

# The Impact of Control Preferences Fit Between Employees and Their Supervisors on Employee Job Satisfaction<sup>1</sup>

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*Control preferences differentiate people with regard to their inclination towards a certain division of control in an interdependent situation. Social situations that block one's capability to exert a preferred type of control can be evaluated as unpleasant and provoke their abandonment. We hypothesized that incompatibility of control preferences between leaders and followers would result in diminished job satisfaction among the followers. Such incompatibility could stem from either discrepancy between leader-follower control preferences (e.g. a discrepant preference for collaboration) or too great a similarity (e.g. a similarly strong preference for domination). In our study, 203 participants rated their own control preferences and the perceived control preferences of their immediate supervisors. The results of polynomial regression with response surface analysis showed that job satisfaction was higher when a follower was aligned with a leader at a high level of collaboration preference rather than at a low level of collaboration preference. Contrary to our expectations, a similarity rather than a dissimilarity in dominance between employees and their leaders predicted higher job satisfaction among employees. Job satisfaction was higher when leaders were perceived as having greater respect for autonomy, regardless of the follower's reactive autonomy. Finally, job satisfaction increased as both the follower's proactive autonomy and the leader's respect for autonomy increased.*

**Keywords:** person-supervisor fit, person-environment fit, control preferences, job satisfaction, supplementary fit, complementary fit.

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## Znaczenie dopasowania preferencji kontroli pomiędzy podwładnym i przełożonym dla satysfakcji z pracy pracowników

*Preferencje kontroli różnicują ludzi pod względem ich skłonności do podziału kontroli w sytuacji współzależności. Sytuacje społeczne, które blokują zdolność do sprawowania preferowanego rodzaju kontroli mogą zostać ocenione jako nieprzyjemne i doprowadzić do ich porzucenia. Postawiliśmy hipotezę, że niezgodność preferencji kontroli pomiędzy liderami a pracownikami związana jest z niższym zadowoleniem z pracy wśród pracowników. Taka*

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*niezgodność może wynikać albo z rozbieżności pomiędzy preferencjami kontroli liderów i pracowników (np. różnica pod względem preferencji partnerstwa), albo ze zbyt dużego podobieństwa (np. podobnie silna preferencja dominacji). W naszym badaniu 203 uczestników oceniono własne preferencje kontroli oraz postrzegane preferencje kontroli ich bezpośrednich przełożonych. Wyniki regresji wielomianowej wykazały, że zadowolenie z pracy było tym wyższe, im bardziej pracownik był dopasowany do lidera pod względem preferencji partnerstwa, ale jedynie dla wysokiego poziomu tej preferencji. Wbrew naszym oczekiwaniom to podobieństwo, a nie odmiennosc preferencji dla dominacji pomiędzy pracownikami i ich liderami przewidywało większe zadowolenie z pracy wśród pracowników. Zadowolenie z pracy było też wyższe, gdy przywódcy byli postrzegani jako mający większy szacunek dla autonomii, niezależnie od poziomu reakcji pracowników. Wreszcie, zadowolenie z pracy wzrastało wraz ze wzrostem zarówno samokontroli pracownika, jak i szacunku lidera dla jego autonomii.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** dopasowanie człowiek-przełożony, dopasowanie człowiek-środowisko, preferencje kontroli, satysfakcja z pracy, dopasowanie suplementarne, dopasowanie komplementarne.

Nadesłany: | Zaakceptowany do druku:

**JEL:** M12, O15, J24, J28

## 1. Introduction

A popular business adage states that: “Employees don’t leave companies – they leave bosses”. Indeed, destructive leadership has been shown to strongly predict turnover intention, counterproductive behavior, or follower resistance (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Sixty-three percent of respondents contributing to Kelly Global Workforce Index (KGWI, 2014) declared that their direct manager had a significant impact on the level of their satisfaction and engagement. Yet, not all leaders are destructive-abusive, despotic, or psychopathic. It is probably safe to assume that most try to be supportive and responsible for their followers. Does that guarantee their success in dealing with subordinates?

One approach to answering this question is attempted through the analysis of person-supervisor fit (PS fit) or congruence. Research suggests that personality similarity or goal and value congruence between a supervisor and a subordinate are positively associated with employee job satisfaction, the quality of the relationship with the leader, and supervisor satisfaction (e.g. Colbert, Kristof-Brown, Bradley, & Barrick, 2008; Kristof-Brown, Barrick, & Stevens, 2005; Schaubroeck & Lam, 2002; Witt, 1998). However, do all types of similarity between a leader and a subordinate lead to positive outcomes? What if both of them are dominant and

strive for power? What if an employee is more dominant than the leader? What if an employee dislikes being controlled, while a leader exhibits a low level of respect for others’ autonomy? Those questions refer to people’s preferences for distribution of control in an interdependent situation. Social situations that block one’s capability to exert a preferred type of control can be evaluated as unpleasant and provoke their abandonment (Grzelak, 2002).

The aim of the current paper is to expand the current literature on PS fit by concentrating on the consequences of person-supervisor control preference congruence (and incongruence) for employee job satisfaction. Previous research on PS fit focused mainly on the positive consequences of similarity between leaders and followers. Our investigation is consistent with the supposition that the compatibility can be a result of both similarity and diversity of traits (Levine & Moreland, 1994). Therefore, we expect that similarity in terms of some control preferences and diversity in others may enhance employee job satisfaction.

