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Contrat psychologique d'équipes:
reconceptualisation, antécédents et conséquences

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et conséquences

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Résumé

Le contrat psychologique s'impose comme le cadre d'analyse le plus approprié à l'étude des relations d'emploi et à la compréhension des comportements et attitudes des employés (Guerrero, 2005; D. Rousseau, 1990). L'examen du contrat psychologique s'est principalement concentré sur les perceptions individuelles des employés aux obligations mutuelles qui les lient avec l'organisation. Avec le recours grandissant aux équipes de travail, la conception traditionnelle du contrat psychologique s'avère limitée à l'examen des nouvelles relations qui lient les équipes de travail, en tant qu'entités, à l'organisation (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). L'étude du contrat psychologique d'équipes, davantage soulignée dans la littérature, n'a pourtant reçu qu'une faible attention (Gibbard et al., 2017). Axée sur les équipes de travail et le rôle critique que le contrat psychologique d'équipes peut jouer dans l'efficacité des équipes, cette thèse a pour principal objectif d'étendre la portée d'étude du contrat psychologique et ce, en proposant une reconceptualisation du contrat psychologique au niveau groupal. Plus spécifiquement, nous proposons que les membres d'équipes, sur la base de leur interaction et interdépendance continue et de leurs expériences collectives à l'environnement du travail, peuvent développer des perceptions communes aux termes et obligations d'échange impliquant leurs équipes, en tant qu'entités, et leur organisation. Afin de participer à l'avancement des connaissances dans ce domaine, nous avons adopté une recherche articulée en trois articles qui se sont basés sur des données transversales recueillies en milieu organisationnel dans le cadre d'une recherche dirigée par les professeurs Vincent Rousseau (professeur à l'Université de Montréal) et Caroline Aubé (professeure à HEC Montréal).

Le *premier article* propose une reconceptualisation du contrat psychologique au niveau de l'équipe et donne lieu à l'élaboration d'une échelle de mesure du contrat psychologique d'équipes dotée de propriétés psychométriques fort acceptables. Les résultats de cette recherche, basée sur deux échantillons (comptant 526 participants et 506 participants), montrent que les membres d'équipes peuvent avoir des perceptions collectives et communes des obligations réciproques de leurs équipes et organisation. Par ailleurs, les résultats révèlent que le contrat psychologique d'équipes consiste en deux dimensions, à savoir le contrat relationnel d'équipes et le contrat transactionnel d'équipes. Les deux autres articles (articles 2 et 3) se penchent, quant à eux, sur la composante relationnelle du contrat psychologique d'équipes.

Plus précisément, le *deuxième article* consiste à explorer les antécédents du contrat psychologique d'équipes. Nous nous intéressons, particulièrement, à l'effet que la supervision abusive, comme forme de leadership destructif, pourrait avoir sur le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes en considérant le rôle médiateur de l'habilitation d'équipes et l'effet modérateur du style d'attachement de l'équipe (anxiété/évitement). Les résultats de cette recherche, réalisée auprès de 135 équipes (représentant 514 participants), indiquent que la supervision abusive peut affecter négativement le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes en réduisant l'habilitation d'équipes. La force de la relation entre la supervision abusive et l'habilitation d'équipes diminue lorsque l'équipe est davantage orientée vers un attachement d'anxiété et augmente lorsque l'équipe affiche un niveau élevé d'attachement d'évitement.

Le *troisième article* porte sur les conséquences du contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes. Cette recherche propose un modèle théorique qui cherche à vérifier le rôle que le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes peut avoir sur l'adoption de comportements d'autogestion par les membres de l'équipe. Ce modèle tient en compte le rôle médiateur des affects d'équipes positifs ainsi que le rôle modérateur de l'interdépendance au travail au regard de la relation entre les affects d'équipes positifs et les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes. En recourant aux mêmes données du deuxième article, les résultats de cette étude ont permis d'appuyer le rôle médiateur des affects d'équipes positifs et montrent, également, que la force de la relation entre les affects d'équipes positifs et les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes augmente lorsque les tâches d'équipes requièrent un niveau élevé d'interdépendance entre les membres d'équipes.

De façon générale, les résultats des trois recherches offrent un soutien empirique aux hypothèses proposées. Les résultats soulignent, par ailleurs, l'importance de considérer les contrats psychologiques d'équipes dans la gestion des équipes de travail. En outre, les résultats de cette thèse corroborent l'importance de prêter attention aux facteurs organisationnels et individuels susceptibles d'influencer les types de contrats psychologiques d'équipes et ainsi les affects et comportements qui en découlent.

Mots clés: Contrat psychologique d'équipes, supervision abusive, comportements d'autogestion d'équipe, styles d'attachement de l'équipe (anxiété / évitement), habilitation d'équipes, interdépendance à la tâche, affects d'équipes positifs.

Abstract

Psychological contract stands out as the most appropriate analytical framework for the study of employment relationships and for the comprehension of employees' attitudes and behaviors (Guerrero, 2005; D. Rousseau, 1990). The study of psychological contract has basically focused on employees' individual perceptions regarding employees-organization mutual obligations. With the growing use of teams, the traditional conception of psychological contract seems to be inadequate to examining contemporary relationships that bind teams, as entities, to their organization (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). Although the study of team psychological contract is increasingly highlighted in the literature, this concept has received little attention in the literature on the psychological contract (Gibbard et al., 2017). Considering the significant role that the team psychological contract can play in the effectiveness of teams, the main object of this thesis consists in extending the study of the psychological contract to the team level. Essentially, we suggest that team members, based on their regular interaction and interdependence and on their common experience to the work environment, may develop similar perceptions regarding terms and obligations between their team, as an entity, and their organization. In order to participate to the advancement of knowledge in this field, we adopted research articulated in three articles based on cross-sectional data collected in an organizational setting as part of research directed by professors Vincent Rousseau (professor at University of Montreal) and Caroline Aubé (professor at HEC Montreal).

The first article proposes a reconceptualization of psychological contract at the team level and leads to the development of a scale for measuring team psychological contract with very acceptable psychometric properties. The finding of this study, based on two samples (counting 526 and 506 participants), show that teams may develop collective perceptions about their team-organization reciprocal obligations. Moreover, the results reveal that team psychological contract consists of two dimensions, namely relational team contract and transactional team contract. The other two articles (articles 2 and 3) focus on the relational component of team psychological contract.

Specifically, the second article consists of exploring the antecedents of relational team psychological contract. We are, particularly, interested in the effect of abusive supervision, as a destructive form of leadership, might have on members' relational team contract by considering

the mediating role of team empowerment and the moderating effect of team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance). Based on a sample of 134 teams (representing 514 participants), the results of this study indicate that abusive supervision can negatively affect relational team psychological contract by lessening team empowerment. Abusive supervision effect on team empowerment decreases when team members have more attachment anxiety and increases when team members display more attachment avoidance.

The third article addresses relational team psychological contract consequences. This study proposes a theoretical model that aims to examine the role that relational team psychological contract may play on the adoption of team members to self-managing behaviors. This model takes into consideration the mediating role of team positive affective tone and the moderating effect of task interdependence on the relationship between positive team affective tone and team self-managing behaviors. Using the same sample adopted in the second article, this study findings support the mediating effect of team positive affective tone and indicate that the effect of team positive affective tone increases when team task requires a high level of interdependence between team members.

Overall, the results provide an empirical support to the three studies hypotheses. Moreover, the results highlight the need of considering team psychological contract in managing teams. The results, finally, stress the importance of exploring the factors that may influence team psychological contract types and thus the resulting behaviors.

Keywords: Team psychological contract, abusive supervision, team self-managing behaviors, team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance), team empowerment, task interdependence, team positive affective tone.

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Introduction

Les changements rapides de l'environnement d'affaires ont forcé les organisations à réviser, voire modifier leurs modes de gestion afin de s'assurer l'adaptation, la survie et la pérennité organisationnelles (Gibbard et al., 2017). Pour ce faire, nombreuses sont les organisations qui se sont tournées vers les équipes de travail pour soutenir leurs succès et performance organisationnels (Guchait, Lei, & Tews, 2016; Maloney, Bresman, Zellmer-Bruhn, & Beaver, 2016; Stettina, Els, & Croonenberg, 2021). Comparativement à ce que les employés peuvent offrir individuellement, les équipes de travail se basent sur la mise en commun et la coordination des différentes habiletés, expertises et savoir-faire de chacun des membres dans l'accomplissement des tâches et objectifs qui sont leurs sont assujettis par l'organisation (Fay et al., 2015; Gibbard et al., 2017; Salas et al., 2015). Mais qu'est-ce qu'une équipe de travail ?

Équipe de travail: une entité et un lieu d'interaction et de partage...

De manière générale, l'équipe de travail désigne « *tout ensemble formel et permanent d'au moins deux individus interdépendants et collectivement responsables en regard de l'accomplissement d'une ou de plusieurs tâches définies par l'organisation* » (V. Rousseau et al., 2006, p. 120, *caractère gras ajouté*). Il s'agit, en d'autres termes, d'un groupe d'individus qui mobilisent conjointement leurs efforts pour réussir les tâches et atteindre les objectifs qu'on a assigné à leur équipe en tant qu'entité. Bien qu'interdépendants et responsables de la réalisation des mêmes tâches, ces individus peuvent avoir des rôles et des responsabilités distincts; chacun apportant son propre travail et savoir-faire à l'équipe (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). L'équipe de travail est, principalement, fondée sur le travail et l'effort qu'apporte chacun des membres pour réaliser les tâches pour lesquelles ils sont collectivement responsables (Aqerrou, 2014).

Toutefois, l'équipe de travail est différente des autres regroupements qui sont susceptibles d'exister dans le milieu organisationnel (Demirci, 2018; Shelton, Waite, & Makela, 2010). En effet, quatre critères permettent de distinguer l'équipe de travail. Découlant initialement de la définition de Hackman (1987), ces critères ont fait partie intégrante des définitions attribuées par la suite par de nombreux auteurs aux équipes de travail (ex., Cohen & Bailey, 1997; V. Rousseau et al., 2006; Sundstorm, De Meuse, & Futrell, 1990). Une équipe de travail doit, dans un premier

temps, regrouper des membres qui sont en interaction permanente et dont la réalisation de leur tâche commune dépend du travail et effort fournis par chacun des membres. À ce critère d'interdépendance des membres, s'ajoute ensuite le partage de la responsabilité et des ressources par les membres. Les membres sont, en effet, responsables de manière collective de la réalisation des tâches et objectifs définis par l'organisation. Ils doivent pour ce faire, combiner les différentes ressources (ex., habiletés, expériences) dont chacun dispose pour les aider à la réalisation de leurs tâches et l'atteinte de leurs objectifs communs. L'équipe de travail doit, de plus, être en relation avec un ou plusieurs systèmes sociaux. Les relations qu'elle entretiendrait avec les différents acteurs organisationnels (ex., collègues, clients, fournisseurs) permettront à l'équipe de faire connaître l'impact de son travail, puisque ses résultats identifiables et mesurables procurent à l'équipe de travail une certaine notoriété et influence auprès des acteurs de l'organisation. L'équipe de travail doit, finalement, être perçue et se percevoir par les autres membres de l'organisation comme une seule et même entité sociale qui lui procure des droits et lui impose des obligations.

L'équipe de travail représente, de ce fait, une entité indépendante qui est en relation d'emploi et d'échange avec l'organisation et ses différents agents (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Elle est responsable de l'accomplissement des tâches et objectifs en échange de rétributions qui lui sont promises (en tant qu'entité) par l'organisation. En découleraient un développement de perceptions et croyances similaires chez les membres d'équipes concernant les termes et conditions de l'échange qui lie leurs équipes à l'organisation. On parle dès lors de « contrat normatif » (D. Rousseau, 1995) ou encore de ce que nous appelons « contrat psychologique d'équipes ». Ce dernier représente, en d'autres termes, les perceptions communes que les membres d'équipes développent au sujet des contributions que leurs équipes doivent, en tant qu'entités, fournir à l'organisation en échange des rétributions que l'organisation a promis d'offrir en retour aux équipes (Aqerrou, V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2021). L'étude d'un tel construit n'a, toutefois, reçu que peu d'attention dans la littérature portant sur le contrat psychologique. Un nouveau courant de recherches, défendant l'importance d'adapter le contrat psychologique aux relations d'emploi contemporaines liant équipes et organisations, a adopté une théorie de contrat psychologique multi-niveaux pour examiner les relations équipes-organisations (ex., Gibbard et al., 2017; González-Romà, Fortes-Ferreira, & Peiró, 2009; Laulié & Tekleab, 2017; Mai, Ellis, Christian, & Porter, 2016). Ces études tendant principalement à évaluer les perceptions individuelles partagées

ou les perceptions d'équipes au respect du contrat psychologique (ex., Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Gibbard et al., 2017; Tekleab et al., 2020). Notre conceptualisation du contrat psychologique d'équipes, quant à elle, adopte une approche groupale. Elle défend l'idée selon laquelle les membres d'équipes peuvent, à travers leur interaction et interdépendance mutuelle, développer des perceptions similaires quant au contenu de l'échange équipe-organisation. Ces perceptions ne reflètent pas les perceptions individuelles de chaque membre aux obligations mutuelles qui le lient avec l'organisation mais plutôt les perceptions des membres à la relation d'accord liant l'équipe à l'organisation. Une telle conception s'appuie sur la notion de l'accord intra-groupe (*within-group agreement*) et plus spécifiquement sur le modèle de consensus par changement de référent (traduction libre; *shift-referent consensus model*) que l'on utilise dans l'opérationnalisation des construits de niveau individuel au niveau groupal (Chan, 1998). La compréhension du concept psychologique d'équipes ne peut se faire sans la présentation du contrat psychologique et des théories qui le soutiennent.

Contrat psychologique : évolution vers un cadre explicatif de la relation d'emploi

La théorie du contrat psychologique a été développée pour faire face à la confusion qui entoure les relations d'échange souvent caractérisées par des relations imparfaites qui laissent place à la détermination implicite de certaines spécificités des rapports entre les parties (Conway & Briner, 2005; Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008). Elle analyse la relation d'emploi à partir des croyances de l'individu concernant les obligations mutuelles promises qui existent entre lui et son employeur (D. Rousseau, 1989). Son fondement remonte à la théorie de l'équilibre de Barnard (1938) qui propose une perspective d'échange présentant les conditions qui assureraient à l'organisation l'implication et la participation continues de ses employés. Le contrat psychologique repose principalement sur la théorie de l'échange social selon laquelle la relation d'emploi est considérée comme un échange où l'employé peut offrir certaines contributions telles que l'engagement et la loyauté en retour à des rétributions offertes par l'employeur telles que les salaires, le développement de carrière et les conditions de travail (Guest, Isaksson, & De Witte, 2010; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Ces obligations renvoient, en d'autres termes, à la norme de réciprocité qui joue un rôle important dans le développement des relations d'échange social et ce, en prolongeant le respect des obligations et en renforçant l'engagement envers ces obligations (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008).

Au début des années 1960, Argyris (1960) introduit le terme de « contrat psychologique du travail » (*work psychological contract*) pour désigner la compréhension implicite partagée entre un groupe d'employés et leur contremaître; une relation qui se développerait suite à la volonté des employés à échanger un niveau élevé de productivité contre la garantie d'un salaire adéquat et d'une stabilité d'emploi (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008; Taylor & Tekleab, 2004). Levinson, Price, Munden, Mandl, et Solley (1962) définissent le contrat psychologique en termes d'attentes implicites et tacites mutuelles qui existent entre l'employé et son employeur et qui se forment, souvent, avant la relation d'emploi. Schein (1965) et Kotter (1973), tout en plaçant les attentes au cœur de leur conceptualisation du contrat psychologique, ajoutent la concordance entre les attentes des employés et des employeurs comme condition à la manifestation d'un contrat psychologique efficace.

Cependant, ce n'est que vers la fin des années 1980 que le domaine du contrat psychologique connaît un grand revirement. En effet, les travaux de Denise Rousseau ont participé à un regain rapide et croissant de l'intérêt pour le contrat psychologique comme un construit scientifique quantifiable qui peut être étudié en utilisant les méthodes de recherche traditionnelles telles que les questionnaires (Conway & Briner, 2005; Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Guest et al., 2010; Roehling, 1996). Le contrat psychologique est défini et circonscrit aux perceptions de l'individu aux obligations mutuelles basées sur des promesses faites entre cet individu et l'autre partie à l'échange (D. Rousseau, 1989). Le contrat psychologique est, donc, fondé sur des obligations mutuelles, découlant de promesses faites de manière explicite ou implicite, et dont l'accomplissement par une partie est contingent de l'accomplissement de la part de l'autre partie. La conceptualisation de D. Rousseau (1989) marque une rupture avec les conceptualisations initiales sur différents points (Conway & Briner, 2005; Delobbe, 2005). Tout d'abord, la conceptualisation de D. Rousseau (1989) se démarque par le niveau individuel auquel elle a limité l'étude du contrat psychologique, ce qui réduit la notion d'accord de Argyris (1962) et la perspective de l'organisation de Levinson et al. (1962) et de Schein (1965). Il s'agit, donc, d'un phénomène subjectif qui n'appartient qu'à l'individu (D. Rousseau, 1989). En d'autres termes, c'est l'individu uniquement qui a des perceptions des obligations des deux parties à l'échange. L'organisation, en tant qu'entité abstraite, ne peut avoir de perceptions et donc de contrat psychologique pour D. Rousseau (1989). Ensuite, D. Rousseau (1989) définit le contrat

psychologique en termes d'obligations et non en termes d'attentes comme c'est le cas des conceptualisations élaborées par Levinson et al. (1962) et Schein (1965). Des obligations que D. Rousseau (1989) distingue également de la nature obligatoire des attentes, présentées par Levinson et al. (1962), par les promesses (implicites ou explicites) sur lesquelles elles reposent. Par ailleurs, la conceptualisation du contrat psychologique de D. Rousseau (1989) se distingue des conceptualisations antérieures sur le plan de sa formation. En effet, si la formation des attentes est déterminée par les besoins humains (ex., Levinson et al., 1962), la formation du contrat psychologique se fait selon D. Rousseau (1989) sur la base de perceptions individuelles. Ces dernières sont formées à partir des comportements cohérents et répétés qui sont observés dans le milieu de travail et qui sont influencées aussi bien par les pratiques et processus de recrutement et de socialisation déployées par l'organisation que par les expériences antérieures à l'emploi (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Dufour, 2009). L'ensemble de ces éléments constitue ce que D. Rousseau (1990) appelle des schémas qui représentent des modèles mentaux qui guident les interprétations des individus à la relation d'emploi et aux promesses que les parties sont tenues de respecter (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008). D. Rousseau (1989), finalement, se démarque des auteurs de l'étape initiale par le moyen qu'elle utilise dans l'explication du lien entre le contrat psychologique et les comportements et attitudes des employés. En effet, si le degré de la concordance perçue entre les rétributions offertes par l'organisation et les contributions fournies par les employés est le mécanisme avancé dans les travaux antérieurs pour expliquer l'impact du contrat psychologique sur les comportements et attitudes des employés (Schein, 1967), la violation est le moyen mis de l'avant par D. Rousseau (1989). Cette auteure définit la violation comme étant: *« l'échec de l'organisation ou de l'autre partie à répondre à la contribution fournie par l'employé et ce, en termes d'obligations qu'il considère que cette dernière devait remplir »* (D. Rousseau, 1989, p. 128; traduction libre). Comparativement au non-respect des attentes, la violation génère, selon D. Rousseau (1989), des réponses plus intenses qui changeraient de manière profonde les perceptions des victimes à l'autre partie et à leur relation mutuelle (Conway & Briner, 2005; D. Rousseau, 1989).

Contrat psychologique : définitions et confusions entourant le concept

Depuis son introduction, le contrat psychologique a connu différentes définitions qui, jusqu'à nos jours, sont loin de faire le consensus des chercheurs. Une question principale au cœur de ce débat est liée aux parties considérées dans la conceptualisation du contrat psychologique. En effet, si pour certains auteurs, il s'agit de l'employé et de son organisation (ex., Herriot & Pemberton, 1997; Kotter, 1973; D. Rousseau, 1989), le contrat psychologique peut lier, pour d'autres auteurs, l'employé et le représentant de l'organisation (ex., Robins & D. Rousseau, 1994) et même l'employé et les autres membres de l'organisation (Marks, 2001; Schein, 1980). En effet, si toutes les définitions s'accordent sur le fait que l'employé est l'une des parties au contrat psychologique, la détermination de l'autre partie de l'échange demeure confuse; ce que l'employé perçoit comme l'autre partie dans la relation d'échange (Conway & Briner, 2005). S'agit-il du directeur de l'organisation, du gestionnaire, du superviseur immédiat, des collègues de travail ou des coéquipiers ?

Cette confusion semble découler des perspectives adoptées par les chercheurs dans l'étude du contrat psychologique. Les auteurs qui définissent le contrat psychologique sur la base des perceptions individuelles de l'employé défendent l'idée selon laquelle l'organisation, en tant qu'entité abstraite ne pouvant communiquer et négocier avec ses employés, ne peut avoir de contrat psychologique (ex., Herriot & Pemberton, 1997; Morrison & Robins, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1995). Le problème avec cette position, comme avancé par Guest (1998), est que l'employé a toujours besoin d'une entité pour former ses perceptions concernant les obligations des deux parties. Cette idée est particulièrement défendue par les auteurs qui considèrent à la fois les perspectives de l'employé et de l'employeur (ex., Guest, 1998). Ces auteurs considèrent que les perceptions des employés sont formées à partir de différents éléments organisationnels, tels que les pratiques et politiques organisationnelles, les groupes, les documents organisationnels et les actions des agents de l'organisation (ex., gestionnaires, superviseurs immédiats et collègues; ex., Arnold, 1996; Bordia, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2010; Conway & Briner, 2005; Dabos & D. Rousseau, 2004; Herriot & Pemberton, 1997; Marks, 2001; Millward & Hopkins, 1998; D. Rousseau, 1995; D. Rousseau, & Greller, 1994; Sims, 1994; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003).

La détermination des parties à l'échange, comme on peut le constater à travers la littérature, représente une des confusions fondamentales que connaît le concept du contrat psychologique (Conway & Briner, 2005). Un point soulevé par Millward et Hopkins (2003) qui soulignent le rôle que joue l'interaction quotidienne dans la détermination de l'autre partie au contrat psychologique. Selon ces auteurs, ce sont les individus qui interagissent avec les employés sur une base quotidienne qui sont les plus susceptibles d'être perçus comme l'autre partie au contrat psychologique (ex., superviseur immédiat, coéquipiers). La théorie du contrat psychologique, dans ce sens, doit tenir compte des évolutions qu'ont principalement connues les modes de l'organisation du travail (Marks, 2001). Plutôt que de se limiter à la perception individuelle des employés, la théorie devrait s'étendre à l'étude du contrat psychologique et de son développement au niveau groupal. En effet, compte tenu de l'expansion des équipes de travail dans les organisations et des phénomènes sociaux partagés auxquels le travail en équipe donne lieu, il est possible que les membres développent des perceptions communes à propos des obligations qui lient leurs équipes à l'organisation (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). De plus et étant donné que le contrat psychologique est conçu comme un modèle mental de la relation d'emploi dont le rôle influence la formation du contrat psychologique (D. Rousseau, 2001), les membres de l'organisation partageant un schéma commun seraient plus susceptibles d'avoir une compréhension similaire des obligations de chacune des parties à cette relation et de s'accorder sur l'interprétation des informations, actions et événements organisationnels et de la sorte des promesses implicites de l'organisation.

Un autre point saillant qui ressort de la littérature du contrat psychologique est lié à la nature même des croyances qui constituent le contrat psychologique (Conway & Briner, 2008; Roehling, 2008). En effet, si certains auteurs définissent le concept en termes d'attentes (ex., Herriot et al., 1997; Kotter, 1973; Sutton & Griffin, 2004), d'autres le font en termes d'obligations (ex., Coyle-Shapiro & Neuman, 2004; Lester et al., 2007; Shore & Barksdale, 1998) et d'autres encore en termes de promesses (ex., Guest & Conway, 2002; D. Rousseau, 1989, 2000). Ainsi, si les définitions attribuées au contrat psychologique lors de la phase initiale du développement du concept font référence à des croyances liées aux attentes (ex., Kotter, 1973; Levinson et al., 1962; Schein, 1965), celles qui se sont basées sur la conceptualisation de D. Rousseau (1989) font référence à des croyances liées aux promesses et obligations (ex., Herriot & Pemberton, 1997; Morrison &

Robinson, 1997). En plus de spécifier les conditions auxquelles les croyances doivent répondre pour faire partie du contrat psychologique, les auteurs de la seconde vague d'écrits ont présenté une justification qui permet de distinguer de manière claire entre les attentes, les obligations et les promesses (Conway & Briner, 2005; Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson & D. Rousseau, 1994; D. Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993; D. Rousseau, & Tijoriwala, 1998). En effet, de par le sens large auquel elles peuvent renvoyer, les attentes peuvent émaner de croyances externes à la relation d'emploi et se forment souvent avant l'entrée dans l'organisation; elles ne sont, donc, pas toutes contractuelles (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Robinson & D. Rousseau, 1994; D. Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Il en est de même pour les obligations qui peuvent résulter d'éléments qui ne sont pas liés à la relation d'emploi tels que l'expérience antérieure d'emploi et les valeurs morales (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008). Pour être incluses dans le contrat psychologique, les attentes et les obligations doivent donc reposer sur des promesses perçues faites par les parties de manière implicite ou explicite (Conway & Briner, 2005; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Ces promesses se produisent à la suite des interactions récurrentes des parties; chacune observant les comportements et les éléments communiqués par l'autre (D. Rousseau, 1990). Le contrat psychologique, dans ce sens, est constitué de croyances que les employés ont des obligations que l'employeur doit remplir sur la base des promesses qu'il a faites de manière implicite ou explicite dans la relation d'échange réciproque (Conway & Briner, 2005; Robinson & D. Rousseau, 1994). Toutefois et bien que la conceptualisation de D. Rousseau (1989) soit la plus répandue et la plus utilisée dans l'étude du contrat psychologique, on peut noter que les termes "attentes", "obligations" et "promesses" continuent à être utilisés de manière interchangeable. Cette diversité, selon plusieurs auteurs, est liée au type de l'étude menée par le chercheur; chaque chercheur définissant le contrat psychologique de la manière qui convient le plus à son étude et à la mesure qu'il utilise (Conway & Briner, 2005; DelCampo, 2007; Roehling, 1997).

