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Team political skill and performance in virtual teams: The role of team cohesion and shared leadership

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Master in Psicologia Social e das Organizações

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TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

To my mother

Acknowledgements

The present dissertation marks the end of an extensive and rewarding academic journey. Having that said, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who contributed, one way or another, to the completion of such project.

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of team political skill on team performance as well as the mediating roles of team cohesion and shared leadership. It also furthers the understanding of this line of research by analyzing the moderating roles of task interdependence and team virtuality. Data was collected in 20 teams of undergraduate and master students. The hypotheses were tested resorting to SmartPLS 3, which draws on a partial least square structural equation modeling. Results reveal positive and significant relations between team political skill and team task cohesion, and between team task cohesion and team performance. Hence, team task cohesion had a positive and significant mediating effect on the relationship between team political skill and team performance. A positive moderating effect of team virtuality was also found in the relation between team task cohesion and team performance. These findings are discussed, and theoretical and practical implications were inferred as how to promote team cohesion within teams.

Keywords: team political skill, team cohesion, shared leadership, team virtuality, task interdependence

APA classification codes: 3020 Group & Interpersonal Processes; 3660 Organizational Behavior

Resumo

Este estudo examina o impacto da competência política da equipa no desempenho da equipa, assim como os papéis mediadores da coesão da equipa e da liderança partilhada. Contribui igualmente para esta linha de investigação ao analisar os papéis moderadores da interdependência da tarefa e da virtualidade da equipa. Os dados foram recolhidos junto de 20 equipas de estudantes de licenciatura e mestrado. As hipóteses foram testadas com recurso ao SmartPLS3, que se baseia num modelo de equação estrutural de mínimos quadrados parciais. Os resultados revelam relações positivas e significativas entre a competência política da equipa e a coesão da tarefa da equipa, e entre a coesão da tarefa da equipa e o desempenho da equipa. Assim, a coesão da tarefa da equipa teve um efeito mediador positivo e significativo na relação entre a competência política da equipa e o desempenho da equipa. Verificou-se também um efeito moderador positivo e significativo da virtualidade da equipa na relação entre a coesão da tarefa da equipa e o desempenho da equipa. Estes resultados são discutidos e as implicações teóricas e práticas inferidas para a promoção da coesão grupal junto das equipas.

Palavras-chave: competência política da equipa, coesão da equipa, liderança partilhada, virtualidade da equipa, interdependência da equipa

Códigos de classificação APA: 3020 Group & Interpersonal Processes; 3660 Organizational Behavior

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Introduction

As competition and globalization increase, the need for organizations to establish their competitive advantage (Goodwin et al., 2009) and to seize their workers' knowledge and skills have become more salient (Dong et al., 2017; Pearce & Manz, 2005). For this reason, teams have been gaining centrality in organizational analysis (DeShon et al., 2004). Team level research thus established itself in organizational psychology as a promising venue for new theories and knowledge. Nonetheless, team focused research has yet to fully explore the political dimension of work experience. This has motivated researchers into considering the existence of a team political skill and its consequent influence on team performance (Lvina et al., 2018; Semrau et al., 2017). Hence, shifting from the individual focused body of literature on political skill to a more broaden dimension, by acknowledging its social nature and studying it in a group context (Kimura, 2015). However, it is still an area that needs to be further explored as very few are the studies that considered team political skill as an independent variable (Kimura, 2015).

Moreover, the current Covid-19 pandemic scenario is having a great impact in many markets and businesses, leading them to the urgent need to adapt promptly in order to survive and strive (Kabadayi et al., 2020). As a response to lockdown measures, many organizations were faced with the decision of shifting their office work teams to a virtual environment (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Virtual teams have been increasingly prevalent in organizations even before the current pandemic, boosting the research focused on this subject. However, virtual teams have not been studied in the context of team political skill. Thus, having the global crisis in mind and building on Lvina et al.'s (2018) study, the present research aims to examine the relation between team political skill and team performance via team cohesion in a mainly virtual context.

In addition, as virtual environments usually present extra challenges for managing teams (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014), the focus on leadership becomes more relevant. Hence, we consider that studying the relation between team political skill and team performance via shared leadership can offer new theoretical contributions. Considering both of these purposes, we also aim to analyse the relationship between team cohesion and shared leadership.

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Furthermore, literature has shown that task interdependence and team virtuality may influence team level processes (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017). Therefore, we aim to examine the moderators' effects of the aforementioned variables in the relation between team political skill and team cohesion. Particularly with team virtuality, we are also interested in analysing its moderating effect in the relation between team cohesion and team performance.

The present research offers major contributions to the growing body of literature on team political skill. More specifically, considering the current state-of-the-art, to our knowledge, this study is breaking new ground by (a) being the first to study the relation between team political skill and team performance in a mainly virtual environment, and (b) being the first to examine the relation between team political skill and shared leadership, and its consequent effect on team performance. Through the study of the moderators' effects, it contributes to broaden the understanding of this line of research by exploring boundary conditions. Going beyond its theoretical contributions, the present research also has great implications for organizations, specifically regarding the mechanisms to improve team performance and its consequence impact on the success of an organization.

The present dissertation is organized in chapters, which comprise the following content: (1) chapter II includes a review of the state of art, containing the constructs' definitions as well as evidence for the relations proposed in the conceptual model; (2) the method, which includes information about the sample, procedure, and measures used, can be found in chapter III; (3) in chapter IV the results are presented; and (4) the discussion of such results can be read in chapter V. At the end, a concise conclusion is also presented.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

The present literature review presents a concise definition of the constructs that comprise the conceptual model, as well as the relations amongst them. We will start by addressing the concept of team political skill and its consequences on team performance. From there, we will tackle the construct of team cohesion and its role as a mediator in the relationship between team political skill and team performance. Subsequently, the focus will shift to shared leadership and its role as a mediator in the relationship between team political skill and team performance, as well as its relationship with team cohesion. Lastly, we will approach the boundary conditions focusing firstly on the moderating role of task interdependence in the relationship between team political skill and team cohesion and then on the moderating role of team virtuality in the relationships between team political skill and team cohesion and between team cohesion and team performance.

1.1. Team Political Skill and Team Performance

Many researchers believe that organizations are in a great extent political (Ferris et al., 2019; Hochwarter et al., 2020; Mintzberg, 1985), encompassing a fierce competition for power (Clegg et al., 2006; Pfeffer, 2010). Therefore, employees must have a set of social competences, specifically political skill, in order to succeed, despite their effort, intelligence, and hard skills (Ahearn et al., 2004; Mintzberg, 1985; Pfeffer, 2010). Political skill is commonly defined as the capacity to understand and influence others to achieve personal and/or organizational goals (Ahearn et al., 2004; Ferris et al., 2005). According to Ferris et al. (2005), it is a multidimensional construct, comprising four dimensions: (a) social astuteness, characterized by the ability to accurately interpret social interactions and situations, as well as to interpret others' behaviors – individuals high on political skill also possess high levels of self-awareness and acumen; (b) interpersonal influence, which refers to the capacity of adapting one's behavior in accordance to each situation with the aim of exerting influence on those they are interacting with; (c) networking ability, characterized by the ability of easily developing beneficial relationships with friends and allies and ensuring they are well positioned in the network in order to smoothly seize opportunities (Pfeffer, 1992); and (d) apparent sincerity, which is crucial to ensure the success of an influence attempt as it allows to build trust and confidence

with the one they interact with – specifically refers to the apparent “integrity, authenticity, sincerity, and genuineness” exhibited by individuals high on political skill (Ferris et al., 2005, p. 129).

Emerging literature has shifted its interest regarding the study of political skill. This is evidenced by the integration of a broader and collective approach, contrasting with the more individual approach that has dominated research on political skill (i.e. the study of individual political skill and its individual outcomes). The new line of research encompasses the focus on team political skill (i.e. “the mean level of political skill among team members”, Semrau et al., 2017, p.239) and its collective outcomes, such as team performance (e.g. Lvina et al., 2018; Semrau et al., 2017). It has been argued that political skilled individuals “effectively control their emotions and adjust their behavior to the demands of the situation while being attuned to the needs of others and demonstrating sincere interest in their well-being” (Lvina et al., 2018, p. 1004). In other words, they are able to seize opportunities, by accurately recognizing, evaluating, and capitalizing them, compared with the ones with less political skill (Ferris et al., 2019). This endorses Blickle et al.’s (2011) idea that political skilled individuals are more prone to handle potential conflicts of interest effectively and positively. This may, in turn, lead to a more positive group environment, to empathic interactions among team members, and to team cohesion, affecting team performance, both objective and subjective performance (Lvina et al., 2018). Subjective team performance is especially interesting, as team members’ perceptions can influence how they interact and even the team lifespan (Lvina et al., 2018). Overall, the relationship between team political skill and team performance has already been established by Lvina et al.’s (2018) study, albeit the size of the direct effect being within the vicinity of 17%. This finding reinforces the researchers’ option of previewing a mediator, i.e. team cohesion, between team political skill and team performance. Nonetheless, we still hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Team political skill is positively related to team performance.

1.2. The Mediating Role of Team Cohesion

The concept of group cohesion is utterly relevant for group dynamics, having a long history in team research (Emich et al., 2020; Grossman et al., 2017). It was conceptualized by Carron et al. (1985) as consisting in two broad groups: (a) group integration, which refers to “a member’s perceptions of the group as a totality”, and (b) individual attraction to the group, which involves “a member’s personal attraction to the group” (p.128). Each of these two groups is subdivided

into a task and a social dimension, referring to group task cohesion and group social cohesion, respectively (Carron et al., 1985). According to Lvina et al. (2018), the former can be defined as “shared task commitment” and the latter as “established social bonds” (p. 1006).

Studies have shown evidence for a positive relation between team cohesion and team performance (e.g. Braun et al., 2020; Castaño et al. 2013; Chiniara & Bentein, 2018; Chiocchio & Essiembre 2009). However, there is no consensus regarding the specific influence of task and social cohesion (Picazo et al., 2015). For instance, Chang and Bordia (2001) demonstrated that task cohesion was positively related with subjective team performance, whereas social cohesion was positively related with objective team performance. A recent meta-analysis demonstrated that task cohesion has a stronger relation with team performance, compared to social cohesion, due to the nature of the measure – that is task cohesion is more proximal whereas social cohesion is a more distal measure (Grossman et al., 2021).

Moreover, literature has been focusing on group cohesion as a relevant mediator for team performance (e.g. Greer, 2012). In Lvina et al.’s (2018) study, team task cohesion positively mediated the relationship between team political skill and objective team performance, whereas team social cohesion mediated the relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance which goes in line with Chang and Bordia (2001) findings. Building on Lvina et al. (2018) study, and focusing solely on subjective team performance, we propose that:

Hypothesis 2a: Team task cohesion mediates the relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance.

Hypothesis 2b: Team social cohesion mediates the relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance.

Alongside the affective group process known as team cohesion, leadership as a behavioral group process, particularly shared leadership, has been acknowledged as a critical factor influencing team performance (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017).

