# E ort Complementarity and Sharing Rules in Group Contests

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#### **Abstract**

In this paper, we consider a prize-sharing rule design problem in a group contest with e ort complementarities within groups by employing a CES e ort aggregator function. We derive the conditions for a monopolization rule that dominates an egalitarian rule if the objective of the rule design is to maximize the group's winning probability. We not conditions under which the monopolization rule maximizes the group's winning probability, while the egalitarian rule is strictly preferred by all members of the group. Without e ort complementarity, there cannot be such a con ict of interest.

Keywords: group contest, complementarity in e orts, free riding, prize-sharing rule JEL Classi cation Numbers: C72, D23, D74

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is	identica	al to	that	where	а	group's	winning	probability	goes	down	as	the	population	of t	the

standpoint of the group's winning probability. This happens when (i) there exists moderate e ort complementarity and (ii) the marginal e ort cost is moderately concave. This result cannot be obtained without e ort complementarity.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents our model. In Section 3, we show that the results in Esteban and Ray (2001) and Nitzan and Ueda (2014) still extend in the presence of e ort complementarity. Section 4 shows our main result that a group leader and his/her group members may have a con ict of interest with e ort complementarity. Section 5 explains how our results for Nash equilibrium in the intragroup game can be extended to an equilibrium analysis in a group contest game, and proves the existence and uniqueness of the equilibrium. Section 6 concludes by discussing the importance of e ort complementarity and commenting on a model in Epstein and Mealem (2009), the details of which are given in Appendix B. All proofs are collected in Appendix A.

# 2 The Model

We consider a contest in which n=2 groups compete for a prize, focusing on a representative group i=1;2;:::;m. The population of group i is denoted by  $n_i=1$ . Group members choose their e ort levels  $e_{ij}$ ,  $j=1;2;:::;n_i$ , which contribute to their group's winning probability, simultaneously and non-cooperatively. Group members' e orts are aggregated by the CES function of  $X_i = (\frac{n_i}{j-1} e_{ij}^r)^{\frac{1}{r}}$ , where  $jT\theta l$  SQBBBT  $\delta T$   $\theta OTGFDT$   $\theta OTGFDT$   $\theta OTGFDT$ 

e ort is also zero).

The winning probability of group i is described as a contest success function  $X_i = \frac{X_i}{X_i + X_i}$ , where  $X_i = \frac{X_i}{k \cdot i} \cdot X_k$  is the other groups' aggregated i or the prize comprises divisible private goods that are shared among members of the winning group, and the value of the prize is normalized to 1. We denote the share of member in group i by  $a_{ij} = 2$  [0;1] and group i's (prize) sharing rule i by i or i

Each member in a group decides his/her e ort level to maximize his/her expected payo . We assume that group members regard the other groups' aggregate e or  $X_i$  as given and consider a Nash equilibrium of group's e ort contribution game as their best response to the other groups' aggregate e or  $X_i$ . Then, the rst-order condition of any member i in group i is  $\frac{\partial U_{ij}}{\partial e_{ij}} = \frac{\partial U_{ij}}{\partial e_{ij}} \frac{$ 

This can be rewritten as

$$P_i(1 P_i) \frac{e_{ij}^r}{X_i^r} a_{ij} e_{ij} = 0$$
: (1)

With these rst-order conditions (1), we can investigate how the sharing rule  $a_i$  a ects the members' equilibrium e ort levels  $(e_{i1}; ...; e_{in_i})$  in an e ort contribution game in group i.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>We employ the Tullock-form contest success function (Tullock 1980).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Nitzan and Ueda (2011) assume that individual e ort levels are observable by the group leader and analyze

From (1), we have  $e_{ij}^r = \frac{P_i(1-P_i)}{X_i^r}$   $\frac{r}{a_{ij}^r}$ . Summing up all  $e_{ij}^r$  in group i, we have  $X_i^r =$ 

 $a_{il}$  = 0 for any other member  $l \in j$ ). The next proposition shows that these two rules maximize the winning probability of group i, depending on r and .