L'étude du contrat psychologique, en somme, n'est pas tâche facile et ce, malgré l'effort des chercheurs à fournir une définition claire et partagée au concept et à ses composantes et à simplifier de la sorte sa mesure (Conway & Briner, 2005; Roehling, 2008; D. Rousseau, 1989). À titre d'exemple, D. Rousseau (2010, p. 191; traduction libre) a défini le contrat psychologique comme un « *système de croyances individuel qui est basé sur les engagements exprimés ou confirmés au*

regard de l'entente d'échange avec l'autre partie ». Cette définition exprime et traduit la complexité et la confusion auxquelles les chercheurs peuvent faire face lors de l'étude du contrat psychologique. En effet, outre la non-spécification de l'autre partie à l'échange, cette définition au contrat psychologique ne fait aucune référence à la nature des croyances constituant ce contrat. L'étude du contrat psychologique peut ainsi s'étendre à différentes parties à l'échange mais également inclure différents types de croyances; complexifiant davantage une possibilité de consensus autour du concept.

Le contenu du contrat psychologique

L'évolution de contenu du contrat psychologique a suivi la transformation qu'a connu le monde du travail. On retrouve, donc, différents types de contrats psychologiques associés à différentes dimensions et à des termes et conditions d'emploi distincts. Par contenu de contrat psychologique, on entend surtout les promesses implicites et / ou explicites de l'échange et non les termes effectivement échangés entre les deux parties au contrat psychologique (Conway & Briner, 2005).

MacNeil (1974, 1985) a développé une typologie formée de deux types de contrat psychologique: transactionnel et relationnel. Ces deux types de contrat se différencient selon cinq caractéristiques, à savoir l'horizon temporel, le degré de spécificité, les ressources échangées, le caractère explicite des promesses et la négociation (voir tableau 1). Le contrat transactionnel se caractérise par la forte spécificité des termes et conditions de ses échanges. De nature purement économique, ces derniers font l'objet de promesses explicites et d'entente formelle circonscrites dans le temps. Compte tenu de ses caractéristiques et du faible niveau de l'investissement des employeurs dans le développement des employés, le contrat psychologique transactionnel tend à résulter en des faibles niveaux d'engagement et d'implication de la part des employés et par conséquent en un taux de roulement élevé (Delobbe, 2019; Lemire, 2005; MacNeil, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1995). Le contrat relationnel, quant à lui, se caractérise par une relation ouverte où l'échange est intangible et s'étend aux ressources socio-émotionnelles de longue durée impliquant des obligations moins spécifiques (Blau, 1964; Lemire, 2005; MacNeil, 1985). Les termes et conditions de cet échange sont implicites et sont compris de manière subjective par les parties (Conway & Briner, 2005). La confiance et la foi en la justice ainsi que les possibilités intéressantes de croissance et de développement caractérisant le contrat relationnel assurent la présence d'un engagement

réciroque de chacune des parties et un faible taux de roulement chez les employés (Lemire, 2005; D. Rousseau, 1990, 2000; D. Rousseau & Robinson, 1994; D. Rousseau & Wade-Benzoni, 1994).

Tableau 1. Comparaison des contrats transactionnel et relationnel.

Caractéristiques du contrat psychologique	Transactionnel	Relationnel
Horizon temporel	Court-terme, promesses circonscrites dans le temps	Long-terme, promesses ouvertes
Degré de spécificité	Haute spécificité	Faible spécificité
Ressources échangées	Tangible, valeur monétaire	Intangible, pouvant être socio-émotionnelle
Caractère explicite des promesses	Explicite	Implicite
Négociation	Peut-être explicite requérant une entente formelle par les deux parties	Implicite ne nécessitant pas d'entente réelle par les deux parties
Exemples	Paie en échange d'un nombre d'heures travaillées	Sécurité d'emploi en échange de loyauté

Traduit et adapté de Conway & Briner (2005, p. 44, traduction libre).

Inspirée par la typologie de MacNeil (1995), D. Rousseau (1995) a développé une nouvelle typologie où elle distingue entre quatre types de contrat psychologique et ce, à partir de deux caractéristiques interreliées: le temps (durée de la relation d'emploi) et les exigences de performance (spécification de la performance comme condition d'emploi). Deux types de contrat psychologique sont ajoutés aux contrats transactionnel et relationnel, soit le contrat transitionnel et le contrat équilibré. Le premier type de contrat psychologique de la typologie de D. Rousseau est le contrat transactionnel. Tout comme dans la typologie de MacNeil (1985), ce type de contrat se caractérise par la spécificité de ses termes et exigences de performance. La définition claire des tâches des employés ainsi que les responsabilités des employeurs et employés limitent le niveau d'ambiguïté et les interprétations qui peuvent en découler (D. Rousseau, 1990, 1995; Robinson et al., 1994). S'inscrivant souvent dans une optique de courte durée et offrant aux employés la possibilité d'accepter un nouveau contrat, le contrat transactionnel conduit à un niveau élevé de roulement dans l'organisation. Il en est de même pour les opportunités d'apprentissage que ce type de contrat offre et qui limitent l'implication et l'engagement des employés (Dabos & D. Rousseau, 2004). Le contrat transactionnel, en somme, se définit par son étroitesse

où l'employeur n'investit pas dans le développement des employés et où l'employé se limite aux tâches pour lesquelles il est rémunéré. Il se caractérise également par son court-terme où la relation de l'emploi est circonscrite dans le temps et où il n'y a aucune obligation d'y rester (D. Rousseau, 1995).

Le deuxième type contrat psychologique de la typologie de D. Rousseau (1995) est le contrat transitionnel. Il se démarque par la non-spécificité de ses exigences de performance et qui est responsable de l'ambiguïté et de l'incertitude entourant la compréhension des employés aux obligations qu'ils ont envers l'organisation (D. Rousseau, 1995). S'observant dans les milieux instables qui connaissent des changements organisationnels importants (ex., fusion, réorganisation des emplois), ce type de contrat peut mener à l'érosion de l'implication et de l'engagement des employés et par conséquent à un niveau élevé du taux de roulement. Le contrat transitionnel, à travers ses caractéristiques, reflèterait une absence d'accord entre l'employeur et l'employé et ne peut donc être considéré comme un contrat psychologique en tant que tel (ex., Hui, Lee, & D. Rousseau, 2004).

Le troisième type de contrat psychologique présent dans la typologie de D. Rousseau (1995) est le contrat relationnel. Il se distingue par sa portée large où les termes et conditions de l'échange sont intrinsèques et subjectifs (D. Rousseau, 1990). S'appuyant sur une relation basée sur la confiance, ce type de contrat assure l'implication et l'engagement des employés sur le long-terme (Robinson et al., 1994). Se préoccuper, en effet, du bien-être de ses employés et leur procurer des conditions favorables à leur développement (ex., sécurité d'emploi) ne peut qu'accroître leur engagement affectif envers l'organisation et ainsi leur loyauté et stabilité dans l'organisation (Dabos & D. Rousseau, 1994; D. Rousseau, 2000).

Le contrat équilibré est le dernier type de contrat psychologique proposé par D. Rousseau (1995). Réunissant des éléments du contrat transactionnel (où les récompenses des employés sont contingentes de leur performance) et du contrat relationnel (où l'employeur se préoccupe et s'investit dans le développement des employés), ce type de contrat se caractérise par la spécificité de ses exigences de performance où une grande importance est accordée à l'employabilité, à l'avancement interne et à la performance dynamique (D. Rousseau, 2000). Le développement d'habiletés et de compétences recherchées sur le marché du travail étant fortement valorisé et

central à l'atteinte des objectifs et au maintien du niveau de compétitivité de l'organisation, les employeurs s'engagent dans l'amélioration et le développement continus des habiletés des employés et ainsi de leur employabilité interne et externe (ex., formation, développement de carrière). L'organisation s'assure, de la sorte, d'un niveau élevé de l'engagement, l'implication et l'intégration de ses membres (D. Rousseau, 1995, 2000).

À travers les dimensions et les caractéristiques qui les forment, les typologies de contrat psychologique de MacNeil (1985) et de D. Rousseau (1995) ont réussi à fournir une bonne explication de l'évolution du contrat psychologique et surtout une meilleure identification de la nature de la relation d'emploi. L'approche qui se base sur le contenu du contrat psychologique connaît certaines limites principalement associées à la difficulté de catégoriser le contenu. En effet, certains items peuvent être classés à la fois dans le contrat relationnel et dans le contrat transactionnel et ce, tel qu'il est le cas pour la « formation » qui est utilisée par certains auteurs dans l'évaluation du contrat transactionnel et par d'autres dans l'étude du contrat relationnel (Arnold, 1996; Freese & Schalk, 2008). Il en est de même pour les échelles de mesures qui présentent certaines limites liées aux différentes interprétations qui peuvent être attribuées par les participants à certains items qu'elles comportent et ce, tel que la « rémunération équitable » (Conway & Briner, 2005). Les participants pouvant avoir une compréhension différente de certains éléments organisationnels, il est possible que leurs réponses soient biaisées ne reflétant pas avec exactitude le type du contrat psychologique qu'ils ont.

Cette approche permet, néanmoins, l'accès aux termes mêmes de l'échange entre les parties et la compréhension des perceptions, comportements et réactions des employés (Mai et al., 2016). C'est dans ce sens que nous adoptons l'approche basée sur le contenu pour opérationnaliser et mesurer les types de contrat psychologique d'équipes: relationnel et transactionnel. Contrairement aux autres types de contrat psychologique qui sont hybrides (contrats transitionnel et équilibré) [D. Rousseau, 1995], les contrats transactionnel et relationnel représentent deux facteurs indépendants (ex., Conway & Briner, 2005; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). En effet, les contrats hybrides ne sont pas communs dans les situations d'emploi: le contrat transitionnel représentant davantage une situation d'emploi plutôt qu'un contrat psychologique spécifique et le contrat équilibré entraînant potentiellement des tensions en termes d'horizon temporel (court versus long terme) et de spécificité des termes (précis versus général) qui peuvent être difficiles à concilier

à travers le temps (Agarwal & Bhargava, 2013; Gupta, Massa, & Azzopardi, 2016). En nous intéressant aux termes et conditions du contrat psychologique, nous serions davantage en mesure de comprendre le moyen à travers lequel l'organisation influencerait la formation de types particuliers de perceptions, attentes et obligations chez les membres des équipes de travail.

Contrat psychologique d'équipes : une relation d'échange équipes-organisation

Bien que la conceptualisation du contrat psychologique reconnaisse qu'un groupe d'individus puisse développer un échange implicite avec l'organisation (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; D. Rousseau, 1989, 1995), force est de noter que la concentration de la recherche est surtout orientée vers la perspective individuelle où on s'intéresse principalement à la relation d'échange et des obligations qui lient l'employé et son organisation. Ces deux parties impliquées dans l'échange, peuvent, selon la théorie de l'échange social, être remplacées par deux ou plusieurs entités qui s'engagent dans une relation d'échange (ex., coéquipiers, enseignants et étudiants; Blau, 1964; Gibbard et al., 2017). Dans les organisations, les relations d'emploi contemporaines ne se limitent plus aux échanges employés-organisations mais sont étendues aux échanges équipes-organisations (Bashshur et al., 2011; Gong, Chang, & Cheung, 2010; González-Romá et al., 2009). Dans cette relation d'emploi, l'organisation fait des promesses de rétributions aux équipes (ex., formation, autonomie, ressources) en échange de contributions que les équipes, en tant que partie à l'échange, doivent fournir (ex., tâches, objectifs, services; Alcover et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Les équipes de travail, dans ce sens, sont susceptibles de développer un contrat psychologique d'équipes où les membres s'accordent sur une seule et même compréhension des termes et conditions entourant la relation d'échange équipes-organisation et ainsi des obligations mutuelles incombant à l'équipe et à l'organisation (D. Rousseau, 1995). Le travail en équipe accentue, en effet, les possibilités de la formation de perceptions, interprétations et compréhension communes à propos des différents événements, systèmes, valeurs, politiques et pratiques organisationnels auxquels les équipes sont exposées (Gibbard et al., 2017). Il renforce l'interaction et l'interdépendance des membres d'équipes qui doivent échanger des perceptions, idées et opinions pour assurer l'accomplissement des tâches et objectifs qui ont été définies à leurs équipes (Hakman & Morris, 1975). Lors de ces échanges, les membres cherchent entre autres à s'assurer une bonne compréhension de leur environnement de travail (tâches, valeurs, obligations, comportements). Ils se tournent, pour ce faire, vers leurs coéquipiers qui, exposés au même

environnement organisationnel, leur servent de référents qui les aident à confirmer, ajuster et / ou modifier leurs perceptions (Chen, Takeuchi, & Shum, 2013; Groth et al., 2002 ; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). À travers le temps, ces interactions et interdépendance continues sont susceptibles de façonner les perceptions individuelles des membres d'équipes de manière à donner lieu au développement de croyances similaires propres à l'équipe où les membres s'accordent sur une interprétation commune quant à leur environnement de travail et à leurs expériences collectives dans l'organisation (James et al., 2008; James & James, 1989). Les interactions fréquentes des membres d'équipes et leur interdépendance au regard de la tâche d'équipes influenceraient, autrement dit, les croyances des membres de manière à former une compréhension similaire de l'environnement organisationnel. Ici, il n'est pas question des perceptions de chaque individu à ses propres expériences de son environnement de travail que les membres finissent par partager, mais plutôt des perceptions de chacun des membres aux expériences de l'équipe dans son ensemble à cet environnement de travail. Ainsi et sur la base de la théorie du traitement de l'information sociale (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), il est attendu que le travail en équipes donne lieu au développement de perceptions communes des obligations mutuelles de l'équipe et l'organisation au sujet des contributions que l'équipe, en tant que partie à l'échange, doit fournir en échange des rétributions promises par l'organisation. Ce contrat psychologique d'équipes représente un construit groupal où il y a un consensus concernant les perceptions des membres quant aux obligations entourant la relation d'échange de leurs équipes avec l'organisation. Les termes de cet échange équipes-organisation peuvent donner lieu à des réponses spécifiques de la part de l'équipe et donc à des types particuliers de contrat psychologique d'équipes.

Objectifs et structure de la thèse

Le recours croissant des organisations aux équipes de travail n'arrétant de s'accroître, l'examen du contrat psychologique au niveau de l'équipe s'avère crucial afin d'accéder aux perceptions des membres d'équipes et comprendre ainsi leurs comportements et attitudes. Il s'agit là de l'objectif principal de la présente thèse qui cherche à élargir la portée d'étude du contrat psychologique au niveau groupal en offrant une explication théorique et un soutien empirique à la possibilité pour les membres d'équipes de développer des perceptions communes quant aux obligations encadrant la relation équipes-organisation.

En découlent trois objectifs spécifiques:

- 1- Montrer que les équipes de travail peuvent développer des perceptions communes quant aux termes d'échange liant leurs équipes et organisation et établir une échelle de mesure du contrat psychologique d'équipes;
- 2- Explorer l'effet de la supervision abusive, comme antécédent, sur le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes en considérant le rôle médiateur de l'habilitation de l'équipe et du rôle modérateur du style d'attachement de l'équipe (anxiété / évitement);
- 3- Vérifier les conséquences du contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes sur les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes en prenant en compte de l'effet médiateur de l'affect d'équipes positif et de l'effet modérateur de l'interdépendance des membres d'équipes au regard de leurs tâches.

Plus spécifiquement, le corps de la thèse est composé de trois articles empiriques présentant des recherches empiriques réalisées dans le même milieu organisationnel. Le premier article présente le contrat psychologique d'équipes de manière générale, tandis que les deux autres articles se concentrent sur la composante relationnelle du contrat psychologique d'équipes. Plus spécifiquement, le premier article consiste à présenter une conceptualisation du contrat psychologique au niveau groupal. Cette étude s'est basée sur deux échantillons: le premier a servi à réaliser des analyses exploratoires (526 participants) et le second à effectuer des analyses confirmatoires (506 participants). En plus de fournir un cadre théorique explicatif de la possibilité de la formation de contrat psychologique d'équipes, cet article contribue au développement d'une échelle de mesure qui permet d'évaluer ce concept de manière empirique. Ce premier article s'intitule «*Team Psychological Contract: Psychological Contract Reconceptualization and Psychometric Properties of a Team-Level Scale*».

Le deuxième article s'intéresse à l'étude des antécédents susceptibles d'influencer le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes. Cette recherche présente un modèle conceptuel qui cherche à vérifier l'effet de la supervision abusive sur le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes à travers l'habilitation de l'équipe. Réalisée auprès de 135 équipes (représentant 514 participants), cette recherche permet également de vérifier si l'effet de la supervision abusive sur l'habilitation persiste ou varie en fonction du style d'attachement de l'équipe (anxiété / évitement). Cet article met la lumière sur le rôle que joue le superviseur immédiat dans la formation et l'orientation des

perceptions des membres d'équipes. Il a pour titre «*The Effect of Abusive Supervision on Relational Team Psychological Contract: A Moderated Mediation Model*».

Le troisième article, finalement, est lié à l'étude des conséquences du contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes. Cette étude permet de vérifier, à titre exploratoire, si le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes exerce un effet sur les affects d'équipes positifs et sur la disposition des membres à prendre la responsabilité de la gestion de leurs équipes en adoptant des comportements d'autogestion. Cet article repose sur les mêmes données recueillies et utilisées dans le deuxième article. Les résultats de cette recherche soutiennent le rôle critique des contrats psychologiques d'équipes dans la détermination des émotions et comportements des membres d'équipes. Cette étude s'intitule «*Relational Team Psychological Contract and Team self-managing behaviors: The Effects of Team Positive Affective Tone and Team Member Interdependence*».

L'atteinte des objectifs de la présente thèse de doctorat repose sur une démarche quantitative, appuyée par un devis de recherche transversale. Les données ont été recueillies en milieu organisationnel dans le cadre d'une recherche dirigée par les professeurs Vincent Rousseau (professeur à l'Université de Montréal) et Caroline Aubé (professeure à HEC Montréal) et *subventionnée par le Conseil de recherche en sciences humaines du Canada (CRSH)*. Cette recherche a été réalisée auprès de participants qui œuvrent pour une organisation de sécurité publique située au Canada et qui a pour mission d'appliquer les lois et de promouvoir le bien-être de la population. Les équipes qui ont participé à cette étude sont des équipes semi-autonomes stables travaillant selon des horaires fixes dont les membres interagissent de manière fréquente pour accomplir les tâches et objectifs assujettis à leurs équipes. Ces équipes ont pour mandat d'offrir des services de première ligne et ont dû faire face à des situations complexes et imprévisibles caractérisées par des pressions de temps intenses (telles que les interventions de sécurité routière et les opérations d'urgence). Cette organisation encourage les innovations susceptibles d'améliorer les réactions des équipes de travail à ces situations. Elle est très favorable à l'adoption d'un système de gestion collégiale offrant davantage de latitude décisionnelle aux équipes de travail et dispose d'ailleurs de plusieurs points de services décentralisés.

La collecte des données s'est basée sur des questionnaires qui ont été administrés manuellement aux membres des équipes et à leurs superviseurs immédiats durant les heures de travail. Un assistant de recherche était sur les lieux de travail afin d'informer les participants de l'objectif de l'étude qui consiste à développer une meilleure compréhension du fonctionnement des équipes de travail dans un contexte organisationnel. Les questionnaires comportent un court texte qui fait mention des considérations éthiques de l'étude (ex., participation volontaire de chaque membre, anonymat de répondants).

L'analyse de ces données a fait appel à des analyses préliminaires visant principalement à vérifier la conformité des concepts de l'étude et la possibilité de leur utilisation dans la vérification des hypothèses proposées (analyses d'agrégation, analyses bivariées et multivariées). Par la suite, des analyses multivariées ont été réalisées à l'aide du logiciel Mplus pour répondre aux hypothèses de relations, de médiations, de modération et de médiation-modérées. Plus précisément, ces analyses ont été utilisées pour vérifier les hypothèses de relations entre les variables ainsi que les effets de modération. L'approche de cheminement (« *path analysis* ») a été adoptée pour tester les hypothèses de médiation. Cette approche consiste à vérifier les effets indirects et la convenance des modèles proposés et ce, à travers les estimés de relations (« *path estimate* ») et les indices d'ajustement (« *fit indices* ») de l'ensemble des modèles tels que l'indice d'ajustement comparatif (« *Comparative Fit Index; CFI* »), l'erreur d'approximation basée sur la racine du carré moyen (« *Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; RMSEA* ») et la racine carré moyenne standardisée des résidus (« *Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual; SRMR* »). Finalement, la vérification des hypothèses de médiations modérées a été réalisée à l'aide du « Bootstrap » qui consiste à analyser l'effet de médiation ainsi que ses variations en fonction des différentes valeurs de la variable modératrice (effets indirect conditionnel) et peut être utilisé pour tester des modèles de médiation modérée avec une ou plusieurs variables médiatrices et modératrices.

Au terme de la présente thèse doctorale, une discussion générale des résultats des trois études qui en découlent sera présentée suivie par l'indication des principales contributions des trois recherches à l'avancement des connaissances liées aux différents concepts abordés sur le plan scientifique et pratique. Finalement, seront présentées les avenues pour les recherches futures et la conclusion générale.

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Article 1: Team psychological contract: Psychological contract reconceptualization and psychometric properties of a team-level scale

La première auteure (Madiha Aqerrou) a conçu le projet de l'article, développé la méthodologie, réalisé les différentes analyses de données et rédigé le manuscrit. Le second auteur Vincent Rousseau (professeur à l'Université de Montréal) a orienté la recherche et supervisé toutes les étapes du processus. La troisième auteure Caroline Aubé (professeure à HEC Montréal) et le second auteur ont conçu, organisé et dirigé la collecte de données sur le terrain et ont partagé avec la première auteure (Madiha Aqerrou) les données concernant les concepts à l'étude.

Team Psychological Contract: Psychological Contract Reconceptualization and Psychometric Properties of a Team-Level Scale (Article 1)

Madiha Aqerrout, Vincent Rousseau, and Caroline Aubé

Abstract

With the great reliance on teams, employment relationships have evolved from employee-organization to team-organization relationships. The purpose of the present study is to propose a reconceptualization of the psychological contract at the team level. Based on the social information processing theory, we argue that team members, as a part of exchange, are likely to develop similar perceptions regarding team-organization mutual obligations. Specifically, we contend that teams would develop a particular type of psychological contract depending on the type of the exchange they have with the organization. We, also, present the development of a new scale and its psychometric properties. Data were collected from two samples (sample 1 = 526 and sample 2 = 506 participants) in a public safety organization. Results offer an empirical support to the team psychological contract scale we propose and demonstrate that team members hold common beliefs about the contributions their team has to provide in return to the retributions their organization has to offer to their team as a part of the team-organization exchange agreement. Moreover, our findings show that team psychological contract is composed of two dimensions, namely transactional and relational contracts. Overall, the results of this study indicate that team psychological contract plays an important role in teams' functioning and efficiency.

Keywords: Team psychological contract – measure – validation.

Introduction

Since its introduction to the management and organizational behavior fields, the concept of psychological contract has gained in popularity to become now an essential component in the examination of employment relationships. It has been presented as an integrative theory that elucidate the confusion surrounding the exchange relationship, and to comprehend employees' behaviours and attitudes (Conway & Briner, 2005; Pietersen, 2014; D. Rousseau, 2004; Salazar-Fierro & Bayardo, 2015). Psychological contract has been defined as “the individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (D. Rousseau, 1995, p. 9). Through its focus on individual perceptions about the employee and employer mutual obligations, psychological contract highlights the importance for employees and employers to understand and manage their implicit and explicit reciprocal agreements (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; D. Rousseau, 1989, 1995, 2011; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). It refers to employees' perceptions concerning the contributions they have to provide and the inducements the organization has to offer in return.

