Political Skill in the Team Context: Team Political Skills Composition and Team Effectiveness

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A Thesis

in

John Molson School of Business

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Business Administration) at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April 2011

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies

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Entitled: **Political Skill in the Team Context: Team Political Skill Composition and Team Effectiveness**

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Administration)

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ABSTRACT

Political Skill in the Team Context: Team Political Skill Composition and Team Effectiveness

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This thesis examined the role of "soft skills", namely team political skill, in predicting team effectiveness. My primary goal was to extend the current paradigm of individual political skill (a work context understanding of others applied to influencing their actions to advance one's own or organizational agenda) by developing a model of political skill composition at the team level. Based on the results obtained from 189 student project teams and 28 business work teams I found team political skill operationalized as a group mean to be a strong predictor of team emergent states. The results also supported the need for additional methods of operationalizing team political skill, specifically dispersion and minimum score. To explain how and when the effects of team political skill on team effectiveness hold, I hypothesized and demonstrated the mediation effect of team emergent states, including group cohesiveness, team trust, and team conflict. I also identified perception of organizational politics and team task interdependence as important moderators of the team political skill and team emergent states relationship. Finally, I explored the impact of team political skill in comparison to the impact of the leader political skill and found that team political skill was an important predictor of team effectiveness beyond leader political skill. The findings provide important practical guidelines for organizations on employees' political skill composition in effective teams. The organizational implications extend to recruitment, training, development and team building.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank many individuals for their help and support in completing my degree. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Gary Johns. I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with such a brilliant, generous and caring person. You made all the difference in this journey.

I also wish to thank my thesis committee members. Christian Vandenberghe for his generous guidance, endless support and flexibility with my deadlines. Kathleen Boies and Tracy Hecht for their meticulous feedback and insightful questions.

I would also like to acknowledge the Concordians who helped me tremendously, in different ways and at various points of time: Kamal Argheyd, Stephane Brutus, Devasheesh Bhave, Manuela Dohmen, Karen Fiddler, Marylène Gagné, Terri Lituchy, Martin Martens, Shirley Masterson, Judith Walls, and many, many others. Your support is greatly appreciated.

I acknowledge my wonderful friends, both old and new ones. I would not have been able to succeed without you. I would like to particularly thank Elena Volkova for helping me collect the data in the company she supervised; Sujit Sur for giving most valuable advices; Magda Donia for providing unconditional support and timely help; Catalin Ratiu for always offering a helping hand and demonstrating a healthy attitude to what matters; Carol-Ann Tetrault-Sirsly for setting an example of the excellence and care. I also wish to thank Natalia Totskaya, Alex Bitektine, Nicole Bérubé, Tasha Wallace, Merce Mach, John Vongas, Eric Patton, Tatyana Bobrova and Dr. Alfred Jaeger for being there for me when I needed you most.

Last but absolutely not least, I thank my family – my parents, my father-in-law, my sons and my step daughter. You provided me with a reason and ensured my endurance in this quest. Finally, I owe a very special thank you to my husband, Leonid Lvin, for his exceptional support, devotion and understanding.

Thank you for enabling me to move forward to this point.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

With the increased use of teams in organizations, there has been a growing need to develop a more informed understanding of team processes, team emergent states and outcomes. While considerable research attention has been devoted to teams in recent years, there is much we still need to know, as teams are complex, multilevel systems that function over time, tasks, and contexts (Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt, 2005). Specifically, I attest that understanding the role of "soft skills" in teams is highly pertinent.

This study addresses an interpersonal predictor of team effectiveness, namely political skill. Political skill is defined as "the ability to effectively understand others at work and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and /or organizational objectives" (Ferris et al., 2005: 127). In the extant literature, this skill is regarded as a strong predictor of leader effectiveness (Douglas & Ammeter, 2004a) and managerial performance (Semadar, Robins, & Ferris, 2006), and an effective career management tool (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). Furthermore, political skill is claimed to be one of the most important competencies leaders can possess, contributing to effectiveness in organizations (Treadway, Hochwarter, Ferris, Kacmar, & al., 2004). However, if we agree that "the retinue makes the king", or, in organizational terms "the followers make the leader", then the team of followers should also warrant scholarly attention, which has not yet been the case in research on political skill. This study aims to facilitate answering the question whether political skill is also beneficial for teams, as compared to individual outcomes.

My literature review reveals that, almost exclusively, political skill is studied at the individual level, with little attention given to substantive constraints or outcomes of the operation of political skill in work groups. The majority of researchers view political skill as an individual's asset and seek causal explanations for its correlation with important work-related outcomes. I contend that this approach may draw the researchers' attention away from the important question of if and when political skill matters at the team level resulting in the impact of team and organizational context not being adequately addressed in the research on political skill. Thus, building on conceptual articles on the importance of contextualization (Johns, 2001; 2006; Mowday & Sutton, 1993), this study aims to fill an important gap in the extant research by exploring how contextual variables (such as perception of organizational politics and task interdependence) may affect team political skill, team emergent states (such as group cohesion, trust and conflict), and team effectiveness (operationalized as team viability, team satisfaction and team performance).

The first objective of this study is to extend the current paradigm of individual political skill by developing a model of team political skill composition. Chen et al. (2005a) highlight that compositional models and aggregation methods differ in the extent to which they are likely to maintain the level of conceptual similarity across levels of analysis. Although Bell's (2007) meta-analysis demonstrates that most group composition and team performance relationships are strong when the composition variable is operationalized as the mean, she suggests that future research use both the mean and a specified aspect of the distribution, as it may help obtain even stronger relationships. Thus, the study explores different methods of expressing team political skill in addition to the mean levels of political skill. By doing so, I evaluate the relative predictive value of the group mean versus other operationalizations of team political skill.

As I intend to explain how and when the effects of team political skill on team effectiveness hold, I propose to test the mediating effect of various team emergent states variables. Namely, I argue that group cohesiveness and team trust represent the generative mechanisms through which the focal independent variable of team political skill is able to influence the dependent variable of team effectiveness. I also explore what role team political skill composition might play in preventing conflict and in effective dealing with existing conflicts. An overall negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict, as well as viability and team satisfaction is hypothesized.

Another research domain this study addresses is the impact of leader political skill in a team context. Namely, I am interested whether political behaviour exhibited by a leader positively relates to that exhibited by his/her followers (team political skill), and to what extent both get reflected in team performance. Arguably, leader political skill is one of the areas that should warrant more scholarly attention, as it has been shown to have the potential to facilitate team performance and effectiveness (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004; Nyhan, 2000; Yeatts, Hyten, & Barnes, 1996). Yet in the team context the impact of leader political skill remains largely unexamined (Ahearn et al., 2004). The mechanism of this influence seems to be even less known. It is an intriguing question if politically skilled leaders inspire team members to greater team performance, or politically skilled leaders are successful because "they build the political skill of their teams, thus orchestrating effective team performance" (Ahearn et al., 2004: 322). Hence the fourth objective of this study is to test whether distributed influence from within the team (team political skill) accounts for the effectiveness of the team above and beyond the political skill of the appointed team leader (vertical political skill).

This study was designed to employ two samples: (a) student project teams and (b) business work teams. In what follows, I refer to the student sample as "study one." The multinational corporation retail store sample is referred to as "study two."

Group dynamics research is frequently conducted with student samples, and this allows for a number of benefits. Specifically, the controlled environment of study one allowed achieving a large sample size of 189 teams. To my best knowledge, this is one of the largest samples ever reported in a study on team processes. In addition, it enabled me to collect the majority of the data from intact teams (with no data missing). Furthermore, the controlled environment helped minimizing common method variance by collecting the variables of interest at different time points and via different modalities. Even though the controlled setting of the study had these benefits, I realize it limited its generalizability. Although the nature of the projects and group dynamics in the student sample were similar to work groups, some characteristics of the student groups may differ from teams in a typical organization. For instance, the short life-cycle of the teams and potential lower level of commitment to the course (compared to a job) task may influence the findings. Therefore, workgroups in a business organization were approached to replicate the results of study one and to enhance the overall generalizability, as well as to explore the research questions in teams with different qualities. In addition, study two addressed the questions of whether perception of organizational politics sets the context for team political skill enactment. It also helped explore the role of leader political skill versus team political skill in predicting team effectiveness.

Summing up, my study contributes to the existing literature by taking the complexity of the political skill-outcomes relationship to a higher level of analysis, and by demonstrating that its boundary conditions operate across multiple levels. This paper

is divided into eight sections. In the sections that follow, I first provide a theoretical background of the study and propose a theory of team political skill composition. Then, I continue by identifying the hypothesized team emergent states critical to team performance and I link them to the construct of team political skill. Following that, I discuss the extant literature on team composition and test hypotheses which explain team emergent states and team effectiveness with regard to the operationalization of the composition variable to the team level, and explore a number of mediating and moderating effects. Next, I study a comparative effect of team political skill composition and leader political skill. Finally, the thesis concludes with a discussion of the importance of team political skill as a noteworthy construct for organizational behaviour research and for practitioners.

