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Zurich** ^{UZH}

Institute of Psychology

Is diversity good or bad for teams?

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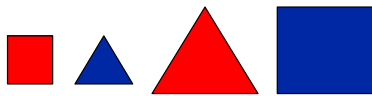
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Teams are the most common form of organisational collaboration (Salas et al., 2008)

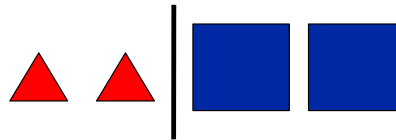




Looking at several differences simultaneously: Diversity Faultlines




Colour: 2 x red, 2 x blue
Shape: 2 triangles, 2 squares
Size: 2 x small, 2 x large

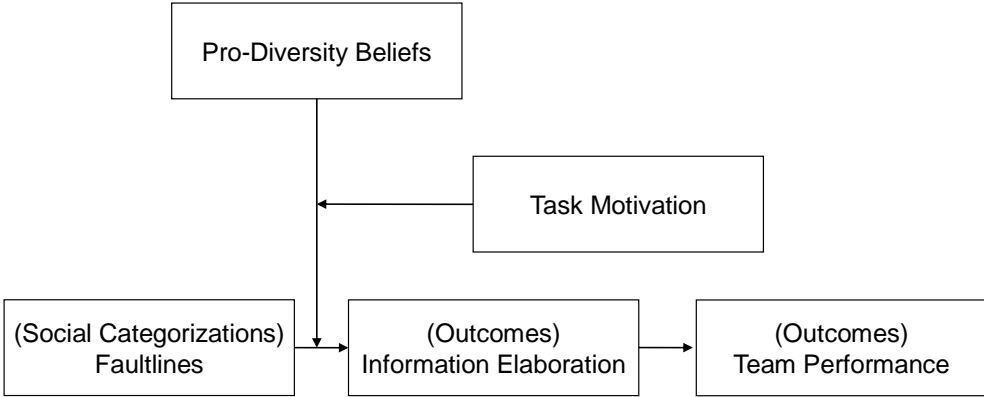


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Shape: 2 triangles, 2 squares
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- If we only look at one attribute at a time, these two teams have the same level of diversity
- These two teams differ in their diversity faultline strength: 0.33 vs. 1.00
- Faultlines are associated with decreased satisfaction and performance (Thatcher & Patel, in press).
- Can we overcome the negative effects of faultlines?

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Faultlines in context: What if team members see value in diversity (and like the task)?



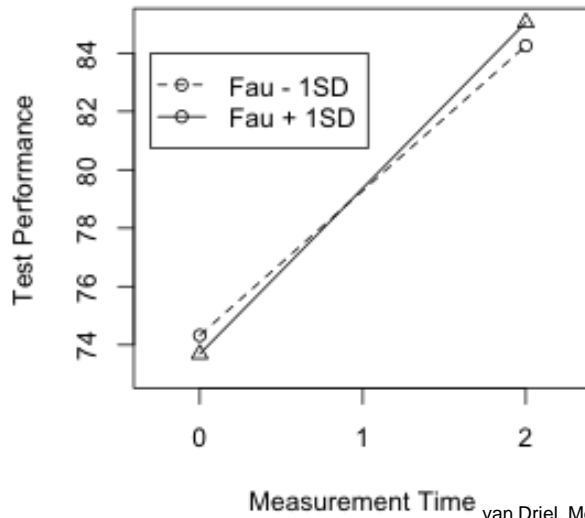
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graph TD; A[Pro-Diversity Beliefs] --> B["(Social Categorizations) Faultlines"]; B --> C["(Outcomes) Information Elaboration"]; C --> D["(Outcomes) Team Performance"]; E[Task Motivation] --> A;
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Meyer & Schermuly, in press


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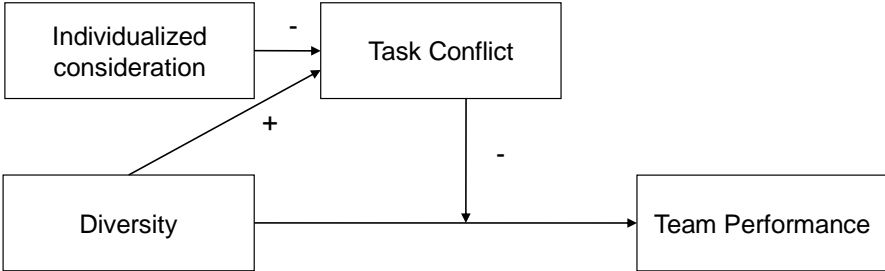
Random Coefficient Growth Modeling in R (Bliese, 2009) reveals the proposed effect



van Driel, Meyer, & McDonald, 2011

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Hypothesized causal structure: IC reduces conflict in diverse teams, which decreases performance



