

UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL

LA PHILOSOPHIE DE GESTION DE TALENT EXCLUSIVE ET LE RÔLE DE LA TRANSPARENCE DANS
LA PERCEPTION DE JUSTICE ET LES BESOINS PSYCHOLOGIQUES DES EMPLOYÉS

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LISTE DES ABRÉVIATIONS, DES SIGLES ET DES ACRONYMES

CI	Confidence Interval
DJ	Distributive Justice
Dinj	Distributive Injustice
M	Average
NEEDSAT	Need Satisfaction
NEEDFRU	Need Frustration
PJ	Procedural Justice
Pinj	Procedural Injustice
SE	Standard Error
SD	Standard Deviation
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
TAD	Théorie de l'autodétermination

LISTE DES SYMBOLES ET DES UNITÉS

α Cronbach's Alpha

β Unstandardized Beta Coefficients

p *P*-value

e.g. Example

RÉSUMÉ

D'ici 2036, tous les scénarios projetés par Statistique Canada envisagent un déclin significatif dans le pourcentage de la population canadienne active. Ce déclin est largement dû au nombre croissant de canadiens appartenant à la génération des Baby-boomers qui prennent leur retraite, combiné à une immigration insuffisante pour renverser la vapeur (Martel, 2019). Le marché de l'emploi se situe ainsi dans une dynamique où l'offre de main-d'œuvre ne subvient pas à la demande. Ceci représente un réel enjeu d'affaires pour les entreprises de toutes tailles, lesquelles font face à des demandes croissantes et une compétition féroce. L'enjeu est par ailleurs autant qualitatif (identifier et préparer la relève) que quantitatif (recruter et conserver une main-d'œuvre essentielle au bon fonctionnement des opérations). C'est à travers cette nouvelle réalité que la gestion de talent a pris de l'ampleur dans le monde de la gestion. Les dirigeants se retrouvent effectivement à élaborer des méthodes pour attirer, conserver et stimuler la main-d'œuvre essentielle, tout en identifiant les employés à haut potentiel afin de leur offrir un traitement spécial et les préparer à intégrer des postes de haute gestion. Ces efforts requièrent ainsi de différencier les employés par statuts ou par groupes, une pratique de gestion de talent qui n'est pas libre de conséquences (Gelens *et al.*, 2013). Nous nous intéressons notamment à mieux comprendre comment les employés vivent le fait d'être assignés à un groupe (haut potentiel, employé régulier), comment cela influence leurs perceptions de justice, comment cela influence conséquemment leurs besoins psychologiques, et finalement comment le style de communication choisi peut altérer cette expérience. Ce sont sur les fondements de la théorie de justice organisationnelle (Colquitt et Greenberg, 2003) ainsi que la théorie de l'autodétermination (Ryan et Deci, 2000) que nous appuyons nos objectifs de recherche. Jusqu'ici, la littérature portant sur les conséquences individuelles des pratiques de gestion de talent est principalement de nature théorique et qualitative, et nécessiterait un plus gros volume d'études empiriques quantitatives (Thunnissen et Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019).

Cette thèse de doctorat comprend une étude transversale à partir de laquelle deux articles ont été écrits. La première étude vise à comprendre la relation entre la pratique d'identification de talent, la perception de justice et le rôle de la communication dans cette relation. Des vignettes cliniques nous ont permis d'étudier les principales variables d'intérêt, soit l'identification de statut (haut potentiel, employé régulier) et le choix de communication (transparence, ambiguïté). De plus, avant de lire les deux vignettes, les participants¹ étaient aléatoirement assignés à un statut (haut potentiel ou employé régulier) et étaient appelés à lire les vignettes et répondre aux questionnaires subséquents en tenant compte de ce statut. Les participants ($n=124$) ont été recrutés en partie via la méthode boule de neige, et en partie via le service payant Prolific Academic. Des analyses de test-t appariées ainsi qu'une ANOVA factorielle mixte ont été effectuées sur R, version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021). Les résultats de cette première étude suggèrent que la pratique d'identification de talent influence la perception de justice distributive. En effet, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel perçoivent plus de justice distributive que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers, et ce peu importe l'approche de communication. Les résultats suggèrent par ailleurs que l'adoption d'une approche transparente engendre de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que l'approche ambiguë, et ce peu importe le statut du participant. Toutefois, lorsque l'on évalue la perception d'injustice distributive, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers perçoivent plus d'injustice distributive que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel, et ce peu importe le style de communication.

¹ L'emploi du masculin est favorisé afin d'alléger le texte.

Le second article avait pour premier objectif d'étudier l'influence de la pratique d'identification de talent sur les besoins psychologiques des employés. Nous cherchions par ailleurs à étudier le rôle de la justice/injustice distributive comme médiateur entre l'identification de talent et les besoins psychologiques, et la justice/injustice procédurale comme variable modératrice sur la médiation. Le même échantillon ($n=124$) comprenant les vignettes cliniques que présenté pour l'article 1 a été utilisé. Toujours en utilisant R version 2.4.4 (R Core Team, 2021), une analyse de médiation modérée a été effectuée. Les résultats soulèvent trois constatations. Premièrement, l'identification de talent est significativement liée aux besoins psychologiques, de sorte que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de satisfaction de leurs trois besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation que les employés réguliers. À l'inverse, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques que les hauts potentiels. Dans un second temps, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive, et conséquemment ont rapporté des scores d'autant plus élevés de satisfaction de leurs besoins. L'inverse s'est aussi avéré significatif, où les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté des scores d'injustice distributive plus élevés, et subséquemment ont rapporté plus de frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques. Troisièmement, la justice et l'injustice procédurale se sont avérées non significatives comme modérateurs dans la médiation. Toutefois, la justice/injustice procédurale est significativement liée aux besoins psychologiques des employés, et ce indépendamment de la justice/injustice distributive.

Ces deux études quantitatives posent un regard encore trop rare sur les conséquences individuelles des pratiques en gestion de talent. Les résultats suggèrent en fait que la pratique d'identification de talent semble engager les employés dans un cheminement qui, malgré eux, favorise les hauts potentiels au détriment des employés réguliers.

Mots clés : gestion de talent, philosophie de gestion de talent, justice organisationnelle, théorie de l'autodétermination, besoins psychologiques.

SUMMARY

By 2036, all scenarios projected by Statistics Canada anticipate a significant decline in the percentage of the active Canadian population. This decline is largely due to the increasing number of Canadians from the Baby-boomer generation who are retiring, combined with insufficient immigration to reverse the trend (Martel, 2019). The job market is thus in a dynamic where the labor supply does not meet the demand. This represents a real business issue for companies of all sizes, which are facing increasing demands and fierce competition. The issue is both qualitative - identifying and preparing the next generation - and quantitative, recruiting and retaining a workforce essential to the smooth operation of operations. It is through this new reality that talent management has gained momentum in the world of management. Leaders are indeed developing methods to attract, retain and stimulate the essential workforce, while identifying high-potential employees to offer them special treatment and prepare them to integrate high management positions. These efforts thus require differentiating employees by status or by groups, a talent management practice that is not without consequences (Gelens et al., 2013). We are particularly interested in better understanding how employees experience being assigned to a group (high potential, regular employee), how this influences their perceptions of justice, how this consequently influences their psychological needs, and finally how the chosen communication style can alter this experience. It is on the foundations of organizational justice theory (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) that we base our research objectives. So far, the literature on the individual consequences of talent management practices is mainly theoretical and qualitative in nature, and would require a larger volume of quantitative empirical studies (Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019).

This doctoral thesis includes a cross-sectional study from which two articles were written. The first study aims to understand the relationship between talent identification practice, the perception of justice, and the role of communication in this relationship. Clinical vignettes allowed us to study the main variables of interest, namely status identification (high potential, regular employee) and communication choice (transparency, ambiguity). Moreover, before reading the two vignettes, participants were randomly assigned a status (high potential or regular employee) and were asked to read the vignettes and answer subsequent questionnaires taking into account this status. The participants (n=124) were recruited partly via the snowball method, and partly via the paid service Prolific Academic. Paired t-test analyses and a mixed factorial ANOVA were performed on R, version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021). The results of this first study suggest that the practice of talent identification influences the perception of distributive justice. Indeed, participants identified as high potential perceive more distributive justice than participants identified as regular employees, regardless of the communication approach. The results also suggest that adopting a transparent approach generates higher scores of perception of distributive justice than the ambiguous approach, regardless of the participant's status. However, when evaluating the perception of distributive injustice, participants identified as regular employees perceive more distributive injustice than participants identified as high potential, regardless of the communication style.

The second article had the primary objective of studying the influence of talent identification practice on the psychological needs of employees. We also sought to study the role of distributive justice/injustice as a mediator between talent identification and psychological needs, and procedural justice/injustice as a moderating variable on mediation. The same sample (n=124) including the clinical vignettes presented for article 1 was used. Still using R version 2.4.4 (R Core Team, 2021), a moderated mediation analysis was performed. The results raise three findings. First, talent identification is significantly linked to psychological needs, so that participants identified as high potential reported higher scores of satisfaction of their three psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and affiliation than regular employees. Conversely,

participants identified as regular employees reported higher scores of frustration of their psychological needs than high potentials. Secondly, participants identified as high potential reported higher scores of perception of distributive justice, and consequently reported even higher scores of satisfaction of their needs. The reverse was also significant, where participants identified as regular employees reported higher scores of distributive injustice, and subsequently reported more frustration of their psychological needs. Thirdly, procedural justice and injustice proved to be non-significant as moderators in mediation. However, procedural justice/injustice is significantly linked to the psychological needs of employees, regardless of distributive justice/injustice.

These two quantitative studies cast a still too rare look at the individual consequences of talent management practices. The results actually suggest that the practice of talent identification seems to engage employees in a path that, despite themselves, favors high potentials at the expense of regular employees.

Keywords: talent management, talent management philosophy, organizational justice, self-determination theory, psychological needs.

CHAPITRE 1

INTRODUCTION

Dans les années 1980, alors que la grande majorité des baby-boomers faisaient partie intégrante du marché du travail, le Canada comptait 6 personnes actives pour chaque personne de 65 ans et plus, qualifiées « d'inactives ». En 2017, ce ratio de 6 : 1 avait diminué à 4 personnes actives pour chaque personne inactive. D'ici 2036, tous les scénarios projetés par Statistiques Canada suggèrent que le ratio tombera sous la barre du 3 : 1 (Martel, 2019). Avec les générations plus jeunes moins nombreuses, la compétition plus grande et les exigences qui ne cessent de croître, les entreprises canadiennes se battent pour attirer une main-d'œuvre brillante dans un marché où tout le monde a plus à offrir (Martel, 2019; Silzer *et al.*, 2016). La difficulté à trouver des employés ayant les compétences et habiletés nécessaires à soutenir la croissance des entreprises correspondrait en effet à une des principales craintes chez 75% des dirigeants d'entreprises (PwC, 2017, cité dans Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2020, p. 458).

En effet, révolu est le temps où la notion d'avantage compétitif se limitait à une capacité d'exécution avec des processus performants. L'avantage compétitif est maintenant considéré comme la capacité d'innover et de changer (Lawler, 2008), et c'est à ce moment que la force du capital humain comme facteur critique de différenciation prend tout son sens. Pour cette raison, la gestion de talent est plus que jamais un déterminant de succès organisationnel (Beechler et Woodward, 2009; Iles *et al.*, 2010) et surtout un ingrédient clé pour assurer la pérennité d'une entreprise (O'Toole et Lawler, 2008).

Ce sont notamment les philosophies de gestion de talent qui informent les stratégies en matière de gestion de talent. Les philosophies de gestion de talent correspondent aux croyances fondamentales entourant la nature du talent (Meyers *et al.*, 2020). La majorité des entreprises privées opèrent selon une philosophie de gestion de talent dite « exclusive » où les employés qualifiés de hauts potentiels sont considérés comme l'élite (Cappelli, 2008). Un dilemme toutefois perdure : dans une logique de segmentation des employés, est-il préférable d'être transparent ou ambigu par rapport au traitement préférentiel offert aux hauts potentiels? Chaque choix comprend son lot d'avantages, d'inconvénients et de conséquences, notamment sur la perception de justice (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001) et les besoins psychologiques fondamentaux (autonomie, compétence, affiliation) des employés (Manganelli *et al.*, 2018). La théorie de la justice organisationnelle (Colquitt et Greenberg, 2003) ainsi que la théorie de l'autodétermination (Ryan et Deci, 2000) sont les assises théoriques principales sur lesquelles nous appuierons nos objectifs de recherche.

La théorie de la justice organisationnelle (Adams, 1963, 1965) est un cadre théorique fréquemment utilisé pour comprendre comment les philosophies de gestion de talent influencent les employés, notamment par rapport à leur perception de justice (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018). Huselid et Becker (2011) ont par ailleurs soulevé un besoin pour des études empiriques portant un regard sur les pratiques de segmentation des employés et l'effet sur les individus, notamment sur leur perception de justice et incidemment sur leurs propres retombées cognitives, affectives et comportementales. Malgré une certaine croissance dans la recherche portant sur la justice organisationnelle et la gestion de talents (e.g. Gelens *et al.*, 2013, 2014), il demeure un grand besoin d'études empiriques s'intéressant à l'effet des philosophies de gestion de talent sur les perceptions des employés. En effet, la majorité des études sur les philosophies de gestion de talent se sont intéressées davantage aux bénéfices et conséquences organisationnels, moins aux bénéfices et conséquences individuels (Meyers et van Woerkom, 2014).

Dans un marché où l'offre de main-d'œuvre ne subvient pas à la demande, il importe de mieux comprendre comment les employés vivent le fait d'être assignés à un groupe (e.g. : haut potentiel, employé régulier), comment ceci influence leurs perceptions de justice, et finalement comment la communication altère cette expérience et ces perceptions. De plus, ce revirement de situation vers un marché « d'employés » plutôt « qu'employeur » force les organisations à revisiter leur marque employeur afin d'être attrayantes aux yeux d'employés potentiels. Les pratiques de gestion de talent, toutefois, auraient le potentiel de mettre à risque l'unicité de groupe (Cappelli, 2017; DeLong et Vijayaraghavan, 2003), allant ainsi à l'encontre des efforts corporatifs pour développer une image attrayante.

Par ailleurs, la théorie de l'autodétermination (TAD ; Ryan et Deci, 2000), spécifiquement la sous-théorie des trois besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation, pourrait s'avérer un cadre théorique utile. En effet, au travers des années, les besoins psychologiques se sont positionnés comme des facteurs clés ayant le potentiel d'influencer la motivation, la performance et la santé (Ryan et Deci, 2017). La perception de justice serait d'ailleurs liée à une panoplie de conséquences individuelles au travail, notamment sur les besoins psychologiques, lesquels peuvent être satisfaits ou frustrés (Chou *et al.*, 2022). Toutefois, aucune étude empirique ne semble avoir étudié la façon dont les différentes philosophies de gestion de talent influencent les besoins psychologiques des employés.

L'usage de ces deux théories bien établies répond à l'appel de Greenwood et Miller (2010), lesquels ont recommandé que les études subséquentes incluent plusieurs cadres théoriques matures afin de bien

capturer la complexité organisationnelle et personnelle qu'engendrent les philosophies de gestion de talent. Thunnissen et Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) ont pour leur part fait un appel à ce qu'un plus grand nombre d'études s'appuient sur des cadres théoriques cohérents et matures.

Ainsi, la présente thèse de doctorat vise, d'une part, à étudier comment la pratique d'identification de talent (une pratique phare qui s'inscrit dans la philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive) influence la perception de justice organisationnelle, et comment, d'autre part, le choix de communication peut influencer cette relation. Nous étudierons aussi comment la pratique d'identification de talent influence les trois besoins psychologiques, ainsi que le rôle de la perception de justice organisationnelle dans cette dynamique. La prochaine section aura pour objectif d'effectuer une recension des écrits portant sur les différentes variables d'intérêts ainsi que les liens qui les unit.

1.1 État des connaissances

Quatre principales sections mettront en lumière l'état des connaissances entourant et reliant les différentes variables d'intérêts dans la présente proposition. Nous débuterons, dans un premier temps, par introduire le concept de talent, la gestion de talent, ainsi que les philosophies de gestion de talent. Nous effectuerons ensuite un survol des différents choix de communication (transparent, ambigu) vis-à-vis les pratiques de gestion de talent exclusives et les enjeux que cela engendre pour l'organisation et les employés. Puis, nous discuterons des deux théories qui formeront notre cadre conceptuel, soit la théorie de la justice organisationnelle et la théorie de l'autodétermination, en prenant soin de relier les enjeux de la perception de justice et des besoins psychologiques fondamentaux au domaine de la gestion de talent.

1.1.1 Le talent

Le mot « talent » tient ses origines du Grec ancien *Talanton* [τάλαντον] qui signifiait « balance, poids, somme d'argent » (Hoad, 1996). Depuis, une variété de définitions ont évolué dans nos sociétés, disciplines, jargons et croyances (Tansley, 2011), de sorte que l'opérationnalisation du talent en recherche s'est avérée et demeure encore aujourd'hui un défi (Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2020). Dans un effort de solidifier les assises théoriques entourant la gestion de talent, Nijs *et al.* (2014) ont effectué une recension des écrits en incluant, en plus des écrits spécifiques à la gestion des ressources humaines, les écrits d'une variété de disciplines comme la psychologie vocationnelle, la psychologie positive et du « *Giftedness* » (F. Gagné, 2010). À partir de cette recension, les auteurs proposent une définition du talent en milieu organisationnel qui se veut plus complète et que nous adoptons ainsi dans notre opérationnalisation du talent :

Le talent fait référence aux capacités innées systématiquement développées chez les individus qui sont déployés dans des activités qu'ils aiment, trouvent importantes et dans lesquelles ils veulent investir de l'énergie. Il permet aux individus d'obtenir d'excellents résultats dans un ou plusieurs domaines du fonctionnement humain, opérationnalisé comme étant plus performants que d'autres personnes du même âge ou de la même expérience, ou comme étant constamment à leur meilleur niveau. (Nijs *et al.*, 2014, p. 182)

1.1.2 La gestion de talent

Si le talent est un terme que l'on retrouve dans un large éventail de domaines, la notion de *gestion* de talent se range davantage sous la discipline de la gestion des ressources humaines. La gestion de talent est un mécanisme qui permet aux organisations d'effectuer des « investissements stratégiques » (Nijs *et al.*, 2014, p. 2), notamment en rapport avec l'identification, la sélection, la planification, le développement et la rétention de la main-d'œuvre. La pensée stratégique entourant la gestion de talents a pour objectif premier d'effectuer une décision qui apportera une certaine valeur économique à l'entreprise. Cette valeur se traduit ici par le biais de compétences, d'habiletés et de forces que l'on retrouve chez le talent embauché (Nijs *et al.*, 2014).

Le manque de cohésion dans l'opérationnalisation du talent influence sans doute la capacité des chercheurs à adéquatement opérationnaliser la gestion de talent (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013). Ce serait en fait un des principaux défis entourant ce domaine de recherche (Wacker, 2004, cité dans Nijs *et al.*, 2014), un point que l'article séminal de Lewis et Heckman (2006) avait soulevé alors que la gestion de talent prenait son essor. Ce point a, par ailleurs, plus tard été réitéré par Thunnissen et Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) dans leur réflexion critique sur l'évolution du domaine de recherche en gestion de talent.

1.1.3 Les philosophies de gestion de talent

Une philosophie de gestion de talent correspond aux « croyances fondamentales sur la nature, la valeur et l'instrumentalité des talents détenus par les principaux décideurs d'une entreprise » (Meyers et van Woerkom, 2014, cités dans Meyers *et al.*, 2020, p. 564). Les philosophies de gestion de talent informent directement les stratégies de gestion de talent. Bien que le domaine de recherche en gestion de talent ait augmenté en popularité, plusieurs reconnaissent que le domaine demeure fragmenté théoriquement (Collings et Mellahi, 2009; De Boeck *et al.*, 2018; Lewis et Heckman, 2006). Il n'en demeure pas moins qu'à travers les ans, quelques théories entourant les philosophies de gestion des talents se sont solidifiées dans le domaine. On regroupe notamment les philosophies de gestion de talent en deux grandes catégories, soit les philosophies objectives et subjectives du talent. Comme son nom l'indique, la

philosophie objective conçoit le talent comme une série de caractéristiques personnelles que l'on peut discerner avec objectivité. Le talent est donc perçu comme « une habileté au-delà de la moyenne pour une fonction spécifique » (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013, p. 293).

La seconde catégorie, soit la philosophie de talent subjective, conçoit le talent comme des compétences hors du commun. Les deux principales philosophies de talent subjectives sous-jacentes sont les approches inclusive et exclusive vis-à-vis le talent et la gestion de talent.

1.1.3.1 Philosophie de gestion de talent inclusive

Selon la philosophie de talent dite inclusive, le talent concerne tous les employés d'une organisation. Cette vision plus nouvelle de la gestion de talent aurait été inspirée du système éducatif allemand, lequel valorise et promeut l'accès au développement pour tous (Festing *et al.*, 2013, cités dans Meyers *et al.*, 2020). Tous les employés ont ainsi des forces qui, si adéquatement ciblées et encadrées, ont le potentiel d'offrir une valeur ajoutée à l'entreprise (Buckingham et Vosburgh, 2001). Cette philosophie supporte notamment l'idée que les employés représentent, de nos jours, le plus grand avantage compétitif pour une entreprise, et que le vrai succès organisationnel ne peut être atteint qu'en optimisant les forces de tout un chacun (Tulgan, 2002). La philosophie est notamment en cohérence avec l'approche par les forces (Seligman et Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, 2014).

La principale critique entourant l'approche inclusive de gestion de talent est qu'en n'effectuant aucune distinction entre les employés talentueux et « réguliers », la gestion de talent s'apparente fortement à la gestion stratégique des ressources humaines, laquelle a pour objectif premier d'effectuer une gestion des employés adéquate et cohérente avec les objectifs corporatifs (Gelens *et al.*, 2013). De plus, Lin (2006) argue que d'adopter une philosophie inclusive engendrerait des coûts élevés en développement. Toutefois, une approche inclusive à la gestion de talent aurait le potentiel de répondre au besoin de quantité et de qualité de main-d'œuvre engendrée par la crise démographique.

1.1.3.2 Philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive

Pour sa part, la philosophie exclusive de la gestion de talent opère selon une logique de différenciation (ou segmentation) des employés. Les employés étant des hauts performants ou ayant le potentiel d'être performants au-delà de la moyenne sont ainsi considérés comme l'élite (« A » *Players*) (Anlesinya *et al.*, 2019; Cappelli, 2008; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013; Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013b). Les organisations font ainsi

le choix de cibler leur investissement dans un petit groupe d'employés susceptibles de rapporter à l'entreprise (Tansley *et al.*, 2013). Ces employés sont identifiés comme ayant une valeur sur le marché avec des compétences et habiletés uniques, difficiles à remplacer (Lepak et Snell, 1999).

La différenciation des employés serait, selon certains, un aspect fondamental à la pratique de gestion de talents (Boudreau et Ramstad, 2005; Collings et Mellahi, 2009; Ledford et Kochanski, 2004). Parmi les employés faisant partie de l'équipe « A », certains sont identifiés comme hauts performants (*high performers*) alors que d'autres sont identifiés comme hauts potentiels (*high potentials*). Les hauts performants sont les employés qui rapportent une performance exceptionnelle et constante (Stahl *et al.*, 2012) au travail. Les hauts performants feraient partie du 10% des employés les plus performants dans une compétence ou un domaine spécifique appartenant à leur groupe d'âge (F. Gagné, 2010; Ulrich et Smallwood, 2012). Les hauts potentiels sont, pour leur part, les employés qui s'avèrent prometteurs en termes de performance. Ils sont les diamants bruts. Silzer et Church (2009) définissent le « potentiel » comme « [...] une façon de suggérer qu'un individu a des qualités pour bien performer et contribuer à des tâches plus diversifiées ou des rôles différents au sein de l'organisation à un certain point dans le futur » [Notre traduction] (p. 379).