CHAPTER TWO

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Political skill: the construct and its predictive power

The idea of the skillful pursuit of self-interest while engaging in organizational politics gains prominence among the growing number of the constructs related to social effectiveness at work (e.g., emotional intelligence, networking, self-monitoring) and is reflected in the recently developed construct of political skill. It has been suggested that people high in political skill not only know what to do in various social situations at work, but also how to do it in a sincere, engaging manner that disguises any ulterior, self-serving motives (Ferris, Perrewé, & Douglas, 2002). More specifically, political skill is defined as "the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and / or organizational objectives" (Ferris et al, 2005: 127). Ferris and colleagues conceptualized the political skill construct as overlapping to a modest degree with other related social effectiveness constructs and with selected personality traits. However, they argued that political skill exhibited distinctiveness as a construct that is sufficiently different from others. Indeed, a recent study established the construct validity of political skill and also provided evidence on the validity of the Political Skill Inventory (2005). While initial development of a unidimensional measure of political skill (Ferris et al., 1999) found some support, the more comprehensive multidimensional construct of political skill was developed later on. In order to measure the skill, Ferris and his colleagues advocated four dimensions of political skill: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity (Ferris et al., 2005).

Social astuteness. Individuals possessing political skill are sharp observers: They can read and understand people's emotions, needs and motivations in diverse social situations.

Interpersonal influence. Politically skilled individuals possess a subtle and persuasive personal style. Furthermore, they are capable of appropriately adapting it to each situation.

Networking ability. Individuals with strong political skill are exceptionally good at establishing and using relationships with people, both key organizational members and outsiders.

Apparent sincerity. Politically skilled individuals come across as possessing high levels of integrity, authenticity, and sincerity. They are, or appear to be, honest, open, and genuine.

To date, the construct of political skill (as well as its dimensions assessed separately) has been found to predict a number of important individual and organizational outcomes. Employee job performance has been one of the most studied to date. For example, Semadar et al. (2006), found political skill to be the strongest predictor of performance as compared to emotional intelligence, self-monitoring and leadership self-efficacy. Ferris and colleagues (2005) demonstrated that employee political skill is positively related to supervisor-rated job performance, and that of the four PS dimensions, social astuteness related most strongly to supervisor evaluations of an employee's job performance. They also note that the dimension of social astuteness relates most strongly to an employee's job performance as assessed by a supervisor. They suggest that "the employee's social astuteness at presenting his or her work behaviour in the best possible light" may explain the results (Ferris et al., 2005: 147). The research by Blickle et al.

(2008) found that the agreeableness and conscientiousness traits of the Big Five personality model, moderated by political skill, also predicted job performance. In sum, these studies demonstrate that favorable job performance ratings depend to a fair extent on employees' political skill.

Political skill has also been employed in relation to other constructs, such as political behaviour, stress and performance. For example, the study by Kacmar and colleagues (Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, & Anthony, 1999) found that perceptions of politics, moderated by understanding, influence outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover intent. Some studies have demonstrated the neutralizing effects of political skill on stress (Brouer, Ferris, Hochwarter, Laird, & Gilmore, 2006; Perrewé, Zellars, Ferris, Rossi, & al, 2004). Specifically, research suggests that executives high in political skill are better able to cope with the chronic workplace stressors they encounter (Perrewé, Ferris, Frink, & Anthony, 2000). Indeed, Perrewé et al. (2004) established that political skill can be an essential coping mechanism for stress. Political skill was found to reduce most types of strain, including anxiety, somatic complaints and physiological strain. Thus, political skill was claimed to moderate stressor–strain relationships and neutralize the stress caused by such ubiquitous stressors as role conflict and role overload, or resource deficit (Perrewé et al., 2004). Explaining this finding, Ferris and colleagues assert that psychosocial resources theories would suggest that political skill demonstrates such a neutralizing effect on stressors because the additional resources possessed by those high in political skill render stressors as non-threats (Ferris, Treadway, Perrewé, Brouerz, et al., 2007).

The political skill of a leader forms a relatively new area of inquiry. Noteworthy, research has demonstrated that the presence of such skill can facilitate both team

performance and leader effectiveness. For example, perceptions of a leader's political skill were found to significantly predict leader effectiveness as measured by ratings of subordinates (Douglas & Ammeter, 2004). Following this stream, Treadway and colleagues (2004) demonstrate the effects of leaders' political skill on perceived support, trust and other constructive reactions of employees. Furthermore, Ahearn et al. (2004) link the political skill of leaders to team effectiveness and suggest that politically skilled leaders inspire team members to greater team performance.

Yet another important aspect of organizational wellbeing, career success and career satisfaction, has been vigorously studied in relation to political skill. In a recent paper, Ferris and colleagues expanded on prior work and conducted an investigation of construct validity and the antecedents and outcomes of political skill, specifically focusing on the individual career (Ferris et al., 2008). In this longitudinal study the authors demonstrated some evidence that political skill predicts such outcomes as career satisfaction and hierarchical position. Of all dimensions, networking ability was the only predictor of income. Overall, networking behaviour has been rigorously studied both as a separate phenomenon and as an integral dimension of political skill. Studies of individual politicking behaviour provide evidence of the relationship between engaging in networking behaviour and outcomes, both objective (number of promotions, total compensation) and subjective (perceived career success) (Forret & Dougherty, 2004).

2.2. Political skill in teams and in the organizational context

For two decades researchers have considered the role of various facets of context on individuals' behaviour in organizations (Johns, 2001, 2006; Mowday & Sutton. 1993; Whetten, 1989). Notwithstanding these important attempts, Johns (2006) encourages OB

scholars to increase efforts to take into account the influence of context -- this often unrecognized and under-appreciated variable. Too often the contextual description of studies is thin or pallid, as if the organization and the people under study are "removed from time and space" (Johns, 2006: 390). To provide further confirmation of this, my own literature review reveals that, although there are notable exceptions, the majority of studies of political skill feature no contextualization variables whatsoever.

This important gap is echoed by other organizational behaviour researchers as well. Team researchers have tended to look at teams as unaffected by the context surrounding them. Kozlowski and Bell attest that we still "…know relatively little about the effects of organizational context on team functioning" (2003: 362), and that "team research needs to incorporate the effects of major organizational context factors specified in models of team effectiveness" (2003: 363). Ilgen and colleagues (2005) also highlight a still sizable deficiency in our understanding of teams as complex, multilevel systems that function over time, tasks, and contexts.

Having established a place for contextualization in organizational research, I will now review its relevance to this study. Following Johns, context can be described as "situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables" (2006: 386). Reporting "who, what, when, where, and why" (*omnibus context*) is important to readers. At the same time, close attention to the particular context (*discrete context*) provides invaluable insights for researchers and practitioners. Discrete context is defined as "specific situational variables that influence behaviour directly or moderate relationships between variables" (Johns, 2006: 393). Context can manifest in situational features, as a cross-level effect, or as a set of stimuli. It can also operate as a shaper of

meaning and as an event. I believe that boundary conditions and situational factors shape team dynamics with regard to team political skill. The importance of these factors can be inferred from examples of the role of social context variables studied in organizational behaviour. For instance, research (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998) demonstrates a positive relationship between the level of antisocial behaviour exhibited by an individual and that exhibited by his or her coworkers ("monkey see, monkey do"), suggesting the importance of a group norms as context. Another study provides an example of how contextual factors shape team dynamics: two organizational level variables, organizational efficacy and trust in top management, have top-down influences on the extent to which teams engage in boundary spanning (Tasa, 2008).

For the implications of social context on political skill, consider, for example, a group-level constraint such as peer pressure against networking (if, say, this behaviour is perceived as non-loyal to the *in-group*), or the societal constraint of gender differences (if political behaviour is perceived as violation of gender-stereotypic prescriptions). Intuitively, the influence of these contextual variables may affect the extent to which an individual engages in politicking and, consequently, the strength of relationship between political skill and one's personal or organizational objectives. At a higher level, these variables may influence the relationship between political skill and team and organizational objectives, and probably to an even larger extent.

Extending the propositions above, I contend that not only does individual political skill influence team members' actions but that its aggregate also creates a context for those actions. For instance, individual ability to understand others and adapt one's behaviour to a situation accordingly is reflected in the political skill dimensions of social astuteness and interpersonal influence. At the same time, this behaviour creates the norm

of "active listening" and the need to appropriately calibrate behaviour within a team. Consequently, this ongoing interaction - a key for both political skill and teams - results in the emergence of a "collective structure" (Morgeson and Hofmann, 1999) of team political skill. Arguably, behaviours associated with politically skilled team members can also benefit teams.