1.3. The Mediating Role of Shared Leadership

Throughout the decades, researchers have shifted their perspective on studying organizations, abandoning the idea of organizations as a “machine, a black box that can be understood by an analysis of inputs and outputs with leaders at the top who direct and control the process”, and adopting the view of organizations as “a living, dynamic system of interconnected relationships and networks of influence” (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003, p. 21). Consequently, the concept of leadership has also changed. The more traditional and “heroic” approach deemed leadership as an individual-level skill (Day, 2001; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Lyndon et al., 2020) and focused mainly on vertical leadership, exerted by one team leader, usually someone outside the team (Fransen et al., 2020; Stewart & Manz, 1995). This approach was substituted by one focused largely on its relational nature and on the possibility of being a “shared or distributed phenomenon occurring at different levels and dependent on social interaction and networks of influence” (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003, p. 21). Hence, leadership as a process can be defined as an interactive mutual influence within a group, where its members purposively intent to facilitate their coworkers’ goal achievement (at the team level) (Chiu et al., 2016; Pearce & Conger, 2003). This came to be known as “shared leadership”, a concept that has been deserving increasing interest in leadership research.

Despite its multiple definitions, shared leadership involves three key ideas: (a) horizontal influence, (b) being an emergent team process, and (c) leadership influence distributed within a team (Zhu et al., 2018). This is in accordance with Carson et al.’ (2007) perspective which states that this form of leadership should be analyzed as a continuum, regarding the number of team members who exert influence on the team. Therefore, this informal social process, marked by the temporary emergence of leaders within a team, embeds a “fluid and often reciprocal” idea of leadership (Bligh et al., 2006, p. 306; Lyndon et al., 2020; Pearce et al., 2010). Hence, it is common for members to lead and to follow within teams where shared leadership emerges (Ali et al., 2020; Carson et al., 2007).

Shared leadership has been found to foster team performance (e.g. Ensley et al., 2006; Pearce & Sims, 2002). This may be explained by the now established view of work as “team-based knowledge work”, which means that the completion of a task or goal does not rely solely on the expertise and competence of one person but rather on the team as a whole (Pearce, 2004, p. 47). For this end, it is common for team members to share relevant information and ideas (Bruccoleri et al., 2019), thus contributing to an increasing diversity in approaching challenges and finding solutions.

Nonetheless, literature has shown that conflict is more than likely to arise in work teams, and as a consequence team performance may be compromised (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; de Wit et al, 2012; Jehn & Rispens, 2009). In dynamic teams who engage in shared leadership, it is particularly crucial that its members are able to communicate effectively and sincerely to generate ideas. Scharmer (2001) believes that a team's communication should evolve through four phases to bring positive results and generate collective knowledge: (1) "talking nice, or using rule-reproducing language games" – members behave like it is expected, by being polite; (2) "talking tough, or using rule-revealing language games" – members give their thoughts a voice and debate each other's ideas, allowing conflict to emerge; (3) "reflective dialogue, or using rule-intuitive language games" – members listen and critically think about their own ideas and let themselves be influenced, allowing mental models to emerge; and (4) "generative dialogue, or rule-generating language games" – members focus on the group and are able to generate ideas as a whole (p. 146). As the second phase gives rise to potential conflict, it then becomes fundamental that members possess certain skills to be able to understand the signals of emerging conflict and to effectively manage it. Amongst these skills lie the important construct of political skill (Ferris et al., 2005) that is seen by many authors as crucial for leaders to positively and effectively influence followers (e.g. Ahearn et al., 2004). The four dimensions of political skill allow leaders to effectively inspire and influence people's behavior as well as to create good social networks (Ahearn et al., 2004). Having this in mind, it would be expected that political skilled individuals within a team would be more prone to engage in shared leadership, compared to those who are not so skilled. Likewise, this kind of leadership can become less functional without such skills. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3: Share leadership mediates the relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance.

Studies have shown that team cohesion and shared leadership are not independent among themselves. However, very few have studied the predictive relation of team cohesion on shared leadership. Serban and Roberts (2016) were able to verify that particularly task cohesion was positively associated with shared leadership. As team cohesion allows members to foster positive relationships between one another (Barrick et al., 1998), increase the commitment (Somech et al., 2009) and align common goals (Barrick et al., 1998; Campion et al., 1993; Paul et al., 2016), it can then facilitate the engagement in a more effective communication, trust and collaboration (Paul et al., 2016), and thus, allow for the emergence of shared leadership. In this sense, we propose that:

Hypothesis 4: Team cohesion and shared leadership sequentially mediate the relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance (i.e. team political skill → team cohesion → shared leadership → subjective team performance).

1.4. The Moderating Role of Task Interdependence

As contexts may influence social interactions, research in organizational behavior has been highlighting the importance of considering contexts as conditions where complex phenomena, such as team processes, take place (D’Innocenzo et al., 2016; Greer, 2012). Thus, certain work settings have been taking the attention of researchers, amongst which task interdependence. This concept can be described as the “the extent to which outcomes of the team members are influenced by, or depend on, the actions of others” (Wildman et al., 2012, p. 115). Task interdependence can be seen in a continuum, ranging from none, which means a one-person task, to very high, which implies a group task and the need for information sharing, as team members do not individually possess all the resources required for the completion of such task (Wageman & Baker, 1997). Therefore, interdependence involves “the distribution of resources, materials, information and skills necessary for task completion” (Wageman & Baker, 1997, p. 141).

Additionally, when in the presence of an interdependent task, a strong relationship between team political skill and group cohesion should be expected. This can be explained by the fact that high interdependent tasks require a higher level of team coordination, cooperation and interaction, compared to low interdependent tasks (Liden et al., 2006; Wageman & Baker, 1997). Consequently, it boosts the opportunity for a stronger manifestation of the four political skill dimensions (i.e. social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity – Ferris et al., 2005) and its resulting impact on group cohesion. In other words, teams with a higher level of political skill should be more prone to engage, for instance, in establishing social bonds and in effectively influencing team members to commit to the task, and consequently enhancing group cohesion (social and task respectively), specifically when the task involves a high level of interdependence. Thus, we propose that:

Hypothesis 5a: Task interdependence moderates the relationship between team political skill and team cohesion, such that the relation is stronger when task interdependence is high compared to when it is low.

1.5. The Moderating Role of Team Virtuality

As we are facing the current pandemic scenario, we ought to consider team virtuality as a crucial factor in addition to the task interdependence. Research on the topic of virtual teams begun around three decades ago (Raghuram et al., 2019) and throughout the years, most of team virtuality definitions have considered (to a certain extent) geographical boundaries as a main aspect of virtuality – e.g. more recently Dulebohn and Hoch (2017) have described it as “work arrangements where team members are geographically dispersed, have limited face-to-face contact, and work interdependently through the use of electronic communication media to achieve common goals” (p.569).

Nonetheless, teams can engage in virtual communication even when they are at the same location (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005; Mathieu et al., 2018). For this reason, in the present research, we consider Kirkman and Mathieu’s (2005) definition of team virtuality, which encompasses three dimensions: (a) “the extent to which team members use virtual tools to coordinate and execute team processes”, (b) “the amount of informational value provided by such tools”, and (c) “the synchronicity of team members virtual interaction” (p. 702). Furthermore, it is important to stress that, regarding this first dimension, the higher the use of virtual tools, the higher the virtuality level (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005). In the second dimension, information value is acknowledged as “the extent to which the combination of virtual tools being used conveys communication and data that are important for the team to be effective” (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005, p. 704). Hence, the higher the informational value of the virtual tools used, the lower the virtuality level (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005). The last dimension refers to a continuum ranging from asynchronous interactions, which involve delays in response, to synchronous interactions, which take place at the same time, without delays (Pinelle et al., 2003). Hence, the higher the asynchronous level of the virtual tools, the higher the virtuality level (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005).

There are some virtual tools, e.g. videoconferences and teleconferences/phone calls, which are closer to the face-to-face communication, and therefore present a more synchronous and high informational value type of interaction, compared with the ones which are more virtual, e.g. e-mail and social media group pages (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). For this reason, Mesmer-Magnus et al. (2011) stress that it is important to distinguish between fully virtual teams, i.e. “making full use of virtual tools”, and highly virtual teams, i.e. “making use of tools which do not result in similar communication patterns and advantages as found in face-to-face

teams” (p. 215). Thus, virtuality should be seen in a continuum, as was proposed by Perry et al. (2016).

The virtual dimension of work has been vastly studied as having a negative influence in team processes (Marlow et al., 2017). For instance, Hinds and Bailey (2000) have pointed out that virtuality may lead to more conflict (which can take the form of affective conflict, i.e. “anger or hostility”, or task conflict, i.e. “disagreement focused on work content”, p. C1) and to misconceptions in communication, as well as to a lack of consideration for the other members’ opinions. This corroborates the idea demonstrated by Straus and McGrath (1994), which states that virtuality entails more challenges for groups, especially when dealing with task which invoke high levels of coordination, compared to situation on communication takes place face-to-face. Hence, the development of solid teams may be compromised and affect their performance. Therefore, we propose that:

Hypothesis 5b: Team virtuality negatively moderates the relationship between team cohesion and team performance, such that the relation is weaker when team virtuality is high compared to when it is low.

Moreover, as the frequent use of virtual tools limits the opportunities for synchronous interactions (Kirkman & Mathieu, 2005; Raghuram et al., 2019), which facilitates the manifestation of political skill (Williams, 2016), it may be expected that virtuality will have a negative influence on the relationship between team political skill and group cohesion. In other words, high political skilled teams may have more difficulties building social bonds and influencing their members to commit to the task in more virtual environments, compared to less virtual environments. Therefore, we propose that:

Hypothesis 5c: Team virtuality negatively moderates the relationship between team political skill and team cohesion, such that the relation is weaker when team virtuality is high compared to when it is low.

1.6. The Moderated Mediation Model

The aforementioned work setting variables represent some of the boundary conditions which constrain or foster the manifestation of the four dimensions of political skill and its consequent influence on the emergence of team processes, specifically team cohesion. Consequently, these contextual factors may negatively or positively impact team performance. Specifically, it is expected that higher interdependent tasks will contribute to the manifestation of team political skill and the consequent development of team cohesion, and in turn, lead to team performance gains, contrasting with less interdependent tasks. On the other hand, for a higher virtuality level, there are expected performance losses derived from the constraints in the manifestation of the team political skill and the development of team cohesion, compared to a less virtuality level. Therefore, we propose a moderated mediation model (Figure 1) with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6a: The indirect relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance via team cohesion is moderated by task interdependence, such that the indirect association is stronger when in the presence of a high interdependent task than of a low interdependent task.