Quoique cette philosophie de gestion de talent soit la favorite auprès des entreprises privées (Gallardo-Gallardo et Thunnissen, 2016), l'approche exclusive n'est toutefois pas sans critiques. Plusieurs reprochent en effet à cette philosophie de favoriser des processus de sélection hautement subjectifs, laissant place à de nombreux biais (e.g. Silzer et Dowell, 2010; Walker et LaRocco, 2002). Une seconde critique soulève que la sélection semble insensible à l'aspect changeant et contextuel de la performance et des forces des employés (Netessine et Yakubovich, 2012; Pfeffer et Sutton, 2006). La critique sans doute la plus populaire est toutefois celle qu'une approche de différenciation met à risque l'unicité de groupe et le moral, particulièrement chez les employés identifiés de catégorie « B » (Cappelli, 2017; DeLong et Vijayaraghavan, 2003).

Marescaux *et al.* (2013) ont par ailleurs trouvé que la différenciation de la main-d'œuvre engendrait son lot de conséquences indésirables, notamment une diminution de l'engagement. Plusieurs études sont néanmoins en faveur de l'approche exclusive et arguent que la différenciation de la main-d'œuvre est positivement liée à la performance organisationnelle (Becker et Huselid, 2006; Collings et Mellahi, 2009; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Lepak et Snell, 1999). Moins d'études se sont toutefois intéressées à la façon dont la

différenciation de la main-d'œuvre influence les employés, plus spécifiquement ceux qui ne font pas partie des hauts potentiels, bien que plus récemment l'intérêt à cet égard semble croître.

De plus en plus, la philosophie de gestion de talent hybride gagne en popularité (DeLong et Vijayaraghavan, 2003). Cette philosophie intègre simultanément les philosophies inclusive et exclusive dans la mesure où tous les employés sont perçus comme des talents ayant le potentiel d'être développés, mais qu'une portion des employés identifiée comme hauts potentiels reçoivent plus d'énergie et de financement en vue de les développer comme futurs leaders (Anlesinya *et al.*, 2019).

Dans le cadre de ce projet de recherche, nous porterons une attention particulière à la philosophie de talent exclusive. Nous nous intéresserons plus spécifiquement à la pratique d'identification de talent comme philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive, lesquelles sont plus populaires auprès d'entreprises privées. De plus, nous nous intéresserons particulièrement à la perception, notamment en ce qui a trait à la perception de justice des employés quant au choix de segmentation et de transparence. Un tel angle d'approche nous apparaît pertinent étant donné que les perceptions des employés vis-à-vis des pratiques en ressources humaines déterminent largement leurs réactions par rapport à ces pratiques (Gelens *et al.*, 2013; O'Connor et Crowley-Henry, 2019; Wright et Nishii, 2007). Cette nuance devient notamment intéressante lorsque l'on ajoute le facteur de transparence des pratiques en gestion de talents des entreprises, laquelle nous explorerons dans la section suivante.

1.2 La transparence ou l'ambiguïté comme choix de communication

La communication aux employés est considérée comme un important facteur de succès dans l'établissement d'un système de gestion de talents efficace. En effet, miser sur la transparence ou l'ambiguïté au sujet de la philosophie de gestion de talent choisie peut avoir d'importantes conséquences organisationnelles et individuelles (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). Eisenberg (1984) définit l'ambiguïté stratégique comme « les cas où les individus utilisent délibérément l'ambiguïté pour atteindre leurs objectifs » (p. 230).

En fait, les choix en gestion des ressources humaines en tant que tels ne seraient pas les réels déterminants qui influencent les comportements et attitudes des employés, ce serait plutôt les perceptions que les employés ont à propos de ces pratiques (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). L'adoption d'une logique de transparence ou d'ambiguïté agirait ainsi à titre de lentille à travers laquelle les perceptions des employés se forgent, mais ceci demeure une branche de recherche encore peu explorée en gestion de talents (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018; Sumelius *et al.*, 2020).

Ce sont des choix particulièrement importants pour les organisations qui adoptent une philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive. En effet, rappelons-nous que les philosophies dites exclusives exercent une différenciation des employés en fonction de ceux qui sont identifiés comme hauts performants ou potentiels (les employés de groupe « A »), et les employés qui ne sont pas identifiés comme tels (les employés de groupe « B »). Une logique d'exclusivité correspond ainsi à une allocation asymétrique des ressources où le groupe « A » est favorisé (Sonnenberg *et al.*, 2014).

Le choix de communication influence dans un premier temps l'accès à l'information. Dans une logique de transparence, l'asymétrie de l'information est moins importante étant donné que l'information est accessible à tous. C'est plutôt dans une logique d'ambiguïté que l'asymétrie de l'information est bien présente. Dans une logique d'ambiguïté, les hauts potentiels sont habituellement informés de leur position, alors que les employés « réguliers » sont tenus dans l'ignorance. Dans certains cas, ni les hauts potentiels, ni les employés de catégorie « B » sont informés de leur position. La logique d'ambiguïté ne signifie toutefois pas que l'information est complètement hermétique, on constate au contraire la présence d'une communication davantage informelle (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). En effet, une étude menée par Dries et De Gieter (2014) suggère que l'information à propos de l'existence d'un programme de haut potentiel se transmettrait dans 90% des cas où les organisations adoptent une logique d'ambiguïté.

Du point de vue des organisations, favoriser une approche d'ambiguïté peut être préférable dans la mesure où ceux-ci laissent le doute planer par rapport à qui est identifié comme un talent (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). Un nombre croissant d'écrits suggèrent par ailleurs qu'un grand nombre d'organisations favorise une logique d'ambiguïté vis-à-vis la segmentation de leurs employés (R. M. Fernandez et Campero, 2017). Les entreprises auraient entre autres moins de comptes à rendre par rapport au processus et critères d'identification des hauts potentiels (Dries et De Gieter, 2014). Plusieurs arguent toutefois qu'une telle pratique est éthiquement douteuse pour les employés impliqués, puisque la rétention de l'information au sujet de leur développement et possibilités de croissances au sein de l'entreprise limite la possibilité, pour les employés, d'effectuer des choix de carrière et de développement éclairés (Guest, 2017; Pucik *et al.*, 2016 ; Swailes, 2017, cités dans Sumelius *et al.*, 2020).

Ainsi, tout porte à croire qu'il serait préférable de miser sur la transparence. Or, dans une philosophie de gestion de talents exclusive, miser sur la transparence peut s'avérer être un couteau à double tranchant. En effet, en adoptant une stratégie de transparence, les organisations se retrouvent d'une part dans une

situation inconfortable où ceux-ci doivent s'assurer que le groupe « A » se sente privilégié, tout en véhiculant par le fait même une certaine inclusivité afin d'encourager les employés du groupe « B » à demeurer performants et engagés (DeLong et Vijayaraghavan, 2003). D'autre part, les employés du groupe « A » risquent par exemple de devenir complaisants et d'avoir des attentes irréalistes par rapport à leur développement de carrière (Church et Silzer, 2014; Dries et De Gieter, 2014). En revanche, les employés assignés au groupe « A » risquent aussi de mal réagir à la nouvelle, notamment en ressentant une pression importante à performer (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018; Petriglieri et Petriglieri, 2017). Cependant, les employés du groupe « B » risquent de se sentir dévalorisés, moins engagés et envieux (DeLong et Vijayaraghavan, 2003). On pense ici à l'Effet Golem, où les employés qui ne sont pas identifiés comme haut potentiels se bâtiennent une perception de soi négative, ce qui les amène à moins bien performer (Swailes, 2013).

Sumelius *et al.* (2020) ont étudié spécifiquement les réactions des employés par rapport à l'identification de leur statut au sein d'une entreprise finlandaise qui adoptait une logique d'ambiguïté. Les résultats de leur étude qualitative révèlent que, bien que les réactions initiales étaient très différentes chez les talents et les employés « réguliers », sur le long terme, l'approche d'ambiguïté engendrait des conséquences négatives autant chez les employés désignés comme talents que ceux qui n'étaient pas identifiés comme tels.

En effet, les auteurs ont noté que le choix de l'ambiguïté comme stratégie de communication nourrissait et augmentait les sentiments négatifs, puisque ce choix de communication envoyait comme message que les employés du groupe « B » ne méritaient pas d'être directement informés de leur position (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). Pour ce qui est des employés identifiés comme talent, leurs réactions étaient, au départ, largement positives. Toutefois, les sentiments positifs se sont ensuite dissipés pour faire place au doute et à l'incertitude par rapport à la signification et aux implications de ce statut. En effet, vu l'ambiguïté de la communication, une bonne portion de leur situation était ouverte à interprétation, ce qui apportait son lot de doute et de questionnements (Sumelius *et al.*, 2020). Les résultats de cette étude corroborent les conclusions de plusieurs études antécédentes (e.g. Campbell et Smith, 2010; Dries *et al.*, 2008; Dries et De Gieter, 2014; Festing *et al.*, 2015; Swailes et Blackburn, 2016; Tansley *et al.*, 2013). Ainsi, le choix d'adopter une logique de transparence ou d'ambiguïté comprend son lot d'avantages et d'inconvénients, autant pour l'organisation que les employés. Un important facteur à considérer, toutefois, est la façon dont ce choix stratégique viendra influencer la perception de justice des employés.

La théorie de la justice organisationnelle est un cadre théorique fréquemment utilisé pour comprendre comment les philosophies de gestion affectent les employés (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018). Plusieurs auteurs suggèrent d'ailleurs que la perception du statut de talent de l'employé serait notamment liée à la justice distributive (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018; Gelens *et al.*, 2013, 2014). Par ailleurs, les écrits portant sur la perception de justice organisationnelle suggèrent que d'adopter une logique de transparence par rapport à la présence (ou l'absence, selon la philosophie de gestion de talent) d'une différenciation des employés modèrerait les perceptions de justice et d'injustice (Dries, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Slan-Jerusalim et Hausdorf, 2007).

1.3 La justice organisationnelle

La justice organisationnelle est définie comme « la mesure dans laquelle les personnes perçoivent les événements organisationnels comme étant justes » [Notre traduction] (Colquitt et Greenberg, 2003, p. 159). Peu d'études empiriques se sont intéressées à l'influence des philosophies de gestion de talent sur la perception de justice des employés (Greenberg, 1990; O'Connor et Crowley-Henry, 2019). La perception d'injustice serait toutefois liée à bon nombre de conséquences individuelles comme l'intention de quitter (Cohen-Charash et Spector, 2001), une diminution de la performance (Konovsky et Cropanzano, 1991) et de la satisfaction au travail (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001). À l'inverse, la perception de justice serait positivement liée à la satisfaction au travail, à l'engagement, la performance, la confiance envers l'organisation et les comportements prosociaux (Collings *et al.*, 2011).

La théorie de l'équité (Adams, 1965) est l'assise théorique de choix dans l'étude de l'influence des philosophies de gestion et de communication sur les perceptions de justice organisationnelle. Le domaine d'étude qui porte sur l'équité a effectivement pris son essor avec les écrits de Adams (1963, 1965). La théorie de l'équité se concentre principalement sur la mesure de l'équilibre entre l'effort déployé par un employé et les retombées qui s'en suivent. Ce serait cet équilibre entre ce qui est donné (input) et ce qui est reçu (output) qui caractériserait la présence d'équité ou d'iniquité. En d'autres mots, la théorie de l'équité se concentre sur l'équilibre dans la distribution des contributions de l'employé et les bénéfices reçus en échange. La théorie de la justice organisationnelle (Colquitt, 2001), laquelle prend racine dans la théorie d'équité d'Adams (1965), va au-delà de cette notion plus transactionnelle de la justice en évoluant vers un éventail plus large de types de justice organisationnelle.

La théorie de la justice organisationnelle se distingue par ailleurs de la théorie de l'équité en s'intéressant notamment aux « perceptions d'équité des employés dans leur relation d'emploi » [Notre traduction]

(Anlesinya *et al.*, 2019, p. 284). La théorie de la justice organisationnelle comprend la justice distributive (e.g., la distribution des ressources est-elle équitable?), la justice procédurale (e.g., les procédures qui justifient la distribution des ressources sont-elles équitables?) et la justice interactionnelle (Cohen-Charash et Spector, 2001), laquelle comprend deux sous-catégories, soit la justice informationnelle (e.g., l'accès à l'information est-il équitable?) et la justice interpersonnelle (e.g., le traitement offert aux employés est-il respectueux et équitable?) (Colquitt *et al.*, 2001).

Dans le contexte de ce projet, nous allons porter une attention particulière à la *perception* de justice organisationnelle. En d'autres mots, ce ne sont pas les pratiques en tant que telles, mais bien la perception de celles-ci, qui nous intéressent (Gelens *et al.*, 2014). De plus, les études qui s'intéressent à la justice organisationnelle mesurent généralement la justice sans toutefois évaluer l'injustice. Dans le cadre de ce projet, nous évaluerons les deux opposés du continuum, soit la justice et l'injustice, puisqu'il est important de mesurer autant les perceptions d'adhérence que les perceptions de violation des principes de justice (Colquitt *et al.*, 2015). La perception d'injustice est en effet un domaine qui acquiert de plus en plus d'intérêt en recherche depuis les dernières années. Dans leur plus récent ouvrage portant sur l'injustice en milieu de travail, Bertholet *et al.* (2021) décortiquent notamment l'injustice dans toutes ses dimensions et font état des conséquences organisationnelles et individuelles de la perception d'injustice au travail. En ce qui a trait aux conséquences individuelles, les auteurs rapportent que le sentiment d'injustice est lié à une panoplie de problèmes de santé cardiovasculaire (De Vogli *et al.*, 2007) et musculosquelettiques ainsi que des douleurs chroniques (Manville *et al.*, 2016). Le sentiment d'injustice serait aussi lié à l'épuisement au travail et à l'intention de quitter (Manville *et al.*, 2016; Robbins *et al.*, 2012). Du point de vue comportemental, Colquitt *et al.* (2015) rapportent que le sentiment d'injustice serait un prédicteur d'hostilité, de comportements contre-productifs au travail et d'une plus grande propension à la distraction. Tous ces facteurs représentent des risques pour les organisations, que ce soit notamment d'un point de vue de performance, de rétention du personnel, de satisfaction au travail ou d'engagement.

Dans le cadre de la présente thèse, nous allons par ailleurs cibler notre attention sur la justice distributive ainsi que la justice procédurale. La raison principale pour laquelle la justice interpersonnelle est mise de côté dans ce projet est que la justice informationnelle et interpersonnelle sont des formes de justice qui ne sont pas formellement instaurées dans une organisation, contrairement à la justice distributive et procédurale (Blader et Tyler, 2013). C'est donc dans l'esprit de cadrer adéquatement la présente thèse que la décision a été prise de se concentrer, dans un premier temps, sur les types de justice qui ont une application plus formelle et mesurable en contexte organisationnel.

1.3.1 La justice organisationnelle et les philosophies de gestion de talent

Dans leur article théorique, Gelens *et al.* (2013) suggèrent que la perception de justice est positivement liée à la motivation des employés, une proposition qui a été par la suite confirmée dans les écrits sur la justice organisationnelle. Fondamentalement, les philosophies de gestion de talent portent sur l'allocation de ressources, lesquelles font ici référence aux fonds et opportunités déployés afin de développer le talent. Dans une philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive, l'allocation des ressources est asymétrique dans la mesure où les ressources ne sont offertes qu'à un groupe sélect. Cette distribution des ressources peut ainsi sembler juste pour certains, et injuste pour d'autres. La revue systématique de De Boeck *et al.* (2018) suggère en effet que la perception de justice distributive serait, en théorie, un médiateur clé entre le statut de l'employé (haut potentiel, employé régulier) et les réactions cognitives, affectives et comportementales d'employés.

De plus, certains mettent de l'avant l'argument que les procédures qui supportent la distribution des ressources et la qualité de l'exécution peuvent influencer la façon dont cette distribution asymétrique des ressources est perçue. En effet, plusieurs auteurs suggèrent que la justice procédurale (De Boeck *et al.*, 2018), informationnelle et interactionnelle (Gelens *et al.*, 2013, 2014) modèrent la relation entre la perception de justice distributive et les réactions des employés (Shaw *et al.*, 2003). Suivant la théorie de l'équité (Folger et Cropanzano, 2001), lorsque les procédures sont justes (justice procédurale), qu'une explication légitime est offerte à l'employée (justice informationnelle) et que celle-ci est communiquée de façon respectueuse (justice interpersonnelle), les employés – particulièrement ceux qui ne sont pas identifiés comme haut potentiel – auraient tendance à moins percevoir la distribution asymétrique comme une injustice (Gelens *et al.*, 2013, p. 348).

Dans leur étude quantitative auprès de 203 employés, Gelens *et al.* (2014) se sont intéressés à la perception de justice et la segmentation des employés. Les résultats de leur recherche indiquent que la perception de justice distributive était significativement plus élevée chez les employés identifiés comme haut potentiel que ceux qui n'étaient pas identifiés comme tels. La perception de justice distributive s'est aussi avérée être un médiateur complet dans la relation entre la perception de l'employé par rapport à son statut (talent ou employés réguliers) et son niveau de satisfaction au travail. La perception de justice procédurale agissait par ailleurs comme modérateur dans la relation entre la justice distributive et l'effort au travail. Cette proposition est aussi soutenue par De Boeck *et al.* (2018), lesquels suggèrent que la justice procédurale agirait comme modérateur dans la médiation entre le statut du talent et les réactions d'employés, de sorte que les réactions soient plus positives lorsque les procédures de gestion de talent

sont jugées justes (Gelens *et al.*, 2014). De plus, les écrits portant sur la justice organisationnelle et la communication vis-à-vis les philosophies de gestion de talent suggèrent que les perceptions de justice sont plus favorables lorsque les entreprises adoptent une approche de transparence à propos de leur philosophie de gestion de talent (Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Slan-Jerusalim et Hausdorf, 2007).

Jusqu'ici, les liens entre les pratiques en gestion de ressources humaines, la justice organisationnelle et les conséquences individuelles comme l'engagement ont amplement été étudiées (e.g. Biswas et Bhatnagar, 2013; Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007; Gelens *et al.*, 2014). Toutefois, les besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation proposés par la théorie de l'autodétermination (Ryan et Deci, 2000) ne semblent pas avoir été étudiés comme conséquences individuelles des pratiques de gestion de talent. Plus encore, malgré le fait que la justice organisationnelle soit fortement liée aux comportements des employés, peu d'études se sont intéressées à la relation entre les besoins psychologiques et la justice organisationnelle (Colquitt et Greenberg, 2003; Cropanzano et Rupp, 2003; Olafsen *et al.*, 2015). Malgré le volume d'étude relativement mince sur le sujet, tant la justice distributive que la justice procédurale seraient des déterminants des besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation (De Cremer, 2002; van Prooijen, 2009; van Prooijen *et al.*, 2002, 2008), lesquels seront présentés plus amplement dans la section suivante.

Nous sommes ainsi intéressés à comprendre si, et comment, les pratiques de gestion de talent, la perception de justice ainsi que les besoins psychologiques sont liés. Le prochain chapitre vise ainsi à effectuer un survol de la théorie de l'autodétermination, ainsi que des liens qui unit les besoins psychologiques à la justice organisationnelle et aux pratiques de gestion de talent.

1.4 Théorie de l'autodétermination

La théorie de l'autodétermination a pris racine au milieu des années 1980 (Deci et Ryan, 1985). C'est toutefois au tournant des années 2000 que le volume de publications a substantiellement augmenté et que le domaine de recherche a pris son plein essor, lequel bat aujourd'hui toujours son plein. La théorie de l'autodétermination est une macro-théorie de la motivation qui, grâce à un robuste volume de recherche et de publications, a été validée et supportée à travers un large spectre de domaines comme le sport, l'éducation, la psychothérapie, la santé et même les pratiques parentales (Deci *et al.*, 2017). Un des principaux postulats de la théorie de l'autodétermination suggère que les êtres humains sont des organismes intrinsèquement proactifs, constamment en quête d'opportunités pour améliorer leurs circonstances

(Vansteenkiste *et al.*, 2004). Ce serait cette nature à chercher une meilleure intégrité personnelle et sociale qui nécessiterait certains « nutriments » pour y arriver. Ces nutriments correspondent aux besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation (Vansteenkiste et Ryan, 2013).

1.4.1 Les besoins psychologiques

La théorie des besoins psychologiques est la quatrième de six mini-théories de la théorie de l'autodétermination. Les besoins psychologiques sont au nombre de trois, soit le besoin d'autonomie (e.g., la possibilité d'agir de façon volontaire et de se sentir responsable de ses propres comportements), de compétence (e.g., être adéquatement outillé pour faire partie intégrante de l'environnement) et d'affiliation (e.g., degré auquel un individu se sent accepté par les personnes dans son environnement; Deci *et al.*, 2017). La satisfaction de ces trois besoins psychologiques serait essentielle à la santé psychologique des individus, autant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur de l'environnement de travail (Ryan et Deci, 2017). En effet, plusieurs études supportent la proposition qu'un environnement social (comme l'environnement de travail) qui supporte la satisfaction des besoins psychologiques engendre une panoplie de conséquences positives chez l'employé telle la motivation autonome, une performance supérieure, et une meilleure santé globale (Deci *et al.*, 2017). À travers les années, les besoins psychologiques se sont positionnés comme des facteurs clés ayant le potentiel d'influencer la motivation, la performance et la santé (Deci *et al.*, 2017). Ils seraient en fait d'importants médiateurs dans la relation entre les expériences ou perceptions des employés et leur motivation, bien qu'il ne soit pas rare que les besoins psychologiques soient étudiés comme variables dépendantes, en l'occurrence dans la présente thèse doctorale.

1.4.2 Conséquences de la satisfaction ou frustration des besoins psychologiques

La satisfaction et la frustration des besoins psychologiques sont généralement étudiées comme des construits distincts, étant donné qu'ils ont des antécédents et des prédicteurs propres à chacun (Rouse *et al.*, 2020).

La satisfaction des besoins psychologiques serait, pour sa part, liée à une variété de conséquences positives autant sur l'individu que l'organisation. Van den Broeck *et al.* (2008) ont d'ailleurs trouvé que la satisfaction des besoins psychologiques était liée à moins d'épuisement, alors que Lian *et al.* (2012) ont pour leur part trouvé une relation négative avec la déviance organisationnelle et l'intention de quitter. La satisfaction des besoins psychologiques aurait d'ailleurs une incidence sur la motivation des employés. De Cooman *et al.* (2013) ont en effet trouvé que les employés qui avaient leurs besoins psychologiques

satisfais avaient des formes de motivation plus autonomes. La satisfaction des trois besoins psychologiques serait par ailleurs des prédicteurs indépendants de la motivation intrinsèque et du bien-être psychologique (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2016). En somme, la satisfaction des besoins favorise la croissance, l'épanouissement, l'intégrité sociale et personnelle.