Most of research on psychological contract have relied on D. Rousseau's (1995) conceptualization to examine psychological contracts and employment relationships, regardless the consideration of work structures and processes evolution (Alcover, Rico, Turnley, & Bolino, 2017; Marks, 2001). Indeed, organizations are increasingly team-based, and their employment relationships are no more limited to individuals but also include teams (Kozłowzki & Bell, 2003; Maloney, Bresman, Zellmer-Bruhn, & Beaver, 2016). Accordingly, organizations may make promises to teams as units in return of teams' contributions (tasks and objectives accomplishment). To reciprocate these promises, team members coordinate their mutual efforts and competencies to perform tasks and goals for which their team is responsible and rewarded for as a whole (Kozłowski & Ilgen, 2006). They share individual resources but also opinions and perceptions of organisational environment, events and processes their team experience in time (De Vos & Tekleab, 2014; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). This continuous interaction and information sharing among teams may lead team members to develop similar understanding and interpretation regarding their organizational context, which may result in the emergence of team level constructs (James et al., 2008; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Taberner, Chambel, Curren, & Arana, 2009; Tekleab et al., 2020; Walter & Bruch, 2008). Accordingly, team members may develop and hold common perceptions regarding the obligations

their teams and organization have towards each other. This psychological contract, that we refer to as “team psychological contract” and what D. Rousseau (1995) called “normative contract”, develops when several individuals hold a broad consensus about the content of psychological contract (Alcover et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Team psychological contract is different from shared individual psychological contract (e.g., shared individual psychological contract fulfillment; Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Tekleab et al., 2022). It is conceived to reflect team members’ perceptions to their team-organization mutual obligations and not each member perceptions to his/her own individual-organization exchange agreement. With team psychological contract, though the perceptions are derived from the individual level, the focus is on the team. Indeed, and in accordance with the shift-referent consensus model, psychological contract items are shifted to reflect the psychological contract at the team level (by changing the referent from “I” to “we” (the team) and then aggregated to conceptualize the new form of psychological contract that is team psychological contract (Chan, 1998).

That is said, and despite the call of many scholars, the study of psychological contract at the collective level remains ignored (e.g., Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). Therefore, team psychological contract needs to be explored. In this article, we argue that the concept of psychological contract may not be limited to the individual level, but extended to the team level (Bashshur, Hernández, & González-Romá, 2011; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001; Yamamiro & Dansereau, 2008). The concept of psychological contract being valuable to the comprehension of employment relationships, it is important to reconceptualize the concept as to transcend the individual level to the group level, so it can fit to the study of the contemporary employment relationships. Consequently, we aimed to propose a reconceptualization of psychological contract at the team level. Furthermore, we argue that teams would develop a particular type of psychological contract depending on the type of the exchange they have with the organization. Thus, we intend to demonstrate that team psychological contract is composed of two dimensions, namely transactional and relational contract. Hence, we present the development of a new scale and its psychometric properties.

Theoretical background and hypotheses

Psychological contract defined

The concept of psychological contract was introduced by Argyris (1960), and subsequently developed by Levinson, Price, Munden, and Solley (1962), and Schein (1965, 1980). To these scholars, psychological contract is related to the implicit terms of the exchange agreement between the two parties to the employment relationship (organization or supervisors, and employees). It refers to the mutual expectations, held by these parties, associated to the contributions and retributions each other have in the relationship (Alcover et al., 2017; Conway & Briner, 2005; Herriot, Manning & Kidd 1997). Although the concept of psychological contract is presented as an explanatory framework for the study of employment relationship, it is not until the 1980's and 1990's that it gained in popularity and interest in the organizational literature (Alcover et al., 2017; Pietersen, 2014; D. Rousseau., 2004). D. Rousseau examined the psychological contract and expanded it to a scientific construct that can be empirically investigated and measured (Alcover et al., 2017; Bal, Jansen, Van der Velde, de Lange, & D. Rousseau, 2010; Conway & Briner, 2005; Sverdrup, 2012). The psychological contract is limited to individual perceptions of mutual and reciprocal obligations based on promises that are made between this individual and the other party. Rousseau's conceptualization of the psychological contract is radically different from the previous conceptualizations in a number of ways. Firstly, the study of the psychological contract is circumscribed at the individual level: it is a subjective phenomenon that belongs only to the individual (D. Rousseau, 1989). According to D. Rousseau (1989), the organization is an abstract entity that cannot hold perceptions, and therefore a psychological contract. Secondly, D. Rousseau (1989) placed obligations based on promises at the core of the psychological contract definition and thus the concept is no longer defined in terms of expectations (e.g., Levinson et al., 1962; Schein, 1965). For D. Rousseau (1989), not all expectations can be part of the psychological contract, it must derive from mutual agreement where the terms and conditions are implicitly or explicitly specified by the two parties (Conway & Briner, 2005; Roehling, 2008; Rousseau, 1989). It is the same for obligations that must be based on promises made by the two parties to the exchange (D. Rousseau, 1989). Thirdly, D. Rousseau's conceptualization of psychological contract is different in terms of its formation. It is not determined by human needs but arises from individual perceptions (Levinson et al., 1962; D. Rousseau, 1989). Perceptions in turn are shaped

from coherent and repetitive behaviors that are observed in the workplace and are influenced by pre-employment experiences and by organizational practices and processes (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Dufour, 2009). Psychological contract is a mental model that guide individual interpretations of the employment relationship and of the promises the parties must fulfill (Conway & Briner, 2005, 2009; De Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2003; Lester & Kickul, 2001; D. Rousseau, 1990; Sutton & Griffin, 2004).

Since D. Rousseau's work (1989, 1990, 1995), the literature on psychological contract becomes much more complex. Some researchers adopted D. Rousseau's socio-cognitive approach and examine psychological contracts following the individual perspective (e.g., Chambel & Alcover, 2011; Lee, Tinsley, & Chen, 2000; Mai et al., 2016; Richard, McMillan-Capehart, Bhuian, & Taylor, 2009; Taberner et al., 2009). Here, psychological contract is an individual phenomenon that belongs only to the employee. It is a perceptual concept where the understanding of the two parties' mutual obligations is in the eye of the beholder and is not necessarily shared by these parties (Herriot et al., 1997; Robinson & D. Rousseau, 1994; D. Rousseau, 2011). Psychological contract, according to this perspective, is the employee perceptions regarding the terms of the exchange agreement between individuals and their organization and that are essentially shaped by the organization (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1995).

The concept of psychological contract has developed through two main phases (Conway & Briner, 2005; Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008). The initial phase is marked by its introduction as a reference framework that helps to study implicit aspects of the exchange agreement between the employee and the employer. The research emphasizes the interaction between the parties to the agreement and the importance of concordance of their expectations and contributions (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; Levinson et al., 1962; Schein, 1965). D. Rousseau's phase, in turn, is credited with the rejuvenation of the concept and its reintroduction as the basis for the contemporary research on the employment relationship (Conway & Briner, 2005, 2009; Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008). Psychological contract definition is, therefore, narrowed to individual perceptions about the reciprocal obligations a person and the other party to the agreement exchange has towards each other (D. Rousseau, 2011). Psychological contract is now a concept that can be investigated empirically (Bal, Jansen, Van der Velde, De Lange, & D. Rousseau, 2010; D. Rousseau, 1995, 2011). However, despite psychological contract topic has become a vital

concept when it comes to investigate employment relationship and to comprehend employees' behaviours and attitudes (Conway & Briner, 2005, 2009; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Mai et al., 2016), its conceptualization is limited given the transformations of the workplace (Marks, 2001). In the literature of psychological contract, the focus is on individual perspective which is interested by the agreement exchange involving the employee and his organization without taking into account other forms of work organization such as work teams and the resulting employment relationship (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001; Tabernero et al., 2009). Exchange agreement is established not only for employee-organization but also for teams-organization relationship. Consequently, psychological contracts are likely to develop between organizations and teams (as an entity) and should be, therefore, redefined and extended to other parties and other levels.

Psychological contract redefined

The psychological contract research, as mentioned above, focus traditionally on individual perceptions to understand the mutual and reciprocal obligations in the employee-employer relationship (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). However, this conceptualization seems unsuitable to investigate the contemporary employment relationships. Indeed, the evolution of work organization has given rise to new forms that changed the nature of employment relationships. Thus, it becomes outmoded to think employment relationships in terms of a single exchange between employees and organizations (Marks, 2001; Tekleab, 2020).

One of the most common forms adopted by organizations occurs in the form of work groups or teams (Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt., 2005; Maloney et al., 2016; Marks, 2001). This social entity is based on the coordination of different members' efforts, skills, knowledge and expertise, which results in a better adaptation to the rapid changing market and to remain competitive and innovative (Fay, Shipton, West, & Patterson, 2015; Gibbard et al, 2017; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2001; Salas, Goodwin, & Burke, 2015). In that sense, the employment relationship is conceived between the organization and the team, as a unit, and not the organization and each team member (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). In this relationship, organizations make promises of inducements to teams (e.g., team resources, team autonomy) in exchange of their contributions. Teams obligations, in return, are the accomplishment of tasks and goals for which team members are collectively responsible and rewarded for (Kozlowsky & Ilgen, 2006;

V. Rousseau, Aubé, & Savoie, 2006). To reciprocate the organization promises, team members coordinate each one individual resources and efforts and exchange ideas and opinions regarding their team assigned tasks and goals and about the appropriate way to deliver it. Doing so, team members develop similar understanding of contributions their team has to provide in exchange to what it was promised by the organization. Team members might, therefore, develop similar perceptions regarding the inducements their team is promised in return to the contributions it is supposed to deliver (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). In other words, team members are likely to develop a team psychological contract when they share common perceptions about their team (as a unit) and organization mutual obligations. This idea is consistent with the ‘normative contract’ proposed by D. Rousseau (1989, 1995) that develops when a group of individuals share common agreement about the content of psychological contract (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Moreover, psychological contract is considered as a mental model of the employment relationship that influences employees’ interpretations and behaviours (D. Rousseau, 2004). Yet, team members sharing a common schema would be more likely to develop a similar understanding about the obligations each party to the relationship has toward the other one, and to agree on information, actions, and events they are exposed to. On the whole, there is a need for the psychological contract concept to be redefined and extended to the group level.

Teamwork psychological contract: The social information processing theory

In a team, members are brought together in a close and interdependent relationship, which results in the shaping of members’ perceptions and behaviors (Jehn, 1997b). The daily collective interactions and experiences are likely to generate shared social concepts and phenomena (De Vos & Tekleab, 2014; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Walter & Bruch, 2008). Specifically, the similar situations and environment in which teams operate may engender similar interpretation of the organizational and team environment among team members (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). Team working reinforces, thus, the development of shared mental models that are likely to influence teams and organization outcomes (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). In this sense, team-organization exchange agreement may lead to mutual beliefs, among team members, regarding terms and conditions of team-organization exchange. Particularly, teams can develop common beliefs about organizational promised inducements and contributions whereby teams should reciprocate, which results in psychological contracts between teams and organizations (Alcover et al., 2017; Laulié

& Tekleab, 2016; D. Rousseau, 1995). However, the idea that teams, as a collective entity, can develop psychological contracts with their organizations, has received little, if any, attention in the psychological contract literature (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). Here, social information processing (SIP) theory can provide valuable insights to explain the way team members develop common perceptions, beliefs, and interpretations and therefore a team psychological contract involving teams and their organizations. Applied to the work context, SIP theory suggests that employees' beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes result from the processing they make of the information coming from their social environment (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). This social environment develops essentially through the employees' daily interactions and more specifically through the observation they make of the organizational environment and of other members' behaviors (Burkhardt, 1994; Chen, Takeuchi, & Shum, 2013). Employees, in other words, use their colleagues as social referent sources to build and interpret events and situations, and to evaluate and adjust their own beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes (Chen et al., 2013; Groth, Goldman, Gilliland, & Bies, 2002; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Sleesman, 2012). In that sense, the social environment offers to employees the opportunity to understand their context and to evaluate and confirm beliefs they hold about it (Chen et al., 2013; Groth et al., 2002; Ho, 2006). It indicates to employees the appropriate and desired behaviors and attitudes in the organization, the department, or the team (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978).

In work teams, members are supposed to carry out the tasks and goals for which they are collectively responsible (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; V. Rousseau et al., 2006). To do so, members coordinate their skills, knowledge, and efforts. They share not only resources but also information about their experience to the organizational events, processes, and systems to which their team is consistently exposed to (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). Associated to this interactional and interdependent relationship, team exposure to the same environment represent the social information team members rely on to evaluate, consolidate, and / or adjust their beliefs regarding their work situations (e.g., tasks, values, obligations). The work of teams is, therefore, likely to shape team members perceptions and beliefs regarding not only their team and organizational environment, but also their team-organization exchange agreement (Akkermans et al., 2019). Team members discuss their team tasks and goals but also the resources and strategies that would help them to accomplish it. This ideas' sharing results in forming a similar

understanding of the inducements organization promised to offer and the contributions teams are expected to deliver in exchange (Ho, 2005; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). This idea is consistent with D. Rousseau (1995) who suggests that the consensus of several individuals about the content of psychological contract results in the development of a normative (or group) psychological contract. Accordingly, teams may develop similar beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of their teams-organizations exchange relationship and thus similar meaning of the contributions their teams are supposed to deliver and the promised inducements their team should be provided (Ho, 2005; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Hence, based on SIP, team members can develop and hold common perceptions and interpretations about their team-organization mutual obligations and thus a team psychological contract. We define this team psychological contract as “team members perceptions regarding the contributions their team are supposed to provide to the organization, and the inducements their organization is supposed to offer in return to their team as a unit”.

Content / types of psychological contract

The content (or types) of psychological contract refers to employees’ beliefs about the contributions they must provide to their employer (e.g., flexibility, competencies), and the retributions their employer must offer in return (e.g., training, career development; Conway & Briner, 2005; Mai et al., 2016; D. Rousseau, & Tijoriwala, 1998). The variety of psychological contract content, elaborated and developed since the concept introduction, tend to cluster around the extent to which they are transactional versus relational (MacNeil, 1974, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1989, 1995; Taberner et al., 2009). Transactional contract is defined by its highly specified and economic exchanges in which the terms are determined by explicit promises and formal agreement circumscribed over time (Lemire, 2005; MacNeil, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1995). Employees and employers are limited to what is strictly agreed in the formal contract and do not care about the needs of the other party. As a result, transactional contract leads to a short-term relationship and low level of employees’ commitment and yet to a high level of turnover (D. Rousseau, 2011). Relational contract refers to a broader and long-term exchange that includes subjective, and socio-emotional resources that are comprehended implicitly by the parties (Blau, 1964; MacNeil, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1995). Employer and employee trust each other and show a high concern of fulfilling their mutual obligations towards each other, which results in employees’ positive behaviours and

attitudes (Chambel & Alcover, 2011; Mai et al., 2016; D. Rousseau, 2000; D. Rousseau & Wade-Benzoni, 1994; Thomas, Au, & Ravlin, 2005).

Transactional and relational contract approach helps to access the content of psychological contract and thus to get a deep understanding of employees' perceptions, behaviours, and reactions (Mai et al., 2016; Sverdrup, 2012). Transactional and relational contracts, as Mai et al. (2016) stated, are conceptually and empirically distinct (e.g., Alcover, Martínez-Íñigo, & Chambel, 2012; Dabos & D. Rousseau, 2004) even if research has found that their measures are significantly related to one another (e.g., Alcover et al., 2012; Millward & Hopkins, 1998). In the present study, we examine team psychological contract using the content approach. Specifically, we hypothesize that, following the idea that teams are likely to develop shared phenomena, team members may develop common perceptions about the mutual obligations their teams and organization have towards each other, and thus a particular type of team psychological contract. In that sense, when team members engage with their organization in an economic short-term exchange based on specified terms and conditions, they are likely to develop similar perceptions to a team transactional psychological contract (D. Rousseau, 1990). Here, the low involvement of organization in teams' development would limit connection between teams and organization, which results in a low degree of team members engagement and commitment (Dabos & D. Rousseau, 2004; MacNeil, 1985; Raja, Johns, & Ntalianis, 2004; D. Rousseau, 1995). Moreover, team members would limit their efforts to what they are asked for and tend to leave the organization as soon as they get a better job offer (Rousseau, 1995). In contrast, a team is likely to perceive a relational psychological contract when team-organization relationship is based on socio-emotional exchange that does not cover any specified period of time (Blau, 1964; MacNeil, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1995). The exchange terms and conditions are implicit and subjectively comprehended by team members and organization. Additionally, organization concern by teams' wellbeing and their skills, and careers' development is likely to result in enhancing team members affective engagement and their loyalty and stability on long-term (Richard, McMillan-Capehart, Bhuian, Taylor, 2009; D. Rousseau, 1990, 1995). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: Team psychological contract is composed of two dimensions, namely transactional and relational contracts.

As stated previously, psychological contract is considered as a mental model of the employment relationship (D. Rousseau, 2004). This mental model is likely to be shared when a group of individuals is considered as an independent unitary to whom organization designs specific tasks and goals that members are collectively responsible to accomplish (Hackman & Morris, 1975). Team members coordinate their knowledge, experiences, and skills to perform the tasks and goals their team, as a unit, is responsible and rewarded for (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; V. Rousseau et al., 2006). This interdependent interrelation is likely to result in a mutual understanding of team members to their organizational environment (e.g., systems, practices, values), team tasks or team appropriate behaviors (Bettenhausen, 1991; Cannon-Bowers, Salas, & Converse, 1993; Eby, Meade, Parisi, & Douthitt, 1999; Rentsch & Hall, 1994). These shared mental models represent, in other words, the extent to which team members have a similar interpretation of the organizational elements the team experiences. Although mental model exists within individuals, it is likely to be conceived at the team level (Eby et al., 1999; Rouse & Morris, 1986). The operationalization of the construct at the group level relies mostly on the aggregation of individuals' perceptions data to form a team level construct (Burke et al., 2022; Newman & Sin, 2022). This notion of *within-group agreement* has been a practical concept to validate aggregating individual level measures to signify team level properties (Newman & Sin, 2022). An individual construct is confirmed as a collective level construct when the agreement among team members responses is deemed sufficient (Burke et al., 2022; Chan, 1998). This means that team members hold shared perceptions of the organizational phenomenon, allowing thus the combination of their responses to represent the team level phenomenon (James, 1982; Newman & Sin, 2022). The operationalization of team level constructs derives from specified composition models that explain how constructs conceptualized at the individual level of analysis are related to other forms of the constructs at the group level of analysis (e.g., Chan, 1998; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Chan (1998), particularly, suggested a typology of composition models to guide the aggregation of individual level data to represent group level constructs (Wallace et al., 2016). Essentially two data composition models are used in research, namely direct consensus model and referent-shift consensus model (Wallace et al., 2016; Chan, 1998). *Direct consensus model* consists of aggregating survey items related to individual items perceptions (e. g., I believe) to index consensus of within-group at the individual level and to represent and justify scores at the group level (Chan, 1998; Wallace et al., 2016). *Referent-shift consensus model*, as indicated by Chan

(1998), is analogous to the direct consensus model since it uses the within-group agreement of the individual level to index the group level. The referent-shift consensus model differs, however, by the “referent” it uses to define and operationalize the construct at the higher level prior to consensus assessment. Here, the survey items are changed to reflect the collective referent (“we”) and to define and operationalize a new form of the construct (Chan, 1998; Wallace et al., 2016). As stated by Chan (1998), the basis of content the construct remains unchanged in the new form, but the referent of the content changes from the individual to team. Shift-referent consensus model consists, in other words, of aggregating survey items related to individual perceptions of a higher level (e.g., “we believe”) based on within-group consensus.

Based on the shift-referent consensus model and the SIP theory, we expect team members to be likely to hold similar perceptions about their teams and organization reciprocal obligations (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), and thus an agreement about their team psychological contract. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 2: The level of agreement among members regarding their team psychological contract is acceptable.

Methods

Sample description. The study was conducted in a large public security organization located in Canada with many decentralized service points. The study was carried out in 2018 and 2019 of these service points that were chosen according to their situation location and the interest shown by managers in our research. This organization encourages innovations aimed to improve team reactions to the different situations they are exposed to. It tends to be open to the adoption of a more participatory management system which consists of granting more decision-making latitude to work teams. The participating teams were responsible for delivering front-line services (e.g., road safety and interventions operations). These teams are stable and work according to fixed hours. Team members interact frequently concerning their team tasks and goals and have a certain latitude when carrying out their tasks (deciding the appropriate behaviors based on the situation). Data were collected from two samples of participants: Sample 1 consisting of 526 members is used for exploratory purpose. Sample 2 comprising 506 members is for confirmatory analyses. The participation rate is 73 % (i.e., 526 out of 718 individuals) for sample 1 and 56 % (i.e., 506 out of

904 individuals) for sample 2. With regards to the demographic characteristics of the sample 1 team members, 60 % are men, the average age is 39 years ($SD = 9.76$), and they have been employed by the organization for 37 years ($SD = 7.58$) on average. For the team members of sample 2, the proportion of men was 71 %, the average age was 33.41 years ($SD = 7.16$), and the average of organizational tenure was 8.57 ($SD = 5.69$). The sociodemographic characteristics of both samples are representative of the organization's membership.

Procedure. Our data were gathered through questionnaires administered manually to team members in the organization's offices during work hours. Each participant filled out his or her questionnaire individually. A member of the research team was present during the administration of the questionnaires to present the general objectives of the study and to answer participants' questions.

Measures

Team psychological contract. Team psychological contract was measured using an adapted version of Raja et al. (2004) 18-item Psychological Contract Scale version. This scale was originally developed by Millward and Hopkins (1998) and consists of two dimensions comprising relational (11 items) and transactional (20 items) contracts. In order to fit their study, Raja et al. (2004) retained 9 of their 11 relational items and 9 of their 20 transactional items. This measurement scale was selected considering the reduced number of its items and its adaptation to the organizational context. Raja et al. (2004) has, also, been applied in different research on psychological types or content (e.g., Chang, Hsu, Liou, & Tsai, 2014; Simić, Dordević, & Milanović, 2019; Vantilborgh et al., 2013), which supports its validity.

Given that our research is about teams, the items of Raja et al. (2004) scale were reworded using the 'we' in order to reflect the team perceptions instead of each team member own's perceptions to the team-organization mutual obligations. To do so, a referent-shift consensus model was adopted at the team level, meaning that individual team members completed survey items in reference to their typical team perceptions instead of their individual own perceptions (Chan, 1998; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Only 6 items per dimension were selected and translated to French, the others items were discarded because it was difficult, or not possible, to adapt it to the context of teams and to the context of the organization under study (see

Appendix). An example of a non-selected item is ‘Our job means more to us than just a means of paying the bills’. Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Results

Exploratory factor analyses

Exploratory factor analyses (EFA) were conducted, using SPSS 25.0, to determine if items are related to their corresponding dimension. The value of Kaiser – Mayer – Olkin (KMO) index is .77, which indicates that we can proceed to an exploratory factor analysis for our measure. Moreover, Bartlett’s test is significant ($\chi^2 = 1844.78$, $df = 66$, $p < .001$), which indicates that the correlation of items is not null. Means and standard deviations of the measure are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Initial descriptive statistics

Dimensions	Items	Mean	SD
Transactional team contract	1. We work only the hours set out in our contract and no more.	2.25	1.33
	2. Our commitment to this organization is defined in our contract. *	2.47	1.11
	3. Our loyalty to the organization is contract specific. *	2.13	1.18
	4. We only carry out what is necessary to get the job done. *	2.10	1.17
	5. We work to achieve the purely short-term goals of our jobs. *	2.13	1.06
	6. It is important to be flexible and to work irregular hours if necessary. (reverse-coded)	3.75	1.20
Relational team contract	7. We expect to grow in this organization. *	3.25	.97
	8. We feel part of a team in this organization. *	3.00	1.08
	9. We have a reasonable chance of promotion if we work hard. *	2.63	1.30
	10. To us working for this organization is like being a member of a family. *	2.74	1.18
	11. The organization develops/rewards employees who work hard and exert themselves. *	2.26	1.06
	12. We fell this company reciprocates the effort put in by its employees. *	2.47	1.01

$N=526$ participants.

Note: * designates the retained items.

A principal axis factor analysis with an oblimin rotation was used to determine the distribution of items according to the factors. Oblimin rotation was selected because dimensions of team psychological contract are not expected to be completely independent. We restrained the number of factors to two. The results did not exactly replicate the Raja et al. (2004) solution. Two transactional contract items did not “load” on either factor (1 & 6; see Table 2). Considering that this factorial structure did not respect the principles of a simple structure (i.e., loading > .40 and cross-loading > .15), we trimmed the measure so as to retain only the items that replicate loading pattern. In doing so, we retained 4 of the 6 transactional items and 6 relational items. Additional exploratory factor analyses were conducted considering only the 10 psychological contract items. KMO indices is close to one and situated at .79, and the Bartlett’s test is significant ($\chi^2 = 1732.58$; $df = 45, p < .001$). Final EFA is reported in Table 3.

Table 2. Team psychological contract initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA; 12 items)

Item	Loading	
	RTPC	TTPC
1. We work only the hours set out in our contract and no more.	-.04	.25
2. Our commitment to this organization is defined in our contract. *	-.15	.56
3. Our loyalty to the organization is contract specific. *	-.02	.71
4. We only carry out what is necessary to get the job done. *	.05	.66
5. We work to achieve the purely short-term goals of our jobs. *	-.15	.64
6. It is important to be flexible and to work irregular hours if necessary. (reverse-coded)	.12	-.11
7. We expect to grow in this organization. *	.60	-.17
8. We feel part of a team in this organization. *	.59	-.13
9. We have a reasonable chance of promotion if we work hard. *	.61	-.06
10. To us working for this organization is like being a member of a family. *	.54	-.18
11. The organization develops/rewards employees who work hard and exert themselves. *	.79	-.01
12. We fell this company reciprocates the effort put in by its employees. *	.78	-.09

Notes: TTPC = Transactional team psychological contract;

RTPC = Relational team psychological contract

N=526 participants

Note: * designates the retained items.

Table 3. Team psychological contract final exploratory factor analysis (EFA; 10 items)

Item	Loading	
	RTPC	TTPC
2. Our commitment to this organization is defined in our contract.	-.16	.51
3. Our loyalty to the organization is contract specific.	-.20	.72
4. We only carry out what is necessary to get the job done.	-.05	.66
5. We work to achieve the purely short-term goals of our jobs.	-.15	.68
7. We expect to grow in this organization.	.60	-.17
8. We feel part of a team in this organization.	.59	-.15
9. We have a reasonable chance of promotion if we work hard.	.62	-.05
10. To us working for this organization is like being a member of a family.	.54	-.20
11. The organization develops/rewards employees who work hard and exert themselves.	.80	-.00
12. We fell this company reciprocates the effort put in by its employees.	.78	-.11

Notes: TTPC = Transactional team psychological contract;
RTPC = Relational team psychological contract.