## 2. Theoretical Background

Organizations wish to select individuals who best meet the demands of the job, adapt to the culture, and remain loyal and committed to the organization. Similarly, employees want to find a company that matches their qualifications and meets

their specific needs. Compatibility between individuals and their work environment is called a Person Environment Fit (PE fit, Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; van Vianen, 2018). It assumes that people have an innate need to fit their environment and to seek out environments that match their own characteristics.

The background of the fit theory can be found in Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework. It suggests that perceived similarity of organizational attributes (e.g. values, personality) leads to attraction among potential employees. Candidates perceived as similar are also more likely to be hired (selection). Finally, people who do not fit an environment well have a higher tendency to leave it (attrition). Consequently, this leads to homogeneity in the workforce because people increasingly become more like one another (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). Indeed, research showed that top leaders tend to surround themselves with individuals who represent similar values and personality traits (Giberson, Dickson, & Resick, 2005). This similarity is further augmented by a tendency of the individuals in the same organization to become more similar in terms of their personality traits (neuroticism, conscientiousness, and extraversion) over time, as they progress from newcomers to "full-time" employees (Oh, Han, Holtz, Kim, & Kim, 2018).

PE fit was shown to be one of the most powerful predictors of individual outcomes such as performance, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational and occupational commitment, and reduced turnover (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; van Vianen, 2018). On the other hand, experience of misfit is generally considered unpleasant by the employees and was shown to trigger three approaches: resolution, relief-seeking, and – when the first two have failed – resignation (Follmer, Talbot, Kristof-Brown, Astrove, & Billsberry, 2017).

### 3. Person-Supervisor Fit

In the current article, we focus on one type of PE fit – a person-supervisor fit (PS fit). Research on PS fit mostly concentrated on a similarity of values, personality, and goals held by both parties. The results gen-

erally supported the notion that a similarity between a supervisor and an employee results in positive personal and organizational outcomes. For instance:

1. When members of organizational units displayed high levels of individualism, personality similarity between the leader and the follower was positively associated with promotion possibilities (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2002). Supervisors were also more likely to form trusting, high-commitment relationships with persons that were similar to them in personality.
2. Newcomers' job commitment was enhanced when both the newcomer and the supervisor exhibited high concern for people. Such a fit also affected new employees' turnover intentions (van Vianen, 2000).
3. Fit between the employee's and the supervisor's goals can also provide protection against the negative effect of perceptions of organizational politics (i.e. behaviors of organizational actors that are designed to promote self-interest). Even though the perceptions of organizational politics among employees were shown to negatively affect their commitment and job performance when employees' priorities were similar to those of the supervisors, politics were relatively inconsequential (Witt, 1998).
4. Leader-follower congruence in social cynicism (a belief that the social world is an unjust place governed by competition and exploitation) predicts greater extra-role behaviors and proactive behaviors among followers (Byza, Schuh, Dörr, Spörrle, & Maier, 2017). Research showed that leaders with negative and cynical views tend to mistrust the skills of others and undermine the follower's motivation and performance. However, when employees were also cynical, these negative effects mostly disappeared.
5. Congruence between the leader's and the follower's proactive personality (a proclivity to improve their work processes and outcomes) increased leader-member exchange (characterized by higher trust, loyalty, and respect), which in turn positively affected the follower's performance, job satisfaction, and affective commitment (Zhang, Wang, & Shi, 2012). Even though research on PS fit generally confirms that similarity leads to more posi-

tive outcomes, some studies point in the opposite direction. Person-environment fit models can be most generally divided into (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987):

- 1) Supplementary Fit – occurs when people possess similar values or characteristics to those of other individuals in the environment. Supplementary fit traditions mostly focused on the value congruence between employees and their teams, supervisors, and organizations as a whole.
- 2) Complementary Fit – “the weaknesses or needs of the environment are offset by the strength of the individual, and vice-versa” (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 271).

The second approach proposes that sometimes a dissimilarity of characteristics could lead to desirable organizational outcomes. This is true especially when characteristics of followers complement those of supervisors, and vice versa. For example, dissimilarity in the level of extraversion was shown to maintain a balance between leaders and followers. While individuals characterized by high extraversion emerge as leaders, individuals with low extraversion prefer follower roles (Neuman, Wagner, & Christiansen, 1999). A team that is homogeneous with regard to extraversion may prove to be ineffective due to: a) conflict and power struggles in the case of uniformly high extraversion, b) lack of leadership in the case of uniformly low extraversion. Similar results were shown for emotional stability – a personality trait also related to higher propensity to lead.

#### 4. Control Preferences

Control preferences differentiate people with regard to their relatively stable inclination towards a certain division of control in an interdependent situation. A high level of control makes it possible to achieve desired outcomes and avoid those that are unpleasant (Grzelak, 2002). However, some individuals were shown to prefer to submit to the control of others, diminishing one’s level of responsibility (see also an article by Kuzminska, Schulze, & Koval, 2018). In the current research, we employ the framework of control preferences developed by Grzelak (2001). Each interdependent actor, in an interaction with others, might try to intensify:

- “one’s control over one’s own outcomes: self-control preference (*proactive autonomy*),
- one’s control over others’ outcomes: power preference (*dominance*),
- others’ control over one’s own outcomes: dependence preference (*submissiveness*),
- others’ control over others’ own outcomes: respect preference (*respect for autonomy*),
- joint, one’s and others’ control over one’s own and others’ outcomes: *collaboration preference A<sup>2</sup>*” (Grzelak, 2001).