Toutefois, les besoins psychologiques ne sont parfois pas comblés, voire même frustrés. Par exemple, une personne qui ne se sent pas appréciée de son entourage au travail n'a pas son besoin d'affiliation de comblé. Plus encore, ce besoin serait frustré si cette même personne se faisait activement exclure par ses collègues de travail (Vansteenkiste et Ryan, 2013). La frustration des besoins engendrerait une panoplie de conséquences néfastes pour l'individu et son environnement. En effet, dans son étude auprès d'employés finlandais, Vander Elst *et al.* (2012) ont trouvé que les employés qui rapportaient une frustration de leurs besoins présentaient une moins bonne performance au travail, moins de bien-être et plus d'épuisement. À la lumière de nombreuses études corroborant des résultats similaires, il s'avère que les déterminants de la satisfaction et frustration des besoins psychologiques sont très importants à comprendre et à étudier.

Le soutien à l'autonomie – qu'il soit offert par le gestionnaire ou l'organisation – est un facteur fréquemment étudié comme déterminant de satisfaction ou frustration des besoins (e.g. M. Gagné *et al.*, 2000; Otis et Pelletier, 2005). En revanche, les pratiques de gestion de talent n'ont, à notre connaissance, pas été étudiées comme déterminants de la satisfaction ou la frustration des besoins psychologiques. Vu la popularité des pratiques de gestion de talent exclusives, et vu les conséquences individuelles et organisationnelles de la satisfaction ou frustration des besoins psychologiques, il nous apparaît central de mieux comprendre comment ces deux thèmes sont liés et s'influencent. Il est en effet possible de croire que l'identification de talent ai un impact sur les besoins psychologiques des employés. Suivant la logique supportée et étudiée amplement par la théorie de l'autodétermination, il ne serait effectivement pas étonnant que les employés identifiés comme haut potentiel voient leurs besoins psychologiques plus satisfaits que les employés identifiés comme employés réguliers. À l'inverse, le fait d'être identifié comme un employé régulier aurait pour résultat de frustrer davantage les besoins psychologiques. Ceci demeure toutefois à être étudié empiriquement.

1.5 Objectifs de thèse

À la lumière de l'état des connaissances portant sur la gestion de talent exclusive, le choix de communication, la justice organisationnelle et les besoins psychologiques des employés, la présente thèse comprend deux principaux objectifs. D'une part, nous visons à documenter (1) comment le choix de communication vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent modère la perception de justice et d'injustice organisationnelle. D'autre part, nous désirons étudier (2) l'impact de la pratique d'identification de talent sur la satisfaction et la frustration des besoins psychologiques, et étudier si la justice et l'injustice agiraient en médiation-modérée dans cette relation. Dans ces deux objectifs de thèse, nous cherchons à comprendre comment le statut assigné influence la perception de justice et d'injustice, ainsi que la satisfaction et frustration des besoins psychologiques. Ces deux objectifs de thèse sont scindés en deux articles empiriques, lesquels seront détaillés dans la prochaine section.

1.6 Structure de la thèse

Dans le cadre de la présente thèse, nous sommes intéressés à mieux comprendre comment les employés réagissent au fait d'être assignés à un groupe (haut potentiel ou non), comment cette segmentation influence leurs perceptions de justice et leurs besoins psychologiques et, finalement, comment la façon dont le tout est communiqué affecte leur expérience. La théorie de la justice organisationnelle ainsi que la théorie de l'autodétermination seront nos cadres conceptuels sur lesquels nous appuierons nos objectifs.

1.7 Résumé de l'article 1

Le Chapitre 2 présente notre premier article. Nous étudions ici empiriquement la façon dont l'identification de talent – une pratique qui s'inscrit dans la philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive – influence la perception de justice/injustice distributive des employés. Nous argumentons principalement que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel rapporteront de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers. Inversement, nous envisageons que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel rapporteront des scores moins élevés d'injustice distributive que leurs comparses. Plus encore, nous étudions comment le rôle de la communication peut influencer cette relation. Nous postulons que lorsque l'organisation est transparente vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent, ceci viendra augmenter la relation entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice, et réduire le lien entre l'identification de statut et la perception d'injustice. Inversement, lorsque l'organisation adopte une approche ambiguë, cela viendrait exacerber le

lien entre l'identification de statut et la perception d'injustice, ainsi que diminuer le lien entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice.

Dans cette étude transversale, nous avons fait l'emploi de vignettes cliniques ainsi que de questionnaires. Les vignettes nous ont permis de manipuler les principales variables d'intérêt, soit l'identification de statut (haut potentiel, employé régulier) et le choix de communication (transparence, ambiguïté). Tous les participants devaient donc lire deux vignettes, une relatant un contexte de gestion de talent adoptant une approche de transparence, et l'autre adoptant une approche ambiguë. Les participants étaient par ailleurs aléatoirement assignés à un statut, soit de haut potentiel ou employé régulier, et étaient appelés à lire les vignettes et répondre aux questionnaires subséquents en tenant compte de ce statut. Les participants ont été recrutés en partie via la méthode boule de neige, et en partie via le service payant Prolific Academic, pour un échantillon final de 124 participants. Étant donné que chaque participant lisait deux vignettes et deux questionnaires, nous avons comptabilisé 248 entrées. Pour étudier le lien entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice et d'injustice, nous avons effectué des analyses de test-t indépendants. Pour étudier l'influence du choix de communication sur la relation entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice et d'injustice, nous avons effectué une ANOVA factorielle mixte. Ces différentes analyses de comparaisons de moyennes ont été effectuées sur R, version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021).

Les résultats de ce premier article soulèvent deux points intéressants. Dans un premier temps, les résultats suggèrent que la pratique d'identification de talent influence significativement la perception de justice distributive. En effet, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel perçoivent plus de justice distributive et moins d'injustice distributive que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers, et ce peu importe l'approche de communication. Dans un second temps, l'adoption d'une approche transparente engendre de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que l'approche ambiguë, et ce peu importe le statut du participant. Toutefois, lorsque l'on évalue la perception de violation des principes de justice distributive, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers perçoivent plus d'injustice distributive que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel, et ce peu importe le style de communication. Alors que le premier article brosse un meilleur portrait de la façon dont l'identification de talent ainsi que le choix de communication influencent la perception de justice/injustice, le second article avait pour objectif d'étudier l'influence de la pratique d'identification de talent sur les besoins psychologiques des employés.

1.8 Résumé de l'article 2

Le chapitre 3 présente le deuxième article de thèse, lequel est aussi basé sur l'étude transversale, présentée plus haut, dans le résumé de l'article 1. L'objectif ici était d'étudier empiriquement si la pratique d'identification de talent exerce une influence sur la satisfaction ou la frustration des besoins psychologiques des employés. Dans un second temps, nous cherchions à mieux comprendre si la perception de justice et d'injustice distributives agissait comme médiateur dans cette relation. Troisièmement, un sujet d'intérêt était de savoir comment la justice et l'injustice procédurales pouvaient agir comme modérateurs dans la médiation. Plus spécifiquement, nous proposons que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel voient leurs besoins psychologiques plus satisfaits que leurs comparses et, à l'inverse, que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers voient leurs besoins psychologiques plus frustrés que les hauts potentiels. Nous proposons aussi que la justice distributive et l'injustice distributive agissent comme médiateurs dans la relation entre l'identification de statut et les besoins psychologiques, et que la justice et l'injustice procédurale agissent comme modérateurs dans la médiation.

Les résultats de ce deuxième article soulèvent d'intéressantes constatations. D'une part, l'identification de talent est bel et bien liée aux besoins psychologiques, de sorte que les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de satisfaction de leurs trois besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation que leurs comparses employés réguliers. Inversement, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques que leurs comparses identifiés comme haut potentiel. Plus encore, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive, et ont également rapporté des scores plus élevés de satisfaction de leurs besoins. L'inverse s'est aussi avéré significatif, où les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté des scores d'injustice distributive plus élevés, et ont simultanément rapporté plus de frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques. Finalement, si la justice et l'injustice procédurale ne s'est pas avérée significative comme modérateur dans la médiation, les résultats révèlent que la justice/injustice procédurale est significativement liée aux besoins psychologiques des employés, et ce indépendamment de la justice/injustice distributive.

CHAPITRE 2

ARTICLE 1 - EXCLUSIVE TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

Lavoie, D. & Forest, J.

2.1 Introduction

In its most recent labour force survey, Statistics Canada (Martel, 2019) reports that 35% of companies identify labour shortages as a major impediment to their operations, and 27% feel that retaining current employees will be a significant challenge. With fewer members of the younger generations, greater competition and ever-increasing demands, Canadian companies are struggling to attract a bright workforce in a market where everyone has more to offer (Martel, 2019; Silzer et al., 2016). Gone are the days where the notion of competitive advantage was limited to the ability to execute efficient processes. Indeed, competitive advantage is now seen as the ability to innovate and change (Järvi & Khoreva, 2020; Lawler, 2008), hence why human capital has become a critical differentiation factor in the business landscape. For this reason, talent management is a determinant of organizational success (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Iles et al., 2010) and, more importantly, a key ingredient in ensuring the sustainability of an organization (O'Toole & Lawler, 2008). Yet, much of the focus on the efficiency of talent management programs has been at the organizational level, and little attention has been paid to the employees' reactions and perceptions to talent management programs (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2014). In the current labour market, where organizations are struggling to hire and retain employees who are both essential to the operations and employees who demonstrate top management potential, it appears important to study how talent management programs impact employees.

Talent management philosophies, which correspond to the fundamental beliefs on the nature of talent, inform talent management strategies (Meyers et al., 2020). The majority of private companies operate under an "exclusive" talent management philosophy, where employees labeled as high-potential receive preferential treatment and are considered the elite (Cappelli, 2008). However, a dilemma remains: is it better to be transparent or ambiguous about the preferential treatment offered to high potentials? Each avenue includes its own set of advantages, disadvantages, and consequences on the perceived fairness (Gelens et al., 2013). While there does not appear to be a categorical better choice between both approaches, studies who have investigated these different communication approaches (ie: Gelens et al., 2013; Peterson et al., 2022; Slan-Jerusalim & Hausdorf, 2007) seem to suggest that adopting a transparent approach may reap better personal outcomes. The volume of research on this topic however remains scarce.

Organizational justice theory (Adams, 1963, 1965) is a theoretical framework frequently used to understand how talent management philosophies influence employees' perception of justice (De Boeck et al., 2018). Huselid and Becker (2011) have raised a need for empirical studies to take a closer look at

employee segmentation practices and the effect they might have on individuals, including their perceptions of justice and their potential subsequent cognitive, affective and behavioural consequences. Despite some growth in research addressing organizational justice and talent management (e.g. Gelens et al., 2013, 2014), there remains a great need for empirical studies addressing the effect of talent management philosophies on employee perceptions. Indeed, the majority of studies on talent management philosophies have focused more on organizational benefits and consequences, and less on individual benefits and consequences (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2014). In a market where the labour supply does not meet the demand, it is important to better understand how employees experience being assigned to a group (e.g., high potential, regular employee), how this influences their perceptions of fairness, and ultimately how communication alters this experience.

Drawing on organizational justice theory (Adams, 1963; Colquitt et al., 2001), this study therefore aims to explore how, in an exclusive talent management philosophy, the choice of transparency and talent identification can influence employees' perceptions of organizational justice and injustice. The next section will review the literature on the different variables of interest along with the different relationships that link them together.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Talent

The word talent holds its origins from the Ancient Greek word *Talanton* [τάλαντον] which meant "scales, weight, sum of money" (Hoad, 1996). Since then, a variety of definitions have evolved in our societies, disciplines, jargons and beliefs (Tansley, 2011), such that operationalizing talent in research has proven to be and remains a challenge today (Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). In an effort to solidify the theoretical foundation surrounding talent management, Nijs et al. (2014) conducted a literature review that included literature from a variety of disciplines such as human resources management, vocational psychology, positive psychology, and the study of Giftedness (F. Gagné, 2010). Based on this review, the authors propose a more comprehensive definition of talent in an organizational setting, which we adopt in this study:

Talent refers to systematically developed innate abilities of individuals that are deployed in activities they like, find important, and in which they want to invest energy. It enables individuals to perform excellently in one or more domains of human functioning, operationalized as performing better than other individuals of the same age or experience, or as performing consistently at their personal best. (Nijs et al., 2014, p. 182)

2.2.2 Talent Management

While talent is a term found in a wide range of fields, the concept of talent management mostly falls under the discipline of human resources management. Talent management enables organizations in making « strategic investments » (Nijs et al., 2014, p. 2), particularly in relation to workforce identification, selection, planning, development and retention. The primary goal of the strategic thinking surrounding talent management is to make a decision that will provide economic value to the organization. This value is reflected through the competencies, skills, abilities, and strengths found in the hired talent (Nijs et al., 2014).

The lack of cohesion in the operationalization of talent arguably influences researcher's ability to properly operationalize talent management (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Gelens et al., 2013). This would in fact be one of the main challenges surrounding this field of study (Wacker, 2004, cited in Nijs et al., 2014), a point that Lewis and Heckman (2006) have raised as talent management research was soaring, and then reiterated a decade later by Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) in their reflection on the evolution of the research field.

2.2.3 Talent Management Philosophies

Talent management philosophies directly inform talent management strategies. Talent management philosophies refer to the “fundamental assumptions and beliefs about the nature, value and instrumentality of talent that are held by a firm’s key decision makers” (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2014, cited in Meyers et al., 2020, p. 564). Although the field of talent management philosophies has grown in popularity, many acknowledge the field remains fragmented (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; De Boeck et al., 2018; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Yet, theories surrounding talent management philosophies can be grouped into two broad categories: inclusive and exclusive talent management philosophies. With an inclusive talent management philosophy, talent concerns all employees in an organization (Festing et al., 2013, cited in Meyers et al., 2020). Thus, all employees have strengths that, if properly targeted and honed on, have the potential to add value to the organization (Buckingham & Vosburgh, 2001).

On the other hand, exclusive talent management philosophies operate according to a logic of differentiation (or segmentation) of employees. Employees who are high performers or have the potential to perform above average are therefore considered the elite (« A » *Players*) (Anlesinya et al., 2019; Cappelli, 2008; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013). Organizations choose to target their investments in a small group of employees who are likely to bring added-value (Tansley et al., 2013).

These employees are identified as having high market value given their unique skills and abilities that are difficult to replace (Lepak & Snell, 1999).

Employee differentiation has been identified as a fundamental aspect of talent management practices (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Ledford & Kochanski, 2004). Among employees on the « A » team, some are identified as high performers whereas others are identified as high potentials. High performers are those employees who report exceptional and consistent performance (Stahl et al., 2012). They are considered to be among the top 10% of employees in a specific skill or area within their age group (F. Gagné, 2010; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2012). High potentials, on the other hand, are employees who show promise in terms of future performance. They are the diamonds in the rough. Silzer and Church (2009) define potential as « [...] [a way to] suggest that an individual has the qualities [...] to effectively perform and contribute in broader or different roles in the organization at some point in the future » (p. 380).

While the exclusive talent management philosophy is the preferred one among private organizations (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016), this approach is not without criticism. Indeed, many criticize this philosophy for favoring highly subjective selection processes, leaving room to numerous biases (e.g. Silzer & Dowell, 2010; Walker & LaRocco, 2002). A second criticism highlights the fact that talent identification disregards the changing and contextual aspect of employees` performance and strengths (Netessine & Yakubovich, 2012; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006). Perhaps the most popular criticism, however, is that talent identification puts group cohesion and morale at risk, particularly among the “B players” (Cappelli, 2017; DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003).

Marescaux et al. (2013) further found that workforce differentiation generated its share of undesirable consequences, including decreased commitment. There is nonetheless evidence that workforce differentiation is positively related to organizational performance (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Gelens et al., 2013; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Few studies have focused on the impact workforce differentiation might have on employees, specifically those who are not high potentials.

In the context of the present study, we will focus on exclusive talent philosophy, given their popularity among private organizations. In addition, we will be interested in employees` perception of justice regarding exclusive talent management practices, like talent identification. This approach appears relevant given that employees` perceptions of human resources practices largely determine their reactions to these practices (Gelens et al., 2013; O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019; Wright & Nishii, 2007). This nuance

becomes all the more interesting when adding the type of communication (transparent or ambiguous) in regard to an organization's talent management practices, which we will explore in this next section.

2.3 Communicating Talent Identification

In the talent management research field, communication to employees is considered as an important success factor in establishing an effective talent management system. Indeed, adopting a transparent or ambiguous approach to communicating talent identification can have important organizational and individual consequences (Sumelius et al., 2020). Eisenberg (1984) defines strategic ambiguity as « instances where individuals use ambiguity purposefully to accomplish their goals » (p. 230).

In fact, human resources management choices *per se* are not the real determinants of employee behaviors and attitudes, but rather the perceptions that employees have about these practices (Sumelius et al., 2020). The adoption of either a transparent or ambiguous approach would therefore act as a lens through which employees' perceptions are formed, but this remains an area of research that has not yet been explored in talent management (De Boeck et al., 2018; Sumelius et al., 2020).

These are particularly important choices for organizations that adopt an exclusive talent management philosophy given the distinction between « A Players » and « B Players ». An exclusive approach to talent management essentially corresponds to an asymmetrical allocation of resources where the A Players are favored (Sonnenberg et al., 2014).

As a matter of fact, the choice of communication, whether it be transparent or ambiguous, influences access to information. In a transparent approach, there is more symmetry since information is accessible to all. It is rather in an ambiguous approach that the asymmetry of information is very present. Indeed, in an ambiguous approach, high potentials are usually informed of their position, while regular employees are kept in the dark. In some cases, neither high potentials nor regular employees are informed of their position. This however does not mean that the privileged information being shared is sealed (Sumelius et al., 2020). Indeed, a study conducted by Dries and De Gieter (2014) suggests that information about the existence of a high potential programs is shared informally in 90% of cases among organizations that adopt an ambiguous approach.

From an organizational point of view, favoring an ambiguous approach may be preferable insofar as it avoids potential discomforts (Sumelius et al., 2020). A growing body of literature suggests that many

organizations favor ambiguity in regards to their talent identification practices (R. M. Fernandez & Campero, 2017). Among other things, organizations are less accountable with respect to the process and criteria for identifying high potentials (Dries & De Gieter, 2014). Many argue, however, that such a practice is ethically questionable, as withholding information relevant to employee's development and growth opportunities limits their ability to make informed career and development choices (Guest, 2017; Pucik et al., 2016; Swailes, 2017, cited in Sumelius et al., 2020). These points were recently reinforced by Peterson et al. (2022) in their qualitative study, highlighting that the use of ambiguity in regards to talent identification encouraged frustration, jealousy and retaliatory behaviors from employees who were not selected as high potentials. It was also underlined that ambiguity in exclusive talent management nurtured an environment that supported "hidden networks", discrimination and lack of diversity.

Therefore, everything indicates that transparency might be the best of the two communication approaches. However, in an exclusive talent management philosophy, transparency can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, by adopting a transparent approach, organizations find themselves in a difficult position where they need to ensure that the A Players feel privileged, while at the same time conveying a sense of inclusiveness so that the B Players remain high on performance and engagement (DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003). On the other hand, the A Players may, for example, become complacent and have unrealistic expectations regarding their career development (Church & Silzer, 2014; Dries & De Gieter, 2014). Conversely, A Players might react poorly to the open display of their talent identification, feeling a growing pressure to perform (De Boeck et al., 2018; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2017). Regular employees, on their part, are likely to feel devalued, less engaged, and envious (DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003).

Sumelius et al. (2020) studied employees' reactions to status identification in a Finnish company that adopted an ambiguous approach. Results of their qualitative study reveal that, although initial reactions were very different to high potentials and regular employees, over the long term, the ambiguous approach reaped negative consequences for both high potential and regular employees. The results of this study corroborate the findings of several previous studies (e.g. Campbell & Smith, 2010; Dries et al., 2008; Dries & De Gieter, 2014; Festing et al., 2015; Swailes & Blackburn, 2016; Tansley et al., 2013). Thus, whether transparent or ambiguous, the communication approach has its share of advantages and disadvantages for both the organization and its employees. An important factor to consider, however, is how this strategic choice will influence employees' perceptions of justice.

Organizational justice theory is a theoretical framework frequently used to understand how management philosophies affect employees (De Boeck et al., 2018). Indeed, several authors suggest that the perception of talent identification would be linked to perceptions of distributive justice, among other things (De Boeck et al., 2018; Gelens et al., 2013, 2014). Furthermore, the literature on perception of organizational justice suggests that adopting a transparent approach to talent identification would moderate perceptions of justice and injustice (Dries, 2013; Gelens et al., 2013; Slan-Jerusalim & Hausdorf, 2007).

2.4 Organizational Justice and Injustice

Organizational justice is defined as « the extent to which individuals perceive organizational events to be just » (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003, p. 159). Few empirical studies have examined the influence of talent management philosophies on employees' perceptions of justice (Greenberg, 1990; O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). Perceived justice is positively related to job satisfaction, commitment, performance, trust in the organization and prosocial behaviors (Collings et al., 2011). Conversely, perceptions of injustice have been linked to many individual outcomes such as intention to leave (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), lower job performance (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991) and poor job satisfaction (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Equity theory (Adams, 1965) is the theoretical foundation of choice in studying the influence of management and communication philosophies on perceptions of organizational justice. Developed by the American psychologist Stacey Adams (1963, 1965), equity theory considers the notion of equity based on what employees give (input) and what they in turn receive as output from the organization. Equity is therefore achieved when there is an equilibrium between the input and the output. Organizational justice theory emerged from the roots of Equity Theory but distinguishes itself in two main ways. First, organizational justice theory goes beyond the transactional way of measuring equity through input and output by focusing on one's perceptions of fairness (Anlesinya et al., 2019). Second, organizational justice theory takes into factor a wider range of ways in which fairness can be perceived. This includes distributive justice (e.g., Is the distribution of resources fair?), procedural justice (e.g., Are the procedures that justify the distribution of resources fair?) and interactional justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), which is comprised of two subcategories, informational justice (e.g., Is the access to information fair?) and interpersonal justice (e.g., Is the treatment of employees fair?) (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Organizational justice research often focuses on practices and policies that promote justice (Peterson et al., 2022). In the context of this study, we will pay particular attention to *perceptions* of organizational

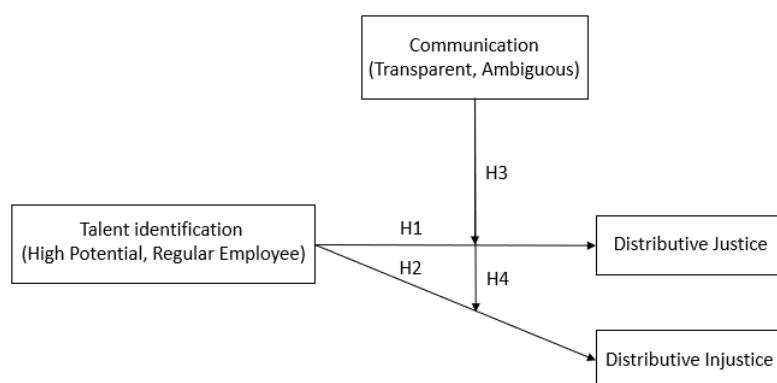
justice. In other words, it is not the practices *per se*, but the subjectivity and perceptions surrounding those practices that we are interested in (Gelens et al., 2014). Moreover, studies that focus on organizational justice typically measure justice but do not assess injustice. We will assess the two opposites of the continuum, justice and injustice, as it appears relevant in this research context to measure both perceptions of adherence and perceptions of violation to the principles of justice (Colquitt et al., 2015).