N = 526

The shortened 10-item scale revealed a clear two-factor solution that accounted for 44.84 percent of the total variance. Next, reliability of the measure was evaluated by Cronbach's alpha. Coefficient alphas are .75 for transactional team psychological contract and .82 for relational team psychological contract for exploratory sample.

Furthermore, a correlation analysis was conducted for the shortened 10-item scale of team psychological contract (relational = 6 items, and transactional = 4 items). Correlation is significant .037 ($p < .001$), which means that relational and transaction team psychological contracts are completely independent.

Confirmatory factor analyses

Furthermore, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted using AMOS 25.0 to assess the additional evidence of the team psychological contract validity. First, we conducted CFAs using six items associated with the relational team psychological contract and four items associated to the transactional team psychological contract. CFAs were tested at the individual level, instead of the team level, in order to increase the number of observations per estimated parameter. This

procedure is frequently used in testing factor models in studies on teamwork (e.g., Aubé, V. Rousseau, & Tremblay, 2015; Griffith & Sawyer, 2010; Miron-Spektor, Erez, & Naveh, 2011; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011; Sun, Zhang, Qi, & Chen, 2012; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008).

Our two-factor model was tested based on the maximum likelihood method. It is composed of two factors representing relational and transactional team psychological contracts. Based on recommendations of Kline (2005), the overall goodness-of-fit of the CFA model was evaluated by reporting (a) the chi-square test statistics with corresponding degrees of freedom and level of significance, (b) the goodness of fit index (GFI; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008), for which values $> .90$ for a high sample indicate a good fit, (c) the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), for which values $> .90$ are generally considered to be indicative of acceptable fit (Bentler & Bonett, 1980), (d) the root of mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger & Lind, 1980) with its corresponding 90 percent CI, for which values $< .05$ indicates close fit, $.05 - .08$ fair fit, $.08 - .10$ mediocre fit, and $> .10$ poor fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993), and (e) the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR; Bentler, 1995), for which values $\leq .08$ indicates good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The results show that our model presents modest-to-mediocre fit as reported in Table 4 [χ^2/df (216.28 / 34) = 6.36, $p < .001$; GFI = .92; CFI = .90; RMSEA = .10; SRMR = .06]. An examination of modification indices provided by Amos suggested that improvement in model fit could be made when allowing the error terms correlate; that is, between relational items 8 and 10, MI = 6.33, $p < .001$, and between items 11 and 12, MI = 19.05, $p < .001$. Allowing these two pairs of error terms to correlate appeared to be theoretically acceptable, since the respective pairs of items were originally based on two terms presenting the same meaning (i.e., membership and reciprocity, respectively). Therefore, the error correlations were likely to descend from content overlap, which is common in social psychological research (Byrne, 1998). Consequently, we conducted additional CFAs to test our two-factor model and covariate the corresponding errors. The results indicate the improvement of some indices, and yet a good fit of our model [χ^2/df (90.80, $df = 35$) = 2.84, $p < .001$; GFI = .96; CFI = .97; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .048; see Table 4]. In order to support the reliability of the two dimensions with the selected items, we carried out an internal consistency analysis. Coefficient alphas are .75 for transactional contract and .85 for relational contract.

For comparison purposes, a one-factor model was tested in which all the 10 items of psychological contract were constrained to load on one latent factor. This model revealed poor model fit, which excluded the possibility of the 10 items measuring a unitary construct with fit indices $\chi^2/df(517,15, df= 35) = 14.78, p < .001$, GFI = .80, CFI = .73, RMSEA = .17, and SRMR = .012 (see Table 4).

The results show that the two-factor model presents more satisfying fit indices than the one-factor model (see Table 4). Results show significant changes in chi-squared from the two-factor model to the one-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 426.35, p < .001; \Delta df = 3, p < .001$), indicating that the two-factor model fits the data better than the one-factor model.

Together, the findings of preliminary analysis, EFAs, internal consistency, and CFAs gave a strong support to Hypothesis 1 predicting that the team psychological contract is composed of two dimensions, namely transactional and relational.

Table 4. Model Fit summary of Confirmatory Factor Analyses for Team Psychological Contract Measured by Team Members

Model fit index	Initial two-factor model	Final two-factor model	One-factor model
χ^2	216.28*	90.80*	517,15
df	34	32	35
χ^2/df	6.361	2.84	14.78
GFI	.917	.96	.80
CFI	.898	.97	.73
RMSEA	.103	.06	.17
SRMR	.5097	.05	.01

Note. χ^2/df = ratio chi-squared/degree of freedom; GFI = goodness of fit; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root of mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

* $p < .001$, two-tailed. $N = 506$ members.

Data aggregation

As the level of analysis of the psychological contract in the study is the team, the scores measured by team members were aggregated by calculating the average of sufficient to permit data aggregation r_{wg} indices were calculated (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984, 1993). The mean r_{wg} is .77 and the median r_{wg} is .87 for relational contract. For transactional contract, the mean r_{wg} is .72 and the median r_{wg} is .81. For both contract types, the r_{wg} values are well above the recommended

.70 cut-off value (George, 1990). We also calculated intraclass correlation coefficients ICC(1) and ICC(2), and the F -ratio (Bliese, 2000; James et al., 1984, 1993). The values of ICC(1) and ICC(2) are .14 and .38 for relational contract, and .05 and .18 for transactional contract, which means that there is more agreement within teams than between teams. Moreover, the one-way analyses of variance indicate that the F -ratio for relational contract is significant, $F = 2.836$, $p < .001$, and not significant for transactional contract, $F = 1.214$ ($p = .081$). Taken together, these results strongly support the aggregation of individual scores to team scores for team psychological contract, and thus the Hypothesis 2.

Discussion

Psychological contract research has primarily limited the study of the concept to the individual level (e.g., Richard et al., 2009; D. Rousseau, 2011). However, considering the increasing reliance of organizations on teams, this conceptualization appears to be inadequate to study the teams-organization relationships (Gibbard et al., 2017; Marks, 2001). In this study, we drew from the social information processing theory to explain how team members can develop common perceptions about their teams and organization reciprocal obligations. In doing so, our study presents two major contributions to the literature on psychological contract. First, we proposed a reconceptualization of the psychological contract at the team level and demonstrated that when individuals work in teams (by collaborating their efforts and skills to perform the tasks and goals for which their team, as a unit, is responsible), they tend to hold similar perceptions about contributions their team, as a unit, has to provide to their organization and the retributions this latter has promised to offer in return (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). The results also show that this team psychological contract is composed of two dimensions, namely transactional and relational contracts. Based on the nature and conditions of their exchange with the organization, teams, indeed, would develop particular team psychological contracts. Second, our study offers an abridged version of Raja et al. (2004) scale to assess empirically the team psychological contract. The findings about the psychometric properties of team psychological contract provide empirical support for our 10-item version of Raja et al. (2004) scale that has been adapted to teams (and translated to French). Finally, this study adds to the literature on work teams. By considering team psychological contract, we will be able to better understand teams' functioning and to explain why some teams presents more efficiency than others.

At the methodological level, this study has two major strengths. First, it was conducted using two samples (sample 1 = 526 participants, and sample 2 = 506 participants), which are a highly respectable sample sizes considering the inherent challenges of research on teams (Aubé et al., 2015; Kozlowski, 2015). Second, all the teams in our sample come from the same organization, which reduce sources of interference that might contaminate the results. Considering the encouraging results of this study, future research on psychological contract should investigate the concept at the team level. By extending the literature of psychological contract to a higher level of analysis, we will be able to explain important team members' behaviors and attitudes, and to adopt the appropriate practices to ensure the optimal team functioning. Moreover, since our study was conducted among public safety employees who regularly face urgent and particularly dangerous situations, it would be appropriate to reproduce this study in other work environments in order to judge the generalizability of the results obtained.

However, our research has also certain limitations that should be addressed in the future studies. First, this study was carried out at one time point (across-sectional design) that does not allow the development and change of constructs to be observed. Psychological contract is a dynamic construct that is assumed to be able to evolve and change over time (Chambel & Alcover, 2011; Schalk & Rose, 2007). Yet, longitudinal studies are needed in order to assess the team psychological contract and to evaluate the validity, over time, of the modified scale we propose. Another limitation concerns the type of sector the research was conducted in. Our research was conducted in a public organization where employment relationships and psychological contracts are assumed to be based on well-defined and explicit obligations, promises and norms. In private organizations, not all the obligations are explicitly agreed between employees and their organizations. Employees develop psychological contracts based on how each party will behave during their exchange. In addition, people working for public sectors are mainly motivated by the employment security and in the private sector where employees are responsible for their employment (Anderson & Schalk, 1998; Herriot & Pemberton, 1997), which might lead to different results. In that sense, future research should attempt to replicate these findings in private and different sectors.

Practical implications and conclusion

This study answers the call of Marks (2001) on the importance of a reconceptualizing and assessing the concept of psychological contract at the collective level. On the whole, the results are consistent with our predictions and confirm the possibility for team members to develop and hold similar perceptions of team-organization agreement exchange and thus a team psychological contract. To facilitate this, team leaders should encourage regular dialogue between members and with their leader to ensure the same interpretations and understanding among team members regarding the organizational events, systems, values, politics and policies to which they are exposed to (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). The findings of this study suggest that continued research on team psychological contract could help generate recommendations for organizations whose performance depends on the effectiveness of their teams.

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Appendix

Table 5. Team psychological contract items (English and French Version)

Psychological contract dimensions	Items	
	Raja et al. (2004) version	Raja et al. (2004) French version
Transactional team psychological contract	1. We work only the hours set out in our contract and no more.	1. Nous travaillons uniquement le nombre d'heures exigé par notre employeur.
	2. Our commitment to this organization is defined in our contract. *	2. Notre implication envers l'organisation se limite à ce qui est exigé par notre employeur. *
	3. Our loyalty to the organization is contract specific. *	3. Notre loyauté envers l'organisation se limite à notre contrat de travail. *
	4. We only carry out what is necessary to get the job done. *	4. Nous n'effectuons que ce qui est nécessaire pour réaliser notre travail. *
	5. We work to achieve the purely short-term goals of our jobs. *	5. Nous cherchons à atteindre uniquement les objectifs à court terme dans notre travail. *
	6. It is important to be flexible and to work irregular hours if necessary. (reverse-coded)	6. Il est important pour nous d'être flexibles et d'être prêts à travailler des horaires irréguliers si nécessaire. [Item renversé]
Relational team psychological contract	7. We expect to grow in this organization. *	7. Nous pouvons nous développer dans notre organisation. *
	8. We feel part of a team in this organization. *	8. Nous avons le sentiment de faire partie d'une grande équipe dans notre organisation. *
	9. We have a reasonable chance of promotion if we work hard. *	9. Nous avons de bonnes chances d'avoir des promotions si nous travaillons fort. *
	10. To us working for this organization is like being a member of a family. *	10. Nous sommes comme des membres d'une famille dans notre organisation. *
	11. The organization develops/rewards employees who work hard and exert themselves. *	11. L'organisation contribue au développement et récompense les employés qui travaillent fort. *
	12. We feel this company reciprocates the effort put in by its employees. *	12. L'organisation tient compte des efforts déployés par ses employés. *

Notes: * designates the retained items

Article 2: The effect of abusive supervision on relational team psychological contract: A moderated mediation analysis

La première auteure (Madiha Aqerrou) a conçu le projet de l'article, développé la méthodologie, réalisé les différentes analyses de données et rédigé le manuscrit. Le second auteur Vincent Rousseau (professeur à l'Université de Montréal) a orienté la recherche et supervisé toutes les étapes du processus. La troisième auteure Caroline Aubé (professeure à HEC Montréal) et le second auteur ont conçu, organisé, dirigé la collecte de données sur le terrain et ont partagé avec la première auteure (Madiha Aqerrou) les données concernant les concepts à l'étude.

The Effect of Abusive Supervision on Relational Team Psychological Contract: A Moderated Mediation Analysis (Article 2)

Madiha Aqerrout, Vincent Rousseau, and Caroline Aubé

Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the effect of abusive supervision on relational team psychological contract. Moreover, this study investigates the mediating effect of team empowerment on this relationship. Furthermore, this study explores the moderating effect of team attachment styles (anxiety / avoidance) on abusive supervision and team empowerment association.

Findings: The sample consists of 135 teams (514 members and 135 immediate supervisors) drawn from a public safety organization. A mediation analysis showed a strong mediating role of team empowerment in the negative relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contracts. The results also reveal that team attachment styles moderate the relationship that abusive supervision has with team empowerment such that this relationship is stronger when teams are high in attachment avoidance and weaker when teams are high in attachment anxiety.

Implications: This study sheds light on the importance for managers to consider the role that team leaders' practices may play in the shaping and orienting of team members' perceptions of team psychological contract.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to the literature on psychological contract and abusive supervision by adopting a team-level approach. On one hand, the current study adds to the research on antecedents of psychological contract by examining the factors susceptible to influence relational team psychological contracts. On the other hand, our study extends the research on abusive supervision consequences by considering the impact it might have on teams' empowerment and perceptions of relational team psychological contracts, which helps understanding how such a destructive leadership may negatively affect teams' functioning. Furthermore, our study adopted a contingency approach to explore the conditions under which the deleterious effect of abusive supervision might differ (Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013;

Tepper, 2007). Our study indicates that team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) is to consider when trying to understand why abusive supervision is more (or less) harmful on relational team psychological contract.

Keywords

Abusive supervision – Relational team psychological contract – Team empowerment – Team attachment styles (Anxiety / Avoidant).

Introduction

The constant transformations affecting the world of work and the great reliance of organizations on teams has redefined employment relationships. Employment relations are no longer limited to employee-organization but extended to team-organizations agreements (Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Marks, 2001). Such exchange relationships imply the possibility for team members to develop and hold similar beliefs regarding team-organization exchange agreement relationships, which has been theoretically and empirically supported (Aqerrou, V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2021; Gibbard et al., 2017; D. Rousseau, 1995). These team psychological contracts refer to the team perceptions about mutual obligations their team and organizations have toward each one (Aqerrou & al., 2021). While research has demonstrated that the nature of psychological contract plays an important role in the understanding of employee's behaviors and attitudes, little contribution has been made regarding the factors that may influence its development (Kickul & Liao-Troth, 2003; Richard, McMillan-Capehart, Bhuian, & Taylor, 2009). At the team level, the examination of team psychological contract antecedents is critical for the understanding of team's perceptions about their psychological contract types.

Our study focuses on the relational component of team psychological contact as it becomes very challenging to attract and retain employees considering the competitive environment and tight labor market organizations face (Dantas & Ferreira, 2015; Donkor, Adda, & Baidoo, 2021; Gibbard et al., 2017). Given the key role that leaders play in managing and influencing teams (Dierdorff, Rubin, & Morgeson, 2009), their behaviors might have a significant effect on relational team psychological contract. Indeed, since leaders act as organizations' representatives who hold the legitimate authority to direct their teams (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Wageman & Fisher 2014), they are likely to influence their team members' perceptions regarding team-organization mutual obligations. However, the influence of leaders on team members is not always positive (Tepper, 2000; 2007). They might enact destructive behaviors that are likely to affect team members' perceptions regarding their team-organization exchange relationships (Robinson & D. Rousseau, 1994). Specifically, we introduce abusive supervision as a significant organizational factor that may undermine perceptions of relational team psychological contract. The effect of abusive supervision has been emphasized because of its negative influence on employees' attitudes, behaviors but also on the quality of exchange relationships in the workplace (Aryee,

Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2007; Choi, Kim, Yun, 2019; Farh & Chen, 2014; Ghani et al., 2020; Priesemuth et al., 2014; Tepper, 2007). As stated in the social exchange theory, social relationships are based on reciprocal benefits (Blau, 1964). In a team context, team members' perceptions, behaviors and attitudes relate to their leaders' behaviors. Thus, when team members are treated in a respectful way, they tend to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors. In contrast, when team members receive an abusive treatment, they would respond in counterproductive behaviors (Ghani et al., 2020; Wu & Lee, 2016). Accordingly, when team leader displays hostile behaviors, such as publicly ridiculing or mocking (Tepper, 2000; 2007), team members would perceive their organization as not concerned by their needs and wellbeing (Choi et al., 2019; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1990), which is likely to decrease their willingness to hold and maintain emotional, trusting, and loyal relationship with their organization (Millward & Hopkins, 1998; Richard et al., 2009; D. Rousseau, 1995, 2004). Team members would question their common understanding of their team-organization exchange agreement and thereby their team perceptions to the mutual obligations it involves. Therefore, we assume that abusive supervision may act as a key barrier to team members' perceptions of relational psychological contract. However, the existing literature is almost scant on how leadership especially abusive leadership affects employees' psychological contracts. Thus, this study contributes to both abusive supervision and psychological literatures by investigating abusive supervision as an obstacle to team members' perceptions of relational team contract. The effect of abusive supervision not being necessarily the same on employees and teams, it might be more (or less) detrimental on some team members than on others.

To gain a better understanding of the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract, we designed this study by defining two main objectives regarding the mediating and moderating mechanisms of this relationship. First, we examine team empowerment as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract. Team empowerment is a dynamic motivational process that strengthens team members' capabilities to accomplish team tasks (Chen et al., 2007; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kirkman, Telusik & Rosen, 2004; Seibert, Wang, Courtright, 2011). It improves team members' participation to organizational development and their engagement toward their organization, which is likely to enhance members perceptions of relational team psychological contract (Arshad, Sun,

& Desmarais, 2021). Relational team psychological contract is an open-ended exchange that is based on a long-term relationship and requires team members' active participation to the organization development (D. Rousseau, 1995), which involves team empowerment. That is to say, team members are less disposed to have relational team psychological contract when they perceive that their team efforts are unrecognized and that any attempt of taking the responsibility of their team is refused (Mawritz, Dust, & Resick, 2014; Restubog, Scott, Zagenczyk, 2011). Specifically, we posit that abusive supervision may create a negative environment that disables team members from developing empowerment perceptions and feelings, which would compromise the perceptions of relational psychological contract within a team. In other words, abusive supervision may have an adverse effect on relational team psychological contract through the decrease of team members empowerment perceptions. Second, we examine the moderating role team style of attachment (anxiety/avoidance) in regard to abusive supervision and team empowerment relationship. Team style of attachment (anxiety/avoidance) is as a relevant moderator because it represents team members' relational tendencies that occur in stressful interpersonal situations such as abusive supervision. We put forward that the influence of abusive supervision could vary under situational or personal factors in organizational settings (Chiaburu, Lorinkova, & Van Dyne, 2013; Choi et al., 2019). Drawing on contingency approach (Ogunfowora, Weinhardt, & Hwang, 2021; Tepper, 2007; Smith, Murphy, & Coats, 1999), this study considers as moderator team style of attachment (anxiety/avoidance). We suggest that abusive supervision would have a strong detrimental effect when the team members are high in avoidance attachment. Conversely, abusive supervision negative effect is likely to be weak when the team members are high in anxiety attachment.

Notably, aside from providing a broader view of the mechanism through which abusive supervision negatively affects relational team psychological contract, the aim goal of the current study is to explore an expansive view of the organizational aspects within which relational team contract occurs. We designed a moderated-mediation model of the abusive supervision-relational team psychological contract relationship through team empowerment by suggesting team attachment style as a moderating effect. We predict that team attachment style interacts with abusive supervision to predict and alter the degrees of team empowerment and perceptions of relational team psychological contract.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Team psychological contracts refer to team members' beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of teams-organization exchange relationships (Aqerrou et al., 2021; D. Rousseau, 1995). Team psychological contract is a form of social exchange relationship that develops between organizations and teams. Indeed, organizations can develop similar, non-written agreements with teams by making, implicit or explicit, promises to teams in return for the tasks and goals they, as units, are responsible for (e.g., Aqerrou et al., 2021; Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). As a team undertakes its shared tasks, similar perceptions and beliefs regarding the content of the team-organization agreement develop within the team (Marks, 2001; D. Rousseau, 1995, 2001), giving rise to the emergence of team psychological contract (Aqerrou et al., 2021). Team psychological contracts have both transactional and relational components (Liu et al., 2020; D. Rousseau, 2004). Teams, however, can differ in the extent to which their contract is more transactional versus relational oriented (Aqerrou et al., 2021; Thomas, Au, & Ravlin, 2003). Transactional team psychological contracts involve short-term and highly economic exchanges organizations offer for certain services performed by teams (Aqerrou et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2020; D. Rousseau, 1990). These contracts are based on well-defined mutual obligations and are characterized by a limited involvement of the teams and organization where each party is limited to complete the explicit obligations conveyed in the employment contract (Mac Neil, 1985; Richard et al., 2009; D. Rousseau, & Tijoriwala, 1998). Relational team psychological contracts, on the other hand, are long-term and socio-emotional exchanges in nature with highly subjective and implicit obligations. Relational team psychological contracts often comprise beliefs such as respect, trust, loyalty, attachment, and commitment (Aqerrou et al., 2021; D. Rousseau, 1995).

Just like other forms of psychological contracts, relational team psychological contracts are shaped by organizations through its processes, politics, and practices such as leadership (Coyle-Shapiro & Pazerfall, 2008; D. Rousseau, 1989). The literature suggests that leaders in general and leadership style, in particular, may influence employees' psychological contracts (Ghani et al., 2020; Morsch, van Dijk, & Kodden, 2020; Oorschot, Moscardo, & Blackman, 2021; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). Indeed, according to the social exchange theory, leaders act as the organizational agents that send out messages and cues subordinates use to build their understanding of the organizational environment and the terms conditioning their employees-organization agreement

relationship (Blau, 1964; Liu, Zhu, & Wei, 2019; Marks, 2001; Richard et al., 2009; D. Rousseau, 1990). Applied to teams, the actions of a team leader may have a systemic effect on the whole team and affect team members' perceptions and behaviors. Consistent with this view, we propose that abusive supervision represents one of the contextual factors that may affect relational team psychological contract. *Abusive supervision* refers to "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (Tepper, 2000, p. 178). Abusive supervision consists of mistreatment to subordinates through actions such as making negative comments, being rude, giving a silent treatment, breaking promises or expressing anger at subordinates (Arshad et al., 2021; Farh & Chen, 2014; Ma, Zhou, & Mu, 2020; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Tepper, 2007, Tepper et al., 2017). Although research examines the concept at the individual level, abusive supervision may be conceptualized at the team level. Indeed, leaders may direct their abusive behaviors toward the entire team and thus the focus is perceptions that team members commonly develop through their leader repeated abusive actions (Duffy et al., 2006; Priesemuth, Schminke, Ambrose, & Folger, 2014; V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2018). Similarly, the whole team is likely to be affected by abusive leaders' actions when some team members are victims of such behaviors, even if they are not directly abused (Greenbaum, Mawritz, Mayer, & Priesemuth, 2013; Mitchell, Vogel, & Folger, 2012; Priesemuth et al., 2014). Moreover, team members may hold similar perceptions regarding their leader behaviors through the discussion they make about their work experience and their leaders' behaviors, which would result in the development of similar perceptions regarding abusive supervision within a team (Priesemuth et al. 2014; V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2018).

The Mediating Effect of Team Empowerment

Abusive supervision may have negative impacts in organizations (Choi et al., 2019; Kirrane, Kilroy, & O'Connor, 2019; Park & Kim, 2019; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Tepper, 2007). In this study, we propose that abusive supervision in work teams may undermine the perceptions of relational team psychological contract by lessening the level of empowerment displayed by team members. *Team empowerment* refers to the team members increased task motivation that results from their mutual positive assessment of the team organizational tasks (Kirkman & Rosen, 2000; Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk, & Gibson, 2004; Kirkman, Telusk & Rosen, 2004). Team empowerment is a multidimensional construct that consists of four distinct but related and mutually reinforcing

dimensions: autonomy, potency, impact, and meaningfulness (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). *Autonomy* reflects team members' perceptions regarding the degree of freedom, independence, and discretion their team has, to make decisions in accomplishing tasks (Hackman, 1987; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Kirkman et al., 2004). *Potency* is related to the team generalized belief that it can be effective (Guzzo, Yost, Campbell, & Shea, 1993; Kirkman et al., 2004). *Impact* is the perceptions team members have about the significant contribution their teams' work makes for the organization and its effect on stakeholders (Kirkman & Rozen, 2000). Finally, *meaningfulness* concerns the team collective sense of its tasks being important, valuable, and worthwhile (Hackman, 1987; Kirkman & Rosen, 2000; Liu, Wang, & Yao, 2019). In a highly empowered team, its members have a sense of responsibility over their work and the way they carry out the team tasks, they believe they have the capability to successfully perform their team tasks, they feel that their tasks positively influence the organization outcomes, and that they have more intrinsically meaningful work (Seibert et al., 2011). That is to say, team empowerment may be inhibited when low-quality relationships are experienced between team leader and subordinates. With an abusive team leader, members feel denied the right to take control over the tasks and resources to accomplish their work-related tasks (Arshad et al., 2021; Tepper, 2000). Members, also, perceive that their leader does not value their work, which makes them feel their work as worthless to the organization (Mawritz et al. 2014; Restubog et al. 2011; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). By treating them in a punitive way, abusive leader would lead team members to limit their engagement toward their teams and organization (Avey et al. 2015; Restubog et al. 2011; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018), which would translate in a decrease of team empowerment. Abused team members, in other words, feel demeaned and devaluated (Lyu, Zhu, Zhong, & Hu, 2016; Ma, Zhou, & Mu, 2020; Tepper, 2018). They would question their team competence and efficiency, which may intensify members' relational difficulties and undermine their team empowerment (Davis & Bowles, 2018; Farh & Chen, 2014; Tepper, 2018). Such a dysfunctional relationship with the team leader is likely to decrease team members' motivation and determination toward their work (Arshad et al., 2021; Rafferty & Restubog, 2011). Along with these arguments, we advance that abusive supervision diminishes team members' tendency to perceive empowerment.