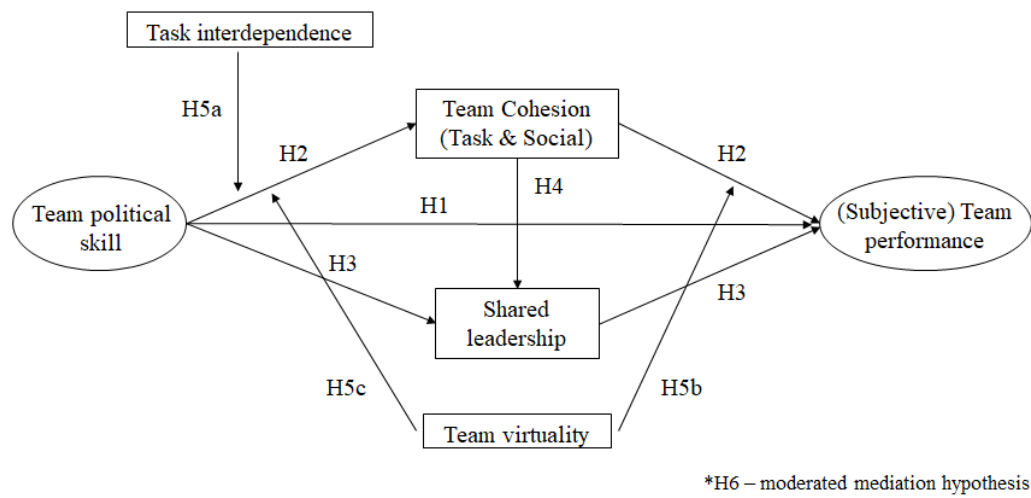
Hypothesis 6b: The indirect relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance via team cohesion is moderated by team virtuality, such that the indirect association is stronger when team virtuality is low compared to when virtuality is high.

Hypothesis 6c': The indirect relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance via team cohesion and shared leadership is moderated by task interdependence, such that the indirect association is stronger when in the presence of a high interdependent task compared to when it is low.

Hypothesis 6c'': The indirect relationship between team political skill and subjective team performance via team cohesion and shared leadership is moderated by team virtuality, such that the indirect association is stronger when team virtuality is low compared to when it is high.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model



CHAPTER 2

Method

This chapter specifies the approach and methodology tools chosen to test the conceptual model. An overview of the sample main characteristics is firstly presented, followed by the procedures, the data analysis strategy, and lastly the measures and control variables.

2.1. Sample

Data from 42 teams was collected in Portuguese universities, using a convenience method. However, 22 teams were eliminated from the final sample due to missing values, which were the result of very few people in the group participating in the study. The final sample comprises 20 work teams, with a total of 73 undergraduate and master students (74.3% female and 25.7% male), with ages ranging from 19 to 46 years old ($M = 21.86$; $SD = 3.47$).

2.2. Procedure

Participants, who were enrolled in courses in which they had to develop a group project, were asked to participate in the study. Participants filled out a survey which was divided into two distinct moments, each taking an average of five minutes to complete. The first wave was deployed 8 weeks into the term and comprised the informed consent, a question about participants' gender (to adjust the language in the Portuguese questionnaire), the political skill measure, the virtuality measure, and a question which aimed to assess team members' familiarity with each other, presented in this order. Two weeks after that first moment, participants were asked to fill the second half of the questionnaire, which contained the remaining measures (i.e. shared leadership, team cohesion, task interdependence, team virtuality, team performance, age and GPA). The questionnaire was developed resorting to Qualtrics – Online Survey Software & Insight Platform (Qualtrics, 2021).

2.3. Data Analysis Strategy

The present data was analyzed using IBM SPSS 26.0 (George & Mallery, 2019) and SmartPLS 3 (Ringle et al., 2015), thus, drawing on the partial least squares structural equation modeling

(PLS-SEM) (Hair et al., 2017) to test the hypotheses. PLS-SEM has been used recently in a few research papers across different disciplines (e.g. do-Valle & Assaker, 2016; Hair et al., 2012; Nitzl, 2016; Richert et al., 2016; Sarstedt et al., 2014). This data analysis model is based on the explained variance (Hair et al., 2017; Munoz et al., 2016) and was chosen due to its suitability not only for complex models and also for small samples (Cassel et al., 1999; Hair et al., 2017).

In order to test the conceptual model, the model goodness of fit (GoF) was firstly examined resorting to the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR, Henseler et al., 2016). Then, to further analyze the structural model, we resorted to the variance inflation factor (VIF, Hair et al., 2011), as it allows the assessment of multicollinearity and common method bias problems of the constructs (Henseler et al., 2015; Tian et al., 2020), as well as to the coefficient of determination (R^2 , Hair et al., 2011), the F^2 (Hair et al., 2017) and the predictive relevance (Q^2 , Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). The correlations were analyzed via SPSS.

2.4. Measures

The questionnaire (Appendix A) included the following measures.

2.4.1. Team Political Skill

Team political skill was measured using Ferris et al.' (2005) Political Skill Inventory (PSI), which comprises 18 items organized in four factors: Network ability (6 items, e.g. "I spend a lot of time and effort in my team (at work), networking with my team members (others)"); Apparent sincerity (3 items, e.g. "When communicating with my team members (others), I try to be genuine in what I say and do"); Social astuteness (5 items, e.g. "I pay close attention to people's facial expressions"); and Interpersonal influence (4 items, e.g. "I am able to communicate easily and effectively with my team members (others)"). We followed Lvina et al. (2018) adaptation of the items – more specifically, "at work" was substituted by "in my team", and "others" was replaced by "my team members". In the same vein, we have also treated team political skill as an unifactorial second order construct (Lvina et al., 2018). The Cronbach alpha is .692 and the composite reliability .798. In the present study, the team political skill score per team results of the average of each member's ratings on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). A higher score means that the team has a higher level of team political skill.

2.4.2. Team Cohesion

Team cohesion was measured using eight items from Chang and Bordia (2001) scale comprising two factors: task cohesion (4 items, e.g. “We all take responsibility for any poor performance of the team”) and social cohesion (4 items, e.g. “Team members like to spend time outside of work hours”). An exploratory factor analysis showed a valid two-factor solution (KMO=.774, Bartlett $X^2(28)=245.007$, $p<.001$) explaining 68.4% variance after rotation (Varimax) with good reliabilities (Table 1). Individuals were invited to answer on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). A higher score indicates a higher perceived team cohesion.

Table 1

Team Cohesion Rotated Component Matrix

	Task Cohesion	Social Cohesion
Everyone tries to help if members have problems.	.875	.037
Our team is united in trying to reach its goals for performance.	.867	.190
We all take responsibility for any poor performance of the team.	.808	.104
Team members communicate freely about each other’s responsibility.	.683	.201
Team members stick together outside of the team project.	.153	.876
Team members rarely socialize together.	.143	.834
Team members like to spend time outside of work hours.	-.006	.817
Team members rather go out on their own than as a team.	.299	.696
Cronbach alpha	.838	.839

Extraction Method. Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

2.4.3. Shared Leadership

Following a social network approach, which relies on the interactions and relationship patterns between team members (Brass, 2003; D’Innocenzo et al., 2016), shared leadership was measured using one item on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*To a great extent*). For ethical reasons, each student was asked to fill a few blank spaces with the first letter of their team members name and surname, and for each team member to answer the following item: “To what extent your team relies on this person for leadership?” (Carson et al., 2007). This measure allows us to focus on the magnitude of shared leadership within a team

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(i.e. “the amount of leading and following acts being exhibited and reciprocated within a group”, DeRue, 2011, p. 132). Higher scores indicate stronger presence of shared leadership.

2.4.4. Team Performance

Building on Lvina et al.’ (2018) study, the present research assessed team performance subjectively. Hence, team performance was measured using three items from Pearce and Sims’ (2002) scale on a 5-point scale with 1 (*definitely not true*), 2 (*not true*), 3 (*neither true nor untrue*), 4 (*true*), and 5 (*definitely true*). The three items were the following: (a) “The team does very good work”, (b) “The team does a very good job”, and (c) “The team is highly effective”. Preliminary analysis revealed issues pertaining to the vertical multicollinearity between the first two items, which is not surprising as their formulations are utterly similar, with a minimal difference of using either “work” or “job” in the sentence. We have opted to keep the second item. The final measure has good reliability ($R_{SB}=.857$; $CR=.933$).

2.4.5. Task Interdependence

Task interdependence was measured using a single item taken from Van Der Vegt et al.’ (2003) five item scale, which stated “Indicate the percentage of your task for which you had to exchange information or cooperate with other team members” (range 0-100). The average interdependence score was calculated for each team. A higher score indicates a higher level of team interdependence.

2.4.6. Team Virtuality

Team virtuality was measured following de Jong et al.’ (2008) methodology. More specifically, participants responded to the item: “Your team members use different medium to communicate amongst each other. Think about all this internal team communication and state to what extent each of the following medium were used to communicate in your team. The cumulative total of all percentages should be 100%. Please fill in for each medium the percentage of use. (Notice: accumulating all the scores, the total extent of use must be 100 percent): (a) Face-to-face ...%, (b) E-mail ...%, (c) Chat ...%, (d) Teleconference (via audio connection; telephone) ...%, (e) Videoconference (via video + audio connection) ...%, (f) Other, namely _____ ...%”.

Following de Jong et al. (2008), and consequently Baltes et al. (2002), methodology for calculating the virtuality level, we primarily calculated the “virtuality” score for each communication channel. According with Baltes et al. (2002), each channel can be ranked in

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terms of the extent of synchronization and para-verbal and nonverbal communication dimensions, such that a high degree in synchronization and a high level of nonverbal and para-verbal cues indicate a low level of virtuality, and vice versa. The percentage filled out by each team member for each communication channel was then multiplied by the virtuality score of the respective channel. An aggregated score of virtuality is obtained by adding up all the scores for the communication tools used by each team.

2.4.7. Control Variables

We controlled for average age, gender and team size.

CHAPTER 3

Results

In this section, the various analyses and findings are accurately presented. We will begin by addressing the measurement model and the respective Rwg and ICC calculations. Then, the focus will shift to the analysis of the descriptive and bivariate statistics and to the assessment of the structural model. Lastly, a section is dedicated to the exploration of the hypothesis testing.

2.1. Measurement Model

As the construct is targeting a group-level measure, we analyzed its aggregability with the within-group index of agreement (Rwg, James et al., 1984) and the proportion of group-level variance (ICC1, Murphy & Myors, 1998), which can be seen in Table 2. ICC values for team political skill ($ICC(1)=.828$), team task cohesion ($ICC(1)=.839$), and team performance ($ICC(1)=.889$) are high, i.e. above the threshold of .10 (Biemann & Heidemeier, 2010), which indicate the aggregability of the data. Additionally, the Rwg for team political skill was found to be .827, on average (ranging from .657 to .944), which is above the threshold of .50 (Guzzo et al., 1993) and the threshold of .70 (James et al., 1984). Thus, the construct can be aggregated. Rwg for team task cohesion is high, being on average .902. However, the Rwg for team social cohesion is .671, ranging from .250 and .986, presenting itself below the acceptable threshold of .70 (James et al., 1984). Thus, on further analysis and hypothesis testing, we decided to disregard team social cohesion as part of the model. Lastly, team performance has an Rwg of .958 on average (ranging from .833 and 1.000), and therefore can be aggregated.