2.4.1 Organizational Justice and Talent Identification

Fundamentally, talent management philosophies are about allocation of resources. In an exclusive talent management philosophy, resource allocation is asymmetric, which can be perceived as unfair. In their study on 203 employees, Gelens et al. (2014) focused on employees' perception of justice and segmentation. Research results reveal that the perception of distributive justice was significantly higher among employees identified as high potential than their counterparts. Perceived distributive justice was also found to be a mediator in the relationship between employee perception of status and job satisfaction. Furthermore, literature on organizational justice and communication toward talent management philosophies suggest that perceptions of justice are more favorable when organizations adopt a transparent approach (Gelens et al., 2013; Sian-Jerusalim & Hausdorf, 2007).

In light of this information, we postulate that talent identification has a significant influence on the perception of distributive justice. Furthermore, we propose that the choice between transparent or ambiguous communication with respect to talent identification influences employees' perception of distributive justice (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Communication as a moderator in the relationship between talent identification and distributive justice/injustice



2.5 Objectives

In light of the state of knowledge on exclusive talent management philosophies, communication choices in regard to talent identification, and finally the perception of organizational distributive justice/injustice, we establish two research objectives. First, we seek to understand how talent identification influences perceptions of distributive justice/injustice. Second, we aim to understand how choosing to be transparent or ambiguous regarding talent identification influences participants' perceptions of distributive justice and injustice. Hence, we postulate four hypotheses (see Figure 2.1):

- **H1:** Participants identified as high potential perceive greater distributive justice with respect to talent management practices than participants identified as regular employees.
- **H2:** Participants identified as high potential perceive less distributive injustice than participants identified as regular employees.
- **H3:** Communication choice (Transparent, Ambiguous) moderates the relationship between talent status and perceived distributive justice, such that participants identified as high potential will perceive greater distributive justice than their regular employee counterparts, and the difference will be greater in the transparent condition.
- **H4:** Communication choice (Transparent, Ambiguous) moderates the relationship between talent status and perceived distributive injustice, such that participants identified as high potential will perceive less distributive injustice than their regular employee counterparts, but the difference will be weaker in the ambiguous condition.

2.6 Method

2.6.1 Study Design

In this cross-sectional study, we used vignettes and quantitative questionnaires to explore the research objectives and hypotheses stated above. The use of vignettes allowed us to manipulate two of our main variables of interest: talent identification and transparency. Vignettes, along with the rest of the questionnaire, were offered both in French and English (See Appendix A). We used the software R version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021) to perform our analysis. For *H1* and *H2*, we performed an independent t-test analysis, while for *H3* and *H4* we performed a mixed factorial ANOVA.

2.6.2 Participants and Procedure

An initial sample of 146 participants was collected. A proportion of participants ($n = 79$) was recruited using a snowball sampling method within the researcher's academic and professional networks, while another proportion of participants ($n = 67$) was recruited through the Prolific Academic platform. Given Prolific is an international recruitment tool, we selected the following countries for our recruitment: United Kingdom, United States, France, and Canada. To ensure there were no significant differences between both samples, we performed a chi-square analysis between the socio-demographic variables and the two samples. Results revealed that neither Age ($p = .09$), Gender ($p = .09$), Race ($p = .19$), Activity Sector ($p = .062$) nor Level of Education ($p = .11$) had a significant difference between samples. On the other hand, results showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) for the Position within the organisation, with 18% Prolific participants identifying as being manager (compared to 7% for non-Prolific respondents) and 17% non-Prolific participants identifying as being part of middle-management (compared to 3% for Prolific respondents). Given the similarities between the two categories and potential overlap in definition, we chose to leave the data as is.

We also performed a chi-square analysis between the socio-demographic variables and the two languages in which it was possible to participate, French or English. Results revealed that neither Age ($p = .223$), Race ($p = .139$), Activity Sector ($p = .09$), Level of Education ($p = .138$) or Position ($p = .108$) had a non-significant difference between the two groups. Results showed however a significant difference ($p < .05$) for Gender. Indeed, it appears like participants who selected to complete the study in French overwhelmingly identified as Female, with 83% compared to 14% identifying as Male. As for the English version of the study, it appears like the proportion was more balanced, with 50% of participants identifying as Female, and 49% of participants identifying as Male. First, and for reasons out of our control, participants who identified as Female (60%) are over-represented in our sample's demographics as whole, as displayed in Table 2.1. Further, irrespective of the language, the respondent's gender identity is independent of the content and constructs the questionnaire is studying. Third, the clinical vignettes (in all available languages) aren't gender-specific. The questionnaire was made available in French and English to ensure a diverse and inclusive sample, but exploring gender differences in our responses is not a primary objective of the present study. Considering this information, we left the data as is.

We performed a listwise deletion of participants who had answered less than 30% of the questionnaire, removing 22 participants. The final sample size was therefore 124 participants. The only inclusion criteria were to be at least 18 years of age and to speak either French or English. A detailed summary of our final sample's descriptive statistics can be found in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Descriptive Statistics

	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	62	39%
Female	96	60%
Prefer not to answer	2	1%
Age Group		
18-20	7	4%
21-29	60	38%
30-39	44	28%
40-49	28	18%
50-59	17	11%
60 +	4	2%
RACE		
Black	2	1%
East-Asian	11	7%
Latino	8	5%
Middle-Eastern	3	2%
South-Asian	7	4%
Southeast-Asian	3	2%
Caucasian	121	76%
Other	4	3%
Activity Sector		
Commerce	7	4%
Fabrication	3	2%
Primary Sector	1	1%
Public Services	17	11%
Teaching, Health and Social Sciences	33	21%
Finance, Real Estate, Professional and Administrative Services	16	10%
Construction	3	2%
Culture, Information, Lodging	11	7%
Public Administration	11	7%
Transportation and Storage	5	3%
Other	52	33%
DIPLOMA		
High School	15	9%
CEGEP	2	1%
Diploma of Collegiate Studies	12	8%
Undergraduate	76	48%
Masters	50	31%
Phd, Post Doctorate	4	3%
POSITION		
Employee	119	75%
Manager	22	14%
Middle Manager	13	8%
Top Management	4	3%

Note. N=124

Each participant had to read two (2) vignettes, one vignette describing an exclusive talent management context adopting a transparent approach, and one vignette describing an exclusive talent management context adopting an ambiguous approach. To avoid habituation, the order of the two vignettes were set to randomly alternate from one participant to another. Following each vignette, participants were required to fill out the same questionnaire built to capture their perceptions of distributive justice and injustice. The same questionnaire was therefore completed twice, hence doubling our number of observations from 124 to 248. Moreover, after giving their consent to participate, each participant was randomly assigned a talent status, either as a high potential or a regular employee. Participants were asked to embody this status when reading the vignettes as well as answering the questionnaires. Following the talent status assignment, participants read a short context which introduced the reader to the concept of exclusive talent management philosophies as well as the kind of treatment that employees identified as high potential or regular employees are expected to receive.

Since participants were not aware of the random assignment of talent status, a short debrief at the very end of the questionnaire revealed the details of the random assignment and its objective. Participants were asked to renew their consent before submitting (Appendix C).

2.6.3 Measures

Our main measurements were the vignettes as well as the questionnaires, both of which were distributed at one point in time.

2.6.3.1 *Vignettes*

Two vignettes were written (Appendix A), one painting the portrait of an organization branch adopting a transparent approach to their exclusive talent management philosophy, and the second of an organization branch adopting an ambiguous approach to their exclusive talent management philosophy. We used a specific type of vignette called “Paper-People Studies”, which is a method that aims to obtain explicit responses from respondents based on fictional stories, or made-up scenarios (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). We also decided that a mixed-design approach would suit the research needs, as all respondents read the same two vignettes, therefore allowing between and within-subject comparisons (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014).

2.6.3.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire containing both socio-demographic questions as well as items seeking the participant's perception of distributive justice and injustice was constructed.

2.6.3.2.1 Socio-demographic variables

Other than the validated items from the justice/injustice scale, the questionnaire was comprised of a consent form as well as socio-demographic questions. We collected information on participant's age, gender, education level, race and current position within their organization, as recommended by Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) in their meta-analysis on perception of organizational justice.

2.6.3.2.2 Perception of Distributive Justice and Injustice

To measure how talent identification and the communication (transparent, ambiguous) approach influence participant's perception of distributive justice and injustice, we used Hansen et al. (2013) shortened version of perception of organizational justice scale (Appendix D). For the French version of the questionnaires, items were translated in French using the back-translation method as recommended by Hambleton and Kanjee (1993). Furthermore, some items, which were originally meant to investigate the perception of justice within one's job, had to be slightly modified to be coherent with our theme as well as the vignette's context (i.e., [original] *Are those outcomes justified, given your performance?* [modified] *Is the status assignment justified, given your performance?*). The distributive justice subscale contains three items ($\alpha = .92$; *Is the status assignment consistent with the effort employees put into their work?*), and the distributive injustice subscale also contains three items ($\alpha = .76$; *Is the status assignment inconsistent with the efforts employees put into their work? (Injustice)*). Each item is measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Very Strongly*).

2.7 Results

We used the software R version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021) to perform both the independent t-test and the mixed factorial ANOVA, based on an initial sample of 124 participants. The "afex" package (Cramer et al., 2016) was used to perform the mixed factorial ANOVA.

2.7.1 Preliminary Analysis

A summary of means, standard deviations, and correlations for the variables of interest is available in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>1</i>
Distributive Justice	124	4.11	1.46	—
Distributive Injustice	124	3.54	1.20	-0.61**

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$

2.7.1.1 Missing Data

We conducted a non-parametric test of homoscedasticity in order to examine which type of missing data our dataset was comprised of using the R package “MissMech” (Jamshidian et al., 2014). The non-parametric test of homoscedasticity was non-significant for both the distributive justice and distributive injustice subscales, therefore showing that missing data was Missing Completely at Random (MCAR), hence rejecting the null hypothesis of normality. With the intention of manipulating our data as little as possible, and along the fact that variables were computed using the average of item scores and considering the missing data as MCAR, we made the informed decision to keep our missing data as is and move forward in our preliminary analysis.

2.7.1.2 Outliers

We explore in this section the univariate and multivariate outliers within our final sample size.

2.7.1.2.1 Univariate Outliers

A univariate boxplot analysis using the R package “car” (Fox & Weisberg, 2019) showed no univariate outliers for neither distributive justice nor distributive injustice, notwithstanding the type of transparency vignette.

2.7.1.2.2 Multivariate Outliers

We calculated the Mahalanobis distance ($D^2=18.47$) and created a Q-Q plot using the R package “psych” (Revelle, 2020) to identify possible outliers above the critical threshold of 18.47 for 4 degrees of freedom

since 4 computed variables are considered in this analysis (i.e., (1) Distributive Justice – Transparent Vignette, (2) Distributive Injustice – Transparent Vignette, (3) Distributive Justice – Ambiguous Vignette, and (4) Distributive Injustice – Ambiguous Vignette). An overview of the Mahalanobis Distance revealed 1 observation ($D^2 = 19.49$) above the critical threshold of 18.47. Since there was only 1 instance above the critical threshold, we did not create a new parallel dataset excluding the multivariate outlier as it would have a very marginal impact on our results.

2.7.1.3 Normality

The Mardia Test of normality using the R package “MVN” (Zhou & Shao, 2014) revealed that univariate normality was reached for both distributive justice and injustice variables from the ambiguous vignette. On the other hand, both distributive justice and injustice variables from the transparent vignette did not reach univariate normality. Nevertheless, an overview of the skewness and kurtosis measures revealed they were all within the range of |1| (Bulmer, 1979). Therefore, deviations from a normal distribution in our sample were not considered severe enough to require correction.

2.7.2 Primary Analysis

2.7.2.1 Independent t-test

For $H1$ we performed an independent t-test with status (high potential, regular employee) as the independent variable and the perception of distributive justice as dependent variable. Since the IV was categorical, we recoded the variable to a numeric format. Results show that the average level of perception of distributive justice in participants assigned as high potentials ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.10$) was significantly higher than the average level of perceived distributive justice among participants assigned as regular employees ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.22$), $t(122) = -8.57$, $p < .001$.

For $H2$, we also performed an independent t-test with Status (high potential, regular employee) as the IV and the perception of distributive injustice as dependent variable. Given the categorical nature of the IV, we again recoded the variable to a numeric format. Results show that the average level of perception of injustice among participants assigned as regular employee ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.10$) is significantly higher than the average level of perceived distributive justice among participants assigned as high potential ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.07$), $t(122) = 5.27$, $p < .001$. Both $H1$ and $H2$ are therefore supported. In other words, participants identified as high potential had on average a greater perception of distributive justice and lower scores of

distributive injustice than their regular employee counterparts. See Table 2.3 for a summary of both independent t-test results.

Table 2.3 Independent T-Test Between Distributive Justice/Injustice and Employee Status

		Employee Status (Independent Variable)				<i>t</i> (122)	<i>p</i>		
Dependent Variable		Regular Employee		High Potential					
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
Distributive Justice		3.23	1.22	5.02	1.10	-8.57	0.00		
Distributive Injustice		4.04	1.10	3.01	1.07	5.27	0.00		

2.7.2.2 Mixed Factorial ANOVA

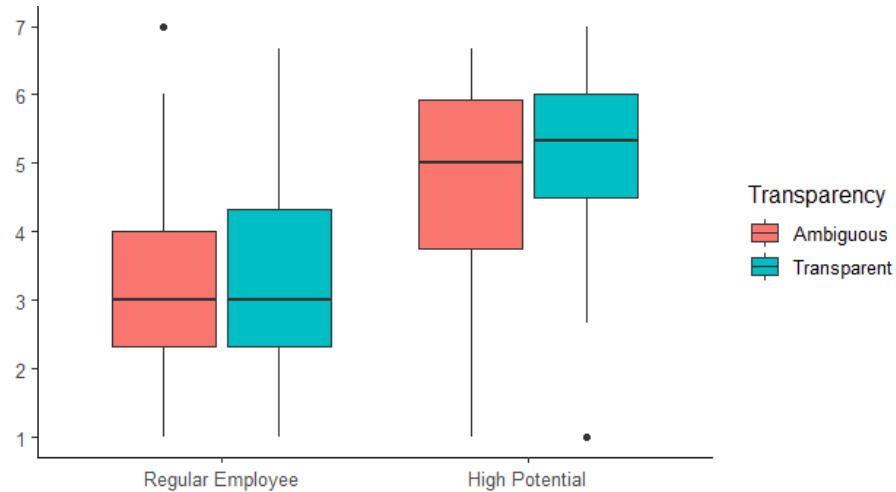
For *H3* and *H4*, we performed a mixed factorial ANOVA using the package “afex” (Cramer et al., 2016). For *H3*, the independent variables were status, a categorical variable with two levels (high potential, regular employee), as well as the level of transparency from one vignette to another, also a two-level categorical variable (transparent, ambiguous). Finally, the dependent variable was the perception of distributive justice, a scale variable. Status was assigned as the between subject variable, while the level of transparency was assigned as the within-subject variable. To perform this analysis, we changed the table format to a “long” format where all 248 observations were structured under three main columns (Status, Transparency, Distributive Justice).

Results indicate a significant effect of status, $F(1,109) = 60.97, p < .001$, as well as a significant effect of transparency, $F(1,109) = 11.30, p < .001$. The interaction between status*transparency was non-significant, $F(1,109) = 2.83, n.s.$ The analysis of the main effect of status suggests that the perception of distributive justice is significantly higher in participants identified as high potentials ($M_{adj} = 5.03, SE = .16$) than participants identified as regular employees ($M_{adj} = 3.27, SE = .16$). Furthermore, the analysis of the main effect of transparency suggests that the perception of distributive justice is significantly higher within the transparent vignettes ($M_{adj} = 4.35, SE = 1.65$) than the ambiguous vignettes ($M_{adj} = 3.95, SE = 1.48$). *H3* is therefore not supported.

In other words, while there is no significant interaction between status and transparency, results nonetheless suggest that talent identification (high potential, regular employee) significantly influences

one's perception of distributive justice, and the choice of communication (ambiguous, transparent) also influences one's perception of distributive justice. Specifically, participants identified as high potential reported greater levels of perceived distributive justice, and the transparent vignettes reaped greater levels of perceived distributive justice than the ambiguous vignettes (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Perception of Distributive Justice by Status and Level of Transparency

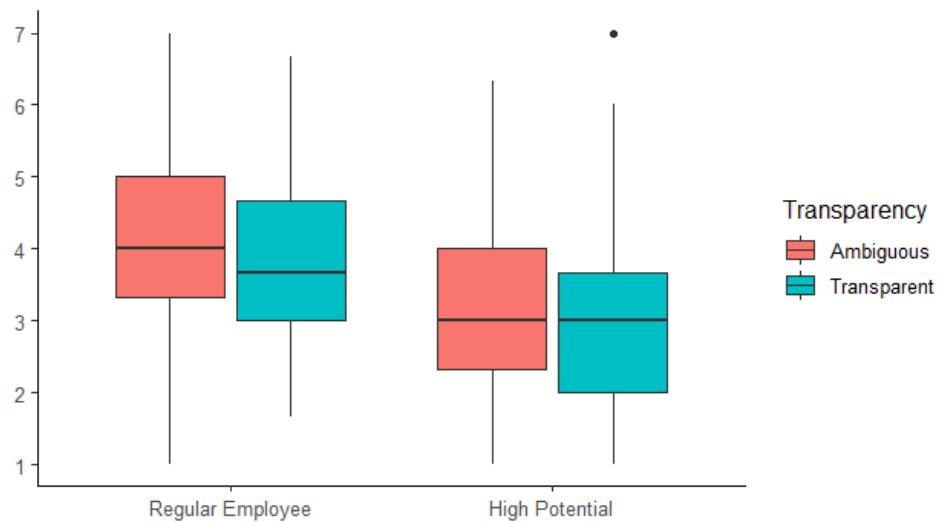


For *H4*, the independent variables were status, a categorical variable with two levels (high potential, regular employee), as well as the level of transparency from one vignette to another, also a two-level categorical variable (transparent, ambiguous). Finally, the dependent variable was the perception of distributive injustice, a scale variable. Status was assigned as the between subject variable, while the level of transparency was assigned as the within-subject variable. We performed the same modifications as for *H3* in order to execute the mixed factorial ANOVA efficiently.

Results indicate a significant effect of Status, $F(1,109) = 20.75, p < .001$. On the other hand, both effects of Transparency, $F(1,109) = 1.78, n.s.$, as well as the interaction between status*transparency, $F(1,109) = 0.11, n.s.$, were non-significant. Nonetheless, the analysis of the main effect of status suggests that the perception of distributive injustice is significantly higher among participants identified as regular employees ($M_{adj} = 4.00, SE = 1.44$) than participants identified as high potential ($M_{adj} = 3.03, SE = 1.44$). *H4* is therefore not supported (Figure 2.3).

In other words, participants identified as regular employee reported significantly greater perceptions of distributive injustice than their high potential counterparts.

Figure 2.3 Perception of Distributive Injustice by Status and Level of Transparency



2.8 Discussion

The aim of the present study was twofold; to better understand how talent identification influences perceptions of distributive justice/injustice, and how choosing to be transparent or ambiguous regarding talent identification may influence participant's perceptions of distributive justice/injustice. We offer a rare quantitative and empirical insight into these questions, as research on talent management philosophies has mostly been focused on organizational benefits, and the few studies that have investigated individual consequences of talent identification have mostly been conceptual or qualitative in nature (Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019).

We found that talent identification does indeed influence perceptions of distributive justice and injustice. As raised by De Boeck et al. (2018) in their systematic review of the literature on talent management, this empirically supports the common assumption that talent identification creates differences between high potential and regular employees. As a matter of fact, our results suggest that individuals identified as high potentials both have significantly higher perceptions of distributive justice, and lower perceptions of distributive injustice than their regular employee counterparts. Furthermore, this complements Gelens et al.'s (2014) quantitative study on employee reactions to talent identification. Their results also suggest

that employees identified as high potentials reported greater levels of perceived distributive justice than their regular employee counterparts.

While the choice of communication between transparency and ambiguity did not significantly moderate the relationship between talent status and perceptions of justice, we did find that perceptions of distributive justice was greater amongst the transparent vignette (notwithstanding the talent status) than the ambiguous vignette. This suggests that no matter if you are identified as high potential or regular employee, transparency is the preferred approach, which is in alignment with Gelens et al. (2013) as well as Slan-Jerusalim and Hausdorf (2007), which both suggested that the transparent approach would provide greater perceptions of justice. This also reinforces Peterson et al.'s (2022) qualitative study on employee reactions to talent identification, which suggests greater transparency would provide greater perceptions of distributive justice. Conversely, results revealing lower scores of distributive justice for the ambiguous vignettes align with Sumelius et al.'s (2020) findings. Specifically, after reporting on the undesirable consequences of adopting an ambiguous approach for both high potentials and regular employees, the authors suggested that perhaps greater transparency would be related to greater perceived distributive justice. Results from our study complement this notion.

This speaks to an interesting divergence between organizational and individual preferences. Indeed, organizations tend to prefer ambiguity over transparency (R. M. Fernandez & Campero, 2017; Sumelius et al., 2020), as it involves less accountability and avoids discomforts. On the other hand, results from this study suggest that employees would in fact prefer transparency.

We also found that transparency did not moderate the relationship between talent identification and perceptions of distributive injustice, although this time the main effect of the communication approach was non-significant. This suggests that no matter the communication approach, participants identified as regular employees perceived more distributive injustice than participants who were identified as high potentials.

To summarize, when measuring for rule adherence (distributive justice), it appears that transparency is the preferred approach for both high potentials and regular employees, and that high potentials perceive greater distributive justice. On the other hand, when measuring for rule violation (distributive injustice), the practice of talent identification itself appears to be contentious, as no matter the communication approach, participants identified as regular employees perceive greater distributive injustice. This leads us to believe that the mere act of segmenting employees influences their perceptions of justice in a way that

may trickle down into either positive or negative reactions. Our results suggest that high potentials gain higher perceptions of justice and lower perceptions of injustice, while regular employees score lower perceptions of justice and higher perceptions of injustice. As studied by Colquitt et al. (2015), high scores of distributive injustice are related to counterproductive work behaviors, greater propensity for distractions, and greater hostility. Hence, this leads us to believe that exclusive talent management practices strongly favor high potentials, and strongly disadvantage regular employees. In times where organizations are trying to convey and uphold values of inclusivity and diversity, the practice of employee segmentation goes against – by design – those specific values.

2.9 Limitations and Future Research

This study contains limitations and avenues to explore in future research. The use of vignettes allowed us to manipulate variables (status and communication approach) in a way that would have been challenging in a real-life context. While they offer for a sterile and controlled environment, vignettes sacrifice external validity at the profit of internal validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). The generalizability of results is therefore not assured. Furthermore, our vignettes enabled us to explore our research question in a contained, “black and white” environment. Real organizational contexts are however far greyer, with added complexities and nuances our vignettes didn’t account for. For instance, the reality of communication approaches in real-world context might not be as dichotomous as completely transparent or completely ambiguous. Organizations might rather fall on a continuum ranging between these two extremes. Similarly, for talent management philosophies, organizations might adopt different levels of exclusivity in their talent management or might even adopt hybrid forms of exclusive and inclusive talent management practices. Some organizations might not even know which talent management philosophy they have chosen to pursue.

If this study were to be replicated in its current format using vignettes, however, we recommend building off two lessons learned. First, we recommend testing the efficacy of the priming for status assignation and the different communication styles as preliminary validation. Second, while the scales we used included validated items in both English and French, we advise ensuring the equivalence of the survey in its entirety across all languages in which the study is conducted.