Based on his research, Grzelak (2001) added one additional preference – *reactive autonomy*. Those high in reactive autonomy display a strong reactance or a lack of acceptance for other people’s control over their own outcomes.

Control preferences predict individuals’ interest in staying in or exiting from the particular relationship or situation (Grzelak, Kuhlman, Yeagley, & Joireman, 2009). Those preferences are also likely to influence our career choices and job related values (Modrzejewska, 2004). Some individuals feel good in jobs that allow them to exert control over other employees. Others perceive control over other people as adding unwanted responsibility and prefer to work alone – not influenced and not influencing. Yet others like to give up control over their own outcomes to a competent boss. Such a strategy is especially likely in situations of uncertainty, as getting rid of personal control transfers the responsibility to a different agent and protects one’s self-esteem (Dolinski, 1993).

The aim of the current study is to investigate whether PS fit in terms of control preferences predicts employee job satisfaction. We believe that due to the relational nature of control preferences, their outcomes should be predicted both in terms of complementary and supplementary fit.

For collaboration preference, we posit that a similarity between leaders and followers would predict greater job satisfaction, especially at a higher end of the collaboration spectrum. Individuals high in the need of collaboration like to jointly decide on the best course of action. Hence, we expect that those aligned at a high level of collaboration preference would feel rewarded with such compatibility. A dissimilarity in the preference of collaboration

could, on the other hand, result in frustration when one party is not willing to get involved in joint decision-making.

With regard to dominance preference, we expect that higher job satisfaction would be observed when leaders and followers complement themselves. Specifically, we expect that a leader should exert a higher level of dominance preference than the follower. A similarity of dominance preference can lead to either power struggles or unwillingness to take on control by either of the parties. In terms of dissimilarity, a higher level of power preference in a follower could result in his perception of leader weakness. This expectation is supported by findings of Glomb & Welsh (2005), who investigated the consequences of PS fit with regard to affiliation and control behaviors. Affiliation behaviors can range from friendliness to hostility, whereas control behaviors range from dominance to submission. Results showed that subordinate satisfaction was higher when the leaders and subordinates were dissimilar in control behaviors, specifically when the supervisors were higher in control than were subordinates. Moreover, subordinate satisfaction was lower when supervisors exhibited less control behaviors than their subordinates.

Regarding the other control preferences (reactive autonomy, proactive autonomy, and autonomy respect), we do not expect simple alignment effects. We believe that it is not sufficient to analyze a similarity between same traits, as two different traits or characteristics might prove complementary in a given context. In our study, we decided to check whether high/low proactive autonomy and reactive autonomy in a follower could be complemented by high/low respect for autonomy in a leader. We predict that employees exhibiting higher levels of reactive autonomy and proactive autonomy would feel the most satisfied if their immediate supervisor exhibited high respect for autonomy preference. Such employees display a need to have influence over their own outcomes and act independently of other people's control. If leaders display low respect for autonomy, the needs of such employees would be frustrated, possibly resulting in lower job satisfaction.

Based on the above considerations, we propose the following hypotheses to be tested in the current research:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Job satisfaction is higher when a follower is aligned with a leader at a high level of collaboration preference rather than at a low level of collaboration preference.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Job satisfaction is higher when there is a discrepancy between perceived leader dominance and follower dominance, specifically, when a leader is more dominant than the follower.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Job satisfaction is higher when a leader's perceived respect for autonomy is aligned (at both high and low levels) with a follower's (H3a) reactive autonomy and (H3b) proactive autonomy.

## 5. Method

### 5.1. Participants

Two hundred and three employees (67% men, ages 19–75,  $M = 33.06$ ,  $SD = 9.75$ , *median* = 30 years) were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk platform (MTurk: <http://www.mturk.com>). All participants were residents of the USA. Data was collected between August 27, 2018 and August 28, 2018. Due to recent reports of automated responses to Mturk questionnaires (Kennedy, Clifford, Burrell, Jewell, & Waggoner, 2018), we used an option offered by Mturk to (1) verify worker country location and (2) block duplicate IP addresses. What is more, we used two red herring items to check for the randomness of the answers: (1) what is the current year and 2) "Please mark *strongly agree* to answer this question". Twenty-six were excluded due to a failure to answer these red herring items. The analyzed sample consisted of 177 employees (65% men, ages 19–75,  $M = 33.46$ ,  $SD = 9.93$ , *median* = 30 years). All participants were currently employed (93.1% full-time). Participants each received \$0.50 as a reward for their participation.

### 5.2. Materials and Procedure

After reading and accepting an informed consent, participants filled in their sociodemographic information (age, gender, occupational status, performed job). On the subsequent pages, participants filled in the following measures, the order of which was assigned randomly.