Table 2*Indexes of Agreement and Reliability*

Construct	Rwg Mean	Rwg Range	Rwg Median	ICC(1)	95% CI	F test
Team Political Skill	.827	.657-.944	.837	.828	.765; .880	F(72, 1224)=5.808, $p<.001$
Network Ability	.767	.349-.919	.796	.804	.725; .866	F(72, 360)=5.107, $p<.001$
Apparent Sincerity	.887	.407-.984	.927	.640	.469; .763	F(72, 144)=2.778, $p<.001$
Social Astuteness	.839	.690-.956	.856	.720	.604; .810	F(72, 288)=3.570, $p<.001$
Interpersonal Influence	.857	.569-1.000	.875	.767	.665; .843	F(72, 216)=4.287, $p<.001$
Team Cohesion Global	.786	.562-.986	.786	.809	.731; .871	F(66, 462)=5.226, $p<.001$
Team Task Cohesion	.902	.777-.988	.901	.839	.765; .894	F(67, 201)=6.184, $p<.001$
Team Social Cohesion	.671	.250-.986	.672	.839	.765; .894	F(66, 198)=6.209, $p<.001$
Team Performance	.958	.833-1.000	.961	.889	.835; .927	F(69, 138)=8.990, $p<.001$

N=20.

2.2. Descriptive and Bivariate Analysis

The reported means for most of the core constructs in the model revealed a strong perceived presence of team political skill ($M=5.57$, $SD=.41$ out of 7), with apparent sincerity being the strongest factor ($M=6.40$, $SD=.44$). Task cohesion was also reported to be strongly felt within the teams ($M=6.04$, $SD=.77$ out of 7), although it may vary substantially as the lowest value ($M=3.50$) strikingly contrasts with the highest ($M=6.94$). Shared leadership is reported as being relatively strong ($M=4.04$, $SD=.48$ out of 5) in a similar magnitude as perceived team performance ($M=4.28$, $SD=.67$ out of 5). The use of synchronous and asynchronous communication media, as an expression of virtuality, is – as expected – moderately strong with a mean score of 42.76 ($SD=6.89$ out of 78), which corresponds to an average of apx. 55% of virtuality. The lowest team reported a virtuality score of 20 (25.6%) and the highest of 51 (66%), which means that teams have opted for relatively different virtual communication media (Table 3).

Correlations between sociodemographic and the conceptual model variables indicate teams with average older participants tend to report lower levels of perceived political skill. Both gender and team size had no correlation with any variable. Team political skill, as expected, shows substantial positive correlations with all key-variables in the conceptual model, namely, task cohesion, shared leadership, and team performance. Likewise, task cohesion is positively and strongly associated with team performance ($r=.836$, $p<.01$) however shared leadership

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showed no significant correlation with team performance. Both moderators, task interdependence and team virtuality, are ideally not strongly correlated with the model variables – findings show these variables have no significant correlation with any of the variables under scrutiny (sociodemographic included) to the exception of a negative association between task interdependence and one of the political skill first order factors (which is irrelevant for the analysis as the choice falls upon the second order factor) (Table 3).

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Table 3

Descriptive and Bivariate Statistics

N=20 teams	Scale min-max	Range	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	19-28	19-28	21.87	1.95	1											
2. Gender	0-1	.00-.75	.24	.22	-.307	1										
3. Team Size	3-6	3-5	3.65	.67	-.232	.258	1									
4. TPS	1-7	4.69-6.39	5.57	.41	-.663**	-.021	.115	1								
5. NAbil	1-7	3.17-6.08	5.08	.78	-.579**	-.202	.026	.924**	1							
6. ASinc	1-7	5.33-6.89	6.40	.44	-.229	-.047	.413	.517*	.368	1						
7. SAstu	1-7	4.87-6.30	5.47	.39	-.596**	.218	.093	.809**	.610**	.375	1					
8. IInfl	1-7	5.00-6.63	5.80	.39	-.480*	.279	.000	.534*	.318	.036	.452*	1				
9. TCoh	1-7	3.50-6.94	6.04	.77	-.258	-.041	.162	.517*	.432	.645**	.537*	-.056	1			
10. SLead	1-5	3.33-5.00	4.01	.48	-.207	-.126	-.370	.432	.456*	.109	.452*	.025	.443	1		
11. TPerf	1-5	2.00-5.00	4.28	.67	-.423	.066	.264	.497*	.369	.464*	.563**	.160	.836**	.160	1	
12. TInterd	-1 to 1	-0.99-0.75	0	.47	.283	.225	-.208	-.363	-.463*	.140	-.198	-.210	.185	.032	.041	1
13. TVirtual	20 - 78	20.00-51.18	42.76	6.89	.128	-.165	.053	-.117	-.248	.107	-.133	.266	-.359	-.184	-.179	-.148

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

2.3. Assessment of the Structural Model

One of the most important steps when testing a conceptual model, is to analyze its overall GoF. The approximate model fit can be determined resorting to the SRMR (Henseler et al., 2016). In the present study, as the SRMR is below the threshold of .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998), and even of .05 (Byrne, 2008), we can conclude it has a good fit (saturated model SRMR=.000, estimated model SRMR=.047) (Hu & Bentler, 1998).

We decided to test the hypothesis with a composite model. According to Henseler et al. (2016), in order to use a composite model, the GoF tests' scores for the saturated model should be below the identified thresholds, as they represent the composites' external validity. As the results obtained provide enough evidence, we further explored the indicators' VIF. In this study, team task cohesion and the effect between team task cohesion and team virtuality present collinearity issues, as their scores are higher than 3.3 (Kock, 2015; Hair et al., 2011) (Table 4). The rest of the variables have no indication of variance inflation.

The model's R^2 shows that 83,7% of the variations in team performance are caused by the independent variables (Sarstedt et al., 2014), being considered a substantial value (i.e. higher than the threshold of .75; Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2011). Further analyzing Table 4, we note that most of the relations present weak effects (F^2), as their values range between .02 and .15 (Cohen, 2013). The relations between team political skill and team task cohesion ($F^2=.836$) and between team task cohesion and team performance ($F^2=.400$) have significant effects, as they are higher than .35 (Cohen, 2013). The interaction effect between team virtuality and team task cohesion ($F^2=.319$) is considered medium, as it is ranges between .15 and .35 (Cohen, 2013).

As for the predictive relevance (Geisser's Q^2 value), team task cohesion has a medium predictive relevance for team performance, as its score ($Q^2=.155$) is ranging between .15 and .35 (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). On the other hand, shared leadership reveals a small predictive relevance for team performance, as its score ($Q^2=.059$) is ranging between .02 and .15 (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). Thus, one part of the model presents a better out-of-sample predictive power.

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Table 4

Structured Model Results

Construct	R2	Adj. R2	F2	Q2	VIF	SMRM
TPerform	.837	.779		.351		.047
TCoh (→TPerform)	.562	.406	.400	.155	4.395	
SLead (→TPerform)	.252	.164	.086	.059	1.660	
TCoh (→SLead)			.088		1.365	
TVirtual*TCoh (→TPerform)			.319		3.477	
TVirtual*TPS (→TCoh)			.025		2.112	
TInterd*TPS (→TCoh)			.140		1.214	
TPS (→TPerform)			.130		1.496	
TPS (→TCoh)			.836		1.486	
TPS (→SLead)			.075		1.365	

VIF, variance inflation factor; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

2.4. Structural Equation Modeling – Hypothesis Testing

The conceptual model was examined using PLS-SEM. As can be seen in Table 5, all of the hypothesis present non-significant effects, with the exception of the mediating effect of team task cohesion on the relationship between team political skill and team performance ($\beta=.394$, $t=1.505$, $p=.067$), and the moderating effect of team virtuality on the relation between team task cohesion and team performance ($\beta=.554$, $t=1.420$, $p=.078$). It is also important to stress that the direct effects between team political skill and team task cohesion ($\beta=.737$, $t=3.097$, $p=.001$), and between team task cohesion and team performance ($\beta=.535$, $t=1.678$, $p=.047$) were both significant.

Figure 2 shows the PLS-SEM model.

Table 5

Hypothesis Constructs

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	t -value	p -value
Direct						
	TPS→TCoh	.737	.659	.238	3.097	.001**
	TPS→SLead	.277	.277	.290	.953	.171
	TPS→TPerform	.178	.163	.210	.847	.199
	TCoh→TPerform	.535	.653	.319	1.678	.047**
	SLead→TPerform	-.152	-.264	.277	.549	.292
	TCoh→SLead	.300	.386	.275	1.092	.138
Mediating						
H1	TPS→TCoh→TPerform	.394	.414	.262	1.505	.067*
H2	TPS→SLead→TPerform	-.042	-.044	.125	.336	.369
H3	TPS→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.034	-.079	.134	.252	.401
Moderating						
H4a	TInterd*TPS→TCoh	-.262	-.233	.287	.913	.181
H4b	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.554	.458	.390	1.420	.078*
H4c	TVirtual*TPS→TCoh	-.189	-.169	.399	.473	.318

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Moderated mediation						
H5a	TInterd*TPS→TCoh→TPerform	-.140	-.139	.224	.625	.266
H5b	TVirtual*TPS→TCoh→TPerform	-.101	-.078	.314	.322	.374
H5c'	TInterd*TPS→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.012	.003	.059	.203	.420
H5c''	TVirtual*TPS→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.009	.023	.102	.084	.466

* $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$

Figure 2

Partial Least Square SEM Model

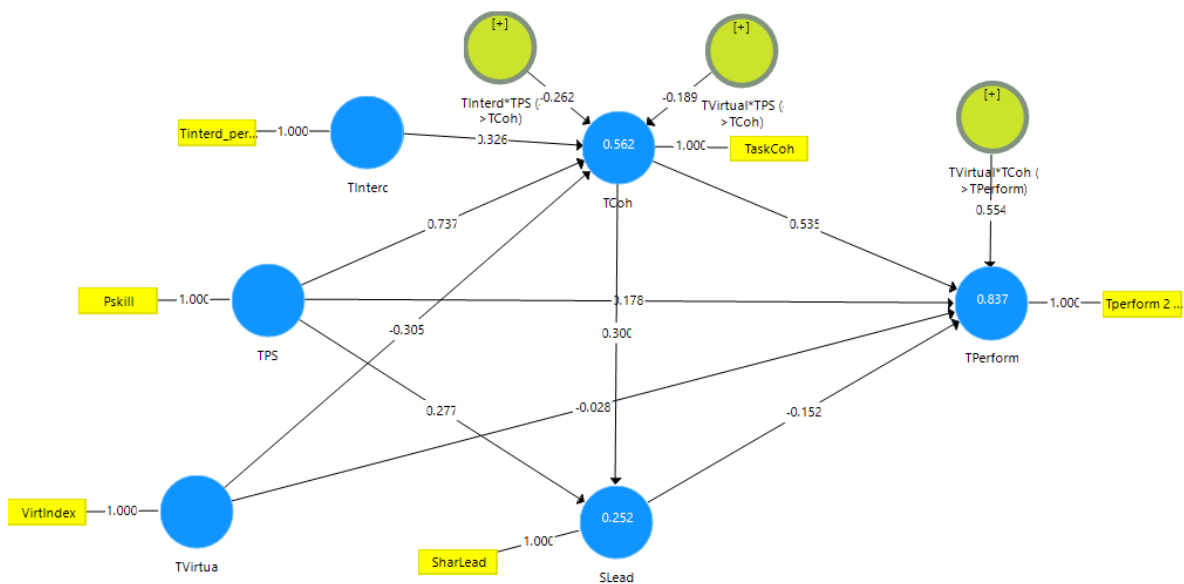
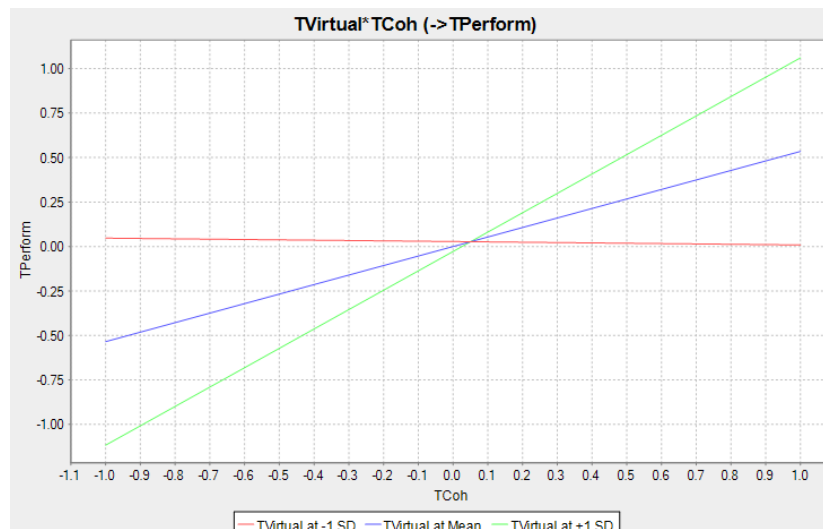


Figure 3 reveals the moderating effect of team virtuality between team task cohesion and team performance, such that the higher the virtuality level, i.e. the more asynchronous and para-verbal and non-verbal poor the exchange is, the stronger the relationship between team task cohesion and team performance.