Proposition 1. When 2r <, the egalitarian rule maximizes the winning probability of group i. When 2r >, the monopolization rule maximizes the winning probability of group i. When 2r =, the winning probability of group i is the same under any sharing rules.

We can interpret this result in the context of R&D competition. Some R&D projects bene t from coordinated e orts (strong e ort complementarity: small r), while others do not (weak e ort complementarity: large r). Proposition 1 says that the group leader should choose the egalitarian rule for projects with strong e ort complementarity (2r <), since treating everybody equally enhances aggregate e ort the most. In contrast, the group leader should use the monopolization rule by selecting a single member for projects with weak complementarity (2r >), since it eliminates all free-riding incentives and maximizes an incentive for e ort by letting the selected member monopolize the prize. If r2=, then  $A_i$  is the same under any sharing rules  $a_{ij} a_{j,i=1} a_{j,i=1} a_{i,j=1} a_{i,j=1}$ 

The probabilities under the egalitarian rule and the monopolization rule are denoted  $B_{iE}$  and  $P_{iM}$ , respectively. Under the egalitarian rule in group, every member's e ort is the same, which is denoted by  $e_i$  in a Nash equilibrium in group i. Then  $X_i = ( \begin{array}{c} n_i \\ j_{-1} \end{array} e_{ij}^r)^{\frac{1}{r}} = (n_i e_i^r)^{\frac{1}{r}} = n_i^{\frac{1}{r}} e_i$ . Thus, (1) becomes

$$e_i = P_{iE}(1 \quad P_{iE}) \frac{1}{n_i^2}$$
: (3)

Since (2) implies  $e_i = n_i^{\frac{2}{\beta}} P_{iE}^{\frac{1}{\beta}} (1 P_{iE})^{\frac{1}{\beta}}$ , when we substitute this into the de nition of  $P_i$ , we

are able to solve  $P_{iE}$  as a function of parameters, in particular  $n_i$  and r implicitly:

$$P_{iE}(n_i;r) = \frac{n_i^{\frac{1}{r}}e_i}{n_i^{\frac{1}{r}}e_i + X_i} = \frac{n_i^{\frac{\beta-2r}{r\beta}}P_{iE}(n_i;r)^{\frac{1}{\beta}}(1 - P_{iE}(n_i;r))^{\frac{1}{\beta}}}{n}$$

group i, despite the fact that the monopolization rule achieves a higher winning probability than the egalitarian rule. In contrast, if  $1 \frac{n_i}{n_i+1} > P_{iM}$  is not satis ed, then the single member who monopolizes the prize prefers the monopolization rule to the egalitarian rule.

This Pareto dominance of the egalitarian rule is due to the complementarity among group members' e orts. Without the complementarity, this Pareto dominance disappears. In fact, at r = 1, the Pareto dominance does not hold.

### 5 Equilibrium in Group Contest

We can apply our analysis to show that our group contest model has an equilibrium. We will consider a two-stage game as follows. Stage 1: Each group leader who maximizes the winning probability of his/her group decides its sharing rule simultaneously, and Stage 2: members of all groups simultaneously choose their e ort levels. In this paper, we assume that each groups' sharing rules are observable and employ subgame perfect equilibrium as our solution concept. We can allow for asymmetric groups|di erent groups can have di erent i,  $r_i$ , and  $n_i$ . The key is to show that a Nash equilibrium exists and is unique in Stage 2. We show that each group's best response to the aggregation of the other groups' e ort levels i is at a Nash equilibrium. The e ort contribution game of any group i in Stage 2 is described as a function  $i(X, i; a_i; i; r_i)$ !  $X_i$ . Using the share-function approach (Esteban and Ray 2001, Ueda 2002, and Cornes and Hartley 2005), we can guarantee the existence and uniqueness of the Nash equilibrium by each i's continuity and strict monotonicity in  $X_i$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Readers may think that it is unrealistic to assume that groups can observe other groups' sharing rules. Nitzan and Ueda (2011) assume that sharing rules are the private information of each group and use perfect Bayesian equilibrium with the same beliefs for other groups' sharing rules at every information set. Since the model does not involve a real asymmetric information problem, their perfect Bayesian equilibrium coincides with our subgame perfect equilibrium under complete information.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>We thank Kaoru Ueda for suggesting that we use the share function approach.

