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A number of authors argue that empowerment begins at the top given that organisational systems influencing climate are largely set by upper management ([Lawler, E. E], 1992; Ledford & Lawler, 1994; Shaduru, Kienzle, & Rodwell, 1999; [Tesluk] et al.,...
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 Boudrias, Jean-Sébastien; Brunet, Luc; Morin, Alexandre J S; Savoie, André; Plunier, Patrick; Cacciatore, Gerlanda
Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, Oct 2010, 42, 4, ProQuest Social Science Journals
 pp. 201

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 0008-0386/10/42(04) 201-211

**Empowering Employees:
 The Moderating Role of Perceived Organisational Climate and Justice**

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Alexandre J. S. Morin
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André Savoie and Patrick Plunier
 Université de Montréal

Gerlanda Cacciatore
 Université du Québec à Montréal

Previous research suggests that empowering managerial practises have small and variable effects on employees' behaviours. The objective of this study is to assess whether organisational climate and justice perceptions moderate the relationship between supervisor empowering managerial practises (SEMPs) and employees' behavioural empowerment. Self-report data were gathered from a sample of 204 employees from three service-sector organisations in a cross-sectional study. Hierarchical regression analysis indicated that both perceptions of organisational climate and justice interact with SEMPs in the prediction of employees' behavioural empowerment. As expected, SEMPs were more positively related to behavioural empowerment when perceptions of organisational support climate and justice were higher.

Keywords: employee empowerment, organisational climate, organisational justice, citizenship behaviours, moderation analysis

Theoretical Background

Many business organisations are interested in empowerment because of its expected potential for increasing organisational effectiveness and innovation. Employee empowerment may be generally defined as "a participative process to utilize the entire capacity of workers, designed to encourage employee commitment to organisational success" (Cotton, 1996, p. 219). Concepts such as "high-involvement work practices" (Lawler, 1992), "employee participation" (Wagner, 1994), and "employee mobilisation" (Trentham & Simard, 2006) are used interchangeably to insinuate this managerial philosophy. In practice, these concepts all involve supervisors encouraging first-line employees to become involved in decisions related to performance. researchers have proposed that environmental factors were not always aligned to reinforce empowerment in previous studies (Ledford & Lawler, 1994). Indeed, employee empowerment does not occur in an organisational vacuum. In other words, supervisors may attempt to increase employee empowerment by giving employees decision-making responsibilities and providing them with opportunities to become involved, yet other features of the organisational system (e.g., policies related to decision-making, to training and development, and to reward allocation) could be sending contradictory messages to employees. Some studies have suggested that participative practises that are integrated within organisational systems