Figure 3

Interaction Diagram of Team Virtuality Between Team Task Cohesion and Team Performance



With the aim of analyzing each team political skill factors influence in the conceptual model, we conducted further analysis, using SmartPLS 3. Similarly to what was previously reported, for each factor, we firstly examined model GoF, using SRMR, and the potential multicollinearity issues, resorting to VIF. We also analyzed the predictive power (R^2) and effects (F^2), the predictive relevance (Q^2) – All of which can be seen in the Appendix B to E. For parsimonious effects, we opted to present only the significant construct relations, which can be found in Tables Table 6, Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9. The effect between team task cohesion and team performance was found to be significant in all of the four models. The moderation effect found in the network ability ($\beta=.597$, $t=1.435$, $p=.076$), apparent sincerity ($\beta=.403$, $t=1.324$, $p=.093$) and social astuteness ($\beta=.498$, $t=1.632$, $p=.052$) models was the same found in the team political skill model (i.e. the moderating effect of team virtuality in the relation between team task cohesion and team performance). A significant mediation effect was only found in the apparent sincerity ($\beta=.649$, $t=1.364$, $p=.087$) and the social astuteness ($\beta=.274$, $t=1.537$, $p=.063$) models, and it was the same found in the team political skill model (i.e. the mediating effect of team task cohesion in the relation between apparent sincerity/social astuteness and team performance).

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Table 6

Significant Effects in the Network Ability Model

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	NAbil→TCoh	.797	.787	.391	2.037	.021**
	TCoh→TPerform	.533	.649	.348	1.530	.064*
Moderating						
	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.597	.495	.416	1.435	.076*

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$

Table 7

Significant Effects in the Apparent Sincerity Model

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	ASinc→TCoh	.635	.531	.363	1.750	.041**
	ASinc→TPerform	-.349	-.383	.192	1.823	.035**
	TCoh→TPerform	1.023	1.067	.322	3.174	.001**
Mediating						
	ASinc→TCoh→TPerform	.649	.576	.476	1.364	.087*
Moderating						
	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.403	.422	.305	1.324	.093*

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$

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Table 8

Significant Effects in the Social Astuteness Model

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	SAstu→TCoh	.497	.460	.210	2.368	.009**
	TCoh→TPerform	.551	.597	.253	2.178	.015**
Mediating						
	SAstu→TCoh→TPerform	.274	.265	.178	1.537	.063*
Moderating						
	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.498	.481	.305	1.632	.052*
* <i>p</i> <0.10, ** <i>p</i> <0.05						

Table 9

Significant Effects in the Interpersonal Influence Model

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	TCoh→TPerform	.670	.713	.302	2.216	.014**
	TCoh→SLead	.446	.453	.223	2.000	.023**
* <i>p</i> <0.10, ** <i>p</i> <0.05						

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

Throughout the years, organizational psychology has established itself as a promising venue for new theories and insights. For instance, political skill has been studied for almost two decades (Ferris et al., 2002). With the recent shift in perspective from the dominant individual focused approach to the more recent and broaden dimension of political skill (i.e. team political skill) (Kimura, 2015), there is still room for a fully exploration of the political dimension of work experience. Very few are the studies which consider team political skill an independent variable (Kimura, 2015; Lvina et al., 2018; Semrau et al., 2017). This has motivated us into testing the impact of team political skill on team performance. Drawing on Lvina et al.' (2018) study, we also aimed to analyze the mediating effect of team cohesion in the relation between team political skill and team performance. As a more dynamic and organic form of leadership may have its advantage in challenging environments, we also considered the mediating effect of shared leadership on the relation between team political skill and team performance. Following Dulebohn and Hoch' (2017) idea that certain conditions may influence team level processes, we examined the moderating effects of task interdependence (in the relation between team political skill and team cohesion) and team virtuality (in the relations between team political skill and team cohesion, and between team cohesion and team performance).

Firstly, the present results show that team political skill could be treated as a second-order factor, as the model evidenced a good fit. Thus, Lvina et al.' (2018) decision to analyze team political skill at the team level and as a unidimensional construct was corroborated in this study.

Contrary to what was evidence by Lvina et al. (2018) and to our expectations, team political skill did not significantly influence the perception of team performance. Thus, suggesting the existence of an intermediate factor capable of explaining such relationship – in this case it was team task cohesion. The results supported the mediation of team task cohesion on the relation between team political skill and team performance. This demonstrates that team political skill plays an important role in facilitating the emergence of a “shared task commitment” (Lvina et al., 2018, p. 1006), which, in turn, contributes to a better perception of the team performance. Interestingly,

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this mediation corroborates Lvina et al.' (2018) research specifically with the sample of employees (as the mediation was not supported in the sample of students). This outcome may not come as a surprise when one realizes that the studies are not clear about which sort of activities students are expected to develop within their work groups. There is an assumption that every team is similar regarding the academic tasks they are expected to elaborate. In our case, students' teams were mostly challenged to take on assignments closely related to employees' group operations. The multiple assignments they face in a semester put pressure for groups to plan, organize, divide, and coordinate themselves and each task to succeed, similarly to what is expected when one is employed. This is plausible albeit it would still require further scrutiny to be ascertained.

On the other hand, as political skilled individuals can attune their behavior to the social circumstances, influence and inspire, as well as creating rapport with others (Ahearn et al., 2004), we should expect the emergence of shared leadership within teams with higher levels of political skill, compared to those with poorer levels. However, none of the results related to shared leadership were found to be significant. This may be explained by the measured used – not only is it a bit complex, but also it may be close related to other concepts of leadership, such as distributed leadership. In fact, many conceptualizations for more broaden and dynamic forms of leadership have emerged in the past decades, namely shared leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003), distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Spillane et al., 2006), collective leadership (Alvarez & Svejenova, 2005), relational leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006), among others. Consequently, many studies have conceptualized, used and measured such terms without the necessary accuracy to avoid confusion – this is particularly evidenced in the case of shared and distributed leadership, as they were often treated as synonyms, disregarding their crucial theoretical distinctions (Fitzsimons et al., 2011; Friedrich et al., 2016). While the former perceives leadership as a shared and complex phenomenon where knowledge and power are shared between its members (Scott et al., 2018), the latter assumes that the organizational environment and values play an important role in the dynamic between leaders and followers, leading to, for instance, co-performance (Fitzsimons et al., 2011). Shared leadership is commonly used to study teams and its development, whereas distribution leadership has its major contributions in the study of cooperation within one or more organizations (Denis et al., 2012). Despite the theoretical differences, they are often operationalized with very similar measures (e.g. Carson et al., 2007; Mehra et al., 2006), which can influence in the results.

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Literature has pointed out that there are certain conditions which facilitate the emergence of shared leadership, such as commitment (Denis et al., 2012). Nonetheless, contrary to what was expected, team task cohesion did not significantly predict the engagement with shared leadership. One could argue that instead of team task cohesion, team social cohesion may be more closely related to shared leadership. As shared leadership was operationalized based on the acknowledgement by each team member of their colleague's ability to take the lead, it could be sensitive to the quality of their interpersonal relations and sense of belonging, in other words, to team social cohesion. Nonetheless, due to issues pertaining the validity and reliability of team social cohesion, we cannot know if such variable would operate as a mediator bridging team political skill with shared leadership. Thus, the answer is still pending but the rationale holds.

In the present research, we considered two factors which could further explain the role of team task cohesion in the relation with team political skill and team performance – the boundary conditions. According to literature, it should be expected that by fomenting collaboration (Liden et al., 2006), task interdependence would positively impact the relation between team political skill and team cohesion. On the other hand, as political skill can be easily manifested in face-to-face (or in synchronous) interactions (Williams, 2016), we expected a negative impact of team virtuality in the relation between team political skill and team cohesion. However, none of these moderations were found to be significant. Results show that task interdependence has a poor range, which means that the nature of each team's tasks is very similar. Therefore, the task interdependence needed for such activities does not differ significantly. Virtuality was measured based on the weighted product of the percentage of time spent communicating through each of the five channels (each enabling or disabling communication features). However, it did not take into consideration the total number of contact hours. Hence, groups that engaged in very few contact hours, which could facilitate miscommunication, but opted to do so face-to-face, may have equivalent performances to those which engaged in lengthier communication, but did so with highly virtual channel (e.g. social media group pages).

Nonetheless these types of communications may have played a small role because, contrary to what we proposed, team virtuality was found to positively moderate the relation between team task cohesion and team performance. Interestingly, similar findings were evidenced in a recent meta-analysis developed by Grossman et al. (2021). This sets the idea that teams which engage in more

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virtual environments – for instance with poor synchronicity – may be able to effectively exchange valuable information through those tools, in a way which does not compromise the emergence of task cohesion and the members' consequent perception of their contributions and performance.

Although, most research opts to treat team political skill as a unidimensional construct (e.g. Lvina, 2011; Lvina et al., 2018; Semrau et al., 2017), we decided to further the depth of our analysis by resorting to the first-order factors, as conceived by Ferris et al. (2005). Our findings reveal significant differences within the four first-order factor models. For instance, interpersonal influence was the only factor which did not present a significant relation with team task cohesion. This may be explained by the possibility that the teams already had an established culture about the way tasks should unfold, thus dispensing much persuasion moments as they develop work. Conversely, network ability, social astuteness and apparent sincerity are resources which facilitate the emergence of a shared sense of commitment (i.e. task cohesion). Interestingly, apparent sincerity was the only factor to evidence a significant relationship with team performance. One can argue that as apparent sincerity fosters a certain degree of trust and confidence (Ferris et al., 2005), it can facilitate a positive perception of the team performance or work at a baseline condition for the group to operate effectively – e.g. if the apparent sincerity factor runs low, it will hamper the possibility of a smooth task completion, jeopardizing its success. This partially corroborates the results found in a meta-analysis developed by Munyon et al. (2015).