This study was another step towards publishing more empirical quantitative studies on talent management philosophies, and results suggest that the individual consequences of talent identification deserve more scientific attention. While this study made an effort to better understand how talent

identification and communication influence perceptions of justice/injustice, it would be interesting for future studies to build on these findings and further explore how talent identification and perceptions of justice influence employee reactions. For example, future articles could look into how perceptions of distributive justice vary between different levels of exclusive talent management methods and practices.

In addition, the present study solely focused on exclusive talent management, yet many public-sector industries favor an inclusive approach to talent management. Future research could also explore how perceptions of fairness vary between exclusive and inclusive talent management practices. Further, longitudinal study designs would allow for a more in depth understanding of how talent identification and perceptions of rule adherence and violation impact employee reactions over time.

With regards to our measurement tools, our questionnaire used only self-report measures. We recommend that future studies combine both subjective and objective measures of consequences of talent identification on perceptions of justice and needs satisfaction/frustration. Turnover rates, profitability, resting blood pressure and sleep quality are all examples of objective measures that could be combined to the self-report items. Van den Broeck et al. (2016) actually encouraged SDT researchers to combine objective measures, self-report measures along with time-separated or longitudinal study designs.

Lastly, considering the cultural context of organizations would be an interesting avenue for future study designs. Tolerance to hierarchy and power distance varies across cultures (D. R. Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 1980), which might influence employees' perception of justice/injustice. This would make for an interesting comparison between countries who have high and low power distance, and how these cultural aspects influence perceptions and reactions to exclusive talent management practices in the workplace.

2.10 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to better understand how the practice of talent identification influences perceptions of distributive justice/injustice, and how the choice of transparency regarding talent identification may influence participants' perceptions of distributive justice/injustice. Up until now, most studies looking into the impacts of talent management practices studied their benefits and consequences from an organizational perspective, with little attention paid to individual consequences. Results from this study suggest that the practice of talent identification has in fact real and significant influence over employees' perception of fairness, and that it should be used with intention and transparency.

As a matter of fact, results from this study suggest that employees identified as high potentials perceive more distributive justice and less distributive injustice than regular employees. On the other hand, regular employees perceive less distributive justice and more distributive injustice. When measuring for rule adherence (i.e., does talent identification follow the principles of justice), employees at large appear to favor transparency over ambiguity. On the other hand, when measuring for rule violation (i.e., does talent identification violate the principles of justice), regular employees perceive greater distributive injustice notwithstanding the communication approach. In other words, everyone appears to favor transparency over ambiguity, but no matter the communication approach, the practice of talent identification negatively plays into regular employee's perceptions of justice. In times where recruiting and retaining both employees that help support operations or have top management potential, a practice that for many organizations is a *de facto* way of operating might have more consequences than anticipated. Indeed, high scores of distributive injustice leads to a variety of negative consequences like counterproductive work behaviors and greater hostility (Colquitt et al., 2015). Perception of injustice is also said to be one of the leading causes of sabotage in the workplace (Ambrose et al., 2002). While it might be essential for organizations to identify and build the next leaders, results from this study suggest that opting for transparency is likely the least damaging approach in terms of perceptions of justice.

2.11 References

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CHAPITRE 3

ARTICLE 2 -

HOW TALENT IDENTIFICATION INFLUENCES PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS: A SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY APPROACH

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3.1 Introduction

Due to the unprecedented labour shortage Canada is experiencing, employers are more than ever having difficulty filling vacant positions and retaining employees (Martel, 2019). Challenges in finding employees with the skills and abilities required to support business growth is indeed reported as a top concern for 75% of organizations (PwC, 2017, cited in Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020, p. 458). With this new and ever-increasing challenge, organizations are left with both a quantitative and qualitative labour force issue, forcing them to adapt. Talent management is often considered a key factor to organizational efficiency (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Iles et al., 2010; O'Toole & Lawler, 2008), and while organizations are turning to hiring an increasing number of less experienced and less qualified employees, talent management programs might appear particularly enticing. If organizational benefits of such programs have been studied (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2014), less is known of the individual impacts of talent management programs, especially perceptions and reactions from employees who are not identified as "high potential".

It is in fact this dynamic between the preferential treatment offered to high potential employees and "regular" employees that is of interest in the present study, particularly how talent identification can influence perceptions of organizational justice and, incidentally, satisfy or frustrate the psychological needs of employees² - whether they are identified as high potential or not. The segmentation of employees between "high potential" and "regular" could, among other potential consequences, jeopardize group unicity and morale, particularly among employees who are considered the "B players" (Cappelli, 2017; DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003; Gelens et al., 2014; Peterson et al., 2022). Thus, the current study aims to explore employees' perceptions of the impact of talent identification on perceived organizational justice (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003) as well as on employees' basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Few empirical studies have been focused on clarifying these issues (Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019), which limits the quality and strength of recommendations offered to organizations.

It is talent management philosophies that inform talent management strategies. Talent management philosophies are defined as the fundamental beliefs pertaining to the nature of talent (Meyers et al., 2020). The majority of private sector organizations operate under what is termed an exclusive talent management philosophy, where employees who are identified as high potential are considered the elite

² More explanations on these concepts are provided in a further section.

(Cappelli, 2008). This segmentation practice, however, is reported to negatively impact perceptions of justice (Colquitt et al., 2001; Gelens et al., 2014; Peterson et al., 2022) and trigger reactions among employees (Sumelius et al., 2020).

Organizational justice theory (Adams, 1963, 1965) is a theoretical framework frequently used to understand how talent management philosophies influence employees, particularly in relation to their perception of justice and injustice (De Boeck et al., 2018). For instance, perceptions of justice is linked to an array of positive outcomes such as job performance, trust, and prosocial behavior (Colquitt et al., 2001). Conversely, perceived injustice is related to negative outcomes like hostility, counterproductive work behavior, and low self-esteem (Colquitt et al., 2015).

Despite some growth in research exploring relations between talent identification, organizational justice and employee reactions (e.g. Gelens et al., 2013, 2014), there remains a great need for more quantitative empirical studies. Indeed, much of the empirical literature on the topic of talent identification has been conceptual or qualitative, and many have called for quantitative empirical studies looking into talent identification and employee reactions (Huselid & Becker, 2011; Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019). In a market where the labor supply does not meet the demand (Martel, 2019), it appears all the more important to better understand how employees experience being assigned to a group (e.g., high potential vs regular employee) influences their perceptions of justice and injustice, and how this influences employees' basic psychological needs.

Moreover, self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000), specifically the mini-theory on the psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, may prove to be a useful theoretical framework. Indeed, over the years, basic psychological needs have grown (in the SDT literature) to be key enablers in influencing motivation, performance and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Perceptions of justice is also said to be an antecedent of basic psychological needs, which can be either satisfied or frustrated (Chou et al., 2022). It however appears like no previous studies have focused on the impact of perceptions of justice on basic psychological needs in the context of exclusive talent management practices. The use of these two well-established theories answers Greenwood and Miller's (2010) call for subsequent studies to include mature theoretical frameworks to properly capture the organizational and individual complexities of exclusive talent management practices.

Drawing on organizational justice theory and self-determination theory, the present study aims to explore how talent identification influences perceptions of organizational justice and injustice, and consequently how this influences employees` basic psychological needs. In this next section, we will cover the literature pertaining to our variables of interest along with the links that unite them with one another.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 Talent

Drawing on Nijs et al. (2014) literature review of talent in human resources and psychology disciplines, we operationalize talent with the following comprehensive definition:

Talent refers to systematically developed innate abilities of individuals that are deployed in activities they like, find important, and in which they want to invest energy. It enables individuals to perform excellently in one or more domains of human functioning, operationalized as performing better than other individuals of the same age or experience, or as performing consistently at their personal best. (Nijs et al., 2014, p. 182)

Originally defined as a measure of weight or sums of money, the word talent [τάλαντον] can be traced back to the Ancient Greek (Hoad, 1996), where a *Talanton* was used as a measure unit. How we perceive and define talent has since then evolved so much in our jargons and beliefs (Tansley, 2011) that the operationalization of talent in research has been and remains a challenge today (Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). The heterogeneity of the operationalization of talent has indeed been identified as a limiting factor in the research field`s ability to soar (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013).

3.2.2 Talent management

Due to the lack of coherence in the operationalization of talent, operationalizing talent management has proved to be challenging (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Gelens et al., 2013). In fact, this is said to be the main difficulty surrounding this field of study (Wacker, 2004, cited in Nijs et al., 2014), a point raised by Lewis and Heckman (2006) in their seminal article, and then highlighted once again by Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) in their reflection on the evolution of the research field.

Talent is a term used in a variety of disciplines like sports and education, yet the concept of talent management is mostly specific to the field of human resources management. Talent management aims to make strategic resource allocations at every step of the talent management lifecycle (identification,

selection, planning, development, retention). In other words, the primary goal of talent management is to support decision-making that will provide value to the organization, which translates into competencies, skills, abilities, and strengths nurtured in the selected talent (Nijs et al., 2014).

3.2.3 Talent Management Philosophies

Talent management philosophies are defined as the “fundamental assumptions and beliefs about the nature, value and instrumentality of talent that are held by a firm’s key decision makers” (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2014, cited in Meyers et al., 2020, p. 564). It is talent management philosophies that directly inform talent management strategies. While the topic of talent management philosophies has grown in popularity, many acknowledge the field remains theoretically fragmented and scarce in quantitative empirical studies (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; De Boeck et al., 2018; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). The main theories surrounding talent management philosophies can be grouped into two broad categories: inclusive and exclusive talent philosophies (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013).

The basic premise of the inclusive talent management philosophy is that all employees are talented individuals who have strengths that, if properly targeted, have the potential to add value to the organization (Buckingham & Vosburgh, 2001; Meyers et al., 2020). This philosophy reinforces the idea that employees represent the greatest competitive advantage, and that organizational success can only be achieved by optimizing everyone’s strengths (Tulgan, 2002). Yet, by making no distinction between talented and regular employees, inclusive talent management becomes all too similar to strategic human resources management, whose primary goal is to manage employees appropriately and consistently with corporate objectives (Gelens et al., 2013). Furthermore, this approach would, by default, incur very high development costs (Lin, 2006).

The premise of an exclusive talent management philosophy is that it allocates resources differently between employees through differentiation or segmentation practices. The segmentation is often based on the estimated value-added specific employees could provide to the organization should their potential be honed on and developed (Tansley et al., 2013). Employees who are high performers or have the potential to perform above average are therefore considered the elite (« A Players ») (Anlesinya et al., 2019; Cappelli, 2008; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013b). These employees are identified as having high market value given their unique skills and abilities that are difficult to replace

(Lepak & Snell, 1999). Employee segmentation is therefore a fundamental aspect to exclusive talent management practices (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Ledford & Kochanski, 2004).

Potential is defined as « [a way to] suggest that an individual has the qualities [...] to effectively perform and contribute in broader or different roles in the organization at some point in the future » (Church & Silzer, 2014, p. 380). Potential can be interpreted as current or projected. Indeed, some employees will be identified as high performers whereas others are identified as high potentials. High performers are among the 10% of employees who report exceptional and consistent performance (F. Gagné, 2004; Stahl et al., 2012; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2012). High potentials on the other hand are employees who show promise in terms of future performance should their potential be honed on and developed.

However popular among private organizations (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016), exclusive talent management philosophies receive their fair share of criticism. The most common critique is that distinguishing employees between “high potential” and “regular employee” puts group cohesion and morale at risk, particularly among the employees who aren’t selected as talent (Cappelli, 2017; DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003; Marescaux et al., 2013). Further, the exclusive talent management approach is often criticized for using subjective selection processes, leaving room to biases, nepotism and favouritism (e.g. Silzer & Dowell, 2010; Walker & LaRocco, 2002). The practice of talent identification also overlooks the changing and contextual aspect of one’s performance and strengths (Netessine & Yakubovich, 2012; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006).

Several studies, however, support the exclusive approach and argue that workforce differentiation is positively related to organizational performance (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Gelens et al., 2013; Lepak & Snell, 1999). However, very few studies have focused on the individual consequences and reactions to talent identification.

Hybrid talent management philosophy models are increasingly gaining in popularity (DeLong & Vijayaraghavan, 2003). This consists in integrating both inclusive and exclusive approaches in that all employees are considered talents with the potential to be developed, but a portion of employees identified as high-potential receive more energy and funding toward developing them as future leaders (Anlesinya et al., 2019).

In this study, we will be focusing on exclusive talent management practices, given their prevalence among private sector organizations. In addition, since we are seeking to study employee reactions to talent

identification, we will be focusing on employees` perceptions. As a matter of fact, it is employees` perceptions of human resources practices that largely determine their reactions and outcomes (Gelens et al., 2013; O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019; Wright & Nishii, 2007).

Organizational justice theory is a theoretical framework often used to understand how management philosophies influence employees (De Boeck et al., 2018). In fact, several authors suggest that talent identification would be related to employees` perception of organizational justice and injustice (De Boeck et al., 2018; Gelens et al., 2013, 2014; Peterson et al., 2022).

3.3 Organizational Justice and Injustice

Colquitt and Greenberg (2003) define organizational justice as « the extent to which individuals perceive organizational events to be just » (p. 159). Only a handful of studies have examined the influence of talent management philosophies on employees` perceptions of fairness (Greenberg, 1990; O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). Perceived fairness is positively related to job satisfaction, commitment, performance, trust in the organization and prosocial behaviors (Collings et al., 2011). Perceptions of injustice, however, is linked to many individual outcomes such as intention to leave (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), poor job performance (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991) and job dissatisfaction (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Organizational justice theory includes distributive justice (e.g., Is the distribution of resources fair?), procedural justice (e.g., Are the procedures that justify the distribution of resources fair?) and interactional justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), which is comprised of two subcategories, informational justice (e.g., Is the access to information fair?) and interpersonal justice (e.g., Is the treatment of employees fair?) (Colquitt et al., 2001).

While we could objectively study how specific policies and processes relate to the principles of organizational justice, the focus of the present research will rather lie in the realm of perceptions. As a matter of fact, it is not the practices *per se*, but the subjectivity and perceptions surrounding those practices that we are interested in (Gelens et al., 2014). Moreover, studies that focus on organizational justice typically measure justice but do not assess injustice. We will assess the two opposites of the continuum, justice and injustice, as it appears relevant in this research context to measure both perceptions of adherence and perceptions of violation to the principles of organizational justice (Colquitt et al., 2015).

3.3.1 Organizational justice and talent management philosophies

In their conceptual article, Gelens et al. (2013) suggest that perceived justice is positively related to employee motivation, a proposition that has subsequently been confirmed in the organizational justice literature. Fundamentally, talent management philosophies are about allocation of resources. In an exclusive talent management philosophy, resource allocation is asymmetric, which can be perceived as unfair. A systematic review by De Boeck et al. (2018) further suggests that perceived distributive justice would, in theory, be a key mediator between employee status (high potential or regular employee) and employee reactions (cognitive, affective, behavioral). In addition, several authors suggest that procedural, (De Boeck et al., 2018), as well as informational and interactional justice (Gelens et al., 2013, 2014), act as moderators in the relationship between perceived distributive justice and employee reactions (Shaw et al., 2003).

In their study on 203 employees, Gelens et al. (2014) focused on employees' perception of justice and segmentation. Research results reveal that the perception of distributive justice was significantly higher among employees identified as high potential than their counterparts. Perceived distributive justice was also found to be a mediator in the relationship between employee perception of status and job satisfaction. Furthermore, perception of procedural justice also acted as a moderator in the relationship between distributive justice and work effort. This proposition is also supported by both De Boeck et al. (2018) and van Prooijen (2009), who suggest that procedural justice would act as a moderator on the mediation between talent status and employee reactions, such that reactions are more positive when talent management procedures are deemed fair (Gelens et al., 2014).

In the field of talent management, the link between human resource practices, organizational justice, and engagement has been extensively studied (e.g. Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013; Cropanzano et al., 2007; Gelens et al., 2014). Within the theoretical framework of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) – which we will cover in the following section - the relationship between perceived organizational justice and the basic psychological needs has also been studied (e.g. Aldama et al., 2021; van Prooijen, 2009). We are specifically interested in bridging this knowledge by studying talent identification and perceived organizational justice as potential determinants of basic needs satisfaction or frustration. Furthermore, despite the fact that organizational justice is strongly related to employee behaviors, still few studies have examined the relationship between organizational justice and basic psychological needs (Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003; Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003; Olafsen et al., 2015).

3.4 Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination theory (SDT) is a macro theory of motivation that emerged in the 1980s (Deci & Ryan, 1985). It is notably at the turn of the second millennium that the volume of publications on SDT skyrocketed, and is recognized to this day as an established framework on motivation that has been validated and supported across a broad spectrum of fields such as sports, education, psychotherapy, health, and parenting (Deci et al., 2017). One of the foundational postulates of SDT is that it suggests human beings are inherently proactive organisms in constant search for opportunities to improve their circumstances (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). This desire to seek greater personal and social integrity requires certain « vitamins » to achieve it. Under SDT, those vitamins correspond to the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013).

3.4.1 Basic Psychological Needs

There are three psychological needs: autonomy (e.g., the ability to act with volition), competence (e.g., to be adequately equipped to perform one's duties) and relatedness (e.g., the degree to which one feels they belong) (Deci et al., 2017). Several studies suggest that a social environment that supports the satisfaction of these three psychological needs generates a range of positive consequences for the employee such as autonomous motivation, superior performance, and better overall health (Deci et al., 2017). Conversely, the frustration of basic psychological needs is said to favour more controlled types of motivation, result in lower job performance and overall less well-being (Deci et al., 2017). Over the years, psychological needs have indeed emerged as key enablers to motivation, performance and health, and are in fact recognized as important mediators in the relationship between employees' experiences or perceptions and their motivation, although it is not uncommon for psychological needs to be studied as dependent variables (e.g. Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004), as is the case in the present research (Deci et al., 2017).

3.4.2 Satisfaction and frustration of basic psychological needs

The satisfaction and frustration of basic psychological needs both have distinct sets of antecedents and predictors, hence why they are generally studied as separate constructs (Rouse et al., 2020). Generally, satisfying one's basic needs leads to a variety of positive outcomes like greater job satisfaction, less intention to leave (Lian et al., 2012) and lower scores of burnout (Van den Broeck et al., 2008). Furthermore, the satisfaction of the three psychological needs favor more autonomous forms of motivation, and are in fact independent predictors of intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being (De

Cooman et al., 2013; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). In sum, need satisfaction promotes growth, fulfillment, and social and personal integrity and have positive impacts on both the individual and the organization.

With needs satisfaction being at one extremity of the spectrum, the basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness can also be unfulfilled or even frustrated. Hence, an employee who does not feel a strong rapport with their manager may have their need for relatedness unfulfilled, as it is not satisfied nor frustrated. On the other hand, their need for relatedness may become frustrated in the event their manager often gets angry with them because of their differing values and opinions (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013). Not satisfying one's basic needs can however generate an array of harmful consequences to the individual and their environment. Indeed, in their study of Finnish employees, Vander Elst et al. (2012) found that employees who reported needs frustration predicted lower job performance, less well-being, and higher scores of burnout.

Although several determinants of satisfaction or frustration of psychological needs such as leadership style and managerial autonomy support have been studied (e.g. M. Gagné et al., 2000; Otis & Pelletier, 2005), exclusive talent management practices have, to our knowledge, never been studied in the context of self-determination theory. Since talent identification is a popular exclusive talent management practice in private-sector organizations, it appears important to better understand how talent identification shapes perceptions of justice and injustice, and how this influences employees' basic psychological needs.

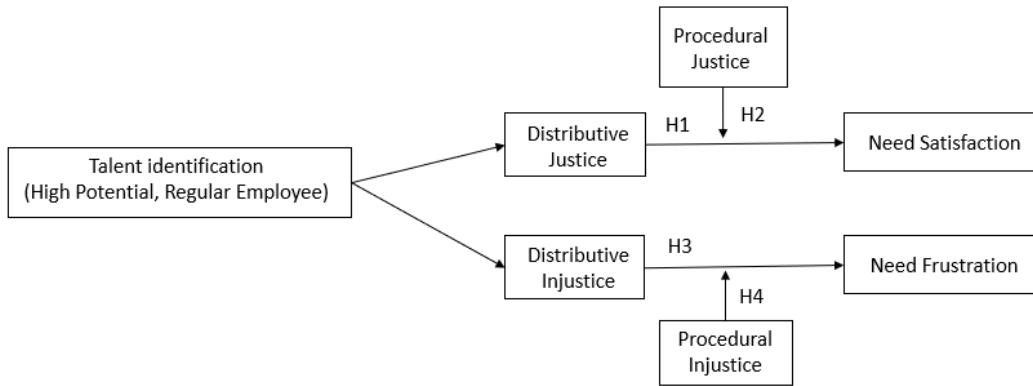
3.5 Objectives

Consequently, in light of the literature review covering talent management practices which are exclusive, perceptions of justice and injustice, and basic psychological needs, we propose the following research objective: We aim to study how perceptions of distributive and procedural justice/injustice may influence the relationship between talent identification and basic psychological needs. Hence, we postulate four hypotheses (see Figure 3.1):

- **H1:** Distributive justice mediates the relationship between talent identification and basic need satisfaction, such that participants identified as high potentials will perceive greater distributive justice, which will lead to greater need satisfaction than participants identified as regular employees.

- **H2:** Procedural justice moderates the mediation, such that when procedural justice is high, it increases perceptions of distributive justice and therefore increase all the more the satisfaction of basic psychological needs.
- **H3:** Distributive injustice mediates the relationship between talent identification and basic need frustration, such that participants identified as high potential will perceive less distributive injustice, which will lead to lower need frustration than participants identified as regular employees.
- **H4:** Procedural injustice moderates the mediation, such that when procedural injustice is high, it increases perceptions of distributive injustice and therefore increase all the more the frustration of basic psychological needs.

Figure 3.1 Theoretical Model



3.6 Methods

3.6.1 Study Design

Vignettes and quantitative questionnaires were used to explore the research objectives and hypotheses of this cross-sectional study. It is through the use of vignettes that we were able to manipulate our main variable of interest: talent identification. Both vignettes and their respective questionnaires were offered both in French and English (Appendix A). In order to perform the two moderated mediations required to explore our four hypotheses, we used the software R version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021).

3.6.2 Participants and Procedure

Our initial sample of 146 participants was partly collected through snowball sampling method as well as through the use of a professional recruitment platform. The majority of participants ($n=79$) were recruited within the researcher's academic and professional networks, while another proportion of participants ($n=67$) was recruited through the Prolific Academic platform. Given Prolific is an international recruitment platform, we narrowed down the geographic recruitment availability to Canada, France, United States, and the United Kingdom. We performed a listwise deletion of 22 participants who had answered less than 30% of the questionnaire, for a final sample size of 124 participants. The only inclusion criteria were to be at least 18 years of age.

Further, we performed a chi-square analysis between the socio-demographic variables to verify there were no significant differences between the snowball method sample and the Prolific sample. Results revealed that neither Age ($p = .09$), Gender ($p = .09$), Race ($p = .19$), Activity Sector ($p = .062$) nor Level of Education ($p = .11$) had a significant difference between samples. There was however a significant difference for the Position within the organisation, with 18% Prolific participants identifying as being manager (compared to 7% for non-Prolific participants) and 17% non-Prolific participants (compared to 3% for Prolific participants) identifying as being part of middle-management. Given the potential overlap in definition and overall similarities between the two categories, we chose to leave the data as is.