For example, being socially astute to the needs of colleagues and appearing genuine in their interactions with them, politically skilled team members can befriend many. In a team with many politically skilled individuals this will lead to a high group attractiveness, which translates into group cohesiveness and team satisfaction. Moreover, these close ties and the perceptions of greater interpersonal control (widely ascribed to politically skilled individuals), ensure that high aggregate levels of political skill will facilitate a relaxed and comfortable climate. The latter in turn can promote such important outcomes as team satisfaction and team viability. Synergy of individual virtues implied in team political skill is argued to affect the team and organization in a most positive way. On the other hand, extremely politically skilled teams may turn out to be dysfunctional at times. This would suggest a possible curvilinear relationship in team political skill with team emergent states and outcomes. More specifically, excessive attention to successful in-group interactions may detour them from effective task completion, especially should the latter challenge the team status quo, may lead teams to groupthink, or may even prompt teams to favor their own interests when these are not in line with those of the organization. It is important to note that I do not consider teams as possessing human attributes, such as skills, but rather offer a model of team political skill which involves a combination of individual political skill.

Unlike individual political skill, which is always directed from within to the "outside" (to colleagues, to supervisors or to clients), team political skill can be targeted either at the team itself, or directed outside the team. This may cause different implications for both the target of political skill enactment and the best operationalization of team political skill. First, the political skill of the team can be targeted at others teams, supervisors, external clients or the organization, thus ensuring both high team status and fulfillment of team goals. While a high average in team members' political skill will most likely be the best operationalization for "within" team political skill, the same may not hold true for the political skill targeted "outside". For instance, one team member with a particularly low score on the apparent sincerity dimension can act as "a bad apple" for client satisfaction dimensions of team effectiveness. At the same time a single member who is especially good at networking with the right people may secure an important resource for his/her team one day; or, acting as an exemplar, boost the whole team performance score in the eyes of a superior. On the other hand, team members may choose to influence other team members through active networking, multiple interactions and strategic behaviours. As a result, highly politically skilled teams enjoy the results of the strong social ties their members build. Namely, they are argued to experience mutual trust and less conflict.

Given the difference in the targets of individual vs. team political skill enactment, it is possible that the latter may contain some additional dimensions. Depending on the in- or out-group focus, team political skill may even result in different outcomes. Thus, in this study I propose to focus on "within" team application of TPS. To address the fact that political skill may be used differently within the team and outside of it, I changed the wording of the inventory used to measure political skill. I used "in team" instead "at

work" description, and I also specifically instructed respondents to think of their teams when answering the questions.

Also, it is a fascinating question whether team political skill can explain variability in team performance above and beyond the team leader's political skill. In other words, is political behaviour exhibited by a leader positively related to that exhibited by his/her followers; and do both get reflected in team performance? Assuming that the latter is true, team political skill composition and the role it plays in team performance and some other organizational outcomes becomes of specific importance and prompts the need to investigate the construct at a higher level of analysis, which is what I discuss in section 3.

2.3. Operationalization of team effectiveness

It is evident from the literature that group effectiveness can be defined as a multifaceted construct (Hackman, 1987). Team task performance, team satisfaction and team viability are the oft cited domains of team effectiveness. At the lower, individual level, effectiveness is reflected in the met needs and goals of the specific team member. Team task performance involves how well the team meets expectations about its assignments. So, at the higher level, team effectiveness often refers to the accomplishment of assigned tasks (Shea & Guzzo, 1987), the construct manifested in a performance appraisal. However, many researchers agree that team effectiveness goes above and beyond performance (Hackman, 1987; Sundstrom, de Meuse, & Futrell, 1990). For instance, member satisfaction and attraction to the group is argued to be an important element of effectiveness (Hackman, 1987; Hackman, 1990). It reflects socioemotional consequences of group activity and may or may not coincide with the perceived quality of

task accomplishment. In addition to task achievement and socioemotional consequences, team viability has been proposed to be another critical component of an effectiveness measure (Hackman, 1987; Sundstrom et al., 1990). Team viability is commonly defined as the group's potential to retain its members (Hackman, 1987). Arguably, team viability is important not only as a team outcome, but also as a team process/team emergent state at all the stages of team development from forming to adjourning. And in fact, beyond the adjourning, for its implications for the forming of future teams (Shachaf & Hara, 2007). Thus, in the current study, team effectiveness was operationalized as a multidimensional team outcome which includes team viability, team satisfaction and team performance, and was assessed by team members and their managers.

Therefore, my study puts forth the effort to demonstrate the complexity of the political skill-outcomes relationship taken to higher levels of analysis, as well as its boundary conditions operating across multiple levels. In the sections that follow, I first identify the team emergent state variables critical to team performance. Next, I link them to team political skill composition. Following that, I offer hypotheses which explain team emergent states and team effectiveness with regard to the operationalization of the composition variable to the team level, and hypothesize some mediating and moderating effects.

CHAPTER THREE

3. TEAM EMERGENT STATES AND POLITICAL SKILL AT THE TEAM LEVEL

3.1. Team processes and team emergent states

In this section I discuss different conceptualizations of team processes and justify my choice of team process variables. I use the following definition of group processes: "members' interdependent acts that convert inputs to outcomes through cognitive, verbal, and behavioral activities directed toward organizing task work to achieve collective goals" (Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001: 357). Even though most researchers of team effectiveness study it in conjunction with team processes, there is no agreed-upon set of team process variables. This lack of consensus regarding the variables that may explain differences in team outcomes is ubiquitous (Brannick, Salas, & Prince, 1997).

Among many, communication, cooperation, coordination and adaptability (Morgan, Glickman, Woodard, Blaiwes, & Salas, 1986), leadership, decision-making, situation awareness (Franz, Prince, Cannon-Bowers and Salas, 1990 as in Brannick et al., 1997) and team cohesion (Evans & Dion, 1991) have been offered as important team processes. Other conceptualizations include team climate (Curral, Forrester, Dawson, & West, 2001), shared mental models (e.g., Kahai, Sosik, & Avolio, 2003; Klimoski & Mohammed, 1994; Mathieu, Heffner, Goodwin, Cannon-Bowers, & Salas, 2005; Mathieu, Heffner, Goodwin, Salas, & et al., 2000), organizational citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997), and team potency (Cohen, Ledford, & Spreitzer, 1996; Guzzo, Yost, Campbell, & Shea, 1993). Obviously there is a lack of consensus on which variables constitute the core of team process. This can possibly be

explained by the fact that different process variables become salient depending on team design (e.g., task interdependence) and context (e.g., operating conditions).

Furthermore, recent studies (Marks et al., 2001; LePine et al., 2008) argue the need to distinguish between team processes, interpreted as team activities, and emergent states, interpreted as attitudes, motivations, or team cognitions. Ilgen and colleagues (2005) however note that this approach may be useful for the purpose of isolating a subset of conceptually pure behavioral processes, but insufficient if one looks for a broader domain of meditational factors influencing input-outcome relationship. While intuitively and theoretically appealing, this differentiation between team processes and team emergent state has not been fully justified in the literature. First, both have been argued and empirically demonstrated to relate to team outcomes, as well as strongly correlate one with another (LePine et al., 2008). Second, it is unclear whether emergent states mediate the relationship between the inputs and team processes, or, rather the relationship between team processes and outcomes. In fact, Marks and colleagues propose that emergent states can be considered both team inputs and proximal outcomes or the mediators (2001). This confuses our understanding of the role of emergent states and implies that no cross-sectional study can effectively test the relationship, which significantly limits the body of literature that can be used to further develop this proposition. Furthermore, sometime the proposed distinction between the two sets appears to be artificial. For example, team trust is proposed to represent a team emergent state, however Ilgen et al. (2005) note that it includes not only attitudinal and cognitive aspects (an emergent state) but also behavioral intentions (which relates trust to team processes) and, in some measures, actual behavior. In addition, placing the variable into one category rather than another may depend upon how the variable is operationalized and measured. For instance, team conflict should be

considered a team emergent state because, in accord with the definition (Marks et al., 2001) it reflects certain types of shared affect and cognitions. On the other hand, conflict management is a "pure" team process as it "describes the nature of member interaction" (LePine et al., 2008: 286). Of a note both constructs are classified as team processes by LePine et al. (2008).

Despite the aforementioned contradictions, recent theorising on team processes calls to avoid construct confusion and to sharpen the conception of team process. Thus, I will treat my set of mediating variables as emergent states. The three of them focus on interpersonal relationships and are hypothesized as most relevant to political skill at the team level. The following team emergent states are used: team cohesion, team trust and team conflict.