Although in all the models, there was a significant relationship between team task cohesion and team performance, it was only in the apparent sincerity and the social astuteness models that the mediation of team task cohesion was significantly observed. One can argue that as individuals with high of apparent sincerity are able to easily build trust and appear honest when communicating (Ferris et al., 2005), it then may facilitate the emergence of a shared task commitment within the team, and consequently lead to a better perception of performance. In the same vein, as individuals with high levels of social astuteness can accurately read the others' behaviors, it improves the clear-sightedness needed to evaluate the interactions (Ferris et al., 2005) and foster the emergence of task cohesion, which in turn leads to stronger feelings of a good performance. Network ability may not be sufficiently linked to team task cohesion as it may not favor the task execution but rather save other purposes such as gathering information about evaluation, ongoing guidelines, or the progress of other groups.

The moderation of team virtuality in the relation between team task cohesion and team performance was significant in every model, except for the interpersonal influence. The direction of the interaction went against expectations, which was a surprise. The rationale that can account for this relates with the familiarity and level of expertise participants have with the different digital communication channels. As this was not covered in the study measures, we have no indication of how easy it is for each participant to use the communication channels that promote virtuality. As a relatively young sample, these individuals grew with access to digital means. Thus, it is reasonable to expect they developed communication strategies and calibrated a standard of communication that may differ from older generations. This sample, constituted of mainly generation z individuals, may simply use virtuality to their advantage, comparing to what can be expected in wider and older samples. The exception case of interpersonal influence, as previously explained, can be due to the mental map individuals share about how to elaborate the tasks or, likewise, to the fact that the group assignment did not require much withing group debate and persuasion.

4.1. Limitations and Future Research

The present study has some limitations and important considerations should be stressed for the continual improvement of this line of research. First, results should be carefully used and cautiously generalized, as the sample size is small. It is important to note that the present data was collected during lockdown and partial lockdown periods, following the adversities of the current pandemic. Consequently, the main channel chosen to collect data was online, to reach more people safely. Although some students were fully engaged with the research, unfortunately they were not enough, as many withdraw from the study, especially in the second wave. This may be explained by the negative influence that lockdowns had on individuals' mental health, as reported by several studies around the globe (e.g. Ahrens et al., 2021; Pieh et al., 2021; Rossi et al., 2020). For instance, one study reported that, in a sample of students, their stress, anxiety, depression, and loneliness levels significantly increased during the lockdown, and their worries suffered a shift, being now more focused on health, their goals and future plans, family and friends (Elmer et al., 2020). Additionally, we did not have the possibility to gain financial support to offer vouchers or other rewards for the participation in the surveys, which would have a positive influence in the students' motivation. Nonetheless, the present method is solid and the results interesting and worth of

consideration – for instance, an equally small sample research (n=18 groups) was published in Small Group Research earlier this year (Stinson et al., 2021). Future research could replicate the present study with a considerably larger sample.

Secondly, as noted, the shared leadership measure is very similar to some of the measures used to study distributed leadership. In this sense, we suggest that future research should find a different shared leadership measure, to avoid potential misleading results. Another option is to study the present conceptual model in the light of a different collective leadership approach (e.g. distributed leadership, or even a particular aspect of distributed leadership, such as co-performance; Fitzsimons et al., 2011).

Lastly, the present sample is constituted of solely student groups, following the majority of group research methodology. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that student groups and their environments differ from organizational teams, for example, in terms of the group life cycle, diversity (e.g. age, race, academic background, etc.), and commitment to the work (Lvina et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2019). Although, Lvina et al. (2018) manage to replicate the results in both samples (students and employees), it was only partially achieved, evidencing the idea that students and employees differ in some important aspects. Therefore, we urge future research to consider replicating these results with organizational groups.

4.2. Theoretical Contributions

Building on the pioneer studies of Lvina et al. (2018) and Semrau et al. (2017), which consider team political skill as a predictor (and not a simple moderator), the present findings contribute to this line of research by considering the impact of an increasingly important boundary condition: virtuality, and its specific impact in the emergence of team cohesion and perception of performance relationship. As virtual environments are becoming the “new normal”, it is imperative that future research explore the different group dynamics and processes that may emerge in this type of work settings.

4.3. Practical Implications

The present research has successfully evidenced that team task cohesion is crucial for good perceptions of group performance, which stresses the need for managers to provide conditions where team members connect in ways which allow for the emergence of team cohesion. Interestingly,

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this relationship is stronger in more virtual environments, compared to less virtual environments. Hence, in the face of potential adverse scenarios, the focus on team cohesion is utterly important.

Being considered an affective state (Lvina et al., 2018), managers should put on the work and resources not directly on cohesion itself, but rather on its predictor: team political skill. As Lvina et al. (2018) propose, there are two ways in which managers can increase the changes of working with solid teams: (a) look for political skilled individuals when hiring for a new role, and/or (b) develop programs to improve employees' political skill. These programs can take a collective approach, incorporating team building tasks (Lvina et al., 2018; Munyon et al., 2015), or an individualist approach, involving, for instance, coaching, mentoring, or other kind of feedback sessions (Morgeson et al., 2010; Xu et al., 2019).

Shared leadership, as measured, was found to have no significant influence in the proposed model. Nonetheless, we believe focusing on employees' critical social competences will contribute to increase the willingness and preparedness to effectively engage in a collective form of leadership, which is critical for managing teams in modern, complex and dynamic work settings.

Conclusion

The present research sheds some light in the political skill literature, not only by replicating a recent study, but also by innovating and furthering its theoretical scope, bringing boundary conditions to its current form. Hence, this study is breaking new ground and acknowledging team political skill within team processes in a mainly virtual environment. Our findings stress that team task cohesion mediates the relationship between team political skill and team performance. Team virtuality was particularly relevant for the team task cohesion and team performance relationship – as it is stronger in more virtual environments (compared to less virtual environments). This can have two interpretations: (a) teams operate better in virtual settings (due to being used to such communication channels) or (b) variables such as team task cohesion and team political skill are more critical in mainly virtual settings. Whatever the interpretation, findings suggest organizations should invest and promote practices for the development of employees' political skill, or lookout for political skill individual to join their teams, in order to leverage team cohesion – especially in more communication challenging environments (e.g. virtual).

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Appendix

A. Questionnaire

Figure 1

First Wave Online Survey

iscte

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English ▾

Invite to participate in the TEAMSILLS_4.0 study

I invite you to participate in a short survey, which is part of a study about team work and aims to understand to what extent the communication channels can influence a team's performance. The study is developed by me, Beatriz Boavida, within the Social and Organizational Psychology Master at Iscte – Instituto Universitario de Lisboa, and it is supervised by Prof. Nelson Ramalho from the same Institute. If you have any doubt, please contact me through bmgba@iscte-iul.pt for any further explanation.

The survey is divided into two distinct moments. This first part will only take 4 minutes. To participate you need to be part of a project team for one of your curricula units.

Your participation in this study is anonymous and confidential, voluntary, it does not involve any risks, and you can withdraw at any time without justifying. The data collected is solely for statistical treatment and no responses will be analyzed or reported individually.

If you have read the information and wish to participate, please, clicking on the arrow button below to initiate the survey. Thank you for your contribution.

→

This survey is divided into two distinct moments. For this reason, to be able to group your responses, we ask you to **create a personal code**. To do that type the **first letter of your name and the first letter of your surname** followed by **the last 3 digits** of your phone number. If someone is called **John Smith** and has a phone number that ends in **123**, the code will look like **JS123**.

This study focuses on work teams. In this sense, to be able to group the data of your team, we ask you to create, alongside your colleagues, a team **nickname** and to type it down.

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

For description purposes of the sample, please state your gender

Male

Female

You have filled 20% of the survey



Please press the arrow below to continue



A set of statements will be presented to you. We recommend reading each one carefully before answering. Please use the scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) to state to what extent you agree with the following items.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Mostly agree	Totally agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I spend a lot of time and effort in my team networking with my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In my team, I know a lot of important people and am well connected.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am good at using my connections and networks to make things happen in my team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates in my team who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I spend a lot of time in my team developing connections with my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am good at building relationships with influential people in my team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When communicating with my team members, I try to be genuine in what I say and do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I try to show genuine interest in my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I always seem to instinctively know the right thing to say or do to influence my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of my team members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I pay close attention to people's facial expressions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand people very well.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

I am able to communicate easily and effectively with my team members. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I am good at getting people to like me. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

You have filled 80% of the survey



Please press the arrow below to continue



Your team members use different medium to communicate amongst each other. Think about all this internal team communication and state to what extent each of the following media were used to communicate in your team. The cumulative total of all percentages should be 100%.

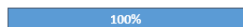
Please fill in for each medium the percentage of use. (Notice: accumulating all the scores, the total extent of use must be 100 percent):

Face-to-face	0 %
e-mail	0 %
Chat (text messages, whatsapp, messenger, etc)	0 %
Teleconference (via audio connection; telephone)	0 %
Videoconference (via video + audio connection)	0 %
Other, namely: (which one?)	0 %
Total	0 %

Before the project / group assignment, were you familiar with your team members?

Yes. If yes, with how many?:

You have reached 100% of the survey!



Please press the arrow below to submit your answers

Thank you very much for your collaboration!

Within some days (1 to 2 weeks) I will try to contact you again to fill in the second part of the survey. It is also a very brief one. **Thank you again for your precious contribution!**



TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Figure 2

Second Wave Online Survey



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English ▾

Invitation to participate in the TEAMSILLS_4.0 study

A few days ago you filled out the 1st part of this study. Thank you very much for your collaboration.

Now, I invite you to participate in the 2nd, and last, part of the study.

This survey will only take 6 minutes and the conditions of anonymity and confidentiality remain the same. You can contact me through bmgba@iscte-iul.pt for any further explanation.

To initiate the survey, please, click on the arrow button below. Thank you again for your precious contribution.

→

On the 1st survey, you created a personal code. This code is needed once again to link both parts of your survey, ensuring anonymity.

You do not need to remember the code. Just follow the same rules. To do that type the **first letter of your name and the first letter of your surname** followed by **the last 3 digits** of your phone number. If someone is called **John Smith** and has a phone number that ends in **123**, the code will be **JS123**.

I would now like to ask you please to remember the **nickname** of your team and to write it below.

→

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

For this second half of the survey think about the same team and project you thought of in the first survey.

This section focuses on your work team for one course. As the answers concern your team, think about your team members and mention them without identifying their name.

To protect your team members identity please mention them using the **first letter of their name** and the **first letter of their surname**. For instance, if your colleague is called **Mary Jones**, mention her as **MJ**.

1st team member	
2nd team member	
3rd team member	
4th team member	
5th team member	

To what extent your team relies on this person for leadership?