Since it was possible to participate in this study both in French and English, we also performed a chi-square analysis between the socio-demographic variables to verify the equivalency between the two groups. Results reveal that neither Age ($p= .223$), Race ($p= .139$), Activity Sector ($p= .09$), Level of Education ($p= .138$) or Position ($p= .108$) had a non-significant difference between the French and English groups. We however observed a significant difference ($p< .05$) for Gender. Indeed, it appears like participants who opted to complete the study in French identified in majority as Female, with 83% compared to 14% of participants who identified as Male. In contrast, the distribution was more balanced for the English version of the study, with 50% of respondents identifying as Female, and 49% of respondents identifying as Male. In light of this information, we consider a few elements. First, we must note that our sample demographics, as illustrated in Appendix E, show an over-representation of participants who identify as Female (60%), a factor beyond our control. Furthermore, irrespective of the language chosen, the respondents' gender identity does not influence the content and constructs studied in the questionnaire. The clinical vignettes (in all languages) are also not gender-specific. While the questionnaire was made available in both French and English to ensure a

diverse and inclusive sample, the exploration of gender differences in responses was not a primary objective of the present study. Given these considerations, we decided to leave the data as is.

Out of the final sample size of 124 participants, participants on average reported being part of the 21-29 years old age group. Furthermore, 34.68% of participants identified as Male, 51.61% of participants identified as Woman, and 13.71% of participants did not disclose their gender. A detailed summary of our final sample's descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix E³.

After giving their consent to participate, each participant was randomly assigned a talent status, either as a high potential or a regular employee. Participants were asked to embody this status when reading the vignettes as well as answering the questionnaires. Following the talent status assignment, participants read a short context which introduced the reader to the concept of exclusive talent management philosophies as well as the kind of treatment that employees identified as high potential or regular employees are expected to receive.

Each participant was asked to read two (2) vignettes, one vignette describing an exclusive talent management context adopting a transparent approach, and one vignette describing an exclusive talent management context adopting an ambiguous approach. The two vignettes were set to alternate from one participant to another to avoid habituation. At the end of each vignette, participants had to complete a questionnaire measuring their perceptions of justice and injustice as well as their basic psychological needs. The same questionnaire was therefore completed twice, hence doubling the number of observations from 124 to 248.

A short debrief (Appendix F) at the very end of the questionnaire revealed the details of the random assignment and its objective, given participants were not aware of the random assignment of talent status. Participants were asked to renew their consent before submitting.

³ The sample and study design are the same as the one presented in the following study: Lavoie and Forest (2023). The same data was used to test different hypotheses along with different variables as an evolution of the theoretical model tested in the first article. Given the communication type (Transparent, Ambiguous) was a manipulated variable used in the first article but not the present article, a mean score between the two vignettes was calculated to measure the variables of perceptions of justice and injustice, as well as basic psychological needs.

3.6.3 Measures

The main measurements are the vignettes as well as the questionnaires, both distributed at one point in time.

3.6.3.1 Vignettes

The first vignette brushed a portrait of a branch within a large organization adopting a transparent approach to their talent identification practices, while the second vignette described another branch within that same large organization adopting an ambiguous (i.e., opaque) approach to their talent identification process. The vignettes are of the “Paper-People Studies” type, a method that aims to obtain explicit responses from respondents based on fictitious scenarios (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Furthermore, we adopted a mixed-design approach in the conceptualization, which means all respondents read the same two vignettes, enabling between and within-subject comparisons (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014).

3.6.3.2 Questionnaire

We constructed a questionnaire that collected socio-demographic information along with validated items seeking the participant’s perception of distributive justice/injustice, procedural justice/injustice, as well the satisfaction/frustration of basic psychological needs.

3.6.3.2.1 Socio-demographic variables

As recommended by Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) in their meta-analysis on perception of organizational justice, we collected information on participant’s age, gender, education level, race and current position within their organization.

3.6.3.2.2 Perception of distributive and procedural justice and injustice

We used Hansen et al. (2013) shortened version of Colquitt et al. (2001, 2015) perception of organizational justice scale to measure how talent identification approach influence participant’s perception of distributive and procedural justice/injustice (Appendix C). For the French version of the questionnaires, items were translated in French using the back-translation method as recommended by Hambleton and Kanjee (1993). Furthermore, some items, which were originally meant to investigate the perception of justice within one’s job, had to be slightly modified to be coherent with our theme as well as the vignette’s context (i.e.: [original] *Are those outcomes justified, given your performance?* [modified] *Is the status*

assignment justified, given your performance?). The distributive justice subscale contains three items ($\alpha = .92$; e.g. *Is the status assignment consistent with the effort employees put into their work?*) and the distributive injustice subscale also contains three items ($\alpha = .76$; e.g. *Is the status assignment inconsistent with the efforts employees put into their work?*). Procedural justice is measured with six items ($\alpha = .72$; e.g. *Do you feel that these procedures are consistent over time?*), and procedural injustice is measured with six items ($\alpha = .52$; e.g. *Do you feel these processes are unevenly applied?*). The procedural injustice items fall within the recommended limit of .50 for emerging constructs (Ahire & Devaraj, 2001; Nunnally, 1978). Each item is measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Very Strongly*).

3.6.3.2.3 Basic need satisfaction and frustration

The satisfaction and frustration of basic psychological needs are measured with the *Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale* (BPNW-S) developed by Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al. (2021) (Appendix G). The questionnaire, available both in English and French, is comprised of 25 items measuring the satisfaction and frustration of the basic psychological needs, respectively 3 items for autonomy satisfaction ($\alpha = .86$; e.g. *I feel free to make choices with regards to the way I work*), 3 items measure for competence satisfaction ($\alpha = .90$; e.g. *I feel skilled*), and 6 items measuring relatedness ($\alpha = .96$; e.g. *I feel included*). As for the frustration of basic psychological needs, 4 items measure autonomy frustration ($\alpha = .85$; e.g. *I feel forced to follow decisions about my work*), 4 items for competence frustration ($\alpha = .94$; e.g. *I feel useless*), and five items measure relatedness frustration ($\alpha = .93$; e.g. *I feel disliked*).

3.7 Results

We used the statistical language R version 4.2.2 (R Core Team, 2021) to perform the moderated mediation analysis, based on an initial sample of 124 participants. The “process” function developed by Hayes (2017) was used to perform the moderated mediation. Furthermore, we mean centered all variables of interest for the analysis. Indeed, in an analysis involving an interaction between variables like a moderated mediation, calculations from M to Y considers W as equal to 0. Given our moderator variable W (Procedural Justice/Injustice) ranges from 1 to 7, it would not have made statistical sense to consider it as equal to 0. Therefore, mean centering would make the variable coefficients implicated in the interaction interpretable.

3.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

An initial sample of 146 participants was collected. A listwise deletion was performed of participants who completed less than 30% of the questionnaire, removing 22 participants. The final sample size was

therefore 124 participants. A summary of means, standard deviations, and correlations for all variables of interest is available in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Mean, Standard Deviations and Correlations

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Distributive Justice	124	4.11	1.46	—					
2 Distributive Injustice	124	3.54	1.20	-0.61**	—				
3 Procedural Justice	121	3.55	1.01	0.58**	-0.23*	—			
4 Procedural Injustice	121	3.76	0.86	-0.39*	0.46**	-0.39**	—		
5 Need Frustration	119	3.44	1.17	-0.56**	0.56**	-0.36**	0.49**	—	
6 Need Satisfaction	119	4.54	1.24	0.69**	-0.51**	0.42**	-0.36**	-0.84**	—

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$

3.7.2 Preliminary Analysis

3.7.2.1 Missing Data

We conducted a non-parametric test of homoscedasticity in order to examine which type of missing data our dataset was comprised of using the R package “MissMech” (Jamshidian et al., 2014). The non-parametric test of homoscedasticity was non-significant for both the distributive justice and distributive injustice subscales, therefore showing that missing data was Missing Completely at Random (MCAR), hence rejecting the null hypothesis of normality. With in mind to manipulate our data as little as possible, that variables were computed using the average of item scores, and considering the missing data as MCAR, we made the informed decision to keep our missing data as is and move forward in our preliminary analysis.

3.7.2.2 Outliers

3.7.2.2.1 Univariate Outliers

A univariate boxplot analysis using the R package “car” (Fox & Weisberg, 2019) showed no univariate outliers for neither distributive justice, distributive injustice, procedural justice, need frustration nor need satisfaction. On the other hand, four outliers appeared for the procedural injustice scale. A visual inspection of the distribution of the variable revealed the distribution to be leptokurtic (more scores concentrated towards the middle of the scale), along with what appeared to be a shorter range than the

other variables, which might explain why the boxplot showed four outliers while these participants' scores might not be *per se* "extreme". With this in mind, we chose to keep the scores as is.

3.7.2.2.2 Multivariate Outliers

We calculated the Mahalanobis distance ($D^2=22.46$) and created a Q-Q plot using the R package "psych" (Revelle, 2020) to identify possible outliers above the critical threshold of 22.46 for 6 degrees of freedom since 6 computed variables are considered in this analysis (i.e., (1) Distributive justice, (2) Distributive injustice, (3) Procedural justice, and (4) Procedural injustice, (5) Need frustration, and (6) Need satisfaction). An overview of the Mahalanobis Distance revealed 1 observation ($D^2 = 27.4$) above the critical threshold of 22.46. Since there was only 1 instance above the critical threshold, we did not create a new parallel dataset excluding the multivariate outlier as it would have a very marginal impact on our results.

3.7.2.3 Normality

The following section is about both univariate and multivariate normality for the variables of interest. The Mardia Test of normality using the R package "MVN" (Zhou & Shao, 2014) revealed that normality was reached for procedural justice, distributive injustice and needs frustration. On the other hand, distributive justice, procedural injustice and needs satisfaction did not reach normality. Nevertheless, an overview of the skewness and kurtosis measures revealed they were all within the range of $|1|$ (Bulmer, 1979). Therefore, deviations from a normal distribution in our sample were not considered severe enough to warrant correction.

3.7.3 Primary Analysis

3.7.3.1 Moderated Mediation 1

For $H1$ and $H2$, we used Process' function Model 14 (Hayes, 2017) to perform a moderated mediation with needs satisfaction as dependent variable (Y), status as independent variable (X), distributive justice as mediator (M) and procedural justice as moderator (W) of the relationship between M and Y (see Figure 3.2). Results revealed significant direct effects between status and need satisfaction ($B = 1.17$, $SE = 0.19$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.7991, 1.5426]), status and distributive justice ($B = 1.77$, $SE = 0.22$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [1.35, 2.20]) as well as distributive justice and need satisfaction ($B = 0.19$, $SE = 0.09$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.008, 0.37]).

Next, we examined the indirect effect of distributive justice in the relationship between status and need satisfaction (H1), and whether procedural justice acts as a moderator in this mediated relationship (H2).

Bootstrap 95% confidence intervals were computed from 5000 bootstrap samples. Results revealed a significant indirect effect of status through distributive justice on need satisfaction ($B = 0.47$, BootSE = 0.17, 95% CI [0.14,0.82]), supporting H1. Additionally, the moderated mediation revealed to be non-significant ($B = 0.003$, SE = 0.056, $p = .95$, 95% CI [-0.11,0.11]), hence rejecting H2. A table summarizing the results of the moderated mediation can be found in Table 3.2.

In other words, participants identified as high potential scored on average 1.78 points higher in their perception of distributive justice than participants identified as regular employees. Furthermore, while controlling for perceptions of procedural and distributive justice, participants identified as high potential scored on average 1.17 more on their scores of need satisfaction than their regular employee counterparts. Additionally, when distributive justice is held at zero (otherwise understood as the average given, we mean-centered the variables), procedural justice is significantly related to need satisfaction. The interaction between distributive justice and procedural justice was non-significant, thus suggesting there is a relationship between procedural justice and need satisfaction regardless of the score of distributive justice. Lastly, the model explains 61% of the total variability of need satisfaction, $F(4,114) = 44.78$, $p < .001$.

Figure 3.2 Moderated Mediation 1

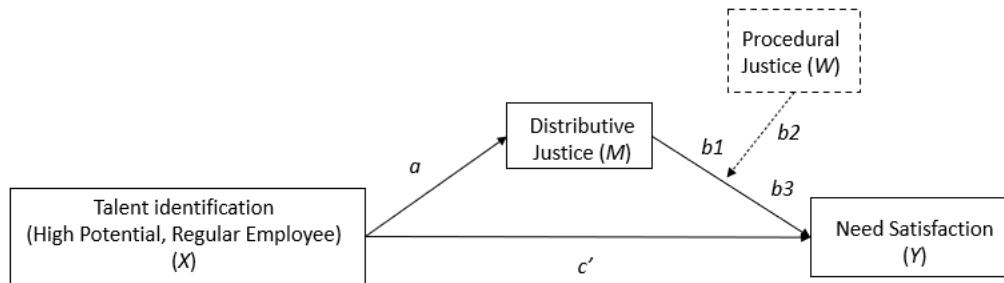


Table 3.2 Results from Moderated Mediation 1

Antecedent	Consequent									
	M (DJ)					Y (NEEDSAT)				
	Coeff.	SE	t	p	CI	Coeff.	SE	t	p	CI
X Status	a	1.78	0.22	8.29	0.00 [1.35, 2.20]	c'	1.17	0.19	6.24	0.00 [0.80, 1.54]
M Distributive Justice	—	—	—	—	—	b1	0.26	0.08	3.41	0.00 [0.11, 0.42]
W Procedural Justice	—	—	—	—	—	b2	0.19	0.09	2.07	0.04 [0.01, 0.37]
M*W	—	—	—	—	—	b3	0.003	0.06	0.06	0.95 [-0.11, 0.11]
Constant	-0.84	0.15	-5.58	0.00	[-1.14, -0.54]	-0.59	0.12	-4.81	0.00	[-0.84, -0.35]
R ² =0.37 F(1,117)=68.69 p < .001					R ² =0.61 F(4,114)=44.78 p < .001					

3.7.3.2 Moderated Mediation 2

The second moderated mediation exploring *H3* and *H4* was also performed using Process' Model 14 (Hayes, 2017), with this time need frustration as dependent variable (Y), status as independent variable (X), distributive injustice as mediator (M) and procedural injustice as moderator (W) of the relationship between M and Y (see Figure 3.3). Results revealed significant direct effects between status and need frustration ($B = -0.84$, $SE = 0.17$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-1.18, -0.49]), status on distributive injustice ($B = -1.03$, $SE = 1.99$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-1.43, -0.63]) as well as distributive injustice and needs frustration ($B = 0.26$, $SE = 0.08$, $p < .005$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.42]).

Next, we examined the indirect effects of distributive injustice on the relationship between status and needs frustration (H3), and to examine whether procedural injustice acts as a moderator in the mediation of distributive injustice on the relationship between status and need frustration (H4). Bootstrap 95% confidence intervals were computed from 5000 bootstrap samples. Results revealed a significant indirect effect of status through distributive injustice on need frustration ($B = -0.27$, BootSE = 0.11, 95% CI [-0.48, -0.07]), supporting H3. Additionally, the moderated mediation revealed to be non-significant ($B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.07$, $p = .76$, 95% CI [-0.11, 0.15]), hence rejecting H4. A table summarizing the results of the mediated moderation can be found in Table 3.3.

In other words, participants identified as high potential scored on average 1.03 points lower in their perception of distributive injustice than participants identified as regular employees. Furthermore, while controlling for perceptions of procedural and distributive injustice, participants identified as high potential scored on average 0.83 points less on their scores of need frustration than their regular employee

counterparts. Additionally, when distributive injustice is held at zero (otherwise understood as the average, given we mean-centered the variables), procedural injustice is significantly related to need satisfaction. The interaction between distributive injustice and procedural injustice was non-significant, thus suggesting there is a relationship between procedural injustice and need frustration regardless of the score of distributive injustice. Lastly, the model explains 49% of the total variability of need frustration, $F(4,114) = 26.94, p < .001$.

Figure 3.3 Moderated Mediation 2

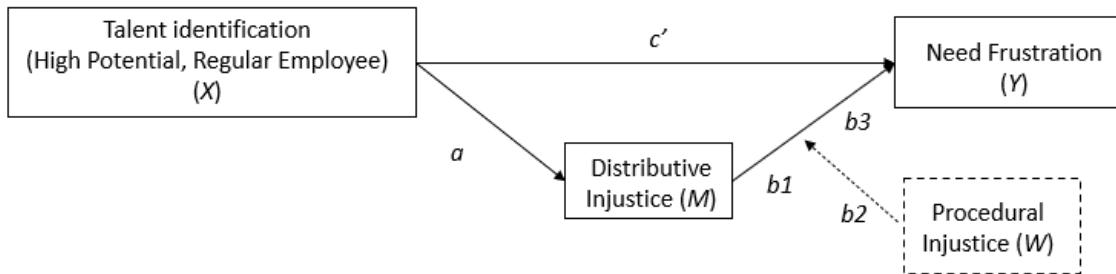


Table 3.3 Results from Moderated Mediation 2

Antecedent	Consequent									
	M (DIjn)					Y (NEEDFRU)				
	Coeff.	SE	t	p	CI	Coeff.	SE	t	p	CI
X Status	a -1.03	0.20	-5.15	0.00	[-1.43, -0.63]	c' -0.84	0.17	-4.82	0.00	[-1.18, -0.49]
M Distributive Injustice	—	—	—	—	—	b1 0.26	0.08	3.22	0.00	[0.10, 0.42]
W Procedural Injustice	—	—	—	—	—	b2 0.41	0.10	3.92	0.00	[0.20, 0.61]
M*W	—	—	—	—	—	b3 0.02	0.07	0.30	0.76	[-0.11, 0.15]
Constant	0.47	0.14	3.37	0.00	[0.20, 0.75]	0.42	0.12	3.45	0.00	[0.18, 0.66]
$R^2= 0.19$					$R^2= 0.49$					
$F(1,117)= 26.56 \ p < .001$					$F(4,114)= 26.94 \ p < .001$					

3.8 Discussion

The aim of the present study was two-fold; first to explore the mediating role of distributive justice/injustice in the relationship between talent identification and basic psychological needs, and second, to explore the role of procedural justice/injustice as moderator in the mediation described above. While organizational justice theory was often studied in the context of talent management, it is (to our knowledge) the first time that Self-Determination Theory is empirically studied in the context of talent

management, specifically talent identification and how it influences employees' basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

We found that talent identification is significantly related to basic psychological needs, such that participants who were identified as high potential reported higher levels of need satisfaction and lower levels of need frustration than their regular employee counterparts. This provides interesting and rare empirical insights into the lived experience of employees when they are assigned a status. Participants identified as high potential report greater satisfaction of their autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. Literature on the consequences of need satisfaction suggest that people who have high need satisfaction will report more autonomous forms of motivation and well-being (Van den Broeck et al., 2016), and will experience higher personal and professional growth.

On the other hand, results suggest that participants identified as regular employees will report greater frustration levels for their autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. Consequences of need frustration has been studied in the SDT literature, suggesting that employees who report high scores of need frustration will also report less wellbeing, lower job performance, and more exhaustion (Vander Elst et al., 2012).

We found that distributive justice acted as a mediator in the relationship between talent identification and need satisfaction. Distributive injustice also acted as mediator in the relationship between talent identification and need frustration. In their study on reactions to talent identification and perceived organizational justice, Gelens et al. (2014) had found that the relationship between talent identification and job satisfaction was fully mediated by distributive justice, such that employees identified as high potentials also reported significantly higher on perceived distributive justice than non-high potentials, and perceived distributive justice was significantly related to job satisfaction. Given job satisfaction is reported as a consequence of the satisfaction or frustration of basic psychological needs, our results are coherent with Gelens et al. (2014) and adds further quantitative empirical evidence that talent identification significantly influences employees' reactions and lived experience within the work environment.

In De Boeck et al. (2018) systematic review of employee reactions to talent management, the authors theorized that perceived distributive justice would mediate the relationship between talent identification and employee reactions (cognitive, affective, behavioral). Our findings empirically support the author's theory with distributive justice mediating the relationship between talent identification and need

satisfaction, and additionally distributive injustice mediating the relationship between talent identification and need frustration.

While it is understood that interactions are often more difficult to detect than individual effects (McClelland & Judd, 1993), results suggest that neither procedural justice nor procedural injustice were significant moderators on the mediation between talent identification, distributive justice/injustice and need satisfaction/frustration. This stirs away from a variety of conceptual articles (e.g., De Boeck et al., 2018) and empirical studies (e.g., Gelens et al., 2014) suggesting that procedural justice might act as moderator in the mediation between talent identification, distributive justice, and employee reactions. While the interactions were non-significant, results from the moderated mediation did however reveal that the simple effect of procedural justice on need satisfaction (and same for procedural injustice on need frustration) was significant, regardless of the score of distributive justice/injustice. Hence, when perceptions of procedural justice increase, so does need satisfaction. Similarly, when perceptions of procedural injustice increase, so does need frustration. Therefore, while acting independently from one another, distributive and procedural justice/injustice significantly influence basic psychological needs.

Lastly, it seems appropriate to highlight how large of an effect both moderated mediations have on our dependent variables. Specifically, results suggest that the moderated mediation with distributive and procedural justice (H3) had a total model effect of 61%, therefore more than half of the variance of need satisfaction is explained by the predictors. Additionally, the total model effect for distributive and procedural injustice (H4) demonstrated that 49% of need frustration's variance was explained by the predictors.

In sum, the results from this study speak to two main contributions. First, that exclusive talent management practices influence employee's basic psychological needs, such that employees identified as high potential report greater satisfaction and less frustration of their basic psychological needs than regular employees. Second, that while the practice of talent identification influences employees' basic psychological needs, the total model of talent identification, perceived distributive and procedural justice/injustice is responsible for respectively 61% of need satisfaction's variance, and 49% of need frustration's variance.

3.9 Limitations and Future Research

This study contains several limitations and avenues for future research. First and foremost, the use of vignettes contained both advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage is that it allowed to

manipulate the variable of talent status, which would have been logistically and ethically challenging in a real-world context. It also allowed us to explore our research questions in a contained environment. Should this study be replicated, it would be ideal to verify that all available translated versions of the survey are equivalent between one another. Future research intending on replicating this study would also benefit from testing the efficacy of the priming for status assignation and the different communication styles. Vignettes as a research method offer strong internal validity at the profit of external validity. The generalizability of results is therefore not assured. Future research should therefore seek to replicate this study in a real work context where reality is far more nuanced than the black and white scenarios built in the context of this study.

Second, while Colquitt et al. (2001) justice scale was validated (Colquitt, 2001), the updated justice scale proposed by Colquitt et al. (2015) including injustice as the opposite side of the spectrum has, on the other hand, not yet been validated. If the Cronbach's alpha for procedural injustice ($\alpha = .53$) fell just above the threshold of .50 as recommended by Ahire and Devaraj (2001) for emerging constructs, this raises nonetheless the need for a validated version of the full-range justice scale. Therefore, it would be valuable for future research to hone in on validating Colquitt et al. (2015) full-range injustice scale in order to further solidify measures that account for both rule adherence and rule violation.

Third, this study design solely looked at exclusive management practices. With in mind to build a fuller and more comprehensive view of how talent management practices as a whole influence individual perceptions and reactions in the workplace, future research would benefit from building a research design that would study both inclusive and exclusive talent management practices and how they respectively influence employees' perceptions of justice and basic psychological needs.

Finally, this study – along with most social sciences research – relied solely on self-report measures. Future studies would benefit from using a combination of both subjective and objective measures like absenteeism rates, turnover rates or physiological measures like heart rate variability.