This implies that each group leader's objective is to maximize his/he $A_i$  in Stage 1, which is the same result as Lemma 1.

Lemma 5. In Stage 1 of the group contest game, the equilibrium winning probability of group i is increasing in  $A_i$ . That is, group i's winning probability is maximized by a sharing rule  $(a_{ij})_{i=1}^{n_i}$  that maximizes  $A_i$ .

This lemma leads us to a counterpart of Proposition 1|that is, the results of Proposition 1 are valid in the two-stage group contest game.

Proposition 5. In Stage 1 of the group contest game, each group i's leader chooses its sharing rule to maximize the winning probability  $P_i$  as follows: (i) use the egalitarian rule if  $2r_i < i$ , (ii) use the monopolization rule  $^{14}$  if  $2r_i > i$ , and (iii) use any sharing rule if  $2r_i = i$ .

A corollary of this proposition is that there is an essentially unique subgame perfect equilibrium in our group contest game, since each group leader's strategy is solely dependent on  $2r_i \leq i$ .

Corollary 1. For all  $(r_i; j)_{i=1}^m$ , groups' equilibrium winning probabilities  $(P_i)_{i=1}^m$  are uniquely determined.

The results of Proposition 5 depend only on the exogenous variables r fand i. Thus, Proposition 5 and Corollary 1 indicate that Proposition 3 is also valid at the subgame perfect equilibrium in the two-stage group contest game. That is, for some group when  $2r_i > i$  and  $1 + \frac{1}{n_i} > i$  under the asymmetric parameters, if  $1 + \frac{n_i}{n_i+1} = i > P_{iM}$  holds, then there is a con ict of interest between the group leader and his/her group members at the subgame perfect equilibrium. If  $1 + \frac{n_i}{n_i+1} = i > P_{iM}$  is violated, then the monopolizing member has an incentive to work with the group leader, since it is in their common interests to choose the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>When the group leader chooses the monopolization rule at Stage 1, e ort complementarity is irrelevant on the equilibrium path. E ort complementarity is in e ect only o the equilibrium path.

monopolization rule and exclude the rest of the group. In addition, if the parameters are symmetric, the condition is simply described as the relation among the number of groups, the group population, and the elasticity of the marginal e ort cost. In this case,  $\sin \mathbf{e}_{iM}$  becomes  $\frac{1}{m}$ , the condition is  $1 = \frac{n_i}{n_i+1} > \frac{1}{m}$ .

# 6 Concluding remarks

We conclude our paper by commenting on Epstein and Mealem (2009). They use a generalized Tullock contest by introducing power r 2 [0;1]: i.e.,  $X_i = \int_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{ij}^r$ . This form may look similar to our CES form,  $X_i = \left( \int_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{ij}^r e_{ij}^r \right)^{\frac{1}{r}}$ , and readers may wonder if our Proposition 3 may hold in their case. It turns out that their generalized Tullock contest cannot generate con icts of interest between the group leader and his/her group members|we can con rm that with their form, the egalitarian rule's Pareto dominance in Proposition 3 cannot occur. Thus, e ort complementarity is essential in getting our con ict-of-interest result. In contrast, with their contest success function, our Propositions 1 and 2 hold. We detail the analysis in Appendix B.

# Appendix A

Here, we collect all proofs. Proof of Lemma 1. Recalling  $X_i = (\sum_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{ij}^r)^{\frac{1}{r}}$  and given  $X_i$ , maximizing the winning probability of group i means that  $X_i$  becomes as large as possible at Nash equilibrium in group i. If  $X_i$  is a strictly increasing function of  $A_i$ , we can maximize  $X_i$  by maximizing  $A_i$  subject to  $\sum_{j=1}^{n_i} a_{ij} = 1$ .

