participants, the authors selected students currently enrolled in three sections in an organizational behaviours class during one semester. Within these three sections, a total of 77 students participated in the study. The researchers created 6 student teams in each section, making it to 18 teams in total. These teams were assigned a complex project that lasted the entire semester. This article was selected due to the size of the teams which can be considered large enough even though we can question their tasks since all the teams are doing similar tasks. For the data analysis methods, the authors used Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine if the different team leadership modes such as emerging, rotating, and designated had any remarkable impact in team performance and team dynamics. The team performance was measured using the final grades that the student teams received in their projects, and the team dynamics was measured using student responses to survey questions. The authors also used Chi-square test to analyse student responses from the survey questions sent. The survey questions focused on whether business schools have a responsibility to train students for leadership roles, and whether all students should have the chance to lead a group. The reason for this survey is to gauge the student opinions on leadership in the classroom context.

For the qualitative research article, one study (Davis & Eisenhardt, 2011), examined the processes by which some technology collaborations generate innovation, while others do not. The authors did a multiple-case, inductive study on the processes by which some technology collaborations generate innovation, while others fail to do so. The authors preferred case study approach than ethnography because the authors were interested in understanding the processes done, as well as identify patterns across different collaborations to identify a general theory. The authors also wanted to focus on impact of collaborative process on innovation by selecting cases with similar parameters. The authors used three methods, case selection, data collection and data analysis. Case selection was done by studying eight technology collaborations between ten organizations in the computing and communications industries, by selecting collaborations that were likely to be successful based on past studies, the authors were able to determine the effects of collaborative process on innovation. Data collection was done using semi-structured interviews which were conducted over 24 months. Data analysis was done by studying the detailed chronological case histories of the collaborations, analysing the phases of each collaboration, and comparing the eight cases to identify similar patterns in how they collaborate to develop a theory on rotating leadership. For the sampling methods and participants, the authors used a purposive sampling method, focusing on categories to select samples that would provide insights into their research problem. The authors used purposive sampling instead of comparative study since they need to focus on a specific concern, and the authors used semi-structured interviews and archival data to create detailed case histories, it is more beneficial to use purposive sampling approach. The authors studied 72 participants across eight collaborations. The participants came from multiple levels within each organization to reflect diverse roles. For the data analysis methods, the authors used many different methods such as writing detailed chronological case histories for each of the eight collaborations, studied the processes and patterns within each individual case, and used cross-case analysis techniques to compare and contrast the chronological cases, studying the data repeatedly as they study more cases to find the pattern within these cases.

For the mixed-methods, one study (Ma et al., 2016), used qualitative method by analysing the top 5 cases of leadership for each class, with a total of 15 cases analysed. Content analysis was done on the notes connected to the leader’s notes in the note network, in order to analyse the student’s influential contribution and their ideas within the wider context of the class discussion. This helped identify specific leadership behaviours and create leadership profiles. The study also used quantitative method by using social and temporal network analyses to study group network patterns and determine the number of leaders over time. The authors looked at how centralized the student network was and whether a few students held most of the influence. The authors also used Knowledge Building Discourse Explorer (KBDeX) to see the connection between learners based on shared words used to identify sharing of ideas among learners.

The analysis of this paper included identifying key themes that emerged from the literature and categorizing articles according to the understanding of the effects of rotating leadership. This review is limited to English-language articles, which may have excluded relevant studies published in other languages, potentially affecting the comprehensiveness of the review. This review is also limited to articles that can be accessed free using the Internet.

**3. Literature Review**

The main concept that this paper will analyse is the impact of rotating leadership. First, we present narrative review methodology. Second, we provide a descriptive analysis of the articles found in the review. Third, we give an overview of the core concepts and research themes. Fourth, we present an integrated framework of rotating leadership. Finally, we discuss the implications for management research and provide directions for future research.

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| # | Authors | Research Approach | Research Objective |
| 1 | Allen et al. | Quantitative | Explore the impact of reciprocal knowledge-sharing relationships on startup success |
| 2 | Bienefeld et al. | Quantitative | Investigate shared leadership in multi-team systems |
| 3 | Davis et al. | Quantitative | Explore the processes that drive successful innovation in technology collaborations, identifying key mechanisms and processes that distinguish innovative collaborations from less successful, focusing on factors such as collaborative processes |
| 4 | Doblinger, M. | Mixed | Conduct a systematic literature review to identify individual competencies required for high-performing self-managing teams. |
| 5 | Eseryel et al. | Qualitative | Examine the role of functional and visionary leadership in self-managing virtual teams. |
| 6 | Karlsson et al. | Quantitative | Develop a model that uses the different principles of lean production, focusing on the work organization in the manufacturing sector |
| 7 | Ma et al. | Mixed | Investigate the role of rotating leadership and collective responsibility in a Grade 4 Knowledge Building classroom |
| 8 | Markulis et al. | Quantitative | Examine the impact of three leadership modes (emerging, rotating, and designated leadership) on team performance and team dynamics |
| 9 | Muller, M. | Mixed | Investigate the impact of leadership in agricultural machinery in Tajikistan |
| 10 | Olaisen et al. | Qualitative | Investigate how individual and collective tacit knowledge can be transformed into collective, explicit and actionable knowledge within teams, focusing on exploration of tacit knowledge |
| 11 | Sharif et al. | Qualitative | Examine the impact of sequentially rotating co-leadership and membership on creativity and innovation in organisms |
| 12 | Sheard et al. | Qualitative | Argue that executives should be prepared to adopt different roles as a mechanism for rotating leadership within groups to maximise group performance |
| 13 | Thompson et al. | Qualitative | Examine the role of teamworking in the transformation of production in advanced manufacturing |