3.10 Conclusion

The present study's purpose was to explore the mediating role of distributive justice and injustice in the relationship between talent identification and basic psychological needs. Another objective was to explore the role of procedural justice and injustice as moderator in the mediation. Our study answers Thunnissen

and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019) call for greater quantitative empirical studies in the field of talent management philosophies. Current literature has also been heavily oriented towards the United States (Thunnissen et al., 2013a), and the present research offers added cultural and linguistic variety to the talent management philosophies research field. The present research also offers a rare overview of employees reactions to exclusive talent management practices, as such programs consequences and benefits have mostly been studied from an organizational perspective (Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019).

Results reveal that talent identification as an exclusive talent management practice plays an unequal and significant role in employees` basic psychological needs. Indeed, employees identified as high potentials report greater satisfaction of their psychological needs, while regular employees report greater frustration of their psychological needs. This suggests that differentiating employees has the potential to instigate both upward and downward spirals, as research on basic needs is consistent in reporting that satisfying basic needs leads to positive outcomes, while frustrating needs leads to a variety of negative outcomes (Deci et al., 2017).

Yet, only a small fraction of employees will be identified as high potentials, therefore most employees score greater need frustration by the sheer fact of being put “in a box” reminding them that they aren’t part of the elite. Given the difficult labour market circumstances (Martel, 2019), organizations need to consider how their talent management practices impact the employees who compose the majority of their workforce and are more than ever vital to proper business operations.

3.11 References

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CHAPITRE 4

DISCUSSION GÉNÉRALE

La présente thèse de doctorat comprenait deux objectifs de recherche généraux. Le premier objectif était d'étudier comment l'approche de communication vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent modère la perception de justice organisationnelle. Le deuxième objectif visait à étudier la différence entre les statuts (haut potentiel, employé régulier) dans la perception de justice et la façon dont celles-ci influencent la satisfaction et la frustration des besoins psychologiques. S'appuyant sur la théorie de la justice organisationnelle ainsi que la théorie de l'autodétermination, ces deux objectifs de recherche se sont déclinés respectivement en deux articles. Ensemble, les résultats de ces deux articles peignent un portrait plus détaillé et complet des réactions individuelles vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent, laquelle s'inscrit dans une philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive.

4.1 Retour sur les résultats de l'article 1

La première étude visait à comprendre comment l'approche de communication vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent modère la perception de justice organisationnelle. Nous avons postulé que le choix de communication (transparent, ambigu) modérerait la relation entre le statut (haut potentiel, employé régulier) et la perception de justice distributive. Les résultats révèlent un portrait nuancé qui supporte partiellement ce postulat. D'une part, l'effet principal du statut s'est avéré significatif. Plus précisément, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers. D'autre part, l'effet principal du choix de communication s'est aussi avéré significatif, de sorte que les vignettes étant une communication transparente ont engendré de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que celles où les vignettes mettaient de l'avant une communication ambiguë. Toutefois, l'interaction entre le statut et le choix de communication s'est avérée non significative, suggérant ainsi que le statut et le choix de communication ont des effets significatifs, et ce indépendamment l'un de l'autre, sur la perception de justice distributive.

En somme, les participants identifiés comme haut potentiel perçoivent plus de justice distributive que leurs collègues identifiés comme employés réguliers, et ce peu importe le style de communication. De plus, l'adoption d'une approche transparente engendre de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que l'approche ambiguë, et ce peu importe le statut du participant. Ces résultats corroborent

les études menées par Gelens *et al.* (2013) ainsi que Slan-Jerusalim et Hausdorf (2007), lesquels avancent que la transparence engendrerait une plus grande perception de justice distributive. Par ailleurs, l'étude récemment publiée par Peterson *et al.* (2022) au sujet des pratiques de gestion de talent exclusives avancent que l'adoption d'une approche plus transparente vis-à-vis des pratiques d'identification de talent favoriserait une meilleure perception de justice distributive.

Les résultats de cette étude sont aussi alignés avec les résultats rapportés par Sumelius *et al.* (2020), notamment que l'adoption d'une approche de communication ambiguë engendre des conséquences indésirables pour les employés, et ce qu'ils soient identifiés comme hauts potentiels ou employés réguliers. Les auteurs recommandent aussi l'utilisation d'une approche de transparence afin de favoriser une plus grande perception de justice distributive.

Nous avons par ailleurs postulé que le choix de communication (transparent, ambigu) modérerait la relation entre le statut et la perception d'injustice distributive. Les résultats de la présente étude peignent, ici aussi, un portrait légèrement plus nuancé que dans le cas de la justice distributive. L'effet principal de statut sur la perception d'injustice distributive était significatif. Précisément, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté de plus hauts scores d'injustice distributive que les participants identifiés comme hauts potentiels. En revanche, l'effet principal du type de communication s'est avéré non significatif, tout comme l'interaction entre le statut et la transparence sur la perception d'injustice distributive.

Ainsi, les résultats suggèrent que, peu importe le type de communication, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers percevront plus d'injustice dans la pratique d'identification de talent que les participants identifiés comme hauts potentiels. En d'autres mots, lorsqu'on mesure la perception d'injustice, les employés réguliers percevront plus d'injustice que leurs collègues hauts potentiels vis-à-vis la pratique d'identification de talent, et ce peu importe le style de communication. En revanche, lorsqu'on mesure la perception de justice, les personnes assignées au statut de haut potentiel perçoivent plus de justice distributive, et ce peu importe le style de communication. Toutefois, l'approche de communication transparente engendre de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive, et ce peu importe le statut assigné.

En somme, les résultats du premier article suggèrent que, si la pratique d'identification de talent est incontournable, mieux vaut miser sur la transparence puisque celle-ci est l'alternative qui engendrera le plus de perception de justice distributive, tous statuts confondus. Toutefois, les employés identifiés

comme employés réguliers y percevront plus d'injustice distributive que leurs comparses hauts potentiels, et ce peu importe l'approche de communication. Sachant cela, le deuxième article a ainsi visé à aller plus loin en étudiant les bénéfices et conséquences que la perception de justice/injustice distributive engendre sur les besoins psychologiques des employés.

4.2 Retour sur les résultats de l'article 2

Le deuxième objectif de thèse consistait à étudier la différence entre les employés identifiés comme talent et les employés réguliers dans leur perception de justice et la façon dont celles-ci influencent la satisfaction et la frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques. Nous avons postulé que les participants identifiés comme hauts potentiels rapporteraient de plus hauts scores de perception de justice distributive que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers, et que cela augmenterait la satisfaction de leurs besoins psychologiques. Nous avons aussi postulé que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers rapporteraient de plus hauts scores de perception d'injustice distributive, et que cela augmenterait la frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques. Les résultats de notre deuxième étude supportent ces deux hypothèses.

D'une part, les résultats suggèrent que la pratique d'identification de talent est significativement liée à la satisfaction des besoins psychologiques des employés identifiés comme hauts potentiels. En effet, les participants identifiés comme hauts potentiels ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de satisfaction de leurs besoins psychologiques que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers. Les résultats de l'étude menée par Gelens *et al.* (2014) au sujet des réactions des employés face à la pratique d'identification de talent supportent les résultats de la présente étude. Les auteurs rapportent en effet que la relation entre l'identification de talent et la satisfaction au travail était entièrement médiée par la perception de justice distributive. Les résultats de la présente étude offrent par ailleurs un support empirique aux hypothèses mises de l'avant par De Boeck *et al.* (2018) dans leur revue systématique de la littérature sur les réactions des employés face aux différentes pratiques de gestion de talent.

Inversement, les résultats suggèrent que la pratique d'identification de talent est significativement liée à la frustration des besoins psychologiques des employés identifiés comme employés réguliers. En effet, les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers ont rapporté de plus hauts scores de perception d'injustice, et aussi de plus hauts scores de frustration des besoins psychologiques que les participants identifiés comme hauts potentiels. Ces résultats sont alignés avec la littérature grandissante portant un

regard sur les conséquences négatives, tant physiologiques que psychologiques, du sentiment d'injustice sur les employés; en effet, les personnes qui vivent de l'injustice seraient notamment deux fois plus à risque de développer des maladies cardiovasculaires (De Vogli *et al.*, 2007). Le sentiment d'injustice serait par ailleurs lié aux douleurs chroniques et aux maladies musculosquelettiques (Manville *et al.*, 2016). Plus encore, Robbins *et al.* (2012) rapportent que les employés vivant de l'injustice seraient de deux à trois fois plus à risque de rapporter des scores élevés d'épuisement professionnel. Si les conséquences de l'injustice peuvent être dommageables pour l'individu, elles peuvent aussi l'être pour les organisations. En effet, de nombreux écrits rapportent que le sentiment d'injustice contribue aux comportements contre-productifs au travail ainsi qu'à l'hostilité (Colquitt *et al.*, 2015).

Par ailleurs, nous nous sommes intéressés au rôle de la justice procédurale comme modérateur dans la médiation, lequel s'est avéré non-significatif. Malgré cela, les résultats du deuxième article ont tout de même démontré que la justice procédurale avait un effet positif significatif sur la satisfaction des besoins, et ce indépendamment de la justice distributive. À l'inverse, l'injustice procédurale avait un effet négatif significatif sur la frustration des besoins, et ce indépendamment de l'injustice distributive. Ceci est cohérent avec l'étude menée par van Prooijen (2009), lequel suggère que la justice procédurale serait liée aux besoins d'autonomie et de compétence et d'affiliation (van Prooijen *et al.*, 2002). Ce n'est toutefois pas aligné aux résultats de l'étude de Gelens *et al.* (2014), lesquels ont trouvé pour leur part que la justice procédurale modérait la relation entre la justice distributive et les réactions d'employés. C'est d'ailleurs basé sur l'étude théorique et empirique de Gelens *et al.* (2013, 2014) que De Boeck *et al.* (2018) ont plus tard suggéré que la justice procédurale agirait comme modérateur sur la médiation entre les pratiques de gestion de talent, la justice distributive et les réactions d'employés. Les résultats de la présente étude suggèrent toutefois une dynamique légèrement différente.

Autrement dit, la pratique d'identification de talent semble engendrer deux expériences assez distinctes et contrastées. D'une part, la minorité des employés identifiés comme hauts potentiels percevront la segmentation comme plus juste, et verront leurs trois besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation satisfaits, ce qui favorise notamment le bien-être et la performance. D'autre part, la majorité des employés qui, eux, ne seront pas identifiés comme haut potentiel percevront la segmentation comme plus injuste, et verront leurs trois besoins psychologiques d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation frustrés, ce qui engendre entre autres du mal-être, une plus grande intention de quitter et une diminution de la performance.

Dans un contexte où les entreprises s'efforcent de véhiculer des valeurs d'inclusivité, le constat est que l'identification de talent va à l'encontre de ces efforts puisque, fondamentalement, celle-ci vise à différencier les employés selon leur valeur perçue au sein de l'entreprise. Cela dit, il peut néanmoins être nécessaire pour une entreprise – et ce spécialement dans un contexte de pénurie de main-d'œuvre – de miser sur le développement de sa relève afin d'assurer la pérennité et la continuité du leadership. Toutefois, les résultats de ce deuxième article lèvent le voile sur les conséquences individuelles de l'identification de talent, et mettent particulièrement en lumière l'étendue du dommage potentiel qu'une telle pratique de segmentation peut avoir sur les employés qui ne font pas partie de l'élite. Ces résultats offrent un apport empirique quantitatif à la littérature actuelle, laquelle est lourdement orientée sur les conséquences organisationnelles, et ce en utilisant majoritairement des devis qualitatifs ou des revues systématiques.

4.3 Limites et recherches futures

Comme dans tout effort académique, cette thèse comprend un certain nombre de limites, lesquelles peuvent être contournées par d'intéressantes pistes de recherches futures. La première limite concerne les vignettes cliniques employées pour les deux articles, une méthode qui comprend des avantages et des inconvénients. L'avantage principal des vignettes est que celles-ci nous permettent d'étudier des thèmes sensibles et éthiquement complexes à étudier sur le terrain (i.e. : le harcèlement sexuel au travail). Les vignettes permettent aussi d'étudier et de manipuler des variables dans un environnement contrôlé. En contrepartie, si les vignettes favorisent l'accessibilité et écartent le bruit autour des variables d'intérêt, elles ne représentent pas entièrement bien la réalité étant donné la nature hermétique de la méthode. Par exemple, autant pour le style communication que le type de philosophie de gestion de talent, la réalité n'est certes pas aussi dichotomique que « transparent » ou « ambigu », ou bien « exclusif » ou « inclusif », mais se retrouve peut-être plus sur un continuum entre ces différents extrêmes. Les résultats de ces deux premières études représentent toutefois un excellent départ vers la publication d'études empiriques et quantitatives s'intéressant aux philosophies de gestion de talent exclusives. En ce sens, il serait particulièrement intéressant que des recherches futures explorent les conséquences individuelles de la pratique d'identification de talent dans un contexte organisationnel réel.

Plus encore, la thèse s'est spécifiquement concentrée sur les philosophies de gestion de talent exclusives, mais il serait intéressant pour des futures recherches d'effectuer une analyse comparative entre les différentes philosophies de gestion de talent, soit exclusive, inclusive et hybride. Les approches exclusives,

inclusive et hybride découlant de l'approche subjective du talent, il serait par ailleurs intéressant d'étudier les bienfaits individuels et organisationnels d'une combinaison entre l'approche subjective et objective. Ceci pourrait par exemple se traduire par un programme de gestion de talent hybride via lequel la sélection des hauts potentiels se fait à l'aide d'une mesure objective des compétences et par le biais de tests psychométriques. C'est en étudiant plus amplement ces différents modèles et combinaisons possibles que nous serions en mesure d'effectuer une comparaison nivélée des conséquences individuelles et organisationnelles que chacune des philosophies engendre.

Dans un autre ordre d'idées, la collecte de données de la présente thèse était unique dans le temps. Il serait intéressant, pour une recherche future, d'explorer un devis longitudinal afin d'étudier les impacts des pratiques de gestion de talent sur les employés à long terme. De plus, nous nous sommes concentrés spécifiquement sur la perception de justice distributive et procédurale, mais il serait pertinent pour des recherches futures d'inclure également la perception de justice interpersonnelle et informationnelle. Plusieurs études théoriques et qualitatives (Gelens *et al.*, 2013, 2014) envisagent ces deux types de justice comme d'importantes variables à étudier dans la relation entre les pratiques de gestion de talent et les réactions d'employés.

Finalement, l'entièreté de notre questionnaire comprenait des mesures autorapportées, laissant ainsi place à beaucoup de subjectivité. Nous recommandons que des recherches futures mesurent, et ce en complément aux mesures autorapportées, des conséquences plus objectives et réelles, tel le taux de roulement, l'absentéisme ou bien des mesures physiologiques comme la variabilité du rythme cardiaque et la pression artérielle. Par ailleurs, si la présente étude était reproduite en employant la même méthode de vignettes, il serait préférable de vérifier au préalable l'efficacité de la manipulation des variables d'intérêt, soit l'assignation de statut et le choix de communication. Finalement, si le questionnaire est pour être disponible dans plusieurs langues, il serait aussi désirable de vérifier que le questionnaire dans son entièreté soit équivalent d'une langue à l'autre.

Ceci représente néanmoins un excellent départ vers la publication plus nombreuse d'études empiriques quantitatives dans le domaine des philosophies de gestion de talents. La présente thèse doctorale soulève deux conclusions principales. Dans un premier temps, les résultats suggèrent que la pratique d'identification de talent est un couteau à double-tranchant favorisant fortement les employés identifiés comme l'élite, et hypothéquant fortement ceux qui ne le sont pas. En compréhension mieux comment cette

pratique influence la perception de justice organisationnelles ainsi que les besoins psychologiques de tous les employés, les organisations pourront effectuer des décisions stratégiques mieux informées en fonction des risques et bénéfices des pratiques employées.

La seconde conclusion marquante de cette thèse doctorale est que, bien qu'il n'y ait pas de réponse entièrement noire ou blanche, nos résultats suggèrent que d'approcher le sujet de l'identification de talent avec transparence, auprès de tous, est l'avenue la moins dommageable pour les employés. En effet, bien que les participants identifiés comme employés réguliers perçussent plus d'injustice distributive que les haut potentiels – et ce peu importe le style de communication – l'approche ambiguë semblait néanmoins ajouter insulte à l'injure. Dans un contexte où, plus que jamais, les employés à tous les niveaux et toutes les fonctions sont précieux et essentiels au succès organisationnel, il convient d'adopter une lentille plus inclusive et englobante des conséquences individuelles des différents pratiques internes comme l'identification de talent.

CHAPITRE 5

CONCLUSION GÉNÉRALE

5.1 Contributions théoriques

La présente étude comprend plusieurs avancements théoriques valant la peine d'être soulignés. Pour ce qui est du domaine de recherche en philosophie de gestion de talent, le devis expérimental et quantitatif de la présente étude répond à l'appel de Thunnissen et Gallardo-Gallardo (2019), lesquels recommandaient qu'un plus grand volume d'études empiriques quantitatives soit publié dans le domaine. Une étude comme celle-ci contribue en effet à complémenter les articles théoriques et conceptuels déjà publiés, tout en ajoutant de la variété aux études majoritairement qualitatives. Dans un second temps, les études portant sur les philosophies de gestion de talent se sont jusqu'ici principalement concentrées sur les conséquences organisationnelles des pratiques de gestion de talent. En ce sens, notre étude contribue à ouvrir l'horizon de recherche en considérant les conséquences individuelles de telles pratiques.

En ce qui a trait à la théorie de l'autodétermination, la présente étude ajoute un apport théorique intéressant étant donné que, à notre connaissance, la théorie de l'autodétermination n'avait jusqu'à présent pas été étudiée dans le contexte des philosophies de gestion de talent. En ce sens, la présente étude offre une perspective fort intéressante sur les conséquences que les pratiques de gestion de talent exclusives peuvent avoir sur la satisfaction et la frustration des besoins psychologiques des employés. Cela ouvre par ailleurs l'opportunité à ce que davantage d'études se penchent sur les différentes facettes de la théorie de l'autodétermination appliquées au domaine des philosophies de gestion de talent. En effet, il y aurait là une belle opportunité pour un cadre théorique mature et établi comme la théorie de l'autodétermination d'être plus fréquemment appliqué dans un domaine de recherche en essor comme celui des philosophies de gestion de talent.

Pour ce qui est des apports relatifs à la théorie de la justice organisationnelle, la présente étude contribue certainement à mieux comprendre comment la perception de justice distributive et procédurale influence les réactions individuelles des employés. Les résultats des deux articles issus de la présente thèse suggèrent par ailleurs que les pratiques de gestion de talent et la perception de justice sont intimement liés quand cela vient aux conséquences individuelles, et méritent ainsi d'être davantage étudiées. L'étude menée dans le contexte de la présente thèse combine ainsi trois cadres théoriques qui n'avaient auparavant pas été étudiés ensemble, enrichissant chaque domaine, autant dans leur individualité que

dans leur globalité. Dans la même veine d'idée, cette thèse contribue au sens plus large au domaine des sciences sociales par son type de devis. En effet, peu nombreuses sont les études en sciences sociales, et plus spécifiquement en psychologie du travail et des organisations, qui adoptent un devis expérimental. L'utilisation des vignettes cliniques s'est en effet avéré être un outil intéressant de recherche qui vaudrait la peine d'être plus fréquemment considéré.

5.2 Contributions pratiques

Bien que le monde de la gestion soit souvent friand « d'étapes à suivre », les résultats de la présente thèse ne nous fournissent pas une recette claire à offrir aux organisations. Elle nous pointe toutefois vers des pistes de réflexions et considérations que toute organisation et leader gagneraient à se poser. Dans un premier temps, si l'organisation a présentement un programme de gestion de talent, le premier questionnement qui s'impose est le suivant : quelles sont les philosophies sous-jacentes en matière de gestion de talent qui ont motivé la mise en place du programme tel qu'il l'est présentement? Suivant cette réflexion, il semble approprié de se questionner si le programme est cohérent avec ces philosophies sous-jacentes. Les résultats de la présente étude suggèrent que de segmenter les employés selon leur potentiel semble bénéficier psychologiquement ceux qui sont en position de privilège au détriment de ceux qui ne le sont pas. Les résultats suggèrent en effet que les personnes identifiées comme employés réguliers verront leurs besoins psychologiques davantage frustrés que les personnes identifiées comme haut potentiel. À l'inverse, les personnes identifiées comme haut potentiel ont rapporté une plus grande satisfaction de leurs besoins psychologiques que les personnes identifiées comme employés réguliers. Dans un contexte où recruter et conserver les employés réguliers est aussi difficile que de former la relève, il impose de se questionner si de frustrer les besoins psychologiques de la majorité de notre main d'œuvre au profit d'une minorité vaut la peine. Ensuite, il est nécessaire de se questionner sur le style de communication présentement utilisé : misez-vous sur une approche transparente ou ambigu vis-à-vis la présence d'un tel programme ainsi que les personnes qui y sont sélectionnées? Les résultats de la présente étude révèlent que l'approche transparente est la moins dommageable des deux options. En effet, bien que les employés identifiés comme employés réguliers perçoivent une plus grande injustice distributive que leurs comparses à haut potentiel, la perception d'injustice est moins importante que lorsqu'une approche d'ambiguïté est favorisée. En somme, les résultats mettent en lumière que les pratiques de gestion de talent engendrent des réactions et conséquences individuelles significatives. Il n'y a toutefois pas de bon ou mauvais choix qui peuvent être fait hors de tout doute raisonnable, tout cela peut dépendre d'une panoplie de facteurs comme l'industrie dans laquelle vous œuvrez, les objectifs stratégiques, la

grosseur et la composition de l'entreprise, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns. Il importe donc pour les organisations d'être conscientes et intentionnelles dans leur conceptualisation du talent, évaluer les besoins actuels et futurs, et s'assurer d'une cohérence entre ces différents éléments afin de mettre sur pied un programme de gestion de talent qui sert les objectifs stratégiques d'entreprise tout en ayant pesé les conséquences que ceux-ci peuvent avoir sur leur main d'œuvre, et conséquemment sur leurs opérations et leur performance.

La gestion de talent est considérée comme un facteur clé de performance organisationnelle (Beechler et Woodward, 2008; Collings et Mellahi, 2009; Iles *et al.*, 2010; O'Toole et Lawler, 2008). Dans le marché actuel, trouver de la main-d'œuvre qualifiée pour assurer le bon fonctionnement opérationnel, ainsi que d'assurer la pérennité de l'entreprise, représente un réel enjeu d'affaires. Dans des circonstances pareilles, plusieurs doivent se tourner vers les programmes de gestion de talent afin de miser sur le développement de la relève à l'interne. Jusqu'ici, la littérature portant sur les philosophies de gestion de talent s'est majoritairement concentrée sur les conséquences organisationnelles de telles pratiques. Les études publiées sont aussi largement de nature théorique ou elles utilisent des devis qualitatifs. L'objectif de la présente thèse était ainsi d'étudier, et ce à l'aide d'une étude quantitative, les conséquences individuelles de l'identification de talent, et surtout de comparer les perceptions et les réactions individuelles en fonction du statut assigné (haut potentiel, employé régulier). S'appuyant sur la théorie de la justice organisationnelle, le premier article visait ainsi à étudier la relation entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice et d'injustice distributives. Nous avons par ailleurs étudié comment le choix de communication (transparent, ambigu) pouvait influencer la relation entre l'identification de statut et la perception de justice et d'injustice. S'appuyant sur la théorie de justice organisationnelle ainsi que la théorie de l'autodétermination, le deuxième article visait à mieux comprendre les conséquences de l'identification de talent sur les trois besoins psychologiques des employés.