Moreover, we expect that team empowerment may enhance perceptions of relational team psychological contract. Indeed, employees' empowerment has been suggested to affect

employee's psychological contracts (Paul, Niehoff, & Turnley, 2000). Specifically, empowerment is likely to enhance employees' participation and achievement sense, which would improve their trust and reinforce their obligations toward their organization (Kun, Hai-yan, Lin-li, 2007; Paul et al., 2000). Following the same logic, we suggest that empowered team members would perceive the organization as trusting their team and believing in its ability to successfully achieve its tasks and goals by providing it with the discretion and control to perform its tasks and goals (Chen et al., 2007; Kirkman & Rosen, 1997; Seibert et al., 2011). They also feel that their organization recognizes the importance and relevance of their team's work and acknowledges its significant contribution to the organizational outcomes (Chen et al., 2007; Kirkman & Rosen, 1997). To team members, these actions reflect the value their organization places on their team and thus on their team-organization relationship (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Wu & Chen, 2015). Based on the reciprocity process intended in the exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), we advance that when team members feel empowered by their organization, they tend to reciprocate by engaging in and preserving a long relationship and by exhibiting loyalty, attachment, and commitment toward it, which would reinforce their perceptions of relational team psychological contract. Specifically, empowered team members hold positive perceptions of their team and organisation. They believe in their team competence to significantly contribute to their organizational objectives. They, also, perceive that their organization trusts team capacity to achieve its goals by providing it with the discretion and support to do so. Besides providing team members with more opportunities of sharing ideas, information, and knowledge (Jiang, Flors, Leelawong, & Manz, 2014; Locke, Alavi, and Wagner, 1997), team empowerment would lead members to take initiatives and to put more effort into their team task and to contribute further to the organizational effectiveness. This, in turn, is likely to enhance team trust toward organization and to reinforce team obligations. The collective feeling of being trusted, effective, and able to make a valued difference (Kirrane et al., 2018), is therefore likely to generate and maintain a long-term, broad, and strong team-organization relationship in which team members, feeling obliged to reciprocate, would increase their contributions by going beyond what is required in their team formal tasks to help their organization meeting its goals (Aqerrou et al., 2021; D. Rousseau, 1989).

In the present study, we put forward a mediation model in which abusive supervision indirectly lessen perceptions of relational team contract by undermining team empowerment. That is, team leaders who display abusive behaviors are likely to obstruct team members in perceiving team empowerment, which would deteriorate members' relational team psychological contract. Team empowerment represents the motivation process through which abusive supervision might affect team psychological contract. We formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The relationship between abusive supervision and relational team contract is mediated by team empowerment.

The Moderating Effect of Team Members' Attachment

Based on the contingency theory (e.g., Drach-Zahavy & Somech, 2001; Reeves, Xyrichis, & Zwarenstein; 2018; V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2018), we can expect different team members' attachment styles to influence the negative effect abusive supervision would have on team empowerment. Generally, *team attachment style* refers to team members' mental representation of their team on the basis of their early experiences (family, social or cultural groups) and that generally influence their perceptions, cognitions, affects, and behaviors during group interactions (Markin & Marmarosh, 2010; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Smith, Coats, & Murphy, 2001; Smith et al., 1999). Initially developed to explain the nature of the affective bonds one's make with others (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969), attachment theory was, then, extended to team context to help understanding individual differences in team relationships and teams functioning (Rom & Mikulincer, 2003; Smith et al., 1999). According to Smith et al. (1999, p. 96), "group members have models of themselves as team members and models of groups that in combination affect their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors about their team memberships". Team members' attachment represents, in other words, the lens through which we can comprehend how team members relate or may relate to each other. It describes, particularly, how team members view themselves and other team members, which affects the way they think, behave, and interact with other members within the team (Markin & Marmarosh, 2010; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Rom & Mikulincer, 2003; Smith et al., 1999; Yip, Ehrhardt, Black, Walker, 2017). Team members' attachment can be of attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance toward a team (Smith et al., 1999). While *team attachment anxiety* depicts the team members perceptions regarding the value their team has

towards them, *team attachment avoidance* represents the value team members place on the team. Team members with a high level of team attachment anxiety tend to be insecure about themselves and feel unworthy as team members. These individuals are concerned and worried about how they are perceived by other team members and by being accepted by the team they perceive as valuable (Rom & Mikulincer, 2003; Smith et al. 1999). They try to please their team and fit in by conforming, for example, to its norms and standards (Smith et al., 1999). At the opposite, team members who are low in team attachment anxiety perceive a team as warm and accepting and thus they are less preoccupied by pursuing team acceptance (Leiter, Day, & Price, 2015; Smith et al., 1999). Team members who score high in team attachment avoidance tend to be independent and self-sufficient. These individuals have a negative view of others and tend to be self-reliant, distant, and aloof in relationships (Leiter et al., 2015; Smith et al., 1999). They avoid closeness to a team and inclusion and perceive the connection to the team as unnecessary or undesirable (Lavy, Bareli, & Ein-Dor, 2015; Rom & Mikulincer, 2003). Conversely, team members who are lower on team attachment avoidance accept dependence and intimacy with teams as being of positive value and attempt to increase and maintain this type of closeness (Smith et al., 1999).

Attachment styles are likely to influence individuals' ability to handle stress, to control emotions, and to seek and utilise social support (Jiang, 2017; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). We advance that team attachment style may moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment, such that this negative association would be weaker for teams high in attachment anxiety, and stronger for teams high in attachment avoidance. Indeed, because of their compulsive need for attention and care and their strong seeking for proximity, team members with high attachment anxiety would turn to their fellow team members for assurance, support, and protection in order to respond to stressful events at work (Cassidy, Jones, & Shaver, 2013; La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Ogunfowora, Weinhardt, & Hwang, 2021; Yip et al., 2017). Moreover, highly anxious team members show difficulties to effectively manage emotional experiences within their workplace and translate it into serious threats (Bowlby, 1982; Ogunfowora et al., 2021; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007), which results in an overdependence on the attachment figure team and closeness-seeking strategies (Fraley et al., 2006; Ogunfowora et al., 2021). Thus, in a situation where the team leader engages in abusive behaviors, highly anxious team members would rely on their teammates for compassion and assurance (Luu, 2017). They

would direct their effort and energy toward guarding and maintaining their relationships with their team (La Guardia et al., 2000; Luu, 2017), which is likely to reduce the negative effect of abusive supervision and foster team empowerment. Thus, when the level of team anxious attachment is high, the detrimental effect of abusive supervision on team empowerment is lessened.

Conversely, highly avoidant team members display a strong need for autonomy and independence and prefer situations where they do not have to socialize with others (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Schusterschitz, Danay & Geser, 2018; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007; Smith et al., 1999). Additionally, due to their positive view of themselves and negative view of others, highly avoidant team members actively minimize feelings towards the team as a mean to preserve themselves from painful relationship experiences, which reduces the importance of the team for themselves (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Ogunfowora et al., 2019; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007). Accordingly, when faced with an abusive leader, a high level of team attachment avoidance would lead members to withdraw into themselves and avoid contact with their team leader and teammates, which is likely to increase the disengagement from the team and lessen members' "teamness" (Kerrane et al., 2018; Ogunfowora et al., 2019; Tilden et al., 2016) and perceptions of empowerment. Wanting to avoid contact with their abusive leader, avoidant attached team members would be less interested to work with their team and would turn in and count on themselves to accomplish solely their work, which would lessen the probabilities for team members to hold common perceptions. Consequently, when the level of team attachment avoidance is high, the negative effect of abusive supervision on team empowerment is amplified. To test the moderating effect of team members' attachment styles with regard to relationships between abusive supervision and team empowerment, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment is moderated by team attachment style, such that this negative relationship is weaker when team is high in attachment anxiety.

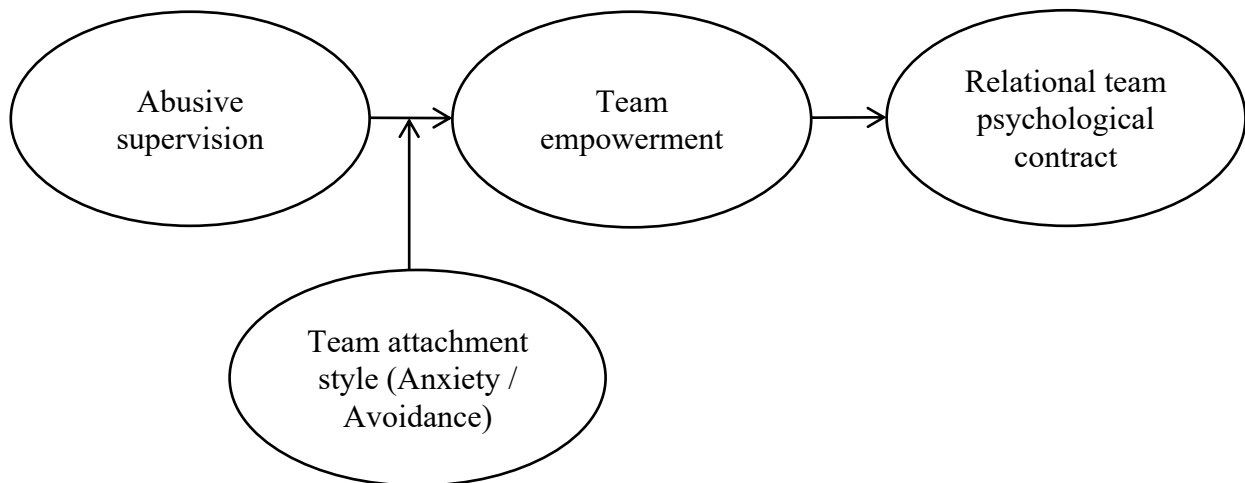
Hypothesis 3: The relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment is moderated by team attachment style, such that this negative relationship is stronger when team is high in attachment avoidance.

The Moderated Mediation Model

Hypothesis 1 suggests that team empowerment mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract. Hypotheses 2 and 3 predict that team attachment style has a moderating effect on the relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment. Taken together, these mediating and moderating effects represent a moderated mediation model (Edwards & Lambert, 2007; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; see Figure 1). This hypothesized model means that abusive supervision has an indirect effect on relational team psychological contract through team empowerment and this indirect effect is contingent of whether team attachment is anxious or avoidance oriented is the level of team attachment style. Therefore, the hypothesis of this moderated mediation effect is formulated:

Hypothesis 4: Team attachment style moderates the mediating effect of team empowerment on the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract, such that the mediating effect is weaker when team is high in attachment anxiety and stronger when team is high in attachment avoidance.

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the hypothesized model



Method

Sample

Our study was conducted in a large Canadian public safety organization. This organization is responsible of applying the law and promoting public safety. Teams participating to this study are stable teams that work according to fixed hours and are responsible of providing front-line services. Team members interact frequently to deal with complex and unpredictable situations characterized by intense time pressures (e.g., emergency measures, road safety interventions). This organization promotes a participative management where teams are given increased decision latitude.

The sample included 135 work teams, which represent 514 members. The team count between 2 and 11 members ($M = 4.95$; $SD = 2.34$) excluding their immediate superior of each team. The average response rate within teams is 80% ($SD = 19\%$). Data regarding the demographic characteristics of the team member participants indicated that the proportion of men was 69 %, the average age was 33.8 years ($SD = 5.2$), and the average tenure was 8.9 years ($SD = 4.4$). The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample are representative of the organization's membership.

Procedure

To test our hypotheses, questionnaires based on existing, standardized scales and few additional demographic variables were completed. Questionnaires were distributed during work hours and were completed, individually, by each team members and immediate superiors. A research assistant was present during the administration of the questionnaires. His role consisted of presenting the goal of the study, explaining the ethical considerations, and answering the participants' questions. Each questionnaire includes a short notification indicating the ethical considerations of the study.

Measures

Data were collected from two sources of evaluation (i.e., team members and their organization). The team members provided data regarding team psychological contract, abusive supervision, team empowerment, team members attachment and team tenure. The organization provided data

about team size. All the measures were translated from English to French using the back-translation method (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018).

Abusive supervision. To assess abusive supervision, we used Harris, Harvey, and Kacmar (2011) brief version of Tepper's (2000) 15-item measure of abusive supervision. The brief scale that consists of six items allowing the best capture of the abusive behaviors (i.e., Xu et al., 2018). These items were adapted to the team context to reflect the team experience instead of individual experience to the abusive behaviors exhibited by their leader. To do so, a referent-shift consensus model was adopted at the team level, which means that individual team members completed survey items in reference to their typical group experience instead of their personal experience (Chan, 1998; Kozlowski & Klein 2000; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Using this approach to assess abusive supervision at the team has been widely adopted in previous studies (e.g., Jiang & Gu, 2016; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2014, 2018). Sample items included: "Our team leader ridicules some team members" and "Our team leader puts down some members in front of others." Respondents rated their responses on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*almost always*).

Team psychological contract. The reported psychological contract was measured using Aqerrout et al. (2021) 10-item Team Psychological Contract Scale version. This scale was adapted based on Raja, Johns, and Ntalianis (2004) 18-item Psychological Contract Scale version based on the earlier scale developed by Millward and Hopkins (1998). Raja et al. (2004) measure consisted of two dimensions transactional (9 items) and relational (9 items). Aqerrout et al.'s scale was adopted to reflect the team members' perceptions to their team–organization exchange agreement. It consists of two dimensions comprising relational (6 items) and transactional (4 items) contracts. In order to fit their study, Aqerrout et al. (2021) retained 6 of their 9 relational items and 4 of their 9 transactional items. As the focus in this study is on relational team psychological contract, only 6 items are considered. An example of selected item is "We expect to grow in this organization". Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Team empowerment. Team empowerment was measured using Kirkman et al. (2004) 12-item scale. This scale consists of four dimensions that meant to assess team members' perceptions of empowerment through 3 items (potency, meaningfulness, autonomy, and impact). Data were collected from each team member and then aggregated to form the team empowerment score. An

example of the selected item is “My team has confidence in itself”, “My team believes that its projects are significant”, “My team can select different ways to do the team’s work”, and “My team has a positive impact on this company’ customers”. Respondents used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Team members’ attachment style. Team members’ attachment style was evaluated using Davis and Jowett (2013) 10-item Brief Attachment Questionnaire. This scale comprises two subscales: anxiety (5-items) and avoidance (5-items) and uses a 7-point Likert type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). In order to fit our research and the organizational context under study, we retained 4 anxiety items and 4 avoidance items that were translated to French. These 8 items were used to report each team members attachment (e.g., anxiety – “I often wonder if my teammates care about me”; avoidance – “I don’t usually discuss my problems or concerns with my teammates”).

Control variables. In order to explicitly consider and eliminate alternative explanations for observed effects, we controlled the effect of two variables commonly used in team composition literature (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010; Stewart & Johnson, 2009). These variables are team size (i.e., the number of members in each team) and team tenure (i.e., the months / years worked by each member within its team). Generally, team size and team tenure have been proposed to influence team-level constructs (e.g., Boehm et al., 2014; Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). Team empowerment and relational team psychological contract are likely to be related to team tenure and team size. Indeed, when team members have worked together for long time, chances of interaction and experiences sharing are higher, which is likely to influence their collective perceptions and feelings regarding their team empowerment and the type of their team-organization mutual obligations (Ogunfowora et al., 2019; Marks, 2001). In the same vein, communication and discussion between team members may be obstructed in a large team size may limit because of physical distance and communication problems. This is likely to damage team empowerment feelings and their perceptions of relational team psychological contract (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016). Accordingly, team size and team tenure are included as control variables.

Results

Preliminary Analyses and Data Aggregation

Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), internal consistency reliabilities, and intercorrelation of study variables. As is shown in Table 1, the alpha coefficient values of the variable under study range from .86 to .94, providing evidence of internal consistency of the scales. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) were conducted, using Amos, 26.0 software, to establish the distinctiveness of abusive supervision, team empowerment, relational team psychological contract, team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance). In order to have a sufficient number of observations per estimated parameter, these analyses were carried out at the individual level (instead of the team level; Miron-Spektor, Erez, & Naveh, 2011; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Moreover, 3 item parcels for team empowerment were used (each parcel included 4 items representing each dimension of team empowerment). These parcels were created using factor loading strategy based on preliminary analysis at the item level. The expected five-factor model (a priori model) was compared with four plausible alternative models, which are: (a) a four-factor model in which three factors, respectively, are abusive supervision, team empowerment, relational team psychological contract, and the fourth factor is a combination of the two dimensions of team members' attachment styles (anxiety and avoidance), (b) a three-factor model in which each one factor represents the supervisor level (abusive supervision), the second factor is related to team members' individual characteristics (team members' attachment styles), and the third factor is associated team members' perceptions (team empowerment and relational team psychological contract), (c) a two-factor model in which one factor designs team supervisor (abusive supervisor) and the other factor represents team members (team empowerment, team members' attachment styles, and relational team psychological contract), and (d) a one-factor model that gathers all the items within one latent variable. The CFA results show that the expected five-factor model had a better fit to the data in comparison with the four alternative models (see Table 2). We conclude, therefore, that abusive supervision, team empowerment, relational team psychological contract, and team members' attachment style may be considered as distinct variables in hypotheses testing.

Data regarding abusive supervision, team empowerment, and relational team psychological contract were collected at the individual level. Given that our study focuses on teams, we

aggregated individual scores to the team level by calculating the average of individual scores for each team. Since team attachment styles (anxiety and avoidance) represent individual characteristics, it is not required to assess the level of agreement among team members, because they do not necessarily have the same level.

Data aggregation is supported using the interrater agreement within teams (r_{wg}), the interclass correlation coefficients ICC(1) and ICC(2), and the F ratio (Bliese, 2000; James et al., 1984, 1993). The average r_{wg} is .95 for abusive supervision, .93 for team empowerment, and .78 for relational team psychological contract, which is higher than the recommended .70 cutoff values (George, 1990). The values of ICC(1) and ICC(2) are .22 and .52 for abusive supervision, .29 and .61 for positive team empowerment, and .14 and .38 for relational team psychological contract, which means that there is more agreement within teams than between teams. Results of an analysis of variance indicate that the F ratio is significant for abusive supervision, $F = 2.06, p < .001$, team empowerment, $F = 2.56, p < .001$, relational team psychological contract, $F = 1.62, p < .001$, which means that the average scores differed significantly across teams. Taken together, the high average r_{wg} , the high value of ICC(1) and ICC(2), and the significant F statistic results support the aggregation of individual scores to team scores for abusive supervision, team empowerment, and relational team psychological contract.

Since team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) refers to an individual characteristic, it is not necessary to verify aggregation indices.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations Between Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Abusive supervision	1.45	.48	(.92)						
2. Team empowerment	5.55	.64	-.46**	(.91)					
3. Relational team contract	2.64	.53	-.17*	.43**	(.89)				
4. Anxiety attachment	2.67	.88	.38**	-.40**	-.16	(.94)			
5. Avoidant attachment	2.63	.81	.40**	-.46**	-.21*	.74**	(.86)		
6. Team size	4.95	2.34	-.07	.02	.01	.14	.15	--	
7. Team tenure	2.20	1.91	-.06	.11	-.22**	-.10	-.03	-.15	--

Note: $N = 135$ teams. Reliability estimates (Cronbach's alphas) are in parentheses.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 2. Model Fit Summary of Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Models	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC
A priori model (five-factor model)	609**	220	2.77	.90	.94	.06	.05	721.61
Alternative models								
Four-factor model	851.35	224	3.80	.86	.91	.08	.06	955.35
Three-factor model	1573.27	227	6.93	.73	.80	.11	.09	1671.27
Two-factor model	2953.22	229	12.90	.57	.60	.16	.15	3047.22
One-factor model	4135.49	230	17.98	.46	.43	.19	.18	4227.49

Note. χ^2/df = ratio chi-squared/degree of freedom; GFI = goodness of fit; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root of mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; AIC = Akaike information criterion.

a. These tests compare the a priori model to the alternative models.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed. $N = 135$ teams.

Testing the Mediation Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 posits that the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract is mediated by team empowerment. This hypothesis was tested by a path analytic procedure using the Amos 26 software and the maximum likelihood method to estimate the parameters of the models. The potential effect of team size and team tenure was considered by including direct paths from team size and team tenure to team empowerment and relational team psychological contract.

Results indicate that the hypothesized model (Model 1) has a very good fit: χ^2/df (22.12, $df = 18$) = 1.23, $p < .001$; GFI = .97; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .08. In addition, the path estimates are significant for the relationships between abusive supervision and team empowerment (estimate = -.33; $p < .001$) and between team empowerment and relational team contract (estimate = .38; $p < .001$). The indirect effect in the mediation model was assessed using the bootstrapping strategy as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Based on a 5000-bootstrap sample, results show that the indirect effect of abusive supervision on relational team psychological contract is significant (estimate = .13, bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of -.23 to -.02). According to these results, we concluded that the relationship between abusive

supervision and relational team psychological contract is mediated by team empowerment, which supports Hypothesis 1.

Testing the Moderation Hypothesis

Hypotheses 2 and 3 predict that team anxious attachment and team avoidance attachment, respectively, are likely to moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment. Particularly, we created two cross-product interaction terms: the first one involving abusive supervision and team anxious attachment and the second one including abusive supervision and team avoidance attachment. To reduce the multicollinearity between abusive supervision and team anxious / avoidance attachment, we centered the scores of these variables and the interaction terms. The interaction term for abusive supervision and team anxiety attachment has a significant path estimate (estimate = .33; $p = .04$) and explains 2.3 % of team empowerment variance. The interaction term for abusive supervision and team avoidance attachment has a significant path estimate (estimate = -.40; $p < .001$) and explains 3.4 % of team empowerment variance. Taken together, these results support the moderating effect of team attachment style (anxiety/avoidance).

Table 3. Conditional effects of abusive supervision on team empowerment at values of team members' attachment style (anxiety / avoidance)

Avoidance	Anxiety	
	High	Low
High	-.37 ($p = .002$)	-1.005 ($p = .001$)
Low	.34 ($p = .24$)	-.30 ($p = .22$)

$N = 135$ teams.

To probe the moderating effect, we used SPSS Process (Dawson, 2014; V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2018), which allows the identification of all ranges of anxiety and avoidance team attachment that are significant (or not significant) predictor of team empowerment (see Table 3). Results indicate that the effect of abusive supervision on team empowerment is significant when the levels of team avoidance and anxiety attachment are high ($p = .002$) but also when team attachment style is high in avoidance and low in anxiety ($p = .001$). However, the association between abusive supervision and team empowerment becomes non-significant when team attachment style is low in avoidance and high in anxiety ($p = .24$), and when team avoidance and anxiety attachment levels are low

($p = .22$). No matter the level of team anxiety attachment, when team avoidance attachment is low, abusive supervision has a weak effect on team empowerment. This effect becomes negative and stronger when team avoidance attachment is high. These findings, in other words, mean that the effect of abusive supervision is more destructive at a low level of team anxiety attachment and a high level of team avoidance attachment. Moreover, team avoidance attachment, comparing to team anxiety attachment, plays a stronger role in moderating the relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment.

To interpret the significant moderating effect, we plotted the moderating effect at three values of team attachment style, namely, the mean, one standard deviation below the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean of the moderating variable (Cohen et al., 2003). Figures 2 and 3 show that the form of moderation is consistent with Hypotheses 2 and 3. As predicted, the strength of the relationship between team attachment style and team empowerment is variable depending on the level of team attachment style. The relationship is stronger when the level of team anxiety attachment is lower, and the level of team avoidance attachment is higher.

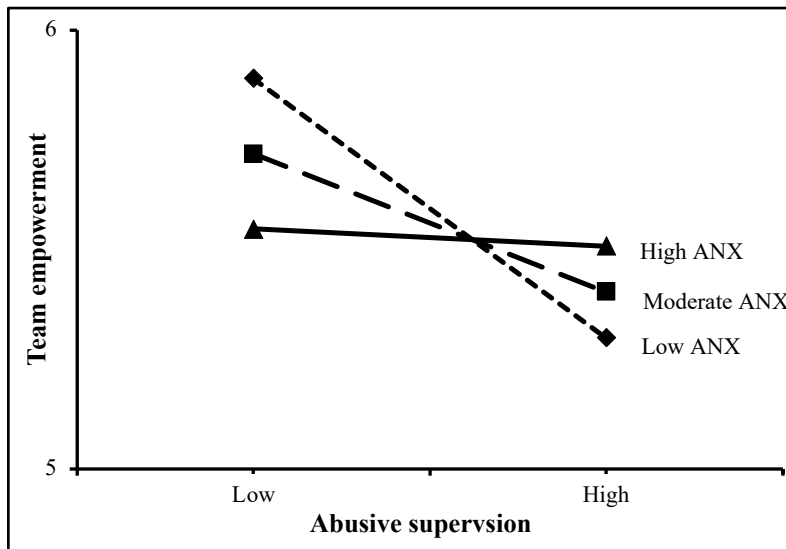


Figure 2. Relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment for low, moderate, and high levels of team attachment anxiety.