**3.1 What are the impacts of Rotating Leadership?**

This section will discuss two managerial concepts, rotating leadership and self-managing teams. Rotating leadership can also be described as rotating specific professional roles within an organization, focusing on leadership roles and tasks. In one study, two teams experimented with role rotation, where designers became production engineers, marketing personnel acted as designers, and production engineers took on marketing roles. After four months, they found that this approach enhanced knowledge sharing. The teams decided to continue rotating roles for another four months, with leaders changing every two months to ensure everyone gained leadership experience. After 18 months, the teams reverted to their original structure, but continued experimenting with role splits for three months, with the professional leader taking on the group leader taking on the group leader for the final three months. Ultimately, the teams developed a strong understanding of the entire process-from design to production to marketing-and shared their experiences every two months. No major differences were found between the two teams, and strong relationships within the teams helped facilitate knowledge transfer (Olaisen & Revang, 2018). The study shows that by assigning distinct roles, such as leadership, design, marketing, and production, each team member gained valuable experience across disciplines, which could be beneficial for career advancement or role changes. This approach fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing, enhancing critical thinking and overall performance. It offers a valuable strategy for managers to use in employee training and career development.

The study relied on only two teams, so using a larger sample could have provided more concrete and convincing findings. While the research highlights the potential benefits of rotating leadership, it often mentions collaboration and knowledge sharing without full addressing them. These tasks require allotted time and resources, such as scheduling meetings or allocating time for discussions. As a result, this approach may not be successful unless carefully planned. Effective teamwork needs to be designed, managed, and overseen by senior management to ensure its success (Olaisen & Revang, 2018). Without proper planning, it is unlikely to achieve the desired result.

In contrast, one study found no evidence of a significant difference in outcomes between fixed and rotating leadership roles (Güth et al., 2007, as cited in Müller, 2020). The study also revealed that the method of appointing leaders has notable behavioral implications. Leaders who are externally imposed tend to have minimal or no impact compared to having no leadership at all. In contrast, leadership that evolves from within the group can encourage contributions to public goods (Rivas and Sutter, 2011, as cited in Müller, 2020), especially in groups where leadership is chosen through a voting process (Guth et al., 2007; Chiang & Hsu, 2017, as cited in Müller, 2020). It has been suggested that the way leaders are selected creates a sense of legitimacy (Grossman and Baldasarri 2012, as cited in Müller, 2020). Therefore, while rotating leadership has potential, it may not always be effective in every situation.

**3.2 Impact of Rotating Leadership on Self-Managing Teams**

A self-managing team is a group of individuals with different skills and expertise, granted collective autonomy and responsibility to plan, organise, and carry out tasks collaboratively in order to achieve a shared objective (Magpili & Pasoz, 2018, as cited in Eseryel et al., 2021). While this definition might suggest that self-managing teams operate without formal leadership, this isn’t always the case. Self-m teams can exist within formal organizational structures, where a leader is appointed by upper management, or they can be more loosely organized groups that come together to address specific issues or challenges (Eseryel et al., 2021). Eseryel et al. proposed that self-managing teams can have two types of leadership: “Functional” and “Visionary.” Functional leaders uphold and reinforce existing structures and norms, while visionary leaders seek to challenge and change them. Both types of leadership can be embodied by different team members, depending on whether they adopt a functional or visionary approach (Eseryel et al., 2021). Furthermore, Doblinger emphasized that for self-managing teams to succeed, team members must possess certain knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs). These include capabilities in areas such as decision-making, collaboration, communication, analysis, creativity, organizing, adaptability, and performance (Doblinger, 2022).

In theory, introducing rotating leadership in self-managing teams would differ from the traditional model. Upper management would need to work closely with team members, as each individual would have the chance to take on a leadership role. This setup allows each team member showcase their KSAOs and demonstrate either a “functional” or “visionary” leadership approach (Eseryel et al., 2021). Similarly, team members would have the opportunity to observe and evaluate these KSAOs in action, learning from one another and refining their skills based on which approaches prove most effective (Doblinger, 2022).

In practice, however, there is limited research on the use of rotating leadership within self-managing teams. Future studies could explore how rotating leadership functions within real self-managing teams and examine its effects compared to other leadership models. Research could also investigate the typical structure of self-managing teams that adopt rotating leadership, as well as the roles and characteristics of individual members. These insights would be very valuable for organizations looking to implement rotating leadership in their own self-managing teams.

**4. Conclusion**

This report aimed to explore the question: *What are the impacts of rotating leadership on employee performance and career development in self-managing teams?* The review highlighted that rotating leadership enhances individual skills and performance by promoting knowledge sharing and role rotation (Olaisen & Revang, 2018), and that self-managing teams require specific competencies to operate effectively (Doblinger, 2022; Eseryel et al., 2021). The findings from the studies reviewed suggest that rotating leadership can positively influence both employee performance and career growth. However, the report acknowledges that certain limitations, such as the lack of sufficient evidence that proves that self-managing teams specifically implemented the rotating leadership model.

The findings of this report offer valuable insight for both researchers and practitioners. For researchers, the review underscores the effects of rotating leadership and explores the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of self-managing teams. For practitioners, the report provides guidance for managers considering the feasibility of implementing rotating leadership and self-managing teams within their organization. Additionally, it offers recruiters insight into the key skills needed when building effective self-managing teams. Future research could expand on this by examining the application of rotating leadership in different team structures and organizational contexts.

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