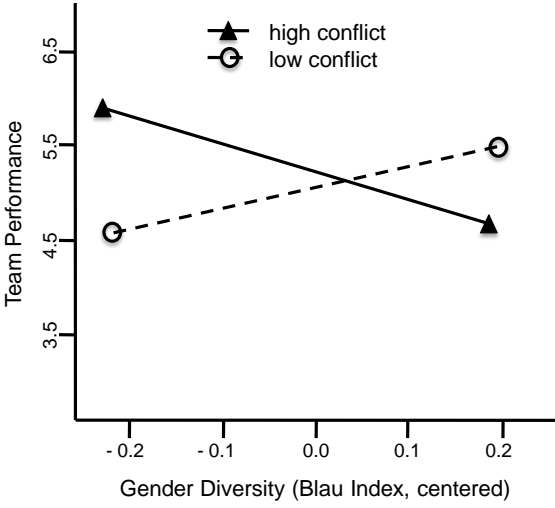
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graph LR; IC[Individualized consideration] -- "-" --> TC[Task Conflict]; D[Diversity] -- "+" --> TC; D -- "-" --> TP[Team Performance]; TC -- "-" --> TP;
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Meyer & Jehn, in preparation

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Field study reveals the interaction of gender diversity and task conflict on team performance



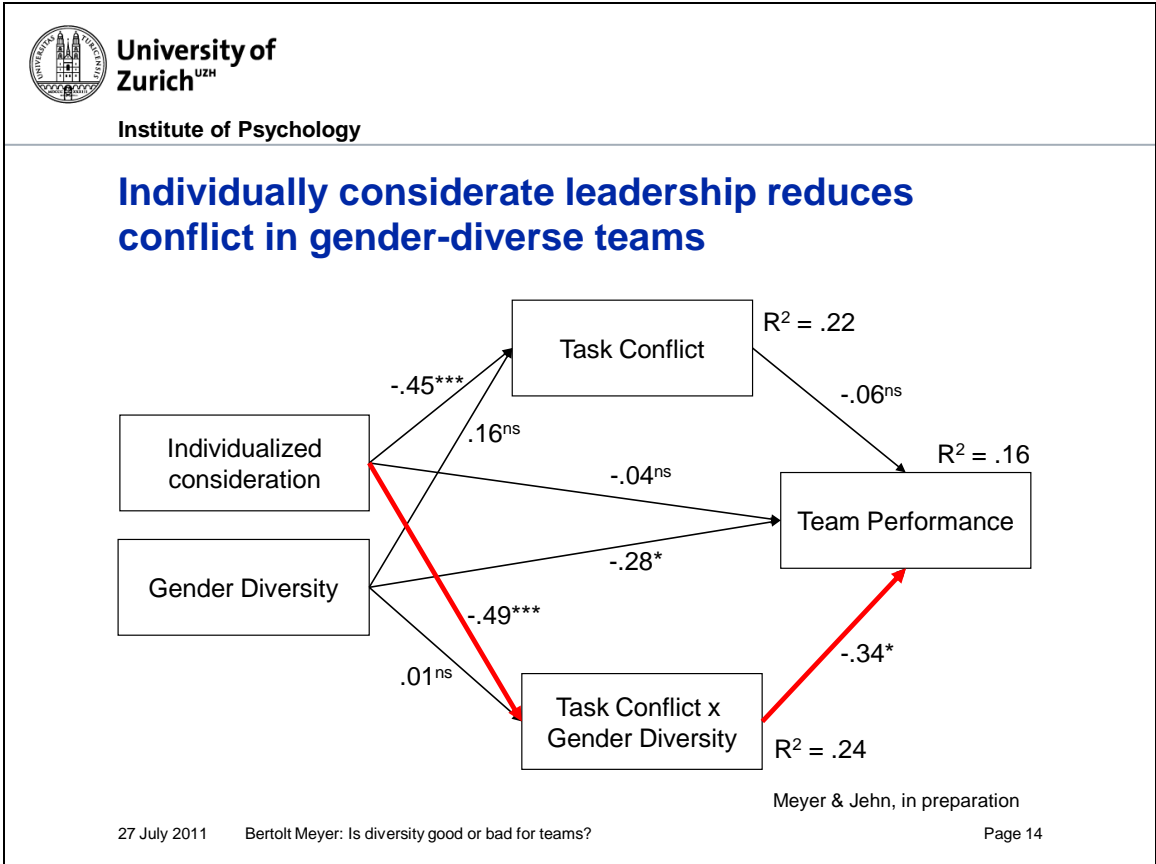
The graph plots Team Performance (Y-axis, 3.5 to 6.5) against Gender Diversity (Blau Index, centered) (X-axis, -0.2 to 0.2). Two lines represent high conflict (solid line with triangles) and low conflict (dashed line with circles). High conflict shows a negative slope, while low conflict shows a positive slope.

Gender Diversity (Blau Index, centered)	High Conflict Team Performance	Low Conflict Team Performance
-0.2	5.8	4.5
0.2	4.6	5.5

- In teams with more women than average, task conflict is detrimental for team performance
- Thus, gender-diverse teams require low levels of conflict for high performance

Meyer & Jehn, in preparation

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Outlook: Antecedents of diversity beliefs; stereotypes & status; diversity & leadership

- Study of the antecedents of diversity beliefs in school children with Social Network Analysis (analysis completed)
- Study on the interaction of team diversity, diversity beliefs, task stereotypicality, and status (paper submitted)
- Leadership & Trust: Which observable micro-level leadership behaviors (speech & body language) bring about the positive effects of leadership?





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Thank you very much for your attention!
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