3.2. A higher level construct of political skill: Team political skill composition models

In this section I build on multiple theoretical and empirical lines of research and attempt to extend the current paradigm of individual political skill by developing a model of team political skill composition. I use the terms "group", "work group", "team" and "work team" interchangeably. I employ the definition of a group as two or more people working interdependently towards a common goal (Johns & Saks, 2005).

As Klein and Kozlowski (2000) point out, in making a shift from micro to meso research, a researcher should step back to assess the relevance of his or her constructs to higher — more macro — levels of analysis. The researcher must then fashion a multilevel theoretical model depicting the hypothesized relationships among his or her constructs.

Rousseau (1985) provides some guidelines for the macro-level researcher. She established a typology of mixed-level models which include composition, cross-level and multilevel models (Rousseau, 1985). For hypothesis development she suggests starting with an explicit description of the levels to which generalization is appropriate. The second step is to develop composition theories to establish whether constructs generalize across levels. Then, level-specific construct validity should be determined and any shifts of level of analysis should be explicitly addressed.

Chan (1998) further develops the theory of composition models. He introduces the following five basic (ideal) models: additive, direct consensus, dispersion, referent-shift consensus, and process models. While the *additive model* (summation of the lower level units) and the *direct consensus model* (the meaning of the higher level construct is identical to the meaning of the lower level units) are the most popular and frequently used, Chan argues that they are not always appropriate, neither are they securely the best choice. *Process models* that address the continuous character of some concepts are the least common, probably because process composition has no concrete empirical algorithm to compose the lower level processes to the higher level process (Chan, 1998). In *referent-shift consensus models* the lower level attributes are argued to be distinct from the original individual-level construct, though derived from it. For example, it has been suggested that leadership style could be a property of the team (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998) and that team-level leadership is isomorphic to individual-level leadership (Sivasubramaniam, Murry, Avolio, & Jung, 2002). *Isomorphism* here refers to the degree to which the constituent components of a phenomenon and the relationships among components are similar across levels of analysis (House, Rousseau, & Thomas-Hunt, 1995). This functional similarity, or *functionalism* (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999)**,** implies

that the two constructs lead to the same outcome (regardless of being structurally identical or not). *Dispersion models* focus on within-group variance as an operationalization of a focal construct. A good illustration of the approach comes from the studies of team composition variables and team performance. For example, consistent with the notion that one disagreeable member can disrupt the social harmony of the team and subsequently, team performance, and that the team benefits from emotionally stable team members, the average emotional stability of team members (i.e., the additive model) is found to positively relate to team performance, and team minimum agreeableness (i.e., the dispersion model) is reported to relate to team performance (Bell, 2007).

The choice of model to compose team political skill will determine the aggregation of political skill scores within the team. For instance, in additive composition models, only an average of the political skill scores would be required. In maximum- and minimum-score composition models, the highest and lowest score in the group would be of interest. Dispersion composition models of political skill must focus on the group mean and within-group variance as an operationalization of a focal construct. These models allow me to construe team political skill as some combination of the political skill of the individuals in the group. Similarly, I apply the aggregation model to the domain of political skill and explore the function of political skill at a higher level.

Consistent with recent multilevel theorizing I assert that team political skill has origins at the individual level but emergent properties at the group level. I consider political skill as individual resource that each team member can use to one's own and team's advantage. Since team political skill emerges from individual team members' political skills and captures the array, pattern or variability of this individual characteristic within a team, the construct represents configural properties (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000)

of the team. In other words, team political skill is argued to shape a distinct profile for a team, which depends on the level and profile of individual political skill of each team member. Team political skill involves a combination of individual political skill, the process labelled as a "discontinuous compilation" (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). On the other hand, team political skill can be understood as a common pool of team resources, a property that influences the team climate and sets the context for individual political skill enactment. Noteworthy, it remains an open question whether functionalism of the construct may be applicable in the case of team political skill: this study is the first attempt to explore political skill at the group level.

3.3. Operationalization of the team political skill construct: team composition

Composition is a fundamental feature of team research. Previous studies provide evidence of significant associations between composition variables and team emergent states and effectiveness measures (see for example, Barry & Stewart, 1997; Bell, 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). The findings, however, are shown to be moderated by the operationalization of the composition variable to the team level. Namely, "no single operationalization was best for all composition variables; rather, the best operationalization was dependent on the specific team composition variable of interest" (Bell, 2007: 607). Along these lines, Chen et al. (2005) highlight that compositional models and aggregation methods differ in the extent to which they are likely to maintain the level of conceptual similarity across levels of analysis. They provide an example of collective efficacy, which is more likely to be conceptually and functionally similar to self-efficacy when measured using referent-shift composition models, as opposed to additive composition models. Thus, Chen and his colleagues conclude that researchers

who are "interested in testing homologous models should employ measures that best maintain the similarity of constructs across levels" (2005: 378).

Further, Bell's (2007) meta-analysis demonstrated that most of the composition variable and team performance relationships were strongest when the composition variable was operationalized as the mean. Given that the number of studies using other operationalizations has been small –making comparison difficult–she suggests that future research use both the mean and a specified aspect of the distribution, as it may help obtain even stronger relationships. To my knowledge, the political skill variable has not been studied from this perspective. Consequently, to ensure that the best measure be employed, I explored a variety of operationalizations for team composition.

Hollenbeck, DeRue and Guzzo (2004) indicate that the best method of aggregation depends on the nature of the team task and the nature of the trait. Even though I accept this in general, I chose not to base my method on the nature of the team task in this study. I had several specific reasons to do so. Firstly, I aim to study teams with different tasks, and secondly, there is some evidence that task typologies (e.g., the additive, conjunctive and disjunctive task typology) are not helpful in identifying the most appropriate operationalization of the team composition variable (Bell, 2007). Furthermore, task typology is usually applied to the outcome, not process or team emergent state variables, so it may be of less relevance for this study. Thus, for the operationalization of team political skill, I will consider the nature of the trait only.

In the literature, constructs and traits related to political skill (such as personality and emotional intelligence) have been operationalized in a variety of ways. For instance, at the group level personality is measured as the average amount of each trait possessed by each individual (the mean score); by an individual highest or lowest in a trait

(maximum/ minimum score), or by the variance and range of individual scores (variability) (i.e., Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount, 1998; Colquitt, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, LePine, & Sheppard, 2002). Emotional intelligence as a higher level construct seems to be exclusively measured by the group mean (see, for example, Druskat & Wolff, 2001; Feyerherm & Rice, 2002; Offermann, Bailey, Vasilopoulos, Seal, & Sass, 2004; Rapisarda, 2002). Addressing this fact, Côté (2007: 318) concludes that, researchers have "mostly focused on a single way of composing group emotional intelligence and a single way of linking it to performance", thus possibly limiting our knowledge of the phenomenon. Côté further describes the range of approaches to compose group emotional intelligence and theoretically examines the conditions in which each of these approaches may best predict performance. Noteworthy, no empirical validation of the propositions is available to date.

An assessment of group-level dynamics and outcomes calls for the analysis of the combined role of group member political skill. Intuitively, finding constructive roles for political skill at the individual level would not necessarily mean the creation of work teams comprised exclusively of highly politically skilled members. Since the current study is exploratory--in the sense that no previous empirical findings are available to guide it-- I suggest exploring different methods of aggregation of team political skill in addition to the mean level of political skill. By doing so, I intend to evaluate the relative predictive value of the mean versus other operationalizations.

Presumably, various operationalizations of the construct produce different effects in relation to team processes, team emergent states and team outcomes. For example, high average team political skill may influence team affect and, consequently, team emotional state, as a result of the following mechanism: First, highly politically skilled individuals

are known to effectively control their emotions and adjust their behaviour to the demands of the situation. This ability is expected to mitigate certain negative facets of group dynamics, especially relationship ones such as conflict. Also, when each team member is attuned to the needs of others and demonstrates sincere interest in their well-being, mutual trust is likely to follow. Directed toward their own team members, political skill enacts numerous and effective social interactions, which may boost group cohesion and group satisfaction, thus, ensuring a positive team emotional state. Note that this relationship is conditioned by assumptions of relatively low variability of team members' skills at the team level and a non-bimodal distribution of these skills. Furthermore, mean analysis does not provide a full picture of team political skill and its functions. In other words, sometimes mean analysis provides insufficient information, or even masks some important findings.