From (2), let  $(X_i; A_i) = X_i P_i(1_i)$ 

d

for > r by using  $A_i = \frac{X_i^{\beta}}{P_i(1-P_i)}$  from (2). Thus,  $X_i$  is a strictly increasing function in  $A_i$  for > r.

Proof of Proposition 1. From Lemma 1, it is enough to maximize  $A_i$ . It is also enough to maximize the contents in parentheses in  $A_i$  because  $\frac{r}{r} > 0$ . Note that  $A_i^{\frac{r}{\beta-r}} = \int_{j=1}^{n_i} a_{ij}^{\frac{r}{\beta-r}}$  is an additively separable function. Since r > 0, our maximization problem boils down to

$$\max_{j=1}^{n_i} a_{ij}^{\frac{r}{\beta-r}} \text{ subject to (i)} a_{ij} = 1 \text{ and (ii)} a_{ij} = 0 \text{ for all } j = 1; \dots; n_i$$

Thus, it is easy to see that  $\frac{r}{r} \lesssim 1$  dictates the optimal sharing rule. We obtain three cases:

Case 1: If 2r < n,  $A_i$  is maximized when  $a_1 = a_2 = n_i = 1 = n_i$ .

Case 2: If  $2^{-}$  = ,  $A_i$  is constant for any sharing rule.

Case 3: If 2r > 1,  $A_i$  is maximized when  $a_{ij} = 1$  for a single j, and  $a_{ij} = 0$  for all other  $a_{ij} = 0$ .

Proof of Lemma 2. Let  $n_i^{\frac{\beta-2r}{r\beta}}$  in relation to  $n_i$  in (4). Rewriting (4), we have

$$(1 P_{iE}) (P_{iE}(1 P_{iE}))^{\frac{1}{\beta}} = P_{iE}X_{i} (10)$$

By totally di erentiating the above, we obtain

$$(P_{iE}(1 P_{iE}))^{\frac{1}{\beta}} X_{i} + \frac{1}{-}(1 P_{iE})(P_{iE}(1 P_{iE}))^{\frac{1}{\beta}-1}(1 2P_{iE}) dP_{iE} = P_{iE}X_{i}d :$$

After solving (10) for  $X_{i}$ 

and

$$\frac{d}{dr} = \frac{1}{r^2} (\log n_i) > 0;$$

respectively. We obtain the results using the chain rul

■

Proof of Lemma 3. Recall  $U_{iE}(n_i;r) = \frac{P_{iE}(n_i;r)}{n_i} \left( 1 - \frac{1}{2} \left( 1 - \frac{1}{2} \left( 1 - \frac{1}{2} \left( n_i;r \right) \right) \right) \frac{1}{n_i} \right) = U(n_i;P_{iE}(n_i;r))$ 

This implies

$$\frac{\mathscr{Q}U}{\mathscr{Q}P_{iE}} = \frac{1}{n_i} \quad \frac{1}{n_i^2} (1 \quad 2P_{iE}) = \frac{1}{n_i^2} (n_i + 2P_{iE} \quad 1): \tag{11}$$

Thus, by totally differentiating  $U(n_i; P_{iE}(n_i; 1))$  with respect to  $n_i$  using (6), we obtain

$$\frac{dU_{iE}(n_i;1)}{dn_i} = \frac{\mathscr{C}U}{\mathscr{C}n_i} + \frac{\mathscr{C}U}{\mathscr{C}P_{iE}} \frac{dP_{iE}}{dn_i} = \frac{P_{iE}}{n_i^2} + \frac{2}{n_i} (1 \quad P_{iE}) + \frac{(2 \quad )P_{iE}(1 \quad P_{iE})}{n_i(1 \quad 2P_{iE} \quad )} \cdot \frac{1}{n_i^2} (n_i + 2P_{iE} \quad 1) = \frac{P_{iE}}{n_i^3} \quad n_i + \frac{2}{n_i} (1 \quad P_{iE}) + (1 \quad P_{iE}) \frac{2}{1 \quad 2P_{iE}} \quad n_i + \frac{1}{n_i} (2P_{iE} \quad 1) = \frac{P_{iE}}{n_i^3} \cdot (1 \quad 2P_{iE} \quad ) + 2(1 \quad P_{iE}) (1 \quad 2P_{iE} \quad ) + (1 \quad P_{iE}) (2 \quad ) ( \quad n_i \quad (1 \quad 2P_{iE}))] :$$