**Control preferences** were measured with a scale developed by Grzelak (2001).

The 28-item scale consists of five subscales measuring: Collaboration (e.g. 5 items, “*I like being in a group in which everyone has something to say*”), Dominance (5 items, e.g. “*I like to have influence on what others do*”), Proactive Autonomy (4 items, “*I like choosing goals for myself*”), Reactive Autonomy (5 items, “*I don’t like it when someone makes decisions about my business*”), Respect for Autonomy (5 items, “*It would be good if everyone were responsible for their own decisions*”), and Submissiveness (4 items, “*I like it when someone makes decisions for me*”). Items were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 5 = *Strongly agree*). Cronbach’s alphas for the scales ranged from  $\alpha = .76$  to  $\alpha = .86$ . All items are attached in the appendix.

**Perceived control preferences of the leader.** We asked participants to think of their immediate boss and rate him/her on the same items, with the exception that they now referred to their boss (e.g. “*My boss likes being in a group in which everyone has something to say*” for the collaboration preference). Two scales –submissiveness and proactive autonomy – were not employed, because it was difficult to adapt them in the above manner and no relationship was expected regarding person-supervisor fit with respect to those scales. Cronbach’s alphas for the scales ranged from  $\alpha = .75$  to  $\alpha = .82$ .

**Job satisfaction** was measured using a translated version of the scale developed by Bajcar, Borkowska, Czerw and Gąsiorowska (2011). The scale measures nine spheres of potential job satisfaction (colleagues, direct supervisors, type of tasks performed, working conditions, professional development, financial rewards, work time, stability of employment) and finally asks respondents to rate their satisfaction with a job as a whole. The response scale ranged from 1: very dissatisfied, to 6: very satisfied. Cronbach’s alpha for the entire scale was 0.93. The items are included in the appendix.

## 6. Analytical Approach

In the current study, hypotheses were tested using polynomial regression with response surface analysis. We based the analyses on the guidelines developed by Shanock, Baran, Gentry, Pattison, and Heggstad (2010). This approach allows

examining how combinations of two predictors jointly relate to an outcome variable. It is of particular interest when the discrepancy or congruence between the two predictors is a central consideration.

In polynomial regression, the dependent variable ( $Z$ ) is regressed on two predictors ( $X$  and  $Y$ ), the interaction between the two predictors, and the squared terms for both predictors. The obtained coefficients are then plotted in a three-dimensional space, creating the “response surface pattern”. On the resulting graph, two lines are of special interest in the analysis of fit (Shanock, Baran, Gentry, Pattison, & Heggstad, 2010):

1. the line of congruence ( $X = Y$ ), which represents how the dependent variable is affected by the agreement between the two predictors. The significance of the test for *slope* of the line of congruence represents how the agreement between the two predictors (a similarity on a continuum from low ratings on both predictor variables to high ratings on both predictor variables) affects the level of the dependent variable (in our case – job satisfaction). The significance of the test for *curvature* along the line of congruence shows whether the effect of agreement between the two predictors on the dependent variable is nonlinear.
2. the line of incongruence ( $X = -Y$ ), which represents the discrepancy between the two predictors. If the degree of discrepancy between  $X$  and  $Y$  affected the level of the dependent variable, the test for *curvature* of the incongruence line would be significant. The test of *slope* of the line of incongruence represents whether the direction of the discrepancy between predictors matters in predicting the dependent variable.

In the current article, the congruence line ( $X = Y$ ) is plotted on all graphs from the front corner (where  $X = Y = -2$ ) to the rear corner (where  $X = Y = 2$ ), whereas the incongruence line ( $X = -Y$ ) is from the left corner to the right corner. In all of our analyses,  $X$  represents the scores of a follower (an employee) on a given predictor variable,  $Y$  represents the scores of a leader (as judged by the follower) on a given predictor variable, and  $Z$  represents the level of follower’s job satisfaction. The Excel spreadsheet developed by Shanock et al. (2010) that we used to create sur-

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age	33.06	9.75	1										
2. Gender	–	–	.03	1									
3. Job Satisfaction	4.37	1.11	.13	.06	1								
4. Follower's COL	3.74	0.66	.07	<b>.21</b>	<b>.37</b>	1							
5. Follower's DOM	3.34	0.89	–.15	<b>–.16</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.26</b>	1						
6. Follower's RA	3.79	0.70	.07	–.02	.00	.06	.08	1					
7. Follower's PA	4.02	0.70	.10	.05	<b>.30</b>	<b>.29</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.43</b>	1				
8. Follower's RfA	3.94	0.61	.02	.14	<b>.31</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>.28</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.69</b>	1			
9. Leader's COL	3.67	0.74	.04	.11	<b>.39</b>	<b>.50</b>	<b>.23</b>	–.02	<b>.21</b>	<b>.38</b>	1		
10. Leader's DOM	3.67	0.69	–.01	–.01	<b>.21</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.39</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.38</b>	.11	1	
11. Leader's RA	3.60	0.73	–.02	.06	–.10	.11	.11	<b>.40</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.24</b>	–.13	<b>.39</b>	1
12. Leader's RfA	3.73	0.66	.01	.08	<b>.39</b>	<b>.51</b>	<b>.20</b>	.08	<b>.36</b>	<b>.50</b>	<b>.65</b>	<b>.28</b>	.10

Note: COL – Collaboration; DOM – Dominance; RA – Reactive Autonomy; PA – Proactive Autonomy; RfA – Respect for Autonomy; bold regression coefficients indicate  $p < .05$ .

face plots included the corrected formulas, as specified in the erratum to the article (Shanock, Baran, Gentry, Pattison, & Hegstad, 2014).