For example, in a scenario in which one out of five team members proves to be low in political skill, and, consequently, acts in a disruptive manner, the relatively high average team political skill may not relate to such outcomes as team satisfaction and team viability. This is predominantly because the disruptive behaviour of this person is likely to impede information exchange, block important communication channels and erode trust. On the other hand, a single member who is especially good at political skill is very likely to become a critical team member in the network. Good at networking and liked by others, such a team member may "act as go-betweens, bridging the 'structural holes' between disconnected others, facilitat[ing] resource flows and knowledge sharing" (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001: 121). Furthermore, the most critical team member can directly influence team task completion (Mintzberg, 1983). Namely, the best political skill combined with member criticality can be used to mobilize support, information

exchange, and other team resources. Consequently this mechanism underscores the importance of considering some alternative operationalizations for team composition variables (e.g., proportion, as in Barry et al., 1997) rather than group mean. Hence, I also explore the maximum and minimum of the characteristics and their dispersion. Doing so is intended to offer an understanding of when each approach is most suited to assess the relationship of team political skill to team effectiveness.

3.3.1. Team political skill composition as mean score for individual measures in relation to team team emergent states and outcomes

I chose the additive composition model to craft my first set of hypotheses. I argue that political skill can be treated as a valuable team resource. As different groups can accumulate or develop this resource to a different extent, its average level contains some important information. Presumably, more politically skilled teams may outperform less politically skilled ones because they have this resource at hand. And there is strong reason to believe that team political skill should be related to team outcomes via team emergent states. Figure 1depicts a proposed mediating relationship among the focal variables.

In accordance with a process model, I posit that the relationships between team political skill and team effectiveness are mediated by various team emergent state variables. Because political skill reflects differences in approaching and developing interpersonal relationships, I expect it to relate to interpersonal team emergent states. At the same time, based on the extant literature, demonstrable relationships seem to exist between the team emergent states and team effectiveness. My ultimate goal is thus to test the mediation effect which represents the generative mechanism through which the focal independent variable is able to influence the dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

I aim at supporting the mediational, versus indirect effects, model which states that "mediation refers to instances where the significant total relationship that exists between an antecedent and a criterion, is accounted for in part (partial mediation) or completely (full mediation) by a mediator variable" (Mathieu & Taylor, 2006: 1039). Finding a direct influence of team political skill on team effectiveness is particularly important for proposing and testing meditational versus indirect effects.

At the individual level, political skill has been shown to positively associate with job performance ratings (e.g., Blickle et al., in press; Semadar et al., 2006). Presumably, high social astuteness in "presenting their work behaviour in the best possible light" may explain better performance appraisal results of highly politically skilled employees (Ferris et al., 2005: 147). Capability of influencing others to achieve one's goals and doing this in a subtle manner, as well as building a large network of colleagues able to provide help when needed, may explain higher objective performance of politically skilled employees. A similar mechanism is argued to take place at the team level. Arguably, team political skill can eliminate some barriers that hinder team performance. For instance, team members who are especially good at networking may secure important organizational resources for the team; or, being highly astute in how to present their results they can boost the whole team's performance in the eyes of a superior.

In comparison to performance, the relationship between political skill and the facets of job satisfaction is far less studied. However, there is some evidence suggesting a positive relationship. Ferris et al. (2009) investigated the interactive relationship between job-limiting pain and political skill on job satisfaction and found that satisfaction declined as pain increased for those with low levels of political skill and that job-limiting pain did not affect satisfaction for those with high levels of political skill. Hochwarter et al. (2009)

examined the interactive effects of generational conflict and political skill on job dissatisfaction and demonstrated that political skill decreased job dissatisfaction when generational conflict was present. Political skill demonstrated an inverted U-shaped nonlinear relationship with job satisfaction, such as moderate levels of political skill were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Kolodinsky et al. 2004).

I contend that being socially astute to the needs of colleagues and appearing genuine in their interactions with them in a team will lead to the overall high group attractiveness. Reportedly, close ties and the perceptions of greater interpersonal control are often ascribed to politically skilled individuals (Ferris et al. 2007). I maintain that high aggregate levels of political skill will facilitate effective interactions and a relaxed climate. As I have argued before, the latter will promote such important outcomes as team satisfaction and team viability. In what follows, I will explain *how* the indirect effects of team political skill on team effectiveness hold.

Hypothesis 1.1. Team political skill will be positively related to team performance.

Hypothesis 1.2. Team political skill will be positively related to team satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1.3. Team political skill will be positively related to team viability.

Group cohesion. According to Marks et al., team cohesion is "an emergent state, as it can be dynamic in nature and vary as a function of team context, inputs, processes and outcomes" (2001: 357). Group cohesion is commonly defined as "the resultant of all forces acting on members to remain in the group" (Festinger, 1950, as quoted and cited in Dobbins & Zaccaro, 1986: 204). The history of the concept can be traced back to 1930, when Lewin (1935) used the term to describe forces that reflected social bonds between group members. While early group cohesion researchers treated cohesion as a uni-

dimensional construct, nowadays there is considerable empirical support underlying the consensus among researchers that cohesion is a multi-dimensional construct (Dobbins et al., 1986; Mullen & Copper, 1994) comprising social bonds and task foci. Interestingly, a task orientation is often implied or directly specified in teams' definitions (e.g., Salas, Bowers, & Cannon-Bowers, 1995). Cohesive groups show reliable persistence despite obstacles (Zaccaro et al., 1995), which eventually, leads to better and more consistent performance. This appears to be an ongoing process (wherein the cohesion enhances performance, which further enhances cohesion) but the exact causality of this relationship is yet to be established. Overall, the cohesion-performance link has been frequently demonstrated in the literature (see the meta-analyses by Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003; Evans et al., 1991; Gully, Devine, & Whitney, 1995; Mullen et al., 1994). When testing the relationship between the different types of cohesion -- interpersonal attraction, group identity, pride or prestige, and shared task commitment (aka task cohesion), Mullen and Copper's (1994) meta-analysis found that the strongest predictor of performance was task cohesion. And Beal and colleagues' (2003) meta-analysis demonstrated that the benefits of task commitment apply for performance regardless of whether it is measured as behaviour or as an outcome.

I contend that political skill may be one of the mechanisms that facilitates group cohesion. Specifically, politically skilled individuals have been described by Ferris et al. (2005) as keenly attuned to diverse social situations and the needs and motivations of others (social astuteness dimension) and capable of appropriately adapting and calibrating their behaviour to each situation (interpersonal influence dimension). Thus, political skill may enable those individuals to both diagnose the task and to adjust their behaviour and routines accordingly, which in its turn will lead to higher task cohesiveness at the level of

the group. From the very definition of the team as a group of people working interdependently for a common goal, it is evident that efficient interaction and mutual dependence are prerequisites of team cohesion and are critical for teams. Politically skilled individuals are adept at developing and using diverse networks of people, so they are directly tied to numerous individuals within a team and beyond. By virtue of *having* or *appearing* to others as possessing high levels of integrity, authenticity, sincerity and genuineness, these individuals make many friends. Also, they enjoy greater amount of social and emotional support from the social network (Adler & Kwon, 2002). In a team with many politically skilled individuals this will lead to a further attractiveness of the group, and thus, to higher group social cohesiveness. Furthermore, similar to task cohesion, social cohesion will lead to higher team performance. Presumably, group attractiveness facilitates team member interaction and enables cooperation, and, thus, leads to higher team performance. In support of this, Beal et al.'s meta-analysis (2003) demonstrated that the social component of cohesion correlates with performance criteria in a meaningful way.[1]

Cohesive groups are commonly characterized by their attractiveness (originated in either task or social identity, or both) to their members (Mudrack, 1989). Because of this characteristic, members are proud of and keen on staying in the group. Furthermore, they tend to describe the group favourably, as they naturally like the group and value their membership in it. Based on this logic, I suggest that individuals with strong social bonds (high on social cohesion) will demonstrate stronger attraction to the group, and attraction happens to be the key element of the socioemotional foci of effectiveness, operationalized

[1] It is very probable that performance and cohesion are reciprocally related, however, testing this relationship is outside of the scope of the current study.

by Hackman (1987, 1990) as team satisfaction. By the same token, I maintain that higher task cohesion will lead to higher scores in team satisfaction. Conventionally, the task dimension of group cohesion is argued to reflect a stronger motivation to perform well (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950). To the extent that this fulfills individual needs to succeed, task cohesion can be considered a prerequisite of overall satisfaction with one's team. As I expect the task and social foci of team cohesion to form a higher level construct of team cohesion, I do not hypothesize any relationships with each dimension, but rather with the higher level construct. Thus, I maintain:

Hypothesis 2.1. Team political skill will be positively related to group cohesiveness.

Hypothesis 2.2.Group cohesiveness will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team performance.

Hypothesis 2.3.Group cohesiveness will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2.4.Group cohesiveness will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team viability.