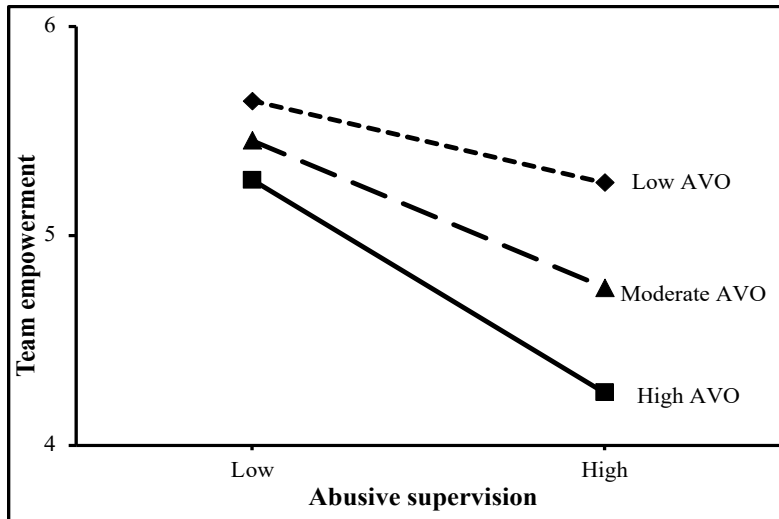


Figure 3. Relationship between abusive supervision and team empowerment for low, moderate, and high levels of team attachment avoidance.

Testing the Moderated Mediation Hypothesis

Hypothesis 4 predicts that the team attachment style (anxiety/avoidance) moderates the indirect effect of abusive supervision on relational team psychological contract through team empowerment. To test this hypothesis, we used Process (SPSS macro) designed by Hayes (2017). Based on 5000-bootstrap sample, the value of the index of moderated mediation is .13 for team anxiety attachment (bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of -.08 to .29) and -.16 for team avoidance attachment (bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of -.31 to .12). Although the values are not significant, the estimates of indirect effect increase in magnitude in function of the levels of team anxiety attachment and team avoidance attachment. While the index moderated mediation results are not significant, the indirect effect at values of team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) and the path model (model fit and path estimates) tend to support to Hypothesis 4 regarding the moderated mediation model.

Supplementary Analysis

Supplementary analyses were conducted in order to rule out some plausible alternative interpretations. Specifically, we compared the hypothesized model (Model 1) with an alternative model (Model 2). **Model 2** (abusive supervision to relational team psychological contract to team empowerment) includes *abusive supervision*, *relational team psychological contract*, *team empowerment*, *team tenure*, *team size*. The results show that the hypothesized model (Model 1) had a better fit to the data in comparison with the alternative model (Model 2). As reported in

Table 2, the prior model (Model 1) [χ^2/df (22.12, $df = 18$) = 1.23, $p < .001$; GFI = .97; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .08] fits the data significantly better than the alternative model (Model 2). Model 2 revealed poor model fit [χ^2/df (30.86, $df = 4$) = 7.71, $p < .001$; GFI = .92; CFI = .61; RMSEA = .22; SRMR = .11]. Taken together, the results provide more support to the priori path model (Model 1) in comparison with the alternative model (Model 2).

Discussion

Theoretical implications

The present study was designed to examine the effect of abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract by considering the mediating role of team empowerment and the moderating effect of team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance). The results of this study offer three major contributions to the literature on psychological contract and abusive supervision. First, although the seminal conceptualization of psychological contract has acknowledged that a group of individuals can develop a shared non-written agreement with their organization, the team psychological contract has received little, if any, attention in the psychological contract literature (Gibbard et al., 2017; Marks, 2005; D. Rousseau, 1989, 1995). Drawing on the team level psychological contract conceptualization, our study extends this line of research by shedding light on the input factors that might influence relational team psychological contract. Moreover, researchers have long called for studying antecedents of psychological contract (e.g., Guest, 1998). Adding to this line of research, the findings of the current study confirmed that a leader who displays abusive behaviors is likely to negatively affect the development of relational team psychological contract. Similarly, we adopted a team approach to examine the effects of abusive leadership on relational team psychological contract and concluded that abusive supervision has a detrimental effect on the development and preservation of relational team contract within a team. This approach is consistent with previous studies conducted at the team level showing the destructive effects of abusive supervision (e.g., Jiang & Gu, 2017; Priesemuth et al., 2014; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). These contributions are important because it adds to the growing body of literature defending the importance of analyzing social exchange indicators at a higher level (e. g., teams) and help better understanding teams' functioning (Gibbard et al., 2017; Marks, 2005).

Our findings indicate, furthermore, that the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract is indirect through team empowerment. Specifically, a team leader who displays abusive behaviors toward members is likely to lessen empowerment perceptions among the team, which in turn may decrease the disposition of team members develop perceptions of relational team psychological contract. Examining a mediating mechanism is meaningful in advancing our understanding of the relationship between abusive supervision and relational team psychological contract. Our findings, also, suggest that team empowerment is a critical factor for the members' relational team psychological contract considering its role in increasing team members' cognitions of competence, meaningfulness, autonomy, and impact (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Kirrane et al., 2018; Spreitzer, 1995). Such feelings instill confidence among team members and promote their organizational engagement and commitment and thereby their willing to engage in a long and non-tangible agreement relationship with their organization.

The present study makes another important contribution by showing that the influence of abusive supervision could be changed under personal characteristics of subordinates (e.g., Chiaburu, Lorinkova, & Van Dyne, 2013; Choi et al., 2019; Howell et al., 2007; Kirrane et al., 2018). Specifically, our study investigated how team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) may influence the pernicious effect of abusive supervision on team empowerment. Our results reveal that the indirect effect of abusive supervision on relational team psychological contract via team empowerment is attenuated when team members are high in team anxiety attachment. In contrast, abusive supervision is likely to have an amplified indirect effect on relational team psychological contract when the team is high in attachment avoidance. Our findings are generally consistent with group attachment theory according to which avoidant team members tend to be self-sufficient and to disengage from affiliation with their team by suppressing negative emotions and any need of support to deal with work problems, whereas anxious individuals tend to seek help and assistance from their team as a source of identity and esteem (Rom & Mikulincer, 2003; Smith et al., 1999). Considering the findings of this study, leadership and psychological theories may be supplemented by including team members' attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) as a moderating factor that helps understanding why abusive supervision may have harmful effects on certain team's outcomes and not on others. Likewise, future studies on teams' functioning should take into consideration the effect of team members' attachment style because of the role the attachment

orientation plays in shaping individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors (Bowlby, 1982; Lavy et al., 2014).

Overall, the results of our study show that abusive supervision should be taken seriously by organizations. Team members receiving negative treatment from their leader may perceive their organization as a stressful workplace where their contributions are not considered or paid back, which is likely to undermine teams functioning and effectiveness.

Study Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

The present study is subject to limitations that open up some crucial interesting avenues for future research. First, our cross-sectional survey limits our ability to achieve causal inferences from the data. Relational team psychological contract and the factors that impede its development likely unfold over time. Our study captures a snapshot of this process in time and as such, underestimates the consequences of abusive supervision perceptions. Similarly, all the data of our study were collected from the same organization, which might limit the external validity of our results. Indeed, each organization is unique by its own characteristics (e.g., values, structure, gender representation). It is worthwhile conducting research longitudinal research or an experimental design using different context and research settings to strengthen the generalizability of our findings and to show the possibly continuing and devastating effects of abusive supervision on team members perceptions, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (Ogunfowora et al., 2019). Second, abusive supervision, team empowerment, relational team contract and team attachment style (anxiety / avoidance) were assessed by team members, which represents a potential risk of common method bias that is likely to influence our study results. We tried to reduce this risk by choosing scales that were validated in previous studies (Kirrane et al., 2018; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). We, also, considered the possibility for team members to have rated their abusive supervision being aware that their leader is also taking the survey. Thus, to counter any response tendencies and social desirability, we ensured total anonymity to our participants (Choi et al., 2019; Kirrane et al., 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2003). Common method bias is not of major issue for the current study since it displays significant interaction effects (Evans, 1985). Indeed, CFAs results offered strong support for the distinctiveness of our variables. Moreover, the moderating role of team attachment style is

significant, which suggests that the method bias is not problematic for this study. However, in order to increase objectivity, future research should use different approaches and methods when gathering data.

Practical Implications and Conclusion

Despite some limitations, this research provides practical insights for both the management and organization. Since team psychological contracts are formed by team members and organizations, it is the organization that influences the type of contract developed (Richard et al., 2009). Providing managers with an understanding of how relational team psychological contracts are developed and maintained would help them capturing and implementing management practices that are likely to nurture the adequate climate ought to boost positive beliefs among team members. The present study reveals that abusive supervision can prevent team members from developing and holding relational perceptions about their teams-organization reciprocal obligations through the decrease in the level of team empowerment perceptions. Consequently, organizations should attentively monitor the occurrence of abusive supervision. Particularly, organizations should initiate clear policies about acceptable and non-acceptable behaviors within the organization (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Organizations should encourage team leaders undertake management and interpersonal skills development training to ensure their understanding of the downsides of enacting abusive behaviors. By doing so, organizations will facilitate build quality relationships between team members and their leaders, which would result in an increased feelings of responsibility, motivation, impact, and meaningfulness within the team (Seibert et al., 2011) and the shaping of team members to orient toward relational team contracts. Additionally, our results show that team attachment styles (anxiety / avoidance) moderate abusive supervision and team empowerment association, such as this negative association is stronger when team members are high in attachment avoidance and weak when team members that are highly anxious. Team members who score high in attachment anxiety tend to positively handle the negative effect of abusive supervision by relying on and supporting each other (La Guardia et al., 2000; Luu, 2017), which helps keeping their team empowerment perceptions and their relational contract towards their organization. Contrary, team characterized by a high level of attachment avoidance are likely to ignore their teammates and count on themselves to face their abusive leader, increasing thereby detachment from the fellow team (Ogunfowora et al., 2019) and reducing the possibility for

empowerment and relational contract perceptions to develop. Organizations should be aware that not all team members react similarly to stressful job events. Indeed, while support might be beneficial for some employees, it is disadvantageous for others. By understanding teams' attachment styles, organizations will be able to provide team members with appropriate support resources that would prevent negative consequences on team functioning.

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Article 3: Team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors: The effects of team positive affective tone and team member interdependence

La première auteure (Madiha Aqerrout) a conçu le projet de l'article, développé la méthodologie, réalisé les différentes analyses de données et rédigé le manuscrit. Le second auteur Vincent Rousseau (professeur à l'Université de Montréal) a orienté la recherche et supervisé toutes les étapes du processus. La troisième auteure Caroline Aubé (professeure à HEC Montréal) et le second auteur ont conçu, organisé et dirigé la collecte de données sur le terrain et ont partagé avec la première auteure (Madiha Aqerrout) les données concernant les concepts à l'étude.

Team Psychological Contract and Team Self-Managing Behaviors: The Effects of Team Positive Affective Tone and Team Member Interdependence (Article 3)

Madiha Aqerrout, Vincent Rousseau, and Caroline Aubé

Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the role of psychological contracts regarding team self-managing behaviors. Furthermore, this study examines the mediating role of team affective tone in this relationship. Moreover, this study assesses the moderating effect of task interdependence on the relationship between team affective tone and team self-managing behaviors.

Findings: The sample consists of 135 teams (514 members and 135 immediate supervisors) drawn from a public safety organization. A mediation analysis showed a strong mediating role of positive affective tone in the relationship between team psychological contracts and team self-managing behaviors. The findings also indicate that task interdependence significantly moderates the relationship that positive affective tone has with team self-managing such that this relationship is stronger when the level of task interdependence is high.

Implications: This study highlights the importance for managers to consider the critical role of team psychological contracts and team affective tone to improve team members' willing to engage in team self-managing behaviors.

Originality/Value: The study contributes to the literature through at least two ways. First, the study examines the exhibition of team members to self-managing behaviors using the psychological contract framework and the team affective tone concept, which offers extra evidence to the body of psychological contract and the group affect literature. Second, this study adopts a structural contingency approach rather than the universalistic approach (e.g., Drach-Zahavy & Freund, 2007; Hollenbeck et al., 2002) to investigate the relationship between team affective tone and team self-managing behaviors.

Keywords:

Relational team psychological contract – Team self-managing behaviors – Team positive affective tone – Task interdependence.

Introduction

An increasing number of organizations have adopted self-managing work teams to ensure the flexibility and adaptability necessary to thrive in an increasingly turbulent business environment and to respond to employees' desire for more participation and autonomy (Cohen, Ledford, & Spreitzer, 1996; Magpili & Pasos, 2018; Schreuder, Schalk, & de Jong, 2017). Self-managing teams consist of groups of independent individuals with diverse skills and knowledge who are likely to exercise discretion over decisions associated with the team task accomplishment, such as assigning tasks to each team member, selecting the methods that help to schedule the work activities, and monitoring the team performance (Cohen & Ledford, 1994; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Members have a certain degree of autonomy to formulate strategies, to make decisions regarding the strategies and methods required to manage, accomplish, and evaluate their project, to develop the knowledge and skills the team needs to meet its goals, and to solve team problems and conflicts (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Lawler, 1986; Leach, Wall, Rogelberg, & Jackson, 2005; Magpili & Pazos, 2018; Thoms, Pinto, Parente, & Druskat, 2002; Wellins & George, 1991; Yang & Guy, 2011). That is, team members mutually plan, manage their tasks, and self-regulate their behaviors to attain the established goals (Cohen et al., 1996; Cummings & Griggs, 1977; De Jong, De Ruyter, & Lemmink, 2004; Magpili & Pasos, 2018; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010).

Despite the literature claim for adoption of self-managing teams, their implementation does not necessarily result in effectiveness ((Beekun, 1989; Cohen & Ledford, 1994; Corderey, Mueller, & Smith, 1991; Guzzo, Jette, & Katzell, 1985; Magpili & Pazos, 2018). Such inconsistencies may mean that not all teams are prone to engage in behaviors that allow them to take on the responsibility of managing their teams. Indeed, it has been argued that research should, instead of studying the effectiveness of self-managing teams, focus on identifying and exploring the factors that may influence team members' willingness to enact self-managing behaviors (Magpili & Pazos, 2018; Millikin, Hom, & Manz, 2010; Stewart, 2006). In line with this call, our study proposes that team members' perceptions of their team contract are likely to affect their willingness to adopt team self-managing behaviors. Team psychological contract refers to team members beliefs regarding their team-organization reciprocal obligations (Aqerrou & V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2021). Although psychological contract has been, widely, used as a reference framework to

comprehend employees' behaviors and attitudes at the individual level (Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Mai et al., 2016; Restubog et al., 2015), a recent group level conceptualization of psychological contract has shown that the concept can be studied at the team level and that team contract can be of relational and transactional (Aqerrout et al., 2021). This conceptualization suggests that team members, as part of exchange, are likely to hold common beliefs regarding team-organization mutual obligations. This team psychological contract may be relational or transactional depending on the conditions and terms surrounding team-organization exchange agreement. Therefore, team psychological contract may be a good lens through which one can understand how team members perceptions, about team-organization reciprocal obligations, are likely to explain the development of discretionary and motivational behaviors team members need to self-manage their team (Organ, 1997; Robinson, & Morrison, 1995). Particularly, the type of team psychological contract may help understanding why team members would engage in specific behaviors to self-managing their team. In this study, we focus on relational team contract because, in a competitive environment, this component of team contract is likely to ensuring the sustainability and optimal functioning of work teams (De Meuse, Bergmann, & Lester, 2001). Moreover, when a team psychological contract is relational, team members perceive their team-organization relationship as trust and loyalty founded where each party is concerned by the other party needs and by the respect of its part of obligations (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1990). As a result, team members engage in a long-term and stable relationship, identify with the organization, and willingly orient their cognitive and emotional investment to help organization meet its goals (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2010). This is translated into positive behaviors such as affective engagement, loyalty, and organizational commitment (Millward & Hopkins, 1998; Richard, McMillan-Capehart, Bhuian, & Taylor, 2009; D. Rousseau, 1995, 2004). Consequently, the current study differs from the previous research by examining the role of relational team psychological contract, as a positive component of team psychological contract, on team self-managing behaviors. We drew on a group level approach of psychological contract (e.g., Aqerrout et al., 2021; Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016) to study how team members perceptions of their team psychological contract are likely to influence their disposition to engage in team self-managing behaviors.

In the perspective of contributing to both psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors literatures, we suggest in this study that relational team psychological contract is likely to motivate

team members to take on the responsibility of managing their team by organizing, adjusting, monitoring, and managing their efforts to accomplish the team tasks and goals. Understanding such an effect requires, however, the consideration of the process through which relational team psychological contract can influence team self-managing behaviors, and the circumstances that might foster this relationship. That is, the purpose of this study is to investigate, first, the mediator role that team positive affective tone may play in the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors. Building on team affective tone research (e.g., Barsade & Knight, 2015; Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018; Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005; Van Kleef et al., 2009), we advance an affective state that helps understanding how positive feelings may orient team members willingness to adopt self-managing behaviors. This study, also, aims to examine the moderating role of task interdependence on the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors. Task interdependence acts as a contextual factor that affects differently the effect of positive team affective tone on team self-managing behaviors. Particularly, we suggest that team positive affective tone would have a strong positive effect when team tasks require a high interdependence among team members. Task interdependence is of crucial importance as a moderator because it reflects the need for team members to rely on each other to accomplish their team task (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Vidyanthi et al. 2014).

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Generally, psychological contract refers to the employees' perceptions regarding the terms of the mutual obligations that bind employees and their organization (D. Rousseau, 1991). The content of psychological contract consists of employees' beliefs and perceptions regarding the contributions they promised to provide to the organization, and the attributions their organization, in return, owe to them (Alcover, Rico, Turnley, & Bolino, 2017; Lambert, Edwards, Cable, 2003; D. Rousseau, 1990, 1995). *Team psychological contract* is defined as "team members' perceptions of the contributions their teams are supposed to provide to the organization, and the inducements their organization has promised to offer in return to the team as a unit" (Aqerrou et al., 2021). Team psychological contract can be of a transactional or relational form in an employment relationship (Aqerrou et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2020; Raja, Johns, & Ntalianis, 2004). Specifically,

the relational team psychological contract refers to long-term, open-ended, and socio-emotional exchanges that are based on mutual trust and loyalty (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1990). On the contrary, transactional team psychological contract is short-term and monetary oriented and focuses on specified and reciprocal exchanges agreement between team members and their organization (Liu et al., 2020; D. Rousseau, 1990).

The Mediating Role of Positive Team Affective Tone

In this study, we propose that relational team psychological contract may increase team self-managing behaviors by enhancing team positive affective tone. *Team self-managing behaviors* refer to the actions team members engage in collectively to take on responsibilities for managing their team's established tasks and goals (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Team members, as a unit, have the authority to define the ways members' efforts should be organized, monitored, managed, and even evaluated to perform the teams' work (Hakman & Wageman, 1995; Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001; Van der Vegt, Bunderson & Kuipers, 2010). Fundamentally, team members should display four key behaviors to engage in self-management, namely self-planning, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement, and self-adjustment (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010; V. Rousseau, Aubé, & Savoie, 2006; Tata & Prasad, 2004; Wageman, 2001). *Self-planning* is related to the means and actions put forward to achieve the team's goals. Self-planning consists of describing each team member's tasks and responsibilities, elucidating performance and environmental opportunities and threats, and specifying the prioritized tasks (DeChurch & Haas, 2008; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). *Self-monitoring* refers to collecting the information that helps team members following their work progression and promptly identify and correct any inconsistencies (Marks & Panzer, 2004; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). *Self-reinforcement* resides, for teams, in rewarding team members in order to improve desired behaviors (Carson, Mosley, & Boyar, 2004; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Team members can reward themselves not only for displaying desired behaviors but also to motivate members to remain to exhibit these behaviors by granting them with valued incentives. *Self-adjustment* refers to the team members' capacity to face internal or external changes that might affect the progress of the team's work towards achieving goals (Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, & Mathieu, 1995; V. Rousseau et al., 2006; Salas et al., 2005). To do so, team members may be required to abandon regular or expected behaviors and

methods and engage in others (e.g., plan reviewing, members' tasks and responsibilities reconsidering, goals changing) [Cannon-Bowers et al., 1995; D. Rousseau et al., 2010].

Team/group affective tone refers to an emergent state that is held or shared, in common, by the members of a team (Barsade & Knight, 2015; Georges, 1990, 1996; Lin, He, Baruch, & Ashforth, 2017). By working on a team, individuals are exposed to the same events and circumstances (Barsade & Knight, 2015; Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018; Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005; Van Kleef et al., 2009). Team members collaborate closely and interdependently to accomplish tasks and achieve the goals their team, as a unit, is responsible for (Aqerrou, 2014; V. Rousseau, Aubé, & Savoie, 2006). Such an interaction results, for team members, in developing similar affective experiences that may have a great impact on the team functioning and outcomes (Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2016; Barsade, 2002; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Zhang, Zhang, & Qiu, 2020). Specifically, team members observe one another's facial expressions, body language, and tone, and develop a perception of his/her colleague's affect (Barsade, 2002). This expression of emotions may, through the process of emotional contagion and imitation, be transferred to other team members who no consciously mimic each other's facial expressions and body language (Barsade, 2002; George, 1990; Knight et al., 2018; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Sy et al., 2005). This mimicry engenders the perceiver to feel the emotion released by his colleague, which leads to the development of a similar and collective affective tone (Barsade & Knight, 2015). Team affective tone is composed of two dimensions: team positive affective tone and team negative affective tone (Barsade, 2002; George & Zhou, 2002, 2007; Knight & Eisenkraft, 2015; Paulsen, Klonek, Schneider, & Kauffeld, 2016; Zhang et al., 2020). A team positive affective tone represents team members' common experience of positive affective states (Chi, Tsai, & Tseng, 2013; George, 1990). When the affective tone is positive in the team, most individuals express positive affect such as enthusiasm, pride, and excitement. Such an affective state makes other team members perceive the team context and work environment as enjoyable, friendly, safe, and supportive (Chi et al., 2013; George & King, 2007). In addition, a team positive affective tone can facilitate team members willingness to engage in organizational citizenship (Chi, Chung, & Tsai, 2011; Collins, Lawrence, Troth, & Jordan, 2013; Mason & Griffin 2003; Tanghe, Wisse, & Van Der Flier, 2010) and to be more cooperative, altruistic, and committed in work (Barsade, 2002; Sy et al., 2005). On the other hand, team negative affective tone refers to the homogenous experience of negative states within the team (e.g., sadness, frustration, or

nervousness) [Chi et al., 2013; Paulsen et al., 2016; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988]. When seeing that most team members are nervous, irritable, and anxious, individuals are more likely to perceive the work environment as unpleasant, hostile, and non-supportive (George, 1990; Chi et al., 2013; Collins et al., 2013). Moreover, when team affective tone is negative, team members are less inclined to communicate and support each other, which results in the experience of many types of conflict and the decrease of prosocial behaviors (Chi et al., 2013; Collins et al., 2013; George, 1990).

Based on the above reasoning, we suggest that relational team psychological contract is likely to influence team positive affective tone, which, in turn, would affect the team members' willing to engage in self-managing behaviors. More specifically, when team members hold common perceptions regarding their teams-organization mutual obligations, they would develop similar beliefs and ideas about the work their team must provide and the retributions their organization should offer in return. Such perceptions can generate, among members, similar emotions, and affective reactions toward their relationship with their organization, tasks, responsibilities, and goals. In turn, this team affective tone would influence the team members' willing to take on responsibilities for managing their teams' tasks, resources, plans, and goals (Alcover et al., 2017; Marks, 2001).

Moreover, we advance that team positive affective tone creates a positive work context that is likely to encourage team members engaging in self-managing behaviors. With a relational team psychological contract, team-organization exchange agreement is guided by trust, respect, and loyalty (D. Rousseau, 1989). The parties are committed to respect their mutual obligations and to help each other meet its needs. By working in such a supportive, pleasant, and friendly environment, team members will optimistically perceive things, they will feel positively toward their team and organization, and they will tend to show empathy, sympathy, and enthusiasm (Ilies et al., 2006; Lin et al., 2017; Watson et al., 1988). Thus, team members will tend to actively coordinate, cooperate, and support each other (Barsade, 2002; George & Brief, 1992; Ilies et al., 2006; Lin et al. 2017; Watson et al., 1988). They will, also, show motivation to take on the management of their team by adapting and adjusting their behaviors to what is required to self-manage their team (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Conversely, when the team psychological contract is transactional, individuals have an economic and specific exchange relationship with

their organization (Lemire, 2005; MacNeil, 1985; D. Rousseau, 1995). Team members and their organization limit their efforts to what is agreed upon and are concerned by their own needs (D. Rousseau, 2011). When holding such beliefs, individuals will perceive their context as competitive, hostile, and non-supportive, and will be anxious and irritable (George, 1990; Chi et al., 2013; Collins et al., 2013). They will, also, be less inclined to communicate, coordinate and support each other, which will result in the deterioration of the team relationship and the experience of many conflicts (Chi et al., 2013; Collins et al., 2013; George, 1990). In summary, as individuals in the same team share common relational perceptions regarding their teams-organization mutual obligations, a generalized team positive affective tone can emerge making team members engage in similar positive behaviors. To test the mediating effect of team positive affective tone regarding relationships between the team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors, the following hypotheses is formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Relational team psychological contract has a positive indirect relationship with team self-managing behaviors via team positive affective tone.