## 7. Results

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the variables. It is visible that participants' self-evaluation of control preferences was strongly associated with that perceived in their leaders. Also, in general, there are positive correlations between all individual control preferences and all perceived control preferences of a leader.

## 8. Leader's and Follower's Collaboration

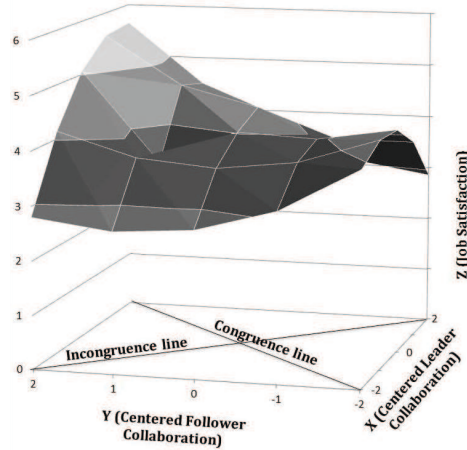
Hypothesis 1 predicts that job satisfaction is higher when a follower is aligned with a leader at a high level of collaboration preference rather than at a low level of collaboration preference. Table 2 shows the estimated regression coefficients for the polynomial regression predicting job satisfaction together with slopes and curvatures along the congruence and incongruence lines. The predictors are follower's collaboration and leader's perceived collaboration (together with their interaction term and quadratic terms). Figure 1

Table 2. Polynomial regression of collaboration preference on job satisfaction

	B	SE	t	p
Constant	4.02		34.46	< .001
Follower collaboration (FC)	.219	.155	1.41	.160
Leader collaboration (LC)	.234	.160	1.46	.146
FC <sup>2</sup>	.150	.117	1.28	.202
LC <sup>2</sup>	–.210	.105	–2.01	.046
FC x LC	.238	.134	1.78	.077
R <sup>2</sup>	0.22			
<i>Congruence (FC = LC) line</i>				
Slope	0.45	0.21	2.169	.031
Curvature	0.18	0.22	0.807	.421
<i>Incongruence (FC = –LC) line</i>				
Slope	–0.02	0.24	–0.064	.949
Curvature	–0.30	0.16	–1.897	.059

presents the response surface plotted with these coefficients. The model was significant,  $F(5, 171) = 9.89$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 22% of variance in job satisfaction. Response surface analysis shows

Figure 1. Job satisfaction as predicted by follower collaboration-leader perceived collaboration congruence



a significant slope of the congruence ( $FC = LC$ ) line indicating a linear (additive) relationship between Follower and Leader Collaboration on job satisfaction. The slope is positive, which means that Job Satisfaction increases as both FC and LC increase. While the slope of the congruence line is significant ( $p = .031$ ), its curvature is not, which means that if FC and LC are in agreement, job satisfaction increased as the FC and LC increased. In Figure 1, the highest level of Job Satisfaction is at the back corner of the graph, where LC and FC are the highest. The curvature of the incongruence line ( $FC = -LC$ ) approaches significance ( $p = 0.059$ ), which means that – on the tendency level – discrepancy from the congruence line is associated with lower job satisfaction among the followers. Therefore, our hypothesis can be tentatively supported – job satisfaction was higher when both FC and LC increased, with the highest level reached at the very high end of congruence line (when collaboration of both follower and leader was high).

### 9. Leader's and Follower's Dominance

Hypothesis 2 predicted that job satisfaction is higher when there is a discrepancy between perceived leader dominance and follower dominance, specifically, when a leader is more dominant than the follower. Table 3 shows the estimated regres-

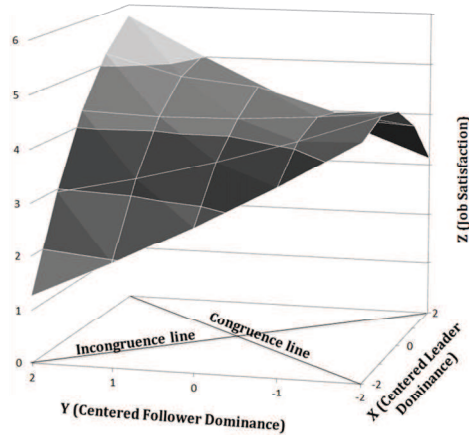
Table 3. Polynomial regression of dominance preference on job satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.24		35.78	< .001
Follower dominance (FD)	-.059	.128	-0.46	.646
Leader dominance (LD)	.408	.232	1.76	.080
FD <sup>2</sup>	-.034	.088	-0.39	.695
LD <sup>2</sup>	-.183	.165	-1.11	.268
FD x LD	.359	.138	2.60	.010
R <sup>2</sup>	0.11			
<i>Congruence (FD = LD) line</i>				
Slope	0.35	.20	1.74	.084
Curvature	0.21	.13	1.57	.119
<i>Incongruence (FD = -LD) line</i>				
Slope	-0.47	.32	-1.48	.142
Curvature	-0.51	.21	-2.39	.019