Trust. Traditional conceptualizations of trust assume that trust resides in personal relationships, past memberships in common social networks, and in the anticipation of future association (Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Powell, 1990). In this study I define trust as one's willingness to be vulnerable to another party's action irrespective of the ability to control that other party (Mayer, Davis, Schrooman, 1995). Often the study of trust has focused on the individual level referent of trust, namely, a leader (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). At the individual level, multiple research reports that trust

relates to performance (Jones & George, 1998). A cross-level study by Chou et al. (Chou, Wang, Wang, Huang, & Cheng, 2008) supports the importance of trustworthiness and trustfulness for team member performance. For instance, trustworthiness, or how a member was trusted by his or her teammates, was found to mediate the relationship between shared work values and team member performance; trustfulness, or how a member trusted his or her team mates, mediated the relationship between shared work values and satisfaction with cooperation. There is evidence that a team can be the focal referent of trust as well, and that team trust is linked to team effectiveness (Dirks, 2000; Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999), either directly or as a moderator of any conflict-effectiveness relationship (Curseu & Schruijer 2010).

Specifically, Cummings and Bromiley (1996) argue that a person trusts a group when that person believes that the group is honest in negotiating group members' commitments, does its best to behave in accordance with these (explicit and implicit) commitments and team members are not excessively self-serving .

The importance of interpersonal trust for team performance has been demonstrated in the literature. For example, trust seems to influence how motivation is converted into work group processes and performance (Dirks, 2000) and how effectively the team is able to solve problems and resolve conflicts (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999). Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1999) have found that global virtual teams with greater levels of trust appeared to be more capable of managing the uncertainty, complexity and expectations of the virtual environment. The above findings suggest a positive relation between team trust and team performance. In addition, trust is the key to developing a team with the long-term capability to work interdependently, suggesting that the viability should be influenced by the level of mutual trust associated with positive social

interaction (Forsyth, 1990). Consequently, trust should be associated with team viability and team satisfaction.

Given their interdependence, team members have to develop certain levels of reliance on one another and mutual trust. Avolio (1999: 118) argues that "teams operate at the highest levels on the basis of trust, integrity, and identification". Trust is enhanced by an open and honest sharing of feelings and thoughts, and by accepting individual vulnerability by team members. I assert that team trust has origins at the individual level but emergent properties at the group level via the process known as a discontinuous compilation (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000).

The seminal model of trust by Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) included perceptions toward another party's ability, benevolence, and integrity as antecedents of trust, and was originally developed at the individual level only. Recently the authors revisited the model and concluded that "all three factors of ability, benevolence, and integrity can contribute to trust in a group or organization" (Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007: 345). I contend that political skill constitutes a critical role in developing these components of trust.

First, perception about a team member's ability – her competences and technical skills – is directly influenced by the team member's political skill. As already mentioned, political skill has been demonstrated to relate positively to rated performance (e.g., Semadar et al., 2006) and this relationship was explained by developed social astuteness of rated persons (Ferris et al., 2005). Hence highly politically skilled team members appear as more competent and trustworthy. Furthermore, due to their effective interpersonal influence, highly politically skilled members are likely to convince others in the team of their benevolence and genuine concern for the team members' well-being and

willingness to work with them rather than against them. Finally, since politically skilled individuals are socially astute to the needs and motivations of others, and are (or appear to be) honest, open and forth-right (Ferris et al., 2005), they may be perceived as possessing high integrity and thus more trustworthy. Thus it is expected that the greater political skill of team members translates into a greater experience of trust by the team and higher team effectiveness.

Hypothesis 3.1. Team political skill will be positively related to team trust.

Hypothesis 3.2. Team trust will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team performance.

Hypothesis 3.3. Team trust will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3.4. Team trust will mediate the positive relationship between team political skill and team viability.

Conflict. In this study, I define conflict as awareness on the part of the parties involved of discrepancies, incompatible wishes, or irreconcilable desires (Boulding, 1963). Past categorizations of conflict distinguish between affective and cognitive conflict (Amason, 1996; Pinkley, 1990). Jehn and Mannix (2001) identify three types of conflict: process, task and relationship conflicts. For the purpose of this research all three types of conflict present relevant characteristics and are of interest. Task conflict is defined as disagreement among group members about task content and process conflict captures disagreement about the way the tasks should be carried out. Jehn and Mannix (2001) argue that relationship conflict represents an awareness of interpersonal incompatibilities and includes affective components such as feeling tension and friction.

Relationship conflict involves personal issues such as dislike among group members and individual feelings such as annoyance, frustration and irritation.

The association between conflict and team performance has been a topic of research interest for quite a long time. DeDreu and Weingart's (2003) meta-analysis reveals a strong negative correlation between a conflict and both team performance and team satisfaction. To some extent their findings go against the current theoretical framework that relationship conflict is worse than task conflict. While relationship conflict is indeed more disruptive for team satisfaction, it is not found to be beneficial for performance, as for example Jehn suggests (Jehn, 1995, 1997). In fact, De Dreu (2008) convincingly argues that workplace conflict is never beneficial to the organization.

De Dreu and Beersma (2005: 105) note that "conflict theory and research has traditionally focused on conflict management strategies, in relation to individual and work-team effectiveness and productivity. Far less attention has been devoted to "soft" outcomes including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, and individual health and well-being". Linking conflict to "soft" outcomes, such as team satisfaction, fills an important gap, and enhances both conflict and team processes theories. An overall negative relationship between conflict and team satisfaction is hypothesized.

Political skill and its four facets have been proposed to facilitate social interaction (Ferris et al., 2005; 2007). The ability of politically skilled individuals to recognize the motives and needs of others, and use constructive communication skills and interaction techniques, should help them keep their discussions headed in the right direction, and thus prevent conflicts. Furthermore, if conflict develops, interpersonal influence might be relevant in managing it. Therefore, this skill should enable teams to effectively deal with

existing conflicts. Flanagan and Runde (2009: 21) argue that "conflict by its very nature often ignites emotions… When team members are upset, managing conflict becomes especially complicated. As defensiveness rises and openness wanes, simply communicating about the conflict is a challenge. If negative emotions are not addressed effectively destructive behaviours soon follow". Based on this, I argue that teams consisting of politically skilled members, who are capable of regulating their emotions, would be able to develop the right climate to resolve conflict at a very early stage. Thus, interpersonal influence and social astuteness should enable teams with highly politically skilled members to resolve or avoid conflicts in their teams. Consequently these teams will enjoy higher team satisfaction and will perceive their teams as more viable.

Hypothesis 4.1. Team political skill will be negatively related to team conflict.

Hypothesis 4.2. Team conflict will mediate the negative relationship between team political skill and team performance.

Hypothesis 4.3. Team conflict will mediate the negative relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4.4. Team conflict will mediate the negative relationship between team political skill and team viability.

Hypothesis 4.5. Out of the three types of conflict, team relationship conflict will demonstrate the highest negative correlation with team political skill, as compared to team task and process conflict.

Hypotheses outlined in this section represent the additive model of team political skill. While calculating a mean score for individual measures is commonly used in the operationalization of team composition, the approach is not without its deficiencies. In the next section, I explain the rationale for considering other ways of operationalizing the

construct of politically skilled teams and provide hypotheses to test the proposed relationships. Unlike team political skill, other variables were not operationalized in multiple fashions since I was not interested in the composition of these variables, rather in a common pool of each characteristic. Furthermore, these other variables do not consist of individual differences such as does political skill.

3.3.2. Operationalizations other than the group mean: Alternative models of team political skill

While a mean score for individual measures is frequently used in the team literature, Bell (2007) recommends using both the mean and a specified aspect of the distribution to see if one of them or the combination of the two captures the team composition variable, such as political skill, more adequately. Hence, I explore alternative operationalizations for team composition variables, for example the variance, or dispersion, of the skill. By doing so I intend to demonstrate how team political skill composition can pertain to group effectiveness and provide guidance for understanding when each approach is most appropriate. There is some empirical evidence for the usefulness of alternative operationalizations of team personality composition. For instance, the proportion of relatively extraverted members was shown to be related curvilinearly to task focus and group performance in Barry and Stewart (1997). Furthermore, in Bell's (2007) meta-analysis the alternative operationalizations revealed a strong relationship between the team composition variable and team performance.

Arguably, the operationalization of team composition as a mean score is not without its deficiencies. Barrick and colleagues (1998: 378) warn researchers that, "The mean score of individual measures is, however, potentially problematic in some instances

because aggregation can mask important information when individual characteristics do not combine additively to form a collective resource pool". Since more of a trait is not always better or worse, researchers need to consider how that characteristic is distributed among team members. A focus on the variance of traits is particularly important for our understanding of the relationship of team composition homogeneity to team emergent states and team outcomes. The highest or lowest individual-trait score of team members is appropriate in situations where one person has an inordinate effect on team success (Barry and Stewart, 1997). Therefore, I suggest that the study of the variability of individual characteristics focusing on the variance and minimum or maximum of the characteristic is warranted.