Since 1  $2P_{iE}$  < 0, we can focus on the sign of the contents of the brackets:

Consider the case of  $= \frac{1}{2}$ . Since  $P_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2}) = P_{iE}(1; \frac{1}{2}) = P_{iM}$  by Proposition 1, we have

$$U_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2}) = \frac{P_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2})}{n_i} = \frac{1}{1} (1 \quad P_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2})) \frac{1}{n_i}$$
$$= \frac{P_{iM}}{n_i} = \frac{1}{1} (1 \quad P_{iM}) \frac{1}{n_i} :$$

By subtracting  $U_{iM}$  =  $P_{iM}$  1  $^{1}$  (1  $P_{iM}$ ) from  $U_{iE}(n_i; _{\overline{2}})$ , we obtain

$$U_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2}) \quad U_{iM} = P_{iM} \quad 1 + \frac{1}{-}(1 \quad P_{iM}) + \frac{1}{n_i} \quad 1 \quad \frac{1}{-}(1 \quad P_{iM}) \frac{1}{n_i}$$

$$= P_{iM} \quad 1 \quad \frac{1}{n_i} \quad \frac{1}{-} \quad 1 \quad \frac{1}{n_i^2} \quad \frac{1}{-} P_{iM} \quad 1 \quad \frac{1}{n_i^2}$$

$$= P_{iM} \quad 1 \quad \frac{1}{n_i^2} \quad \frac{n_i}{n_i + 1} + \frac{1}{-} \quad \frac{1}{-} P_{iM} \quad :$$

Then, the condition of  $U_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2}) > U_{iM}$  is

$$1 \quad \frac{n_i}{n_i + 1} \quad > P_{iM} \tag{12}$$

That is, if (12) is satis ed,  $U_{iE}(n_i; \frac{1}{2}) > U_{iM}$  holds, while  $U_{iE}(n_i; 1) < U_{iM}$ . Since  $\frac{dP_{iE}}{dr} < 0$ 

Since  $\frac{@P_{i^{\theta}}}{@X} < 0$  for all  $i^{\theta} = 1$ ; ...; m, we have X > X and

$$f(X; A_{i} + A_{i}; A_{i}) = P_{i^{0}}(X; A_{i^{0}}) + P_{i}(X; A_{i} + A_{i})$$

$$= P_{i^{0}}(X; A_{i^{0}}) + P_{i}(X; A_{i}) < 1$$

$$= P_{i^{0}}(X; A_{i^{0}}) + P_{i}(X; A_{i}) < 1$$

By the intermediate value theorem, X = 2 (X; X) holds. We conclude  $P_i(X; A_i + A_i) > P_i(X; A_i)$ .

This implies that as  $A_i$  increases  $P_i(X; A_i)$  increases. That is, maximizing  $A_i$  achieves the maximum winning probability for group i.

# Appendix B

Here, we repeat our analysis by using the Epstein and Mealem's generalized Tullock contest, and show that Lemma 1 and Proposition 1 hold. We con rm this rst. The expected payo of member j in group i is  $U_{ij} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{ij}^r}{\sum_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{ij}^r + X_i} a_{ij}$   $\frac{1}{2} e_{ij}$ . The rst order condition is

$$\frac{@U_{ij}}{@e_{ij}} = \frac{re_{ij}^{r-1}X_{i}}{(\frac{n_{i}}{j-1}e_{ij}^{r} + X_{i})^{2}}a_{ij} e_{ij}^{r-1} = 0:$$

This can be rewritten as

$$P_{i}(1 P_{i}) = \frac{re_{ij}^{r}}{\sum_{i=1}^{n_{i}} e_{ii}^{r}} a_{ij} e_{ij} = 0 (13)$$