sion coefficients for the polynomial regression predicting job satisfaction together with slopes and curvatures along the congruence and incongruence lines. The predictors are follower's dominance and leader's perceived dominance (together with their interaction term and quadratic terms). Figure 2 presents the response surface plotted with these coefficients. The model was significant,  $F(5, 171) = 4.126$ ,  $p = .001$ , and accounted for 11% of variance in job satisfaction. Response surface analysis shows a significant and negative curvature of the incongruence ( $FD = -LD$ ) line indicating a concave surface – job satisfaction decreases as the degree of discrepancy between follower's dominance and leader's perceived dominance increases. In other words, job satisfaction is higher when a follower's dominance preference is aligned with his/her leader's, and any deviation from the congruence line (i.e., moving to its left or right) decreases job satisfaction. Figure 2 shows that toward the left and right of the graph, where follower dominance and leader dominance become more and more discrepant, job satisfaction decreases. Therefore, even though the lowest job satisfaction was observed



Figure 2. Job satisfaction as predicted by follower dominance-leader perceived dominance congruence



among employees whose dominance was much higher than that perceived in their leaders, our hypothesis cannot be confirmed – higher job satisfaction was generally observed when followers perceived a similar (and not different) dominance preference to that of their own.

### 10. Leader's and Follower's Autonomy

Hypothesis 3 predicted that job satisfaction is higher when a leader's perceived respect for autonomy is aligned (at both high and low levels) with the follower's (H3a) reactive autonomy and (H3b) proactive autonomy.

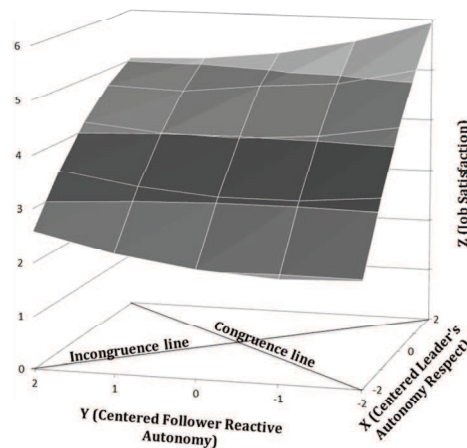
**Follower's Reactive Autonomy.** Table 4 shows the estimated regression coefficients for the polynomial regression predicting job satisfaction together with slopes and curvatures along the congruence and incongruence lines. The predictors are follower's reactive autonomy and leader's perceived respect for autonomy (together with their interaction term and quadratic terms). Figure 1 presents the response surface plotted with these coefficients. The model was significant,  $F(5, 171) = 6.57$ ,  $p < .001$ , and explained 16% of variability in job satisfaction. Response surface analysis shows a significant slope of the congruence ( $FRA = LAR$ ) line indicating a linear (additive) relationship between Follower Reactive Autonomy (FRA) and Leader Autonomy Respect (LAR) on job satisfaction.

Table 4. Polynomial regression of follower's reactive autonomy and leader's respect for autonomy preferences on job satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	3.98		27.34	< .001
Follower RA (FRA)	-0.031	.163	-0.19	.847
Leader AR (LAR)	0.801	.202	3.96	< .001
FRA2	0.061	.097	0.62	.533
LAR2	-0.087	.122	-0.71	.479
FRA x LAR	-0.094	.119	-0.79	.428
R2	0.16			
<i>Congruence (FRA = LAR) line</i>				
Slope	0.77	0.27	2.84	.005
Curvature	-0.12	0.17	-0.69	.493
<i>Incongruence (FRA = -LAR) line</i>				
Slope	-0.83	0.25	-3.36	.001
Curvature	0.07	0.22	0.32	.753

The slope is positive, which means that job satisfaction increases as both FRA and LAR increase. While the slope of the congruence line is significant ( $p = .005$ ), its curvature is not, which means that if FRA and LAR are in agreement, job satisfaction increased as the FRA and LAR increased. The slope of

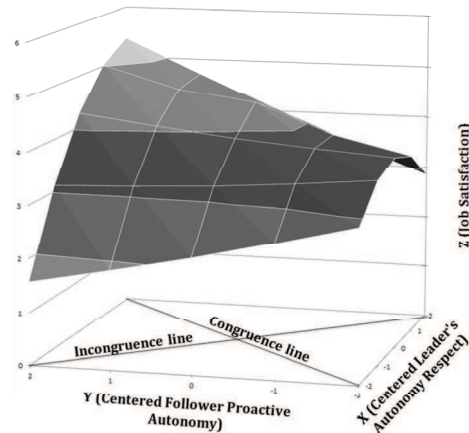
Figure 3. Job satisfaction as predicted by follower reactive autonomy – leader's autonomy respect



the incongruence line ( $FC = -LC$ ) is also significant, which means that job satisfaction is higher when the discrepancy is such that LAR is higher than FRA than vice versa. In Figure 4, the highest level of job satisfaction is visible whenever LAR is high, regardless of the level of FRA. Hypothesis H3a was not confirmed – the level of leader’s respect for autonomy proved more important than its alignment with follower’s respect for autonomy.