The Moderating Effect of Task Interdependence

In this study, task interdependence is considered as a moderating factor in the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors. Task interdependence refers to “the degree to which work is designed so that members depend upon one another for access to critical resources and create workflows that require coordinated action” (Courtright, Thurgood, Stewart, & Pierotti, 2015; p. 5). In other words, task interdependence represents the degree to which the accomplishment of one’s task depends on others’ skills and efforts (Langfred, 2007; Wageman & Baker, 1997). Particularly, the more individuals need each other to perform their tasks, the more they need to cooperate and interact (Bertzen & Wong, 2019; Orton & Weick, 1990). Task accomplishment may be designed at varying levels of interdependence (Langfred, 2007; Wageman, 1995). Indeed, the level of task interdependence can vary along a continuum from low to high (Aubé, V. Rousseau, Mama, & Morin, 2009). Task interdependence is high when the work necessitates a close collaboration of employees to perform their tasks. On contrary, task interdependence is low when the accomplishment of the work can be handled individually by employees. In the team context, task interdependence has been listed as a primary structural factor

of teams and a fundamental characteristic that influences members' coordination and interaction (Bailey, Leonardi, & Chong, 2010; Courtright et al., 2015; Langfred, 2007). Similarly, task interdependence has been noted among the team-level success factors for team self-managing (Bertzen & Wong, 2019; Magpili & Pazos, 2018).

We assert that task interdependence may moderate the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors, such that this relationship is stronger when the level of task interdependence is high. Indeed, a high level of interdependence requires team members to closely collaborate with one another and coordinate each one's skills and knowledge in order to perform their team task (Bertzen & Wong, 2019). Because team members with positive affects are prone to be supportive and friendly (Barsade, 2002; Lin et al., 2016; Waston et al., 1988), a great task interdependence would help members to enhance members' mutual beliefs regarding the team capability of managing itself and achieving its tasks and goals (Alcover et al., 2017). Actually, a high level of task interdependence requires team members to rely on each other and to share and combine each one's efforts, knowledge, and skills to accomplish the team task (Bertzen & Wong, 2019; Courtright et al., 2015). Such a situation would help members get an idea about the team skills and ability to deal with the different situations their team may face. Accordingly, a high level of task interdependence is likely to strengthen the tendency of team positive affective tone to be manifested in team self-managing behaviors. In other words, the team positive affective tone would increase team members' willing to engage in team self-managing behaviors in a context where team members actively depend on each other's skills, knowledge, and efforts (task interdependence). At a lower level of task interdependence, conversely, team members do not need to coordinate and collaborate to accomplish their team task: each member completes solely his or her part of the team task. In this case, team positive affective tone might not be translated into team self-managing behaviors. In other word, when team members work independently, they are less concerned about the optimal functioning of their team and therefore less interested by taking its management.

In line with this, we believe that the positive effect of team positive affective tone on team self-managing behaviors is likely to be amplified by a high level of the team members' interdependence in accomplishing their tasks. To test the moderating effect of interdependence

with regard to relationships between the team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors, the following hypothesis is formulated:

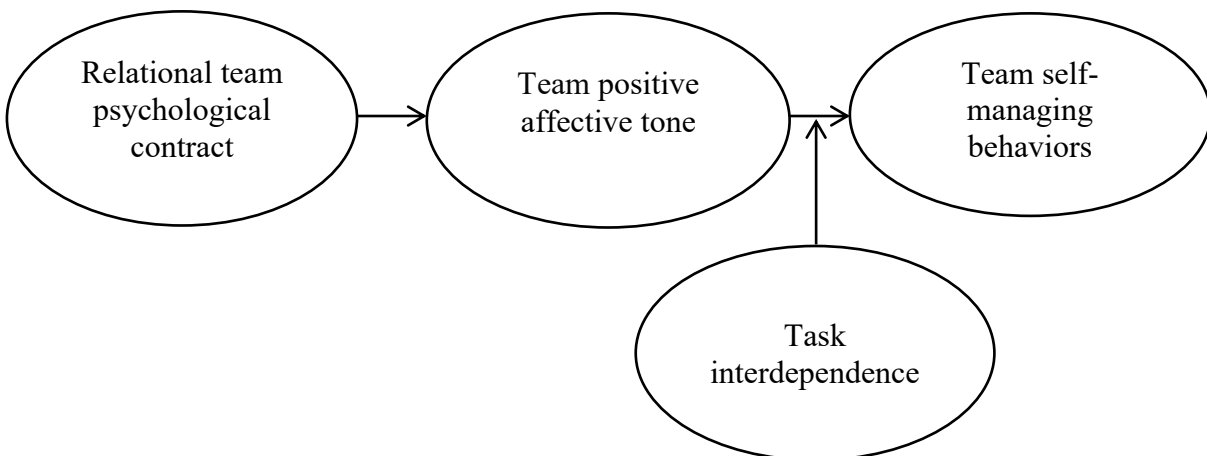
Hypothesis 2: The relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors is moderated by task interdependence, such that this positive relationship is stronger when the level of task interdependence is high.

A Moderated Mediation Model

Hypothesis 2 suggests that positive team affective tone mediates the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors. Hypothesis 3 predicts that task interdependence has a moderating effect on the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors. Taken together, these mediating and moderating effects represent a moderated mediation model (Edwards & Lambert, 2007; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2014; see Figure 1). This hypothesized model means that relational team psychological contract has an indirect effect on team self-managing behaviors through team positive affective tone and this indirect effect is contingent upon the level of task interdependence. Therefore, the hypothesis of this moderated mediation effect is formulated:

Hypothesis 3: Task interdependence moderates the mediating effect of team positive affective tone on the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors, such that the mediating effect is stronger when task interdependence is high.

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the hypothesized model



Method

Sample

We conducted our study in a large Canadian public safety organization. Teams participating to this study are stable teams that work according to fixed hours. These teams are responsible of providing front-line services and have had to deal with complex and unpredictable situations characterized by intense time pressures (e.g., emergency measures, road safety interventions). In order to improve teams' reactions to such situations, this organization is moving towards a participating approach that consists of giving more decision latitude to team members.

The sample included 135 work teams, which represent 514 members. The team count between 2 and 11 members ($M = 4.95$; $SD = 2.34$) excluding their immediate superior of each team. The average response rate within teams is 80% ($SD = 19\%$). Data regarding the demographic characteristics of the team member participants indicated that the proportion of men was 69%, the average age was 33.8 years old ($SD = 5.2$), and the average tenure was 8.9 years ($SD = 4.4$). The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample are representative of the organization's membership.

Procedure and Measures

Data were obtained using the survey method. Each team members and their immediate superiors completed, individually, the survey during regular work hours. A research assistant was present during the administration of the questionnaires. His role consisted of presenting the goal of the study, explaining the ethical considerations, and answering the participants' questions.

Data were collected from two sources of evaluation: team members and their immediate superiors. Team members provided data regarding team psychological contract, team affective tone, team self-managing behaviors, and team tenure. Immediate superiors assessed task interdependence and organization provided data regarding team size. All the measures were administered in French.

Team psychological contract. Team psychological contract was assessed using Aqerrou et al. (2021) 10-item Team Psychological Contract Scale version comprising relational team psychological contract (6 items) and transactional team psychological contract (4 items). This scale is an adaptation of Raja et al. (2004) 18-item Psychological Contract Scale version to the team

context to reflect the shared perceptions developed by team members. As the focus in this study is on relational team psychological contract, only 6 items are considered. An example of selected item is “We expect to grow in this organization”. Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Team affective tone. Team affective tone was measured by using 14-item Hentschel et al. (2013) Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale version. This scale was originally developed by Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, and Kelloway (2000) and consists of two dimensions comprising positive affective tone (7 items) and negative affective tone (7 items). In the current study, we focus on the team positive affective tone. The items of this scale were modified so they can adapt to the context of teams and to reflect the shared emotions developed by team members using the ‘we’ instead of ‘I’. An example of the items is “Our job made us feel excited”. Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*).

Team self-managing behaviors. Team self-managing behaviors were evaluated using 8-item scale developed by V. Rousseau, and Aubé (2010), which assess the extent to which team members engage in self-planning, self-monitoring, self-reinforcing, and self-adjusting. An example of the items is (a) “We plan the accomplishment of our work activities”. Participants provided their responses on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 (*not true at all*) to 5 (*totally true*).

Task interdependence. Task interdependence was evaluated using Aubé et al. (2010) scale adaptation. This scale was originally designed by Pearce and Gregersen (1991) and then translated from English to French by Aubé et al. (2010) based on back-translation method. Aubé et al. (2010) measure includes five items that assess the extent to which the team members depend on each other to accomplish their tasks. An example of the items is “Members of this team must frequently coordinate their efforts”. A 6-point Likert-type response scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*) was used.

Control variables. To explicitly consider and eliminate alternative explanations for observed effects, we controlled the effect of two variables commonly used in team composition literature (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010; Stewart & Johnson, 2009). These variables are team size (number of members in each team reported by team immediate superiors) and team tenure (months /years

worked by each member within its team). Team size and team tenure have been widely proposed as important factors shaping team-level constructs (e.g., Boehm et al., 2014; Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). Team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors are likely to be associated with team tenure and team size. Indeed, when team members' relationships are long standing, opportunities of interaction are increased which is likely to affect their common affective experiences and feelings but also their collective willing to engage in team self-managing behaviors (Barsade & Knight, 2015; Marks, 2001). Conversely, a large team size, due to physical distance and coordination issues, would hinder interaction and exchange among members, which may harm the team positive affective tone and reduce the disposition of team members to take on the management of their team (Smith et al., 1994). Therefore, team size and team tenure are included as control variables.

Results

Preliminary Analyses and Data Aggregation

Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), internal consistency reliabilities, and intercorrelation of the study variables. As we can see in Table 1, alpha coefficients of the variables under study range from .88 to .92, indicating that the reliability of the measures is more than acceptable. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) were conducted, using Amos, 26.0 software, to establish the distinctiveness of relational team psychological contract, team positive affective tone, and team self-managing behaviors. We performed these analyses at the individual level (rather than the team level) to have a sufficient number of observations per estimated parameter, which is consistent with many studies on teams (i.e., Griffith & Sawyer 2010; Miron-Spektor, Erez, & Naveh, 2011; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011; Sun, Zhang, Qi, & Chen, 2012). Additionally, we created 4 parcels for team self-managing behaviors (each parcel included 2 items) using factor loading strategy based on preliminary analysis at the item level (i.e., having one strong loading and one weak loading; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). The a priori model comprises three factors in which one factor represents relational team psychological contract, team positive affective tone, and team self-managing behaviors. Our expected three-factor model was compared with 2 plausible alternative models: (a) a two-factor model in which one factor designs team members' perceptions (relational team

psychological contract and team positive affective tone) and the other factor represents team behaviors (team self-managing behaviors), and (b) a one-factor model that gathers all the items within one latent variable. The CFA results show that the expected three-factor model had a better fit to data in comparison with the two alternative models (see Table 2). Accordingly, relational team psychological contract, team positive affective tone, and team self-managing behaviors may be considered as distinct variables in hypotheses testing.

Data aggregation is supported using the interrater agreement within teams (r_{wg}), the interclass correlation coefficients ICC(1) and ICC(2), and the F ratio (Bliese, 2000; James et al., 1984, 1993). The average r_{wg} is .78 for relational team psychological contract, .91 for team positive affective tone, and .89 for team self-managing behaviors, which is higher than the recommended .70 cutoff values (George, 1990). The values of ICC(1) and ICC(2) are .14 and .47 for relational team psychological contract, .19 and .48 for team positive affective tone, and .19 and .47 for team self-managing behaviors, which means that there is more agreement within teams than between teams. Results of an analysis of variance indicate that the F ratio is significant for relational team psychological contract, $F = 1.62, p < .001$, team positive affective tone $F = 1.92, p < .001$, and team self-managing behaviors $F = 1.88, p < .001$, which means that the average scores differed significantly across teams. Consequently, considering the high average r_{wg} , the high value of ICC(1) and ICC(2), and the significant F statistic, we concluded that the aggregation of individual scores to team scores is supported for relational team psychological contract, team positive affective tone, team self-managing behaviors, and task interdependence.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations Between Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Relational team contract	2.64	.53	(.89)					
2.Team positive affective tone	3.41	.42	.52**	(.91)				
3.Team self-managing behaviors	3.73	.45	.17*	.41**	(.92)			
4.Task interdependence	3.87	.73	.09	.13	.08	(.88)		
5.Team size	4.95	2.34	.01	.00	-.20*	.25**	--	
6.Team tenure	2.20	1.91	-.22**	-.16	.05	-.04	-.15	--

Note. N = 135 teams. Reliability estimates (Cronbach's alphas) are in parentheses.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 2. Model Fit summary of Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Models	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC
A priori model (three-factor model)	442.94**	116	3.82	.90	.93	.08	.05	516.94
Alternative models								
Two-factor model	1038.95	118	8.81	.74	.80	.13	.09	1108.95
One-factor model	1880.22	119	1.8	.62	.61	.17	.13	1948.22

Note. χ^2/df = ratio chi-squared/degree of freedom; GFI = goodness of fit; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root of mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; AIC = Akaike information criterion.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed. $N = 135$ teams.

a. These tests compare the a priori model to the alternative models.

Testing the Mediation Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 states that the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors is mediated by team positive affective tone. To test this hypothesis, we conducted a path analytic procedure using Amos 25.0 software and the maximum likelihood method to estimate the parameters of the models. The potential effect of team size and team tenure was considered by including direct paths from team size and team tenure to team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors.

Results indicate that the hypothesized model (Model 1) has a very good fit: $\chi^2/df(15.65, df=9) = 1.74, p < .001$; GFI = .97; CFI = .92; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .06. Moreover, the path estimates are significant for the relationships between relational team psychological contract and team positive affective tone (estimate = .40; $p < .001$) and between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors (estimate = .44; $p < .001$). The indirect effect in the mediation model was assessed using the bootstrapping strategy as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Based on a 2000-bootstrap sample, results show that the indirect effect of relational team psychological contract on team self-managing behaviors is significant (estimate = .18, bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of .08 to .30). Based on these results, we concluded that the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team

self-managing behaviors is mediated by team positive affective tone, which supports Hypothesis 1.

Testing the Moderation Hypothesis

Hypothesis 2 predicts that task interdependence is likely to moderate the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors. Particularly, we created a cross-product interaction term involving team positive affective tone and task interdependence. To reduce the multicollinearity between team positive affective tone and task interdependence, we centered the scores of these variables and the interaction term. The interaction term has a significant path estimate (estimate = .28; $p = .01$) and explains 3 % of team self-managing behaviors variance, which supports the moderating effect of task interdependence.

To probe the moderating effect, we used the Johnson-Neyman technique based on SPSS Process (Dawson, 2014; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018), which allows the identification of all ranges of task interdependence that are significant (or not significant) predictor of team self-managing behaviors. Results show that the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors becomes significant ($p < .05$) when the level of task interdependence is at least $-.76$ (for centered values).

To interpret the significant moderating effect, we plotted the moderating effect at three values of task interdependence, namely, the mean, one standard deviation below the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean of the moderating variable (J. Cohen, P. Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). Figure 2 shows that the form of moderation is consistent with Hypothesis 2. As predicted, the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors is stronger when the level of task interdependence is higher.

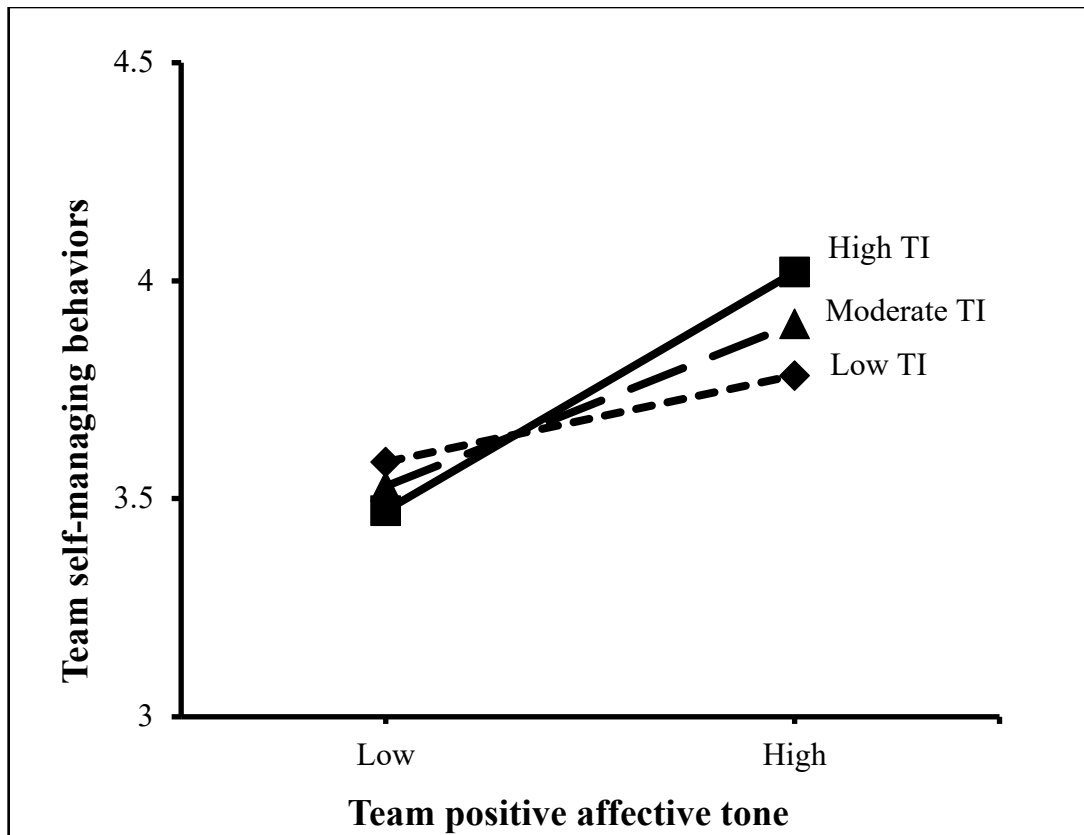


Figure 2. Relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors for low, moderate, and high levels of task interdependence (TI).

Testing the Moderated Mediation Hypothesis

Hypothesis 4 suggests that the task interdependence moderates the indirect effect of relational team psychological contract on team self-managing behaviors through team positive affective tone. To test this hypothesis, we used Process (SPSS macro) designed by Hayes (2017). Based on 5000-bootstrap sample, the value of the index of moderated mediation is .11 (bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of .08 to .21), which is marginally significant. Furthermore, indirect effects were calculated at three values of task interdependence (e.g., one standard deviation below the mean, the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Results indicate that the estimate of indirect effect is significant at the low level of task interdependence (estimate = .11, bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of .01 to .26), at the mean (estimate = .20, bias-corrected 95 % confidence interval of .10 to .34) and at the high level

(estimate = .27, bias-corrected 95 % confidence interval of .13 to .44). Consequently, the estimates of indirect effect increase in magnitude as the level of task interdependence becomes greater. Based on the index of moderated mediation, the indirect effects at three values of task interdependence, and the path model (model fit and path estimates), the results of this study tend to support Hypothesis 4 regarding the moderated mediation model.

Supplementary Analysis

Supplementary analyses were conducted in order to rule out some plausible alternative interpretations. Particularly, we compared the hypothesized model (**Model 1**) with an alternative model (Model 2). **Model 2** (team positive affective tone to relational team contract and team self-managing behaviors) includes *team positive affective tone*, *relational team psychological contract*, *team self-managing behaviors*, *task interdependence*, *team tenure*, and *team size*. The results show that the hypothesized model (Model 1) had a better fit to the data in comparison with the alternative model (Model 2). The prior model (Model 1) [χ^2/df (15.65, $df = 9$) = 1.74, $p < .001$; GFI = .97; CFI = .92; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .06] fits the data significantly better than the alternative model (Model 2). Model 2 revealed poor model fit [χ^2/df (38.93, $df = 9$) = 4.32, $p < .001$; GFI = .92; CFI = .64; RMSEA = .16; SRMR = .06]. In addition, results indicate that Model 1 has the lowest value of Akaike information criterion (AIC = 67.652) compared with AIC values of Model 2 (AIC = 76.935). The model with the lowest AIC value is the best fitting one comparing to other models (Burnham & Anderson, 2004; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Consequently, the results provide more support to the priori path model (Model 1) in comparison with the alternative model (Model 2).

Discussion

As organizations are increasingly relying on self-managing teams, we intended to explore the role of relational team contract on team self-managing behaviors. Specifically, this study applied the group-level approach of psychological contract to examine the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors by considering the mediating role of team positive affective tone. Furthermore, based on a structural contingency approach, we

investigated the moderating effect of task interdependence on team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors relationship.

Theoretical implications

The results of our study contribute to the psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors literatures. First, our study broadens the research on the psychological contract by investigating the concept outcomes on individuals' behaviors at the team-level. This contribution is important because, previous research have focused on psychological contract outcomes at the individual level, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Millward & Hopkins, 1998; Raja et al., 2004; Richard et al., 2009; D. Rousseau, 1990). Although the studies at the individual-level are valuable, the study of the effects of team psychological contract type on team processes and team outcomes may enriches our understanding of team psychological contract. In the current study, our results reveal that relational team psychological contract is a precursor to improve the willingness of team members engaging in self-managing behaviors.

Our findings, also, indicate that the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors is indirect through team positive affective tone. Particularly, team members who hold a relational psychological contract are likely to develop positive emotions and affective reactions toward their relationship with their organization, tasks, responsibilities, and goals, which in turn would influence the team members' willing to take on responsibilities for managing their teams' tasks, resources, plans, and goals (Barsade, 2002; Hatfield et al., 1994). Team positive affective tone is, therefore, a motivational mechanism that is likely to be improved by relational team psychological contract and enhance self-managing behaviors among work team. Our findings give an additional support to the psychological contract as a consistent framework that provides a comprehensive understanding motivational processes in work teams. Thus, relational team psychological contract may shape members' affect and elicit their positive behaviors toward their teams and organizations (Conway & Briner, 2002; Zhao et al., 2007). That is, this research offers a better comprehension of the mechanisms that underlie the implementation of team self-managing behaviors success. Establishing team self-managing behaviors in organizations requires a comprehension of the key factors favourable to sustained success (Magpili & Pazos, 2018).

Another important contribution of this study concerns the moderating effect of task interdependence. Our findings show that when task interdependence is high, the relationship between team positive affective tone and team self-managing behaviors is stronger. Importantly, team positive affective tone may have an increased effect when team members have to closely and mutually interact to accomplish their tasks. These results mean that perceiving positive affects does not necessarily result, for team members, in adopting self-managing behaviors. Team positive affective tone would highly manifest in team self-managing behaviors if team task requires team members to share, coordinate, and associate their mutual experiences and expertise (Berntzen & Wong, 2019). This would enhance team members beliefs about their team capacity of being autonomous able to plan their work, to find out the appropriate information and methods to perform its tasks and goals, and to enact and adjust behaviors required to face work situations (DeChurch & Haas, 2008; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Besides showing the crucial role of task interdependence in increasing the effect of team positive affective tone on team self-managing behaviors, these findings support the structural contingency approach (e.g., Drach-Zahavy & Freund, 2007; Hollenbeck et al., 2002; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010) according to which the intended effect of behaviors is likely to vary depending on the situational characteristics. Simply stated, this study opens up a new avenue through which to examine the role of relational team psychological contract in the nature of psychological contract literature, which has received surprisingly little, if any, attention from researchers.

Study Limitations and Conclusion

Despite its valuable contributions to psychological contract and teams' literature, our study has some limitations that suggest directions for the study variables. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limits causal conclusions among the study variables. Although the post hoc analysis confirmed that the proposed moderated mediation model was the best-fitting one, causal inferences regarding our study findings should be made with caution. For future research, we strongly recommend designing longitudinal studies using different research settings (e.g., lab experiment, hospitals) to test the mediation model tested in our study to establish stronger causality among our study variables and to capture the temporal dynamics involving relational team psychological contracts and team processes and outcomes. Second, there might be a potential risk of common method bias considering that relational team psychological contract, team positive affective tone,

task interdependence and team self-managing behaviors were assessed by team members. We tried to minimize this matter by collecting data from two different sources (i.e., team members and team supervisors), choosing validated scales in the previous research, varying the response scales (Podsakoff et al., 2012; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). However, common method bias is less likely to be a problem for this study because it exhibits significant interaction effects (Evans, 1985). CFAs results provided strong support for the distinctiveness of our study variables. Similarly, the moderating effect of task interdependence is significant, which indicates that the method bias is not a major issue. Indeed, the bias can deflate (but not inflate) interaction or moderating effects (Podsakoff et al., 2012; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). Nevertheless, future research should take different methods and approaches to gather data (such as archival data or observation) and to measure our study variables to enhance objectivity. Finally, the results' external validity may be limited since all the data were gathered from the same organization. This organization may have distinctive characteristics that are not necessarily representative of other organizational settings (e.g., gender representation, power distance and hierarchical structure). Although this sampling strategy strengthens the internal validity of our study by controlling confounding effects, it is worthwhile conducting research in other organizational settings and contexts to enhance the generalizability of our findings.