Effective interpersonal relationships within a team require the combined effort of many, but it may take only a single disagreeable or politically unskilled person to destroy the relationship. For certain team effectiveness dimensions members' average level of political skill may be less important than the diversity, maximum or minimum score of the skill within the group. For instance, one team member with a particularly low score on political skill (especially on the apparent sincerity dimension) can act as a "bad apple" diminishing team cohesiveness and team trust. In line with this argument, there is evidence that a very disagreeable person may make team membership overly costly in terms of social rewards (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959 as cited in Barrick et al., 1998). At the same time a single member who is especially good at networking with the right people may secure an important resource for his/her team; or, acting as an exemplar, boost the whole team's performance in the eyes of a superior. Also, the predictive validity of some traits previously proven to relate to the construct of political skill, such as agreeableness (e.g., Blickle et al., 2008), emotional stability (trait anxiety in Ferris et al., 2005) and

extraversion (Lvina et al., 2009), have been found to depend on team-composition characteristics when predicting either team performance or team viability. For instance, the mean level and minimum score of agreeableness, as well as the minimum score for extraversion and mean score for emotional stability, were found to be related to team performance. At the same time, the minimum score for extraversion in the work team was also associated with greater team viability. Also, the variance and maximum on agreeableness, and minimum and maximum scores for extraversion were related to social cohesion (Barrick et al., 1998).

The variance of traits has been frequently employed as a measure of team heterogeneity or consensus, as well as climate and culture strength. Borrowing from the climate and culture strength literature (e.g., Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002; Lindell & Brandt, 2000; Schneider, Salvaggio, & Subirats, 2002), I explore the interaction of team political skill level and the dispersion of respondents' scores on political skill. I call this interaction political skill strength. Teams with more pronounced skill homogeneity, operationalized as low variability, demonstrate higher similarity in political skill among their members. Herein, I argue that one would expect the most consistently positive outcomes from teams when team political skill strength is high; in other words, when the team skill average is high and the team skill variability is low.

Specifically, I propose that the variance in political skill may influence group cohesiveness, especially when combined with the team average score in political skill. Politically skilled individuals come across as less stressed (Brouer et al., 2006; Perrewé et al., 2004), more in control of the situation (Ferris et al., 2007) and overall as better performers (Blickle et al., 2008; Ferris et al., 2008; Semadar et al., 2006). Most people prefer to mingle with those who are positive, successful and, in other words, possess

higher status (Shaw, 1981). As political skill appears to enhance informal status, I suggest that the level of team members' political skill translates to overall team attractiveness. Indeed, in the literature political skill has been used as a positive characteristic lacking any "dark sides": going with a common definition of skill as a developed talent or ability, it is impossible to have too much of the skill. While "similarity attracts", presumably, teams with high variance on members' skills may have difficulties finding "common language" and, consequently, perceive the team as less attractive. Thus, I contend that the strength of the skill moderates the relationship between the level of team political skill and to team emergent states.

Hypothesis 5.1. Team political skill strength will relate to team cohesion, and explain variance in team cohesion beyond team average political skill.

Hypothesis 5.2. Team political skill strength will relate to team conflict, and explain variance in team conflict beyond team average political skill.

Hypothesis 5.3. Team political skill strength will relate to team trust, and explain variance in team trust beyond team average political skill.

Given their interdependence, team members have to develop certain levels of trust in order to be able to complete the common task. Trust is enhanced by open and honest sharing of feelings and thoughts, and, most importantly, by individual team members' acceptance of their own vulnerability. The dimension of apparent sincerity should play the most important part in this process. And a single team member with particularly poor political skills (especially on the apparent sincerity dimension) will be incapable of honest communication, acting as a "bad apple in the barrel" for team trust. Arguably, this person will be unable to convince others in the team in his/her genuine concern for the team members' well-being and willingness to work with them rather than against them. I

believe that it would seriously damage the extent to which team members would be willing to be vulnerable to the actions of one another. This can provoke ambiguity and anxiety, and, in the long run, contaminate the atmosphere of mutual reliance, and thus, trust. Consequently, it is expected that the lowest trait-level of political skill within teams will be related to team social cohesion, conflict and team trust.

The effect of task disagreement on team outcomes was found to depend on how free members felt to express task-related doubts and how collaboratively or contentiously these doubts were expressed (Lovelace, Shapiro, & Weingart, 2001). Arguably, a team member lowest in political skill may be unable to manage a conflict, let alone to handle a potential conflict situation proactively. I believe that it would seriously damage the extent to which team members would perceive their team as conflict-free and trustworthy. Thus, I maintain that:

Hypothesis 6.1. The score of the least politically skilled member in a team will positively relate to team cohesion.

Hypothesis 6.2. The lowest skill level within a team will be an important predictor of team cohesion beyond average team political skill.

Hypothesis 7.1. The score of the least politically skilled member in a team will positively relate to team trust.

Hypothesis 7.2. The lowest skill level within a team will be an important predictor of team trust beyond average team political skill.

Hypothesis 8.1. The score of the least politically skilled member in a team will negatively relate to team conflict.

Hypothesis 8.2. The lowest skill level within a team will be an important predictor of team conflict beyond team average political skill.

This study is the first attempt to outline and explore various aggregation models of team political skill. Researchers have argued for the importance of group-level constructs formed by identifying the person with the highest or lowest level of a given characteristic in a group, as well as by the trait variability (Elfenbein, 2005). However, empirical evidence for the usefulness of the alternative operationalizations of team composition is limited (Bell, 2007). This study does not aim at developing a profound theory on the applicability of different aggregation models in each and every case, under various tasks or contexts. Rather, the study has an exploratory character in this regard.

Finally, it is a non-trivial question whether the study needs to focus on team political skill as a whole, or on the dimensions of political skill, or on both. To guide the decision, I use the typology of multidimensional constructs proposed by Law, Wong, and Mobley (1998). They argue the importance of a careful taxonomy of multidimensional constructs and highlight that "Without correct specifications of the relations between multidimensional constructs and their dimensions, one would set up research hypotheses at the construct level, conduct analyses at the dimension level, but make conclusions at the construct level" (Law et al., 1998: 742). Following the specification of the construct provided by Ferris et al. (2005), I maintain that political skill is a latent multidimensional construct which has to be treated as a whole. Yet, Law and colleagues argue that multidimensional constructs are realized through their dimensions; thus, one possible way to operationalize the latent model is to represent the multidimensional constructs as the common factor underlying their dimensions (1998). In fact, recent studies (e.g., Ferris et al., 2008) found support for the model operationalizing political skill as a higher order factor comprising the four dimensions. Indeed, it is an interesting empirical question whether certain dimensions of political skill can compensate or complement other

domains' effects. Thus, I explore whether certain dimensions of team political skill are more salient than others and whether they are better predictors of the focal team variables. However, no specific predictions are made in regard to this question.

3.4. Moderating effects

In what follows I will discuss the importance of organizational and team context, and in particular, perception of organizational politics and team task interaction as moderators of the team political skill and to team emergent states relationship. Please see Figure 1 for the model depicting a moderating effect on the team political skill and to team emergent states relationship.

Perception of organizational politics is defined as a perceived amount of self-serving attempts to influence those who can provide rewards that will help promote or protect the self-interests of the actor (Cropanzano, Kacmar, & Bozeman, 1995). Unlike organizational politics, political skill does not necessarily imply self-serving behaviour and does not involve using organizationally unsanctioned means or pursuing unsanctioned ends. The perceptions individuals hold about politics in the organization influence their attitudes towards the company, supervisor and colleagues; they also affect their productivity, satisfaction and turnover intentions (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Therefore, political activity in an organization should influence both organizational culture and individual perceptions. For example, the perception of organizational politics and impression management were found to explain a significant amount of incremental variance in supervisor ratings of employee performance (Zivnuska et al., 2004), suggesting the importance of considering this moderator in the relationship between political skill and individual outcomes. Specifically, Zivnuska and colleagues

(2004) found that when employees perceive their organization as relatively non-political, active impression management may provide employees with a competitive career advantage above and beyond that offered by objective job performance.

I contend that organizational politics also plays a key role in the relationship between political skill and to team emergent states and outcomes. In highly political organizations, rewards are not necessarily tied to, or perceived to be related to, work performance (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). Seemingly, politically skilled employees should benefit from this situation. Their ability to understand hidden motives and to successfully influence others would be very instrumental. However, I argue that teams will benefit from it only up to a certain level. Too much politicking would result in extremely high levels of uncertainty, which would provoke a hyper use of self-serving behaviour while diminishing the team values. Intuitively, too much politicking would be particularly detrimental to employees' trust and group cohesion.