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	To a great extent
1st team member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2nd team member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3rd team member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4th team member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5th team member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

You have filled 20% of the survey



Please press the arrow below to continue



Please state to what extent you agree with the following items. Use the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Mostly agree	Totally agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Our team is united in trying to reach its goals for performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We all take responsibility for any poor performance of the team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everyone tries to help if members have problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team members communicate freely about each other's responsibility.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team members rather go out on their own than as a team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team members rarely socialize together.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team members like to spend time outside of work hours.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team members stick together outside of the team project.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Please state to what extent you agree with the following items. Use the scale below:

Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither agree not disagree 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
---------------------------	---------------	------------------------------------	------------	------------------------

	1	2	3	4	5
I have a one-person job; I rarely have to check or work with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have to work closely with my colleagues to do my work properly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In order to complete our work, my colleagues and I have to exchange information and advice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

You have filled 50% of the survey



Indicate the percentage of your task for which you had to exchange information or cooperate with other team members (from 0 to 100)

Indicate the total number of hours per day you had to exchange information or coordinate with other team members to do your job well (from 0 to 8 hours a day)

You have filled 60% of the survey



Please press the arrow below to continue



Please think about the **main task you are (or were) responsible to perform in your group project**. State to what extent your agree with the following items regarding that task.

1 Totally disagree	2 Mostly disagree	3 Slightly disagree	4 Neutral	5 Slightly agree	6 Mostly agree	7 Totally agree
--------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------	--------------	------------------------	----------------------	-----------------------

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I find this to be a complex task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This task is mentally demanding.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This task requires a lot of thought and problem-solving.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find this task to be a challenging task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Your team members use different medium to communicate amongst each other. Think about all this internal team communication and state to what extent each of the following media were used to communicate in your team. The cumulative total of all percentages should be 100%.

Please fill in for each medium the percentage of use. (Notice: accumulating all the scores, the total extent of use must be 100 percent):

Face-to-face	0 %
e-mail	0 %
Chat (text messages, whatsapp, messenger, etc)	0 %
Teleconference (via audio connection; telephone)	0 %
Videoconference (via video + audio connection)	0 %
Other, namely: (which one?)	0 %
Total	0 %

Please state to what extent you agree with the following items regarding your team.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree not disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
The team does very good work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The team does a very good job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The team is highly effective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

You have filled 85% of the survey



Please press the arrow below to continue



For sample description purposes certain sociodemographic data are needed. A reminder: your participation is entirely anonymous, confidential and voluntary.

What is your gender?

Male

Female

And how old are you?

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

To be admitted in the program (Bachelor or Master) you are currently enrolled in, did you have to apply with a GPA (or equivalent general application grade)?

Yes

No



If “Yes”

Does your GPA scale range from 0 to 20?

Yes

No



If “Yes”

Please state your GPA for the program (Bachelor or Master) you are enrolled in

You have reached 100% of the survey!

100%

Please press the arrow below to submit your answers

Thank you for your collaboration and availability!

If “No”

Please state your GPA for the program you are enrolled in as well as its scale range or the country (if you are an exchange student, name the country you come from)

GPA

Scale range

Country (optional)

You have reached 100% of the survey!

100%

Please press the arrow below to submit your answers

Thank you for your collaboration and availability!

B. Results for the model with network ability**Table 1***Structured Model Results*

Construct	R^2	Adj. R^2	F^2	Q^2	VIF	SRMR
TPerform	.843	.786		.346		.064
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.457	.263	.413	.121	4.375	
SLead ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.282	.198	.098	.126	1.667	
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.104		1.229	
TVirtuality*TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.388		3.445	
TVirtual*NAbil ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.049		1.429	
TInterd*NAbil ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.053		1.384	
Nabil ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.168		1.394	
NAbil ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.566		2.065	
NAbil ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.120		1.229	

VIF, variance inflation factor; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

Table 2*Hypothesis Constructs*

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	t -value	p -value
Direct						
	NAbil $\rightarrow$ TCoh	.797	.787	.391	2.037	.021**
	NAbil $\rightarrow$ SLead	.326	.244	.289	1.127	.130
	NAbil $\rightarrow$ TPerform	.192	.179	.235	.816	.208
	TCoh $\rightarrow$ TPerform	.533	.649	.348	1.530	.064*
	SLead $\rightarrow$ TPerform	-.160	-.273	.253	.632	.264
	TCoh $\rightarrow$ SLead	.302	.406	.244	1.239	.108
Mediating						

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

NAbil→TCoh→TPerform	.425	.496	.377	1.128	.130
NAbil→SLead→TPerform	-.052	-.055	.126	.413	.340
NAbil→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.039	-.101	.154	.251	.401
Moderating					
TInterd*NAbil→TCoh	-.190	-.161	.422	.449	.327
TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.597	.495	.416	1.435	.076*
TVirtual*NAbil→TCoh	-.267	-.247	.618	.433	.333
Moderated mediation					
TInterd*NAbil→TCoh→TPerform	-.101	-.105	.349	.289	.386
TVirtual*NAbil→TCoh→TPerform	-.143	-.177	.533	.267	.395
TInterd*NAbil→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.009	-.001	.090	.102	.460
TVirtual*NAbil→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.013	.034	.168	.077	.469

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$

Figure 1

Partial Least Square SEM Model for Network Ability

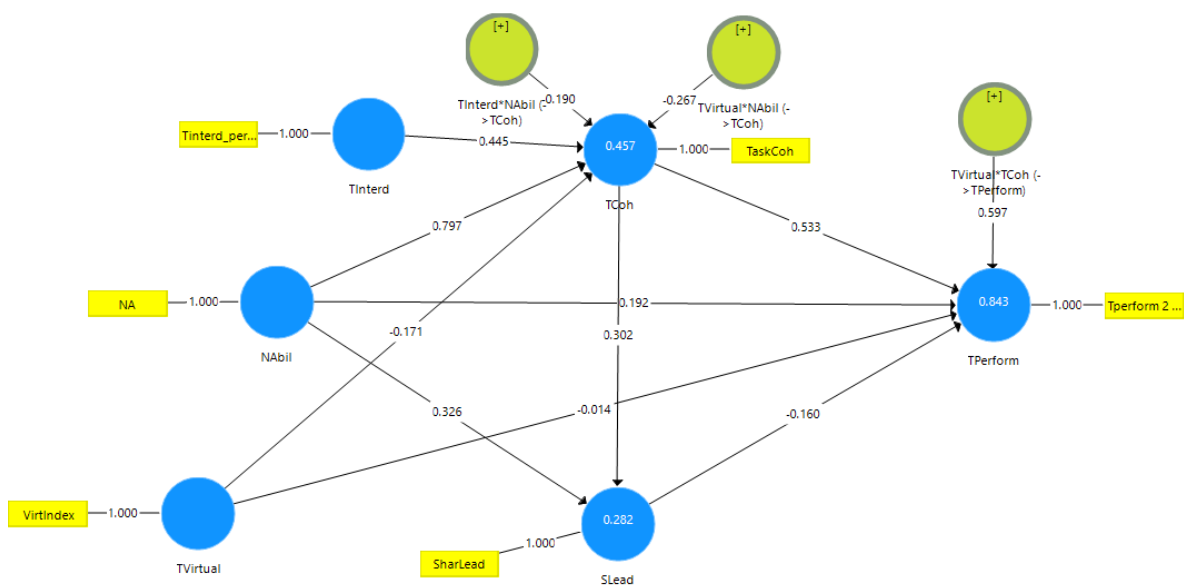
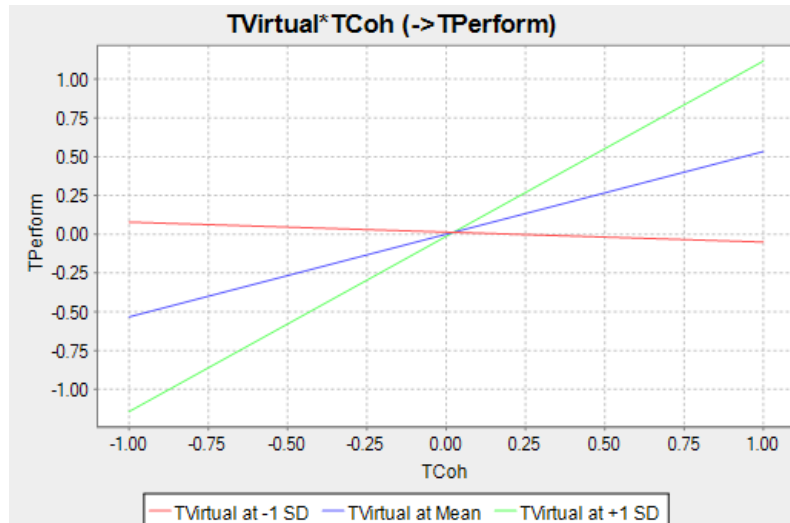


Figure 2

Interaction Diagram of Team Virtuality Between Team Task Cohesion and Team Performance



C. Results for the model with apparent sincerity

Table 1

Structured Model Results

Construct	R^2	Adj. R^2	F^2	Q^2	VIF	SRMR
TPerform	.861	.812		.371		.040
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.707	.602	.891	.240	8.464	
SLead ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.249	.161	.180	.204	1.812	
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.316		1.713	
TVirtuality*TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.177		3.892	
TVirtual*ASinc ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.021		1.699	
TInterd*ASinc ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.353		1.487	
ASinc ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.325		2.703	
ASinc ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			1.054		1.303	
ASinc ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.071		1.713	

VIF, variance inflation factor; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Table 2

Hypothesis Constructs

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	ASinc→TCoh	.635	.531	.363	1.750	.041**
	ASinc→SLead	-.302	-.261	.354	.853	.197
	ASinc→TPerform	-.349	-.383	.192	1.823	.035**
	TCoh→TPerform	1.023	1.067	.322	3.174	.001**
	SLead→TPerform	-.212	-.297	.297	.715	.238
	TCoh→SLead	.638	.693	.276	2.309	.011**
Mediating						
	ASinc→TCoh→TPerform	.649	.576	.476	1.364	.087*
	ASinc→SLead→TPerform	.064	.089	.174	.369	.356
	ASinc→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.086	-.132	.290	.297	.395
Moderating						
	TInterd*ASinc→TCoh	-.349	-.116	.493	.710	.239
	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.403	.422	.305	1.324	.093*
	TVirtual*ASinc→TCoh	-.118	.154	.567	.208	.418
Moderated mediation						
	TInterd*ASinc→TCoh→TPerform	-.357	-.143	.503	.710	.239
	TVirtual*ASinc→TCoh→TPerform	-.121	.194	.657	.184	.427
	TInterd*ASinc→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.047	.019	.177	.267	.395
	TVirtual*ASinc→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.016	-.077	.277	.058	.477