À la lumière de ces deux articles, le constat est le suivant : l'identification de talent teinte pour ainsi dire l'expérience employé, les hauts potentiels pour le mieux, et les employés réguliers pour le pire. Si l'adoption d'une approche transparente peut favoriser la perception de justice distributive, les employés réguliers percevront tout de même une injustice vis-à-vis la pratique, et ce peu importe l'approche de communication. Plus encore, les employés identifiés comme haut potentiel verront leurs besoins d'autonomie, de compétence et d'affiliation plus satisfaits et moins frustrés que les employés identifiés comme employés réguliers. Cette relation est en partie expliquée par la justice distributive qui agit comme

variable médiatrice : les employés identifiés comme haut potentiel perçoivent l'identification de talent comme plus juste, et conséquemment cela renforce la satisfaction de leurs besoins psychologiques. À l'inverse, les employés identifiés comme employé régulier perçoivent l'identification de talent comme plus injuste, et conséquemment cela exacerbe la frustration de leurs besoins psychologiques. Ces résultats appellent les organisations à reconsidérer l'utilisation systématique de programmes d'identification et de développement des employés à haut potentiel comme méthode de gestion de talent.

ANNEXE A

VIGNETTES

Background

Magna Consulting is an international consulting firm with over 1000 employees deployed worldwide. The company has many areas of specialization such as change management, digital transformation, ERP integration and brand refreshment. Each area of specialization has its own office, team and reporting structure, and enjoys considerable freedom in the way it conducts its business. The different branches therefore operate as sub-companies.

In order to ensure the succession of senior management, each human resources department conducts an annual employee segmentation. This exercise consists of reviewing performance evaluations, discussing with managers, and identifying employees with superior performance. Once these employees are identified, they will be identified as “high potential”. These employees will be enrolled in a high potential development program that may extend over several years.

Less than 10% of employees are identified as high potential. These employees will have access to a range of development opportunities (e.g. psychometric testing, coaching, mentoring) and may have access to higher education funded by the company (e.g. MBA). Participation in this high potential development program does not guarantee access to a senior management position; members of the high potential cohorts will compete with each other for a senior management position when one becomes available. Employees who have not been identified as high potential, the so-called “regular” employees, do not have access to this type of development. Since the majority of talent management investments are directed towards the high potential program, very few development opportunities are offered to regular employees.

Vignette 1 [Exclusive, Transparent]

The main office of the change management consulting branch, Alpha Change, is located in Toronto. Alpha Change alone has over 200 employees. Alpha Change is committed to being transparent in its operations, which is why the presence of the high potential program in question is communicated to all at the time of hiring. Each year, employees identified as high potential are announced via the company’s weekly newsletter. In addition, an informal meeting process is available for employees who have not been selected as high potential and who would like to understand the reasons behind the decision made by

Human Resources. Finally, employees identified as high potential are under no obligation to participate in the program and may leave at any time during the development process.

Vignette 2 [Exclusive, Ambiguous]

The main office of the digital transformation arm, Beta Transform, is located in Montreal. Beta Transform has approximately 150 employees. In order to avoid creating a stir, Beta Transform remains as opaque as possible regarding the segmentation of employees and the existence of the high potential development program. Employees identified as high potential are informed of their status, and are further informed that “regular” employees are not aware of their status assignment. Employees identified as high potential do not know the identity of other employees who have received the same recognition, and have very little information as to the implications with which a status such as this comes.

ANNEXE B

QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLET - ARTICLE 1

Instructions

Before you begin reading the vignettes, please note the talent status you were assigned. Think of this status as the role you will play when reading the vignettes. In other words, we ask you to put yourself in the shoes of the status you are assigned when reading the vignettes and when answering the questionnaires.

Background

Magna Consulting is an international consulting firm with over 1000 employees deployed worldwide. The company has many areas of specialization such as change management, digital transformation, ERP integration and brand refreshment. Each area of specialization has its own office, team and reporting structure, and enjoys considerable freedom in the way it conducts its business. The different branches therefore operate as sub-companies.

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Vignette 1 [Exclusive, Transparent]

The main office of the change management consulting branch, Alpha Change, is located in Toronto. Alpha Change alone has over 200 employees. Alpha Change is committed to being transparent in its operations, which is why the presence of the high potential program in question is communicated to all at the time of hiring. Each year, employees identified as high potential are announced via the company's weekly newsletter. In addition, an informal meeting process is available for employees who have not been selected as high potential and who would like to understand the reasons behind the decision made by Human Resources. Finally, employees identified as high potential are under no obligation to participate in the program and may leave at any time during the development process.

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
To what extent...*

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
-----------------	------------------	-------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------

1- Is the status assignment inconsistent with the effort employees put into their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- Is the status assignment appropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- Does the status assignment reflect the effort you put into your work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- Is the status assignment inappropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- Is the status assignment inappropriate, given your job performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6- Is the status assignment justified, given your performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Now please think about the PROCESSES the company uses to determine which employees are high potentials.

To what extent...

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
1- Are these processes based on accurate information?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- Do you feel that these processes are unevenly applied?	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- Do you feel that these procedures are consistent over time?	1	2	3	4	5	7
4- Are you able to appeal the decisions resulting from these procedures?	1	2	3	4	5	7
5- Are the decisions resulting from these procedures set in stone?	1	2	3	4	5	7
6- Are these processes based on faulty information?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Do you have additional comments?

Vignette 2 [Exclusive, Ambiguous]

The main office of the digital transformation arm, Beta Transform, is located in Montreal. Beta Transform has approximately 150 employees. In order to avoid creating a stir, Beta Transform remains as opaque as possible regarding the segmentation of employees and the existence of the high potential development program. Employees identified as high potential are informed of their status, and are further informed that "regular" employees are not aware of their status assignment. Employees identified as high potential do not know the identity of other employees who have received the same recognition, and have very little information as to the implications with which a status such as this comes.

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
To what extent...*

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1- Is the status assignment inconsistent with the effort employees put into their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- Is the status assignment appropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- Does the status assignment reflect the effort you put into your work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- Is the status assignment inappropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- Is the status assignment inappropriate, given your job performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Now please think about the PROCESSES the company uses to determine which employees are high potentials.

To what extent...

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1- Are these processes based on accurate information?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- Do you feel that these processes are unevenly applied?	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- Do you feel that these procedures are consistent over time?	1	2	3	4	5	7
4- Are you able to appeal the decisions resulting from these procedures?	1	2	3	4	5	7
5- Are the decisions resulting from these procedures set in stone?	1	2	3	4	5	7
6- Are these processes based on faulty information?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Do you have additional comments?

Socio-Demographic Questions

- a. **Gender:** What gender do you identify with?
 1. Male
 2. Female
 3. Trans
 4. Non-binary; gender non-conforming
 5. Prefer not to answer

- b. **Age:** What age group do you belong to?
 1. 18-20
 2. 21-29
 3. 30-39
 4. 40-49
 5. 50-59
 6. 60 +

- c. **Race:** What racial category best describes you?
 1. Black
 2. East Asian
 3. Latino
 4. Middle Eastern
 5. South Asian
 6. Southeast Asian
 7. White
 8. Other racial category

- d. **Diploma:** What was your most recent obtained degree?
 1. High School
 2. CEGEP
 3. Diploma of College Studies
 4. Undergraduate
 5. Graduate
 6. Doctoral and post-doctoral

- e. **Activity Sector:** In what industry do you currently work?
 1. Trade
 2. Manufacturing
 3. Primary Sector
 4. Public Services
 5. Education, Health and Social Assistance
 6. Financial, Real Estate, Professional and Administrative Services
 7. Construction
 8. Culture, Information, Leisure and Accommodation
 9. Transportation and Warehousing
 10. Other

f. **Position:** What position do you currently hold?

1. Employee
2. Manager
3. Executive Director
4. Top Management

Debrief

Thank you again for your participation in this study.

The purpose of the study in which you just participated was to explore how employee segmentation influences the perception of justice as well as the satisfaction of primary psychological needs. We also examined how the choice of transparency in relation to employee segmentation influences these same variables.

Participants were randomly assigned a status, either High Potential or Regular Employee. In order to adequately address our research objectives, it was necessary to limit the information surrounding the study in question so that you would not tailor your responses to meet the research objective. **Please note that the companies described in the context and the two vignettes are entirely fictitious.**

Your data is completely anonymous and confidential. You may also contact the lead author of this study (laboie.dominique@courrier.uqam.ca) if you have any questions or comments. In the event that you have a change of heart about the use of your survey data, please be aware that it is possible to withdraw your consent, in which case your data will be destroyed without penalty.

I reiterate my consent:

Yes No (your data will be eliminated)

ANNEXE C
JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE SCALE

Colquitt, J. A., Long, D. M., Rodell, J. B., & Halvorsen-Ganepola, M. D. K. (2015). *Justice and injustice measures* [Database record]. APA PsycTESTs. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t39629-000>

Abridged version suggested by Hansen, A. M., Byrne, Z. S., & Kiersch, C. E. (2013). Development and validation of an abridged measure of organizational justice. *The Journal of Psychology*, 147(3), 217-244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2012.683054>

Distributive Justice and Injustice

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
To what extent...*

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
-----------------	------------------	-------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------

1- Is the status assignment inconsistent with the effort employees put into their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- Is the status assignment appropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- Does the status assignment reflect the effort you put into your work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- Is the status assignment inappropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- Is the status assignment inappropriate, given your job performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6- Is the status assignment justified, given your performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Procedural Justice and Injustice

Now please think about the PROCESSES the company uses to determine which employees are high potentials.

To what extent...

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
1- Are these processes based on accurate information?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- Do you feel that these processes are unevenly applied?	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- Do you feel that these procedures are consistent over time?	1	2	3	4	5	6
4- Are you able to appeal the decisions resulting from these procedures?	1	2	3	4	5	6
5- Are the decisions resulting from these procedures set in stone?	1	2	3	4	5	6
6- Are these processes based on faulty information?	1	2	3	4	5	6

ANNEXE D
FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

**UQÀM | Université du Québec
à Montréal**

Talent management philosophy

Student researcher: Dominique Lavoie, PhD in psychology, lavoie.dominique@courrier.uqam.ca

Research Director: Jacques Forest, PhD, Psychologist, CHRP, Full Professor at ESG UQÀM,
forest.jacques@uqam.ca

Preamble

We are asking you to participate in a research project that involves reading short stories in order to ask questions about certain practices and philosophies of talent management in the workplace. Before agreeing to participate in this research project, please take the time to read the following information carefully. This consent form explains the purpose of this study, the procedures, benefits, risks and harms, and who to contact if necessary.

Description of the project and its objectives

The purpose of this study is to explore how employee segmentation as a talent management practice influences employees' well-being and sense of justice at work. The study will take the form of vignettes, which are short stories that participants will be asked to read. The participants will then have to answer a questionnaire.

Nature and duration of your participation

Participation in this study is unique and will take an estimated 15 minutes. During the study, you will be asked to read one or more vignettes, and then take a questionnaire.

Benefits of participating

You will not personally benefit from participating in this study. However, you will have contributed to the advancement of science, particularly in the research area of talent management philosophies.

Risks of Participation

In principle, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. However, the length of time required to participate could be a disadvantage.

Confidentiality

Participation in this study is completely confidential. Your questionnaire will be associated with a random participant number. Your identity and information will therefore be completely confidential. For electronic participation, we use the Qualtrics platform, which stores its data on a server located in Toronto (soon to be Montreal). The raw data will be kept for 5 years after the scientific communication, after which it will be destroyed.

Voluntary participation and withdrawal

Your participation is entirely free and voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this project or withdraw at any time without having to justify your decision. In addition, you will be asked to reiterate your consent after completing the study, so you will have the opportunity to maintain or withdraw your consent at that time as well.

Compensation

You will not receive any financial compensation for your participation in this research project.

Questions about the project?

If you have any additional questions about the project and your participation, you can contact the people in charge of the project: Jacques Forest, forest.jacques@uqam.ca ; Dominique Lavoie, lavoiedominique9@gmail.com

Questions about your rights?

The Research Ethics Committee for Student Projects Involving Human Beings (CERPÉ FSH) has approved the research project in which you will participate. For information about the research team's responsibilities regarding the ethics of research involving humans or to make a complaint, you can contact the CERPÉ FSH coordination: cerpe.fsh@uqam.ca or 514-987-3000, ext. 3642].

Acknowledgements

Your collaboration is essential to the realization of our project and the research team would like to thank you.

CONSENT:

- I AGREE to participate in this study. I may withdraw at any time without prejudice of any kind. I certify that I am over 18 years of age.
- I REFUSE to participate in this study

ANNEXE E

STATISTIQUES DESCRIPTIVES DE L'ÉCHANTILLON – ARTICLE 2

	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	62	39%
Female	96	60%
Prefer not to answer	2	1%
Age Group		
18-20	7	4%
21-29	60	38%
30-39	44	28%
40-49	28	18%
50-59	17	11%
60 +	4	2%
RACE		
Black	2	1%
East-Asian	11	7%
Latino	8	5%
Middle-Eastern	3	2%
South-Asian	7	4%
Southeast-Asian	3	2%
Caucasian	121	76%
Other	4	3%
Activity Sector		
Commerce	7	4%
Fabrication	3	2%
Primary Sector	1	1%
Public Services	17	11%
Teaching, Health and Social Sciences	33	21%
Finance, Real Estate, Professionnal and Administrative Services	16	10%
Construction	3	2%
Culture, Information, Lodging	11	7%
Public Administration	11	7%
Transportation and Storage	5	3%
Other	52	33%
DIPLOMA		
High School	15	9%
CEGEP	2	1%
Diploma of Collegiate Studies	12	8%
Undergraduate	76	48%
Masters	50	31%
Phd, Post Doctorate	4	3%
POSITION		
Employee	119	75%
Manager	22	14%
Middle Manager	13	8%
Top Management	4	3%

Note. N=124

ANNEXE F

QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLET – ARTICLE 2

Instructions

Before you begin reading the vignettes, please note the talent status you were assigned. Think of this status as the role you will play when reading the vignettes. In other words, we ask you to put yourself in the shoes of the status you are assigned when reading the vignettes and when answering the questionnaires.

Background

Magna Consulting is an international consulting firm with over 1000 employees deployed worldwide. The company has many areas of specialization such as change management, digital transformation, ERP integration and brand refreshment. Each area of specialization has its own office, team and reporting structure, and enjoys considerable freedom in the way it conducts its business. The different branches therefore operate as sub-companies.

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Vignette 1 [Exclusive, Transparent]

The main office of the change management consulting branch, Alpha Change, is located in Toronto. Alpha Change alone has over 200 employees. Alpha Change is committed to being transparent in its operations, which is why the presence of the high potential program in question is communicated to all at the time of hiring. Each year, employees identified as high potential are announced via the company's weekly newsletter. In addition, an informal meeting process is available for employees who have not been selected as high potential and who would like to understand the reasons behind the decision made by Human Resources. Finally, employees identified as high potential are under no obligation to participate in the program and may leave at any time during the development process.

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
To what extent...*

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
-----------------	------------------	-------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------

1- Is the status assignment inconsistent with the effort employees put into their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- Is the status assignment appropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- Does the status assignment reflect the effort you put into your work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- Is the status assignment inappropriate for the work you are doing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- Is the status assignment inappropriate, given your job performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6- Is the status assignment justified, given your performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Now please think about the PROCESSES the company uses to determine which employees are high potentials.

To what extent...

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
1- Are these processes based on accurate information?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- Do you feel that these processes are unevenly applied?	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- Do you feel that these procedures are consistent over time?	1	2	3	4	5	6
4- Are you able to appeal the decisions resulting from these procedures?	1	2	3	4	5	6
5- Are the decisions resulting from these procedures set in stone?	1	2	3	4	5	6
6- Are these processes based on faulty information?	1	2	3	4	5	6

To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.

In my job...

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
1- I feel free to make choices with regards to the way I work	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- I have a say in how things are done	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- I have freedom to make decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6
4- I feel that I am capable	1	2	3	4	5	6
5- I feel skilled	1	2	3	4	5	6
6- I am able to overcome challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6
7- I feel supported	1	2	3	4	5	6
8- I feel listened to	1	2	3	4	5	6
9- I feel valued	1	2	3	4	5	6
10- I feel cared for	1	2	3	4	5	6
11- I feel included	1	2	3	4	5	6
12- I feel valued as an important member of my group	1	2	3	4	5	6
13- I feel pushed to behave in certain ways	1	2	3	4	5	6
14- I feel forced to follow decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6
15- I feel a lot of unwanted pressure	1	2	3	4	5	6

16- I feel forced to do professional tasks that I would not choose to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17- I feel like a failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18- I feel useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19- I feel incapable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20- I feel hopeless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21- I feel rejected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22- I feel brushed aside	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23- I feel disliked	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24- I feel excluded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25- I feel isolated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you have additional comments?

Vignette 2 [Exclusive, Ambiguous]

The main office of the digital transformation arm, Beta Transform, is located in Montreal. Beta Transform has approximately 150 employees. In order to avoid creating a stir, Beta Transform remains as opaque as possible regarding the segmentation of employees and the existence of the high potential development program. Employees identified as high potential are informed of their status, and are further informed that "regular" employees are not aware of their status assignment. Employees identified as high potential do not know the identity of other employees who have received the same recognition, and have very little information as to the implications with which a status such as this comes.

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
To what extent...*

1 Not at all	2 Very Little	3 Somewhat Little	4 Moderately	5 Somewhat Strongly	6 Strongly	7 Very Strongly
-----------------	------------------	-------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------

1- Is the status assignment inconsistent with the effort employees put into their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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1- Are these processes based on accurate information?	1	2	3	4	5	6
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6- Are these processes based on faulty information?	1	2	3	4	5	6

To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.

In my job...

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
1- I feel free to make choices with regards to the way I work	1	2	3	4	5	6
2- I have a say in how things are done	1	2	3	4	5	6
3- I have freedom to make decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6
4- I feel that I am capable	1	2	3	4	5	6
5- I feel skilled	1	2	3	4	5	6
6- I am able to overcome challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6
7- I feel supported	1	2	3	4	5	6
8- I feel listened to	1	2	3	4	5	6
9- I feel valued	1	2	3	4	5	6
10- I feel cared for	1	2	3	4	5	6
11- I feel included	1	2	3	4	5	6
12- I feel valued as an important member of my group	1	2	3	4	5	6
13- I feel pushed to behave in certain ways	1	2	3	4	5	6
14- I feel forced to follow decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6
15- I feel a lot of unwanted pressure	1	2	3	4	5	6

16- I feel forced to do professional tasks that I would not choose to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17- I feel like a failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18- I feel useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19- I feel incapable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20- I feel hopeless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21- I feel rejected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22- I feel brushed aside	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23- I feel disliked	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24- I feel excluded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25- I feel isolated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you have additional comments?

Socio-Demographic Questions

g. **Gender:** What gender do you identify with?

1. Male
2. Female
3. Trans
4. Non-binary; gender non-conforming
5. Prefer not to answer

h. **Age:** What age group do you belong to?

1. 18-20
2. 21-29
3. 30-39
4. 40-49
5. 50-59
6. 60 +

i. **Race:** What racial category best describes you?

1. Black
2. East Asian
3. Latino
4. Middle Eastern
5. South Asian
6. Southeast Asian
7. White
8. Other racial category

j. **Diploma:** What was your most recent obtained degree?

1. High School
2. CEGEP
3. Diploma of College Studies
4. Undergraduate
5. Graduate
6. Doctoral and post-doctoral

k. **Activity Sector:** In what industry do you currently work?

1. Trade
2. Manufacturing
3. Primary Sector
4. Public Services
5. Education, Health and Social Assistance
6. Financial, Real Estate, Professional and Administrative Services
7. Construction
8. Culture, Information, Leisure and Accommodation
9. Transportation and Warehousing
10. Other

I. **Position:** What position do you currently hold?

1. Employee
2. Manager
3. Executive Director
4. Top Management

Debrief

Thank you again for your participation in this study.

The purpose of the study in which you just participated was to explore how employee segmentation influences the perception of justice as well as the satisfaction of primary psychological needs. We also examined how the choice of transparency in relation to employee segmentation influences these same variables.

Participants were randomly assigned a status, either High Potential or Regular Employee. In order to adequately address our research objectives, it was necessary to limit the information surrounding the study in question so that you would not tailor your responses to meet the research objective. **Please note that the companies described in the context and the two vignettes are entirely fictitious.**

Your data is completely anonymous and confidential. You may also contact the lead author of this study (lavoie.dominique@courrier.uqam.ca) if you have any questions or comments. In the event that you have a change of heart about the use of your survey data, please be aware that it is possible to withdraw your consent, in which case your data will be destroyed without penalty.

I reiterate my consent:

Yes No (your data will be eliminated)

ANNEXE G
BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS SCALE

Huyghebaert-Zouaghi, T., Ntoumanis, N., Berjot, S., & Gillet, N. (2021). Advancing the conceptualization and measurement of psychological need states: A 3×3 model based on self-determination theory. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 29(3), 396-421. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072720978792>

*To answer the following questions, think about the STATUS you have been assigned.
In my job...*

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
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Need Satisfaction

Autonomy							
1- I feel free to make choices with regards to the way I work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I have a say in how things are done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I have the freedom to make decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Competence							
1- I feel that I am capable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I feel skilled	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I am able to overcome challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Relatedness							
1- I feel supported	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I feel listened to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I feel valued	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- I feel cared for	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- I feel included	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6- I feel valued as an important member of my group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Need Frustration

Autonomy							
1- I feel pushed to behave in certain ways	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I feel forced to follow decisions about my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I feel a lot of unwanted pressure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- I feel forced to do professional tasks that I would not choose to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Competence							
1- I feel like a failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I feel useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I feel incapable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- I feel hopeless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Relatedness							
1- I feel rejected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2- I feel brushed aside	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3- I feel disliked	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4- I feel excluded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5- I feel isolated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

ANNEXE H

APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE

**UQÀM | Comités d'éthique de la recherche
avec des êtres humains**

No. de certificat : 2022-4801
Date : 2023-05-13

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE RENOUVELLEMENT

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche pour les projets étudiants impliquant des êtres humains (CERPE FSH) a examiné le projet de recherche suivant et le juge conforme aux pratiques habituelles ainsi qu'aux normes établies par la *Politique No 54 sur l'éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains* (avril 2020) de l'UQAM.

Titre du projet : La philosophie de gestion de talent exclusive et le rôle de la transparence dans la perception de justice et le fonctionnement optimal des employés

Nom de l'étudiant : Dominique Lavoie

Programme d'études : Doctorat en psychologie

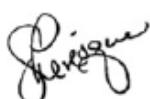
Direction(s) de recherche : Jacques Forest

Modalités d'application

Toute modification au protocole de recherche en cours de même que tout événement ou renseignement pouvant affecter l'intégrité de la recherche doivent être communiqués rapidement au comité.

La suspension ou la cessation du protocole, temporaire ou définitive, doit être communiquée au comité dans les meilleurs délais.

Le présent certificat est valide pour une durée d'un an à partir de la date d'émission. Au terme de ce délai, un rapport d'avancement de projet doit être soumis au comité, en guise de rapport final si le projet est réalisé en moins d'un an, et en guise de rapport annuel pour le projet se poursuivant sur plus d'une année au plus tard un mois avant la date d'échéance (**2024-05-13**) de votre certificat. Dans ce dernier cas, le rapport annuel permettra au comité de se prononcer sur le renouvellement du certificat d'approbation éthique.



Sylvie Lévesque
Professeure, Département de sexologie
Présidente du CERPÉ FSH

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