We process a procedure similar to the one at the end of Section 2 and  $\bigoplus_{j=1}^r \left(\frac{rP_i(1-P_i)}{X_i}\right)^{\frac{r}{\beta-r}} a_{ij}^{\frac{r}{\beta-r}}$  from [13]. By summing up each  $e_{ij}^r$ , we have  $a_{ij}^{n_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i}$ . Let  $a_{ij}^{n_i} = a_{ij}^{n_i} = a_{ij}^{r_i} = a_{ij}^$ 

$$\frac{dX_i}{d\hat{A}_i} = \frac{\bigwedge_{A_i}}{\bigwedge_{X_i}} = \frac{(rP_i(1 \quad P_i) = X_i)^{\frac{r}{\beta}r}}{(r+2rP_i) = (r)} > 0$$

for > r by using  $A_i = X_i \left(\frac{rP_i(1-P_i)}{X_i}\right)^{-\frac{r}{\beta-r}}$ . Therefore, since Lemma 1 holds, Proposition 1 also holds in this case. Proposition 2 holds as well. However, Proposition 3 does not hold.

We check this second. Under the egalitarian rule,  $\sin 2\theta_i = P_{j=1}^{n_i} e_{j}^r = n_i e_{j}^r$ , we have  $e_i = n_i^2 r^{\frac{1}{2}} P_{iE}^{\frac{1}{2}} (1 - P_{iE})^{\frac{1}{2}}$  from (13). Using this, we have

$$P_{iE} = \frac{n_{i} e_{i}^{r}}{n_{i} e_{i}^{r} + X_{i}} = \frac{n_{i}^{\frac{2r}{r}} r^{r} P_{iE}^{r} (1 P_{iE})^{r}}{n_{i}^{\frac{2r}{r}} r^{r} P_{iE}^{r} (1 P_{iE})^{r} + X_{i}}$$
(14)

and

$$U_{iE} = P_{iE} \frac{1}{n_i} + \frac{1}{n_i} = \frac{P_{iE}}{n_i} + 1 + \frac{1}{1} (1 + P_{iE}) \frac{r}{n_i}$$
:

Let  $^{\wedge}$   $n_i^{\frac{-2r}{}}$  in relation to  $n_i$  in (14). We process the same procedure as in the proof of Lemma 2. Rewriting (14), we have

$$r^{-}(1 P_{iE})(P_{iE}(1 P_{iE}))^{-} = P_{iE}X_{i}^{-}$$
: (15)

By totally di erentiating the above expression and conducting the same operations as the proof of Lemma 2, we obtain

$$\frac{dP_{iE}}{d^{\Lambda}} = \frac{h}{\Lambda} \frac{P_{iE} (1 P_{iE})}{1 + \frac{r}{\Delta}}$$

However, this condition	contradicts the	de nition of th	e probability.	Lemma 4 does	not hold.

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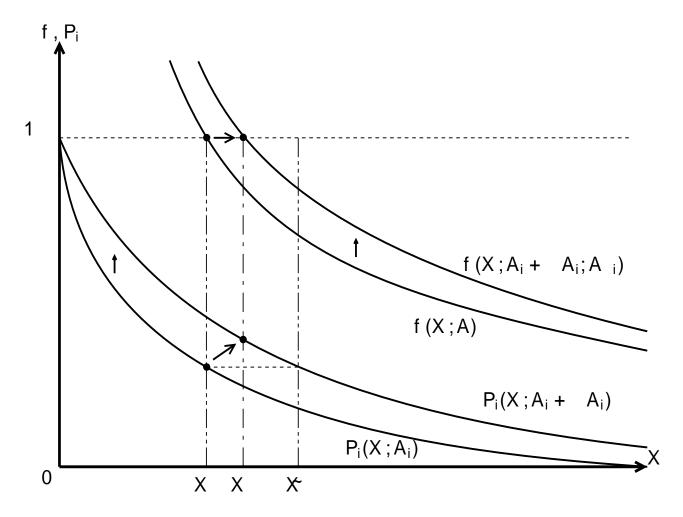


Figure 1: Share function  $P_i(X; A_i)$  of group i and aggregate share function f(X; A)