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Figure 1

Partial Least Square SEM Model for Apparent Sincerity

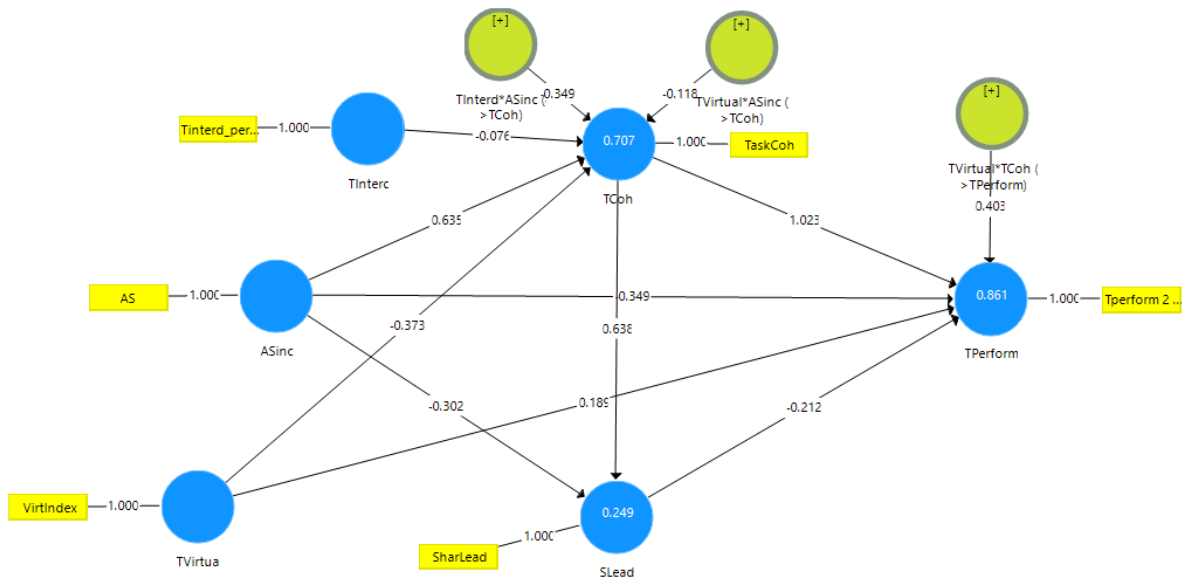
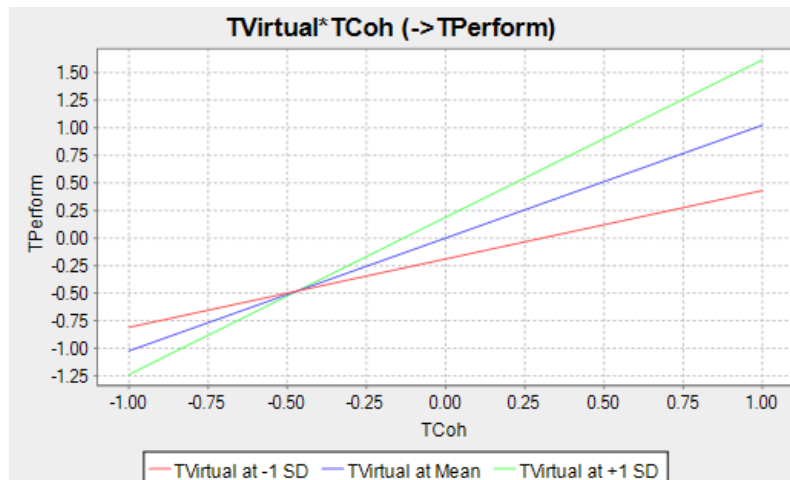


Figure 2

Interaction Diagram of Team Virtuality Between Team Task Cohesion and Team Performance



D. Results for the model with social astuteness**Table 1***Structured Model Results*

Construct	R^2	Adj. R^2	F^2	Q^2	VIF	SRMR
TPerform	.848	.794		.397		.042
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.535	.370	.463	.043	4.305	
SLead ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.261	.174	.123	.107	1.732	
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.076		1.405	
TVirtuality*TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.267		3.595	
TVirtual*SASTu ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.021		2.994	
TInterd*SASTu ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.077		1.184	
SASTu ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.209		1.607	
SASTu ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.449		1.185	
SASTu ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.087		1.405	

VIF, variance inflation factor; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

Table 2*Hypothesis Constructs*

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	t -value	p -value
Direct						
	SASTu $\rightarrow$ TCoh	.497	.460	.210	2.368	.009**
	SASTu $\rightarrow$ SLead	.301	.302	.234	1.283	.100
	SASTu $\rightarrow$ TPerform	.226	.259	.196	1.155	.125
	TCoh $\rightarrow$ TPerform	.551	.597	.253	2.178	.015**
	SLead $\rightarrow$ TPerform	-.180	-.264	.216	.835	.202
	TCoh $\rightarrow$ SLead	.281	.313	.278	1.011	.156

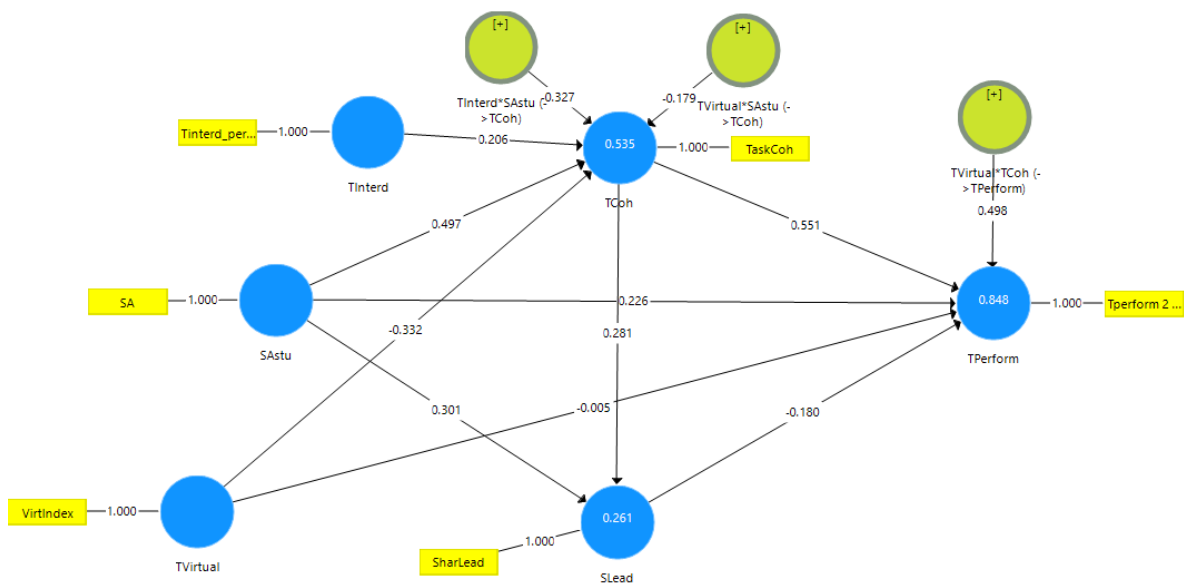
TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Mediating						
SAstu→TCoh→TPerform	.274	.265	.178	1.537	.063*	
SAstu→SLead→TPerform	-.054	-.074	.107	.508	.306	
SAstu→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.025	-.046	.085	.297	.383	
Moderating						
TInterd*SAstu→TCoh	-.327	-.278	.321	1.020	.154	
TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.498	.481	.305	1.632	.052*	
TVirtual*SAstu→TCoh	-.179	-.180	.429	.416	.339	
Moderated mediation						
TInterd*SAstu→TCoh→TPerform	-.180	-.171	.250	.722	.235	
TVirtual*SAstu→TCoh→TPerform	-.098	-.107	.278	.354	.362	
TInterd*SAstu→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.017	.011	.083	.199	.421	
TVirtual*SAstu→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	.009	.036	.098	.092	.463	

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$

Figure 1

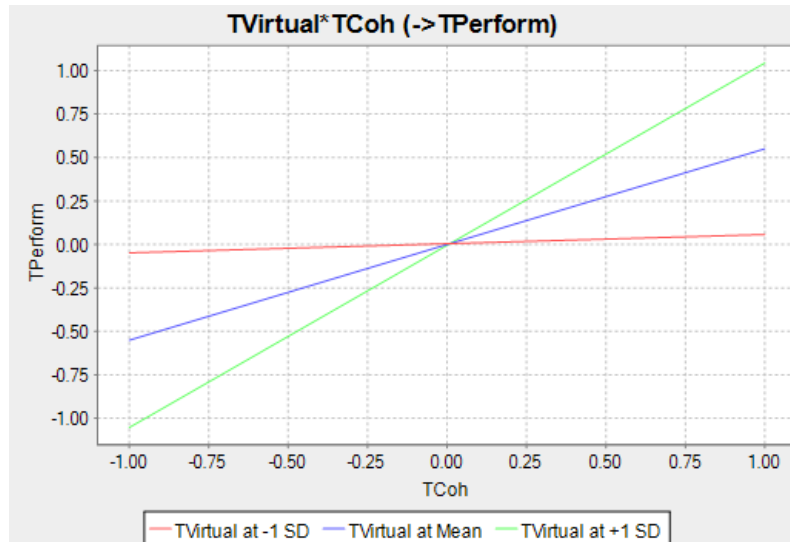
Partial Least Square SEM Model for Social Astuteness



TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Figure 2

Interaction Diagram of Team Virtuality Between Team Task Cohesion and Team Performance



E. Results for the model with interpersonal influence

Table 1

Structured Model Results

Construct	R^2	Adj. R^2	F^2	Q^2	VIF	SRMR
TPerform	.826	.764		.340		.061
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.154	-.148	.524	-.205	4.936	
SLead ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)	.199	.104	.063	-.087	1.647	
TCoh ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.247		1.003	
TVirtuality*TCoh ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.174		4.281	
TVirtual*IInfl ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.001		2.131	
TInterd*IInfl ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.004		1.350	
IInfl ($\rightarrow$ TPerform)			.058		1.347	
IInfl ($\rightarrow$ TCoh)			.002		1.311	
IInfl ($\rightarrow$ SLead)			.003		1.003	

VIF, variance inflation factor; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Table 2

Hypothesis Constructs

Effects	Relations	β	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Direct						
	IInfl→TCoh	.045	.044	.493	.092	.464
	IInfl→SLead	.050	.061	.233	.215	.415
	IInfl→TPerform	.117	.134	.183	.638	.262
	TCoh→TPerform	.670	.713	.302	2.216	.014**
	SLead→TPerform	-.134	-.245	.243	.552	.291
	TCoh→SLead	.446	.453	.223	2.000	.023**
Mediating						
	IInfl→TCoh→TPerform	.030	-.004	.365	.083	.467
	IInfl→SLead→TPerform	-.007	-.008	.080	.084	.467
	IInfl→SLead→TCoh→TPerform	-.003	-.004	.091	.030	.488
Moderating						
	TInterd*IInfl→TCoh	.087	.091	.647	.134	.447
	TVirtual*TCoh→TPerform	.468	.475	.440	1.066	.144
	TVirtual*IInfl→TCoh	.039	-.227	.838	.047	.481
Moderated mediation						
	TInterd*IInfl→TCoh→TPerform	.058	.067	.525	.110	.456
	TVirtual*IInfl→TCoh→TPerform	.026	-.116	.554	.047	.481
	TInterd*IInfl→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.005	.010	.144	.036	.486
	TVirtual*IInfl→TCoh→SLead→TPerform	-.002	.010	.126	.019	.493

p*<.10, *p*<.05

TEAM POLITICAL SKILL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Figure 1

Partial Least Square SEM Model for Interpersonal Influence