**Follower’s Proactive Autonomy.** Table 5 shows the estimated regression coefficients for the polynomial regression predicting job satisfaction together with slopes and curvatures along the congruence and incongruence lines. The predictors are follower’s proactive autonomy and leader’s perceived respect for autonomy (together with their interaction term and quadratic terms). Figure 4 presents the response surface plotted with these coefficients. The model was significant,  $F(5, 171) = 8.51$ ,  $p < .001$ , and explained 20% of variability in job satisfaction. Response surface analysis shows a significant slope of the congruence ( $FPA = LAR$ ) line indicating a linear

Figure 4. Job satisfaction as predicted by follower reactive autonomy–leader’s autonomy respect



(additive) relationship between Follower Proactive Autonomy (FPA) and Leader Autonomy Respect (LAR) on job satisfaction. The slope is positive, which means that job satisfaction increases as both FPA and LAR increase. While the slope of the congruence line is significant ( $p = .017$ ), its curvature is not, which means that if FPA and LAR are in agreement, job satisfaction increased as the FPA and LAR increased. In Figure 4, the highest level of Job Satisfaction is at the back corner of the graph, where FPA and LAR are the highest. Satisfaction is, however, the lowest when the follower exhibits high proactive autonomy, but perceives their leader to show very low respect for autonomy. The curvature of the incongruence line ( $FPA = -LAR$ ) approaches significance, which means that – on the tendency level – discrepancy from the congruence line is associated with lower job satisfaction among the followers. This offers a tentative support for hypothesis H3b.

Table 5. Polynomial regression of follower’s proactive autonomy and leader’s respect for autonomy preferences on job satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	3.91		26.69	< .001
Follower PA (FPA)	0.145	.184	0.788	.432
Leader AR (LAR)	0.473	.229	2.067	.040
FPA <sup>2</sup>	0.016	.110	0.147	.884
LAR <sup>2</sup>	-0.199	.127	-1.561	.120
FPA x LAR	0.240	.167	1.435	.153
R <sup>2</sup>	0.20			
<i>Congruence (FPA = LAR) line</i>				
Slope	0.62	0.26	2.41	.017
Curvature	0.06	0.16	0.35	.729
<i>Incongruence (FPA = -LAR) line</i>				
Slope	-0.32	0.33	-0.98	.328
Curvature	-0.42	0.23	-1.82	.070

Note: PA – proactive autonomy, AR – autonomy respect.

## 11. Discussion

Identifying the perfect match between the leader and subordinates is not only crucial for individuals but can benefit our society and economy as a whole. The building of an authentic relationship between leaders and employees is a critical factor for employee engagement and effectiveness. In the current study, we aimed at supplementing the Person-Supervisor Fit litera-

ture by investigating the consequences of fit between employees' control preferences and those perceived in their leaders.

Although individuals appreciate experiencing fit and are determined to seek it, the optimal fit does not necessarily involve a similarity between leaders and followers (as was shown with regard to values or organizational goals). Sometimes, high job satisfaction might be experienced when leaders complement the characteristics of the followers, and vice versa (e.g. Glomb & Welsh, 2005). Furthermore, it is not enough to analyze a similarity between same traits, as two different traits or characteristics might prove complementary in a given context. In our study, we decided to check whether high/low proactive autonomy and reactive autonomy in a follower could be complemented by high/low respect for autonomy in a leader.

The results of the current study demonstrated that job satisfaction is higher when the follower's collaboration preference (control being shared by all involved parties) is aligned with that perceived in a leader and increased as both the follower's and the leader's collaboration increased. Those with a higher need for collaboration like to jointly decide on the best course of action. When leaders and employees are aligned at a high level of collaboration preference, they can feel rewarded with such compatibility. Dissimilarity in the preference of collaboration can reduce job satisfaction in an employee when one party is not willing to get involved in joint decision-making.

Contrary to our expectations, the follower's job satisfaction increased when the follower's dominance preference was aligned with his/her leader's. When follower's dominance and leader's perceived dominance became more and more discrepant, job satisfaction decreased. Admittedly, the lowest level of job satisfaction was observed among employees whose dominance was much higher than that perceived in their leaders, but this effect could be influenced by a relatively low number of employees with high dominance who perceived low dominance in their leaders. Therefore, our hypothesis cannot be confirmed – higher job satisfaction was generally observed when followers perceived a similar (and not different) dominance preference to that of their own. We expected that if a follower

and a leader were high in dominance, both would try to exert control over each other, which could reduce the satisfaction in a follower, due to an inability to fulfill his/her need for control over the environment. This supposition could have been wrong because it did not take into account the variety of situational factors (e.g. possibility to impact other team members, follower being a supervisor of other employees, etc.). Further research could attempt to replicate and better understand this relationship.

For autonomy scales, we predicted that job satisfaction would increase when the follower's reactive autonomy and proactive autonomy were met by the supervisor's high respect for autonomy. Those high in reactive autonomy dislike when others control their outcomes, while those high in proactive autonomy like to influence their own outcomes. In both respects, bosses' low respect for autonomy could frustrate employees' need of personal control.