Practical Implications and Conclusion

Despite these limitations, the present findings offer several implications for practitioners. Since psychological contract plays a critical role in shaping employees' behaviors and attitudes (Mai et al., 2016; Restubog et al., 2015), a better understanding of how it participates to the development of team-self managing behaviors is very important. Our results reveal that relational team psychological contract may positively impact the team members willing to engage in self-managing behaviors through a team positive affective tone. Accordingly, organizations can increase the team members disposition to display self-managing behaviors through trusting and socio-emotional relationships with their organization where each party is concerned with the other party needs and success and commits itself to respect their reciprocal obligations (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; D. Rousseau, 1990). Such trusting and socio-emotional relationship nurtures optimistic and positive emotions regarding team members' work context, which in turn, encourages them to orient their efforts beyond what is explicitly required in their team role and

to take on the management of their team by adapting and adjusting their behaviors to what is required to self-manage their team (V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2010). Organizations may take advantage from relational team contracts by adopting and adapting management practices to cultivate emotional climate and strong socio-relationships with their teams in order to shape positive beliefs that boost positive affect of team members (Shin, 2014; Shin, Kim, & Lee, 2016). Moreover, our findings indicate that team positive affective tone may have a stronger effect on team self-managing behaviors when team members are required to interact closely to accomplish their team tasks. Teams characterized by a high level of task interdependence tend to combine their members' abilities and knowledge to achieve their teams' tasks and goals, which enhances teams' members willing to take charge of their team. Organizations should, therefore, take actions that help to establish strong interdependence between teams' members for instance by defining complex tasks and setting high goals.

To sum up, this study examined the mediating and moderating mechanisms operating in the relationship between relational team psychological contract and team self-managing behaviors. Our study supports empirically the role of team positive affective tone as a motivational process that accounts for this relationship. Results also show that task interdependence may increase the effect of team positive affective tone on team self-managing behaviors. We encourage future research to focus on the role team psychological contracts may have in teams functioning, so as to gain in a more sophisticated understanding of teams' psychological contract.

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Discussion générale des résultats

Les équipes de travail sont devenues un moyen répandu de l'accomplissement des tâches organisationnelles et de soutien à la compétitivité organisationnelle (Delarue, Van Hootegem, Procter, & Burridge, 2008; Maloney et al., 2016; V. Rousseau, Aubé, & Savoie, 2006). L'implantation des équipes ne se traduisant pas toujours en réussite et efficacité, cette thèse rejoint les nombreuses études qui visent l'identification des facteurs susceptibles d'assurer la mise en place et le fonctionnement optimal des équipes de travail (ex., DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Maloney et al., 2016; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001; Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018). La présente thèse, s'intéressant particulièrement aux relations d'emploi équipes-organisations, adopte le cadre théorique du contrat psychologique pour étudier les perceptions que les membres d'équipes peuvent développer collectivement à l'égard des obligations mutuelles et réciproques liant leurs équipes et organisations. Au terme de cette thèse, il convient de présenter une discussion générale des résultats des trois articles, de souligner les contributions de nos études et d'indiquer les éventuelles avenues des prochaines recherches.

La présente thèse avait pour principal objet d'étudier le contrat psychologique au niveau des équipes de travail. Pour ce faire, chacun des trois articles élaborés de la présente thèse a permis de répondre à des objectifs différents tout en restant complémentaires. Ainsi, le premier article visait à combler une lacune importante dans la littérature en proposant une reconceptualisation du contrat psychologique de manière à intégrer le niveau d'équipes. Les premiers travaux reconnaissants, pourtant, la possibilité de développement de contrat psychologique collectif (ex., D. Rousseau, 1989), il demeure que l'étude du concept reste limitée au niveau individuel. En s'appuyant sur la théorie du traitement de l'information sociale (*SIP*; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), cette recherche permet d'expliquer comment le travail en équipes peut conduire les membres d'équipes à développer des perceptions collectives et similaires concernant les obligations réciproques liées à la relation d'échange équipes-organisation. Contrairement aux études qui se sont concentrées sur le respect du contrat psychologique (brèche/violation) [ex., Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Tekleab et al., 2020], cette étude adopte l'approche basée sur le contenu pour montrer que la nature du contrat psychologique d'équipes peut prendre une forme particulière dépendamment de la relation d'échange équipe-organisation. Afin de mettre à l'épreuve cette conceptualisation,

le développement d'un questionnaire sur le contrat psychologique, adapté au contexte d'équipes, s'est basé sur une collecte de données consistant à deux échantillons d'envergure de 526 et 506 participants œuvrant pour une organisation de sécurité publique située au Canada et qui a pour mission d'appliquer les lois et de promouvoir le bien-être de la population. Les équipes à l'étude sont des équipes stables qui travaillent selon des horaires fixes. Les membres de ces équipes interagissent de manière fréquente pour réaliser les tâches et objectifs assignés à leurs équipes. Des analyses exploratoires, confirmatoires et d'agrégation (r_{wg} , ICC(1), ICC(2), F) ont été réalisées pour évaluer la validité de l'échelle de mesure ainsi que le degré de consensus des membres quant à leurs perceptions aux obligations mutuelles équipes-organisation. Les résultats de ces analyses ont permis de montrer que les équipes de travail peuvent avoir un contrat psychologique propre à l'équipe où sont partagées des perceptions et croyances communes quant aux obligations mutuelles de l'équipe et de l'organisation. Ce contrat psychologique d'équipes comporte deux dimensions, à savoir le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes et le contrat psychologique transactionnel d'équipes et ce, en fonction des termes et des conditions de l'échange de l'équipe avec son organisation. Outre que de soutenir la possibilité de développement d'un contrat psychologique commun par les membres d'équipes, les résultats de cette recherche permettent d'établir la validité de notre version de la mesure de contrat psychologique d'équipes. Basée sur l'échelle de Raja, Johns, & Ntalianis (2004), notre version a été adaptée au contexte d'équipes et a permis d'évaluer empiriquement le contenu du contrat psychologique d'équipes.

Après avoir présenté le contrat psychologique d'équipes, il devenait pertinent d'explorer le rôle que joue ce concept dans le fonctionnement des équipes. En se concentrant sur le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes, le deuxième et le troisième article s'intéressaient, respectivement, à identifier les facteurs susceptibles d'influencer le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes ainsi que les effets de ce type de contrat psychologique d'équipes sur les membres d'équipes. La réalisation de ces deux études s'est basée sur une collecte de donnée, effectuée dans la même organisation de sécurité publique au Canada. L'échantillon comportait 135 équipes de travail (représentant 514 membres). Des analyses de fidélités ont été réalisées pour vérifier la cohérence interne des questionnaires. Des analyses bivariées ont été réalisées pour résumer l'information contenue dans les données qui été recueillies et ainsi donner une vue d'ensemble sur les résultats en découlant. Par ailleurs des analyses bivariées ont été effectuées

pour vérifier les niveaux d'association entre les différentes variables à l'étude. Des analyses multivariées et des analyses de médiation modérée ont été finalement opérées pour vérifier les hypothèses avancées.

Ainsi, le deuxième article visait à vérifier 1) si la supervision abusive affecte le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes, 2) si l'habilitation d'équipes est susceptible de jouer un rôle médiateur sur cette relation et 3) si la relation entre la supervision abusive et l'habilitation d'équipes est susceptible de varier en fonction du style d'attachement d'équipes (anxiété / évitement). Les résultats de cette recherche indiquent que la supervision abusive affecte négativement le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes en réduisant les perceptions d'habilitation chez les membres d'équipes; ce qui corrobore le rôle médiateur de l'habilitation d'équipes. De plus, les styles d'attachement d'équipes s'avèrent exercer un rôle modérateur de sorte que l'effet de la supervision abusive sur l'habilitation d'équipes est réduit lorsque les membres d'équipes affichent un niveau élevé d'anxiété et devient prononcé lorsque le style d'attachement est davantage orienté vers l'évitement.

Le troisième article, quant à lui, cherchait à examiner l'effet du contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes sur les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes et ce, en considérant l'effet médiateur de l'affect positif des membres d'équipes. Cette recherche visait, par ailleurs, à vérifier si l'interdépendance au travail exerce un effet modérateur sur la relation entre l'affect d'équipes positif et les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes. Les résultats montrent que le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes s'associe indirectement aux comportements d'autogestion d'équipes car il favorise l'affect positif des membres d'équipe. L'affect d'équipes positif agit, donc, comme médiateur dans la relation entre le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes et les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes. Les résultats indiquent, par ailleurs, que plus les membres sont interdépendants au regard de la tâche d'équipes et plus l'effet de l'affect d'équipes positif sur les comportements d'autogestion augmenterait, ce qui soutient le rôle modérateur de cette caractéristique de la tâche.

Contributions à l'avancement des connaissances

Sur le plan théorique, les résultats de ces recherches offrent une contribution importante à l'avancement des connaissances liées au fonctionnement et à la gestion des équipes de travail. Chacun des apports des différents articles constitue, en effet, une première dans la littérature portant sur les équipes de travail et du contrat psychologique. Tout d'abord, les résultats de cette thèse doctorale offrent un soutien supplémentaire au rôle pertinent que joue le contrat psychologique, en tant que cadre explicatif des relations d'emploi contemporaines, dans la compréhension du fonctionnement et de l'efficacité des équipes de travail. Le contrat psychologique d'équipes permet d'accéder aux croyances collectives des membres d'équipes quant aux obligations mutuelles encadrant la relation d'échange équipes-organisation. Le type de ces perceptions, étant essentiellement façonné par l'organisation (Richard, McMillan-Capehart, Bhuian, & Taylor, 2009), il est susceptible d'influencer les affects et d'orienter ainsi les comportements et les attitudes des membres d'équipes, ce qui est susceptible d'affecter l'efficacité de l'équipe. La présente thèse doctorale procure, de ce fait, un fondement théorique du développement de contrat psychologique d'équipes tout en présentant une échelle de mesure dont la fidélité et la validité conceptuelle permettent d'évaluer empiriquement les types de contrat psychologique d'équipes, ce qui a été montré à travers les articles 2 et 3 de la présente thèse. Cette contribution est importante car elle permet une adéquation du concept du contrat psychologique aux réalités du monde de travail où les relations d'emploi ne sont plus limitées aux échanges individus-organisation: elles se manifestent également entre les équipes et leur organisation. Étendre la portée d'analyse du concept de contrat psychologique au niveau groupal renforcerait davantage son rôle vital dans l'étude des relations d'emploi et ce, en participant à la compréhension du succès que connaissent certaines équipes comparativement à d'autres.

Cette thèse, par ailleurs, permet d'étendre les études portant sur le contrat psychologique en examinant les antécédents du contrat psychologique, utilisant majoritairement la notion de respect et violation du contrat psychologique (aux niveaux individuel et groupal; ex., Arasli, et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2020 Tekleab et al., 2020), en adoptant l'approche basée sur le contenu. Elle met, de ce fait, la lumière sur l'influence que le style du leadership peut avoir sur le type de contrat psychologique d'équipes. En se basant sur la théorie de l'échange social et la notion de réciprocité (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), la présente thèse a permis de montrer que la supervision abusive

affecte négativement le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes en causant la dégradation des perceptions liées à la qualité de l'échange social et la mise en question des capacités de l'équipe à accomplir ses tâches et objectifs. Cela a pour effet de réduire l'habilitation d'équipes et l'attachement des membres envers leurs équipes et l'organisation (Avey et al., 2015; Rousseau & Aubé, 2018), ce qui est susceptible de nuire au contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes. La considération des styles d'attachement d'équipes (anxiété / évitement), dans l'exploration des antécédents du contrat psychologique d'équipes, représente une autre contribution importante de cette thèse. Elle ajoute à notre compréhension sur la capacité et le succès de certaines équipes à gérer les différents défis et exigences auxquels elles sont confrontées dans leur environnement de travail (ex., la supervision abusive).

Une autre contribution importante de la présente thèse est liée à l'examen des conséquences du contrat psychologique d'équipes sur les comportements des membres d'équipes. Tout comme pour les antécédents du contrat psychologique, les effets du concept ont été majoritairement étudiés via la notion de violation (ex., Agarwal & Avey, 2020; Bari, Ghaffar, & Ahmad, 2020; Conway & Briner, 2002; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Ma, Lasseben, Ma, 2019; Lester, Turnley, Nloodgood, & Bolino, 2002; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). Il a été pourtant montré que le type de contrat psychologique peut aussi influencer les comportements et attitudes des employés (ex., Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2010; Fierro & Bayardo, 2015; Hui, Lee, & D. Rousseau, 2004; Mai, Ellis, Christian, & Porter, 2016; Millward & Brewerton, 1999; Montes & Irving, 2008; Raja et al., 2004; Richard et al., 2009). Ce faisant, notre thèse a permis de montrer que le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes favorise la disposition des membres d'équipes à prendre la responsabilité de la gestion de leurs équipes et ce, en produisant des affects positifs chez les membres d'équipes quant à leurs travail et relations avec l'organisation.

Sur le plan pratique, la présente thèse doctorale souligne l'importance de considérer les perceptions collectives des membres d'équipes dans la gestion des équipes de travail. Elle explique comment le travail en équipes offre une opportunité pour les membres d'équipes de développer une même et seule compréhension, non seulement, quant aux obligations liant leurs équipes et organisation, mais également quant à la capacité de leurs équipes à accomplir leurs tâches et objectifs et à assurer leur gestion. En prenant conscience de l'effet du contrat psychologique d'équipes sur les affects, les comportements et les attitudes d'équipes, les organisations seront en mesure de penser les

valeurs, pratiques et processus organisationnels de manière à faciliter la mise en place et le maintien du type de contrat psychologique d'équipes envisagé. Les organisations gagneraient donc à former les gestionnaires et les superviseurs d'équipes sur la gestion des perceptions des membres d'équipes. Agissant en tant que représentants de l'organisation (Dierdorff, Rubin, & Morgeson, 2009; V. Rousseau & Aubé, 2018; Wageman & Fisher 2014), ces agents peuvent être formés sur la manière dont l'interdépendance des membres et leur interaction continue peut affecter leurs perceptions. Ils peuvent, également, être formés sur la manière de communiquer et élucider les questions entourant les termes et conditions de la relation d'échange équipes-organisation. Munis de ces compréhensions et de telles formations, les responsables d'équipes seraient à même d'accéder aux perceptions des membres d'équipes et de les ajuster au besoin afin d'assurer une compréhension juste et similaire des membres aux différents éléments de leur environnement du travail. Cela permettra aux organisations de prévenir la violation des contrats psychologiques d'équipes et d'éviter les effets qui en découlent, ce qui faciliterait le succès inhérent l'adoption même des équipes de travail.

Les organisations ont, par ailleurs, besoin de prendre conscience du rôle des caractéristiques individuelles des membres d'équipes dans la gestion des contrats psychologiques d'équipes et ce, compte tenu des variations qu'elles pourraient occasionner sur les perceptions et réactions des membres. Tenir compte de ces caractéristiques aiderait les responsables d'équipes à améliorer les processus de sélection et d'intégration des membres lors de la formation des équipes. Ceci aurait pour effet d'assurer un fit entre les membres d'équipes et une cohérence dans les attitudes et comportements des membres et ainsi un fonctionnement optimal des équipes.

Avenues pour la recherche

Les résultats de la présente thèse de doctorat ouvrent la voie à plusieurs pistes pour les recherches futures. En effet, l'étude du contrat psychologique au niveau d'équipes ajoute un pouvoir explicatif au contrat psychologique traditionnellement limité au niveau individuel. Cette conceptualisation groupale étant relativement nouvelle (Aqerrou, V. Rousseau, & Aubé, 2022; Gibbard et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016), son adoption dans les recherches futures permettra de renforcer l'assise conceptuelle et empirique du contrat psychologique d'équipes. Il en est de même pour l'échelle de mesure du contrat psychologique d'équipes développée dans le cadre de la présente thèse. Sur la

base de l'échelle de mesure du contrat psychologique de Raja et al. (2004), cette nouvelle échelle de mesure a été adaptée par Aqerrouf et al. (2021) au contexte d'équipes et traduite en français pour faciliter la collecte de données qui a été réalisée au Québec. L'utilisation de cette échelle de mesure dans d'autres études fournira davantage d'appui à la fidélité et la validité de l'échelle.

Les futures recherches peuvent, par ailleurs, reproduire nos études dans des organisations et contextes différents. Notre thèse étant réalisée dans une même organisation de sécurité publique, nous sommes conscients en effet que cette organisation peut avoir des caractéristiques spécifiques qui ne sont pas nécessairement représentatives des autres organisations (ex., la structure hiérarchique, la représentation des genres et la culture véhiculée par le directeur). Il se pourrait également que le contexte dans lequel cette organisation opère soit différent de celui des autres organisations. Les organisations du même secteur (ex., sécurité publique canadienne) peuvent, en effet, percevoir des besoins différents et être appelées à poursuivre des objectifs distincts requérant des interventions et comportements divergents. Ces organisations peuvent, ainsi, développer des relations d'emploi basées sur des termes et des conditions spécifiques donnant lieu à des contrats psychologiques d'équipes particuliers. Il en est de même pour les organisations de service privé qui peuvent avoir des conditions d'emploi et de travail distinctes (ex., contrat temporaires, relations d'emploi directes ou indirectes) qui donnent lieu à des types de contrat psychologique d'équipes différents de ceux du secteur public. Les futures recherches peuvent étudier le contrat psychologique d'équipes dans des organisations et secteurs différents et ce, afin de renseigner sur les types de contrat qui y sont représentés. Les futures recherches peuvent également considérer le contrat psychologique transactionnel d'équipes pour informer au sujet de la nature du contrat psychologique d'équipes et des réactions et effets qui en résultent.

Il serait, d'ailleurs, intéressant pour les prochaines recherches de reproduire les analyses réalisées dans le cadre de cette thèse en adoptant une approche longitudinale. Le contrat psychologique étant un concept dynamique susceptible d'évoluer et changer à travers le temps (Chambel & Alcover, 2011; Schalk & Rose, 2007), des recherches longitudinales permettront de vérifier si les types de contrat psychologique d'équipes demeurent inchangés ou évoluent et se transforment avec le temps.

Les recherches sur le contrat psychologique d'équipes gagneraient, finalement, à explorer les facteurs susceptibles d'influencer la nature même du concept. On pourra ainsi s'intéresser aux

pratiques organisationnelles (ex., le style du leadership adoptée, les pratiques de recrutement et de socialisation, la gestion de paies et de carrières), aux caractéristiques individuelles des membres d'équipes, ou encore aux caractéristiques mêmes d'équipes (ex., stade de formation de l'équipe, le type de l'équipe, nature des tâches de l'équipe). De telles recherches fourniront une compréhension améliorée des résultats divergents qui découlent de l'implantation des équipes de travail.

Conclusion

Le contrat psychologique s'impose, de plus en plus, comme un construit indispensable à l'étude des relations d'emploi et à la compréhension des comportements et attitudes des employés dans le milieu de travail. À travers l'exploration des études portant sur le contrat psychologique, force est de noter que l'approche dominante de l'étude du concept est située au niveau individuel et ne tient pas en compte la nature relationnelle des contextes organisationnelles (Alcover et al., 2017; Coyle-Shapiro & Paazerfall, 2008). Avec le recours grandissant aux équipes de travail et le changement des relations d'emploi, l'examen du contrat psychologique au niveau des équipes est devenu essentiel pour discerner la manière à travers laquelle le travail en équipes ainsi que les relations équipes-organisations sont susceptibles de façonner les perceptions collectives des membres d'équipes et d'influencer leurs comportements (Alcover et al., 2017, Marks, 2001).

Dans ce contexte, la présente thèse avait pour objectif principal d'élargir la portée des recherches sur le contrat psychologique en misant d'abord sur une contribution pertinente et d'actualité et ce, par l'étude du contrat psychologique au niveau des équipes de travail. Défendue par de nombreux auteurs, cette nouvelle conceptualisation a été principalement proposée et appliquée dans l'étude de la violation du contrat psychologique chez les équipes, comme unité, ou chez chacun des membres d'équipes (ex., Alcover et al., 2017; Laulié & Tekleab, 2016; Gibbard et al., 2017; Tekleab et al.; 2020). Notre thèse adopte l'approche basée sur le contenu pour concevoir et montrer que le travail en équipes soutient la formation d'une compréhension similaire et commune des obligations liées aux contributions de l'équipe (ex., accomplissement des tâches, services et objectifs assignés à l'équipe) et aux rétributions promises par l'organisation à l'équipe, en tant que partie à la relation d'échange équipe-organisation. Notre thèse visait également l'exploration des antécédents et des conséquences du contrat psychologique d'équipes en se concentrant sur la composante relationnelle du concept.

La présente thèse a été pensée en trois articles organisés de façon complémentaire. De manière générale, l'ensemble des résultats obtenus a permis de confirmer les différentes hypothèses articulées dans les trois articles. Les résultats du premier article indiquent que le contrat psychologique peut être conceptualisé au niveau de l'équipe et que ce contrat comporte deux dimensions : relationnelle et transactionnelle. Par ailleurs, les résultats de cet article appuient la

validité de l'échelle proposée pour la mesure du contrat psychologique d'équipes et montrent que cette échelle dispose de propriétés psychométriques fort acceptables.

Les résultats du deuxième article ont permis d'appuyer l'idée selon laquelle le style du leadership adopté est susceptible d'influencer le contrat psychologique. Plus précisément, il a été montré que le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes peut être négativement affecté lorsque le superviseur adopte des comportements abusifs à l'égard de son équipe et ce, en affaiblissant les perceptions des membres de l'équipe à l'habilitation de leur équipe (*team empowerment*). Les résultats du deuxième article révèlent également que l'effet de la supervision abusive sur l'habilitation de l'équipe peut varier en fonction du style d'attachement de l'équipe: cet effet est réduit lorsque l'équipe est davantage orientée vers un style d'anxiété et est accentué lorsque l'équipe affiche un niveau élevé de style d'évitement.

Les résultats du troisième article indiquent que le contrat psychologique relationnel d'équipes influence positivement la disposition des membres d'équipes à adopter des comportements d'autogestion d'équipes et prendre ainsi la responsabilité de la gestion de leurs équipes et ce, en favorisant le développement d'affects d'équipes positifs quant aux tâches, objectifs et responsabilités d'équipes mais également quant à la relation d'échange qui lie leurs équipes à l'organisation. Les résultats du troisième article montrent également que l'interdépendance à la tâche modère l'effet de l'affect d'équipes positif sur les comportements d'autogestion d'équipes, cet effet étant renforcé lorsque la réalisation de la tâche de l'équipe requiert une forte interdépendance des membres.

En conclusion, les résultats de cette thèse offrent une contribution importante à l'avancement des connaissances en relations industrielles. En effet, l'intérêt que nous portons à la redéfinition du concept du contrat psychologique pour intégrer le niveau d'équipes permet d'élargir la portée d'étude du concept et de l'adapter à l'analyse des relations d'emploi contemporaines. Ce faisant, on serait de même à comprendre que le travail en équipes sou tend le développement de perceptions collectives, au niveau d'équipes, qui sont susceptibles d'influencer et de façonner les affects, les comportements et les attitudes des membres. Ces contrats psychologiques d'équipes, si initialement déterminés par les équipes et les organisations, la forme qu'ils sont susceptibles de prendre est surtout influencée par l'organisation (Mai et al., 2016; Richard et al., 2005). Les

gestionnaires gagneraient, donc, à repenser les raisons mêmes à la base de l'adoption des équipes de travail et de concevoir, par conséquent, les relations d'emploi équipes-organisation et les pratiques adéquates qui permettent d'assurer cet échange et d'orienter le type de contrat psychologique d'équipes visé; le tout pour gérer et prévenir la violation des contrats psychologiques d'équipes et les conséquences qui pourraient en découler. Cela peut être atteint, par exemple, par la considération des caractéristiques individuelles des membres lors de la mise en place des équipes de travail et l'analyse des différents facteurs contextuels et pratiques organisationnels (ex., le style du leadership) qui peuvent façonner les perceptions collectives des membres d'équipes et orienter par conséquent le type du contrat psychologique d'équipes.

Notre thèse, comme toute recherche, accuse également quelques limites, notamment liées à l'échelle de mesure développée pour mesurer le contrat psychologique, au recours à un devis transversal et à la concentration sur la dimension relationnelle du contrat psychologique d'équipes pour explorer ses antécédents et conséquences. Il serait intéressant pour les futures recherches de continuer à étudier le contrat psychologique d'équipes et d'utiliser notre échelle de mesure afin de vérifier et appuyer sa validité empirique. Les futures recherches pourront, également, développer un devis longitudinal pour apprécier l'évolution du contrat psychologique d'équipes à travers le temps et les changements que les équipes pourraient rencontrer. Dans une approche comparative, il serait intéressant pour les futures recherches d'intégrer la composante transactionnelle du contrat psychologique d'équipes pour explorer les différents effets constatés dans nos études.

Pour terminer, la présente thèse ne prétendait pas répondre à toutes les limites entourant le contrat psychologique ni de remettre en question les principales méthodes utilisées dans la recherche pour mesurer ses effets sur les comportements et attitudes des employés. Elle visait surtout à souligner l'importance de reconceptualiser le contrat psychologique de manière à l'étendre au niveau groupal. Nous estimons que notre démarche scientifique à travers les trois articles contribue de façon pertinente aux connaissances relatives aux développement, antécédents et conséquences du contrat psychologique d'équipes tout en offrant des pistes intéressantes pour les futurs chercheurs désirant davantage explorer le contrat psychologique d'équipes.

Le succès et l'efficacité des équipes de travail représentent un enjeu de taille pour les organisations. Nous espérons, à travers de cette thèse et notre étude au contrat psychologique d'équipes, avoir réussi à apporter un éclairage additionnel et utile pour les organisations qui se basent principalement sur les équipes de travail dans l'accomplissement de leurs tâches et objectifs organisationnels. Comprendre le rôle essentiel qu'elles jouent dans la formation des contrats psychologiques d'équipes permettra aux organisations d'élucider les pratiques qui s'opposent au fonctionnement optimal des équipes et de favoriser ainsi la réussite de leur implantation.

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