Contrary to this hypothesis, in our study, high respect for autonomy perceived in a leader was always associated with higher job satisfaction, regardless of employees' level of reactive autonomy. In other words, no matter how much reactance we show, having a leader that is seen as allowing their employees to control their own outcomes can lead to higher job satisfaction than having a leader that does not.

However, in terms of followers' proactive autonomy, job satisfaction increased as both followers' proactive autonomy and leaders' respect for autonomy increased. Job satisfaction was the lowest when followers exhibited high proactive autonomy, but perceived their leaders to show very low respect for autonomy. The hypothesized congruence effect on job satisfaction was observed on a statistical tendency level. Employees exhibiting high proactive autonomy display a need to have influence over their own outcomes. Leaders that display high respect for autonomy allow employees to act in accordance with their needs, while leaders that display low respect for autonomy may frustrate those needs resulting in lower job satisfaction.

## 12. Limitations

In the current research, employees assessed control preferences of their bosses.

Hence, we can only talk about the consequences of perceptions of bosses in the eyes of the employees, which can be distorted. The positive effect of congruence of traits on job satisfaction that we observed for collaboration or dominance can stem from the fact that similarity increases attraction and vice versa – those who we like are perceived as more similar than those who we dislike (e.g. Youyou, Stillwell, Schwartz, & Kosinski, 2017). Perceived similarity is even more prognostic of attraction in relationships than the actual similarity (Montoya, Horton, & Kirchner, 2008). Future research could measure the actual control preferences in bosses and employees to disentangle the effects of attraction in the current study from the effects of leaders' control preferences (which might impact their behavior towards employees).

Another problem is its relatively small sample size. Some control preferences are less common than others. Indeed, no bosses were judged as having an extremely low level of dominance and few people described themselves as being extremely submissive. For this reason, the obtained results could suffer from problems with generalizability and replication attempts (on different and larger samples) would be advisable.

Finally, due to a similarity of the items measuring participants' and leaders' control preferences and the fact that the measurement was obtained at one point in time, the obtained data might not be completely free of the common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The problem occurs when correlations between variables are inflated due to the use of the same method of measurement (Spector, 2006). To verify this, we performed an additional analysis on our data using Harman's single factor test. The assumption behind this method is that if a single factor emerges from the factor analysis, or one factor accounts for the majority of the covariance between the measures, the common method variance problem occurs. For our data, the analysis of the unrotated factor solution revealed the existence of two factors with eigenvalue greater than one (and one just below that threshold), together accounting for 56.94% of the variance (factor 1: 38.11%, factor 2: 18.83%, factor 3: 11.09%). These results indicate that although one factor was

slightly more dominant than the rest, the data was still suitable for the purpose of the analyses performed in this study. However, future research should aim at diminishing the common method variance issue by measuring participants' and leaders' perceived characteristics at different point in time or – as mentioned earlier – measuring the leaders' actual control preferences.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Research performed under the project “Multi-cultural Management in the Era of Globalization” realized by the Faculty of Management at the University of Warsaw on the basis of the legal agreement no. POWR.03.02.00-00-I053/16-00 within the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development 2014-2020 financed through the EU structural funds.
- <sup>2</sup> Grzelak (2001) distinguishes between two collaboration preferences: (1) joint, one's and others' control over one's own outcomes: *collaboration preference A* and (2) joint, one's and others' control over others' outcomes: *collaboration preference B*”.

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## Appendix

### Control Preferences Scale (Grzelak, 2001)

<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like being in a group in which everyone has an influence on what happens</li> <li>• I like being in a group in which everyone has something to say</li> <li>• It is best to solve a problem together with others</li> <li>• I like being in a group in which everyone makes decisions together</li> <li>• I like working in a team</li> </ul>
<b>Dominance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like making decisions for others</li> <li>• I like leading other people</li> <li>• I think I have leadership tendencies</li> <li>• I like to have influence on what others do</li> <li>• I like to wield power</li> </ul>
<b>Proactive Autonomy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like taking care of my own business myself</li> <li>• I like controlling my own fate</li> <li>• I like choosing goals for myself</li> <li>• I like taking care of myself</li> </ul>
<b>Reactive Autonomy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't like it when someone interferes in my life</li> <li>• I don't like it when someone rules over me</li> <li>• I don't like it when someone makes decisions about my business</li> <li>• I don't like it when someone forces their opinion on me</li> <li>• I don't like it when someone butts into what I'm doing</li> </ul>
<b>Respect for Autonomy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like people who lead their own lives</li> <li>• I like people who are masters of their own fate</li> <li>• It would be good if everyone were responsible for their own decisions</li> <li>• I like people who are autonomous, independent from others</li> <li>• I like it when other people can think for themselves</li> </ul>
<b>Submissiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I like it when someone directs me in various things</li> <li>• I am readily subordinate to others on a day to day basis</li> <li>• I like it when someone makes decisions for me</li> <li>• I like it when someone is responsible for me</li> </ul>

### Job Satisfaction Scale (Bajcar, Borkowska, Czerw, & Gąsiorowska, 2011)

Please evaluate to what extent you are satisfied with the following aspects related to your work.

1. Colleagues
2. Direct supervisors
3. Type of tasks performed at work
4. Working conditions
5. Professional development
6. Financial rewards
7. Work time
8. Stability of employment
9. The job as a whole