At the same time, in an organization low in politicking and high on individual meritocracy, the willingness to utilize political skill can be viewed as redundant effort. Furthermore, the group may act as a catalyst for "banning" the skill: being astute observers and high monitors, politically skilled team members will act in accord with the environment which does not require much interpersonal influence. Thus, I predict the following curvilinear – inverted U shape – relationship: no politicking and too much of it weakens the relationship, while moderate politicking strengthens it by setting the optimal context to utilize and benefit from political skill.

Hypothesis 9.1. The relationship between team political skill and team cohesion will be stronger when employees perceive organizational politics as moderate and weaker when organizational politics is perceived as high or low.

Hypothesis 9.2. The relationship between team political skill and team trust will be stronger when employees perceive organizational politics as moderate and weaker when organizational politics is perceived as high or low.

I do not predict a curvilinear relationship for the interaction between team political skill and perception of organizational politicking in predicting team conflict. Rather, I expect that the higher politicking will require even stronger team political skill in order to attenuate team conflict. In a highly political organization a hyper use of self-serving behaviour would only strengthen an individual tendency to use political skill to control the situation. Thus, the overall higher level of political skill in a team will be even more beneficial for maintaining low conflict when perceptions of organizational politics are high.

Hypothesis 9.3. The negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict will be more strongly negative when employees perceive organizational politics as high.

Team task interdependence. Task interdependence is the degree to which team members need to work together and exchange information, work related-knowledge and expertise (Stewart & Barrick, 2000). Group work is commonly defined by a common task requiring interdependent work. If individual tasks are absolutely independent of each other they do not reflect real group work. Stewart and Barrick suggest that high task interdependence requires good communication, information sharing and coordinated team effort (Stewart et al., 2000). At the same time, a higher level of task interdependence may

catalyze emotional contagion and, for example, provoke greater negative emotions in the team towards an insincere leader (Dasborough, Ashkanasy, Tee, & Tse, 2009). Hence, I expect that the extent to which group members must actually work together to perform the task and influence each other's performance is different across teams (and possibly, across tasks). Relationships among teamwork processes, to team emergent states and team performance were found to be shaped by task interdependence (LePine, Piccolo, Jackson, Mathieu, & Saul, 2008). I expect that task interdependence also moderates the relationship between team political skill and to team emergent states. Whenever team members need to work together and exchange information, their political skill becomes of particular relevance. Frequent interactions require profound social astuteness and efficient networking. Given its pertinent role in providing the need for individuals to engage in interpersonal interactions, I argue that higher team task interdependence evokes a stronger relationship between team political skill and team to team emergent states.

Hypothesis 10.1. The relationship between team political skill and team cohesion will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.

Hypothesis 10.2. The relationship between team political skill and team trust will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.

Hypothesis 10.3. The relationship between team political skill and team conflict will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.

3.5. Team versus leader political skill: Comparing the predictive power

For some time it has been generally recognized that organizations are political in nature (Mintzberg, 1983). Furthermore, leader career success has been widely argued to be determined by social and political competence (Douglas et al., 2004). However, the

review of leadership literature by House and Aditya (1997) suggested that a political component of leadership is noticeably lacking in the field. In response to this deficiency, Ammeter, Douglas, Gardner, Hochwarter, and Ferris (2002) proposed a theory of political leadership which adds meaningful insight to important leadership outcomes when leadership is combined with social influence processes in organizations. They note that among the ever growing number of constructs related to social influence and social effectiveness, political skill is one of the few which was developed to explicitly address social influence skills in work settings. They also highlight that unlike many other constructs reflecting behaviour, political skill allows people to create synergy among discrete behaviours that transcends the simple sum of the parts. Luthans (2002) argues that leader performance and career success depend less on intelligence and more on social astuteness and savvy. Leaders can then realize a set of interpersonal dynamics that enables them to reach higher levels of personal and career success through the appropriate selection and execution of political behaviours (Ferris et al., 2000). Indeed, Douglas et al. (2004b) found that subordinates' perceptions of leader political skill significantly predicted leader effectiveness ratings after controlling for leader demographic and social skill variables. Ahearn et al. (2004) demonstrated that leader political skill accounts for a significant increment in team performance variance even after controlling for leader and team member work experience and team caseload. The authors suggest that politically skilled leaders inspire team members to greater team performance, possibly by eliminating many of the barriers that might hinder team effectiveness. Along these lines, Douglas et al. (2004) suggest that the construct of political skill may be used to explain how effective leaders are able to get things done without appearing manipulative or controlling. Indeed, if we agree with Yukl and Van Fleet (1990) that leadership is a

process of *influencing* objectives and strategies, people, and the culture of organizations, then the construct of political skill may provide the answer to how this influence is enacted.

As Ensley, Hmieleski and Pearce (2006) point out, in teams there are two potential sources of leadership, which are defined by who engages in leadership: the vertical leader or the team. As vertical leadership is defined as an influence on team processes, while shared leadership represents a team process in itself (Ensley et al., 2006), a meaningful analogy can be made in regard to the level of operation of political skill. Like shared leadership, shared team political skill is carried out by the team as a whole, rather than solely by a single designated individual. Also, vertical (leader) political skill is dependent upon the social effectiveness of an individual leader, whereas team political skill, as shared leadership, draws from the skill of a group.

Ahearn et al. (2004) believe that the question of whether politically skilled leaders inspire team members to greater team performance, or rather, politically skilled leaders are successful because they build the political skill of their teams, is yet to be answered. To answer this question, researchers need to tease out the empirical nature of the relationship between leader and team political skill and team effectiveness. It seems likely that both vertical and team political skill should have an important impact on team effectiveness. However, there is no strong conceptual or empirical rationale to predict whether a leader's political skill is a better or worse predictor of team effectiveness, compared to team political skill. The empirical examination of team political skill as an alternate resource of a team has been virtually unexplored. As I believe that this is an interesting and important research question, I offer hypotheses exploring the relationship: I will test the relative usefulness of each source in the explanation of the variance in team

effectiveness. Since the study is not longitudinal, only the relationship, but not the causality, can be tested.

Hypothesis 11.1. Vertical political skill will be an important predictor of team effectiveness, as it positively and significantly relates to team effectiveness.

Hypothesis 11.2. Team political skill will be positively related to team effectiveness above and beyond vertical political skill.

CHAPTER IV

4. STUDY 1 METHOD

This thesis employed two samples: (a) students enrolled in a required organizational behaviour course at the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, Montreal, and (b) employees of a Russian branch of a large multinational retail firm. I refer to the student sample as "study one." The retail firm sample is referred to as "study two."

4.1. Participants

Participants were recruited from COMM 222, an organizational behaviour course taught at the John Molson School of Business. The course was chosen because it includes compulsory team-based projects with a common grade given to each team member on a project. The data were collected during the two subsequent terms in 2010. A total of 1,140 students participated in the study.

Initially, I collected data from 285 teams. However, data from 94 teams were not used because too few members participated in the research. Adequate response rate was an important concern as I aimed to explore the composition of team political skill. Thus, in total, this study employed 189 teams comprising 879 students. Of those, I used 112 teams with a 100% participation rate and 77 teams with one missing member responding on the target variable of political skill. In regard to other variables, the response rate ranged from 65% to 100%, which was considered to be appropriate for analyzing the data at the team level. Teams consisted of three to six members with a mode of 4 members per team. The members of the group could choose to join their groups, or they were randomly assigned into the teams by instructors.

Gender composition of the sample was 46% male (*N*=318) and 54% female (*N*=373) for 691 respondents. Almost 21% of gender reports (*N*=191) were missing by design as this question was marked as optional. The mean age of participants was 22 years and the median age was 23 years. The sources of data for each variable are provided in Table 1.

4.2. Procedures

Team projects are a regular requirement for Comm 222 – a core course in organizational behaviour. The task typically involves analyzing a case followed by submitting a written report. Some instructors provide their students with cases, while others require them to approach a real organization and solve its case. In each variation of the team project though, the work is to be done outside of class time and the students are autonomous as to how they complete the project. The life span of a typical team is between six and ten weeks. Also, student teams get graded as a group on the project, so this activity requires achieving a common consequential goal, one of the most important team characteristics.

The method of data collection was tailored to the respondent population and the research questions. First, mid-way in the term, student participants were asked to fill out an in-class survey that included the Political Skill Inventory and demographic variables. Some incentives, such as an opportunity to win a $25 gift card, were offered in exchange. Then, during the last week of the term, the students were directed to the management department subject pool website where department scholars recruit students taking Comm 222 to participate in their research. The students answered about 80 online questions concerning their to team emergent states and outcomes. In exchange for their

participation, they received 1 point toward their final grade. Participation was optional, but the opportunity to earn points toward their final grade was a strong motivator for students. I also offered to discuss individual results when requested by a student to ensure he/she could benefit from the study. Students were informed that the survey was confidential, and the participants' identity would not be revealed to any third party or in study results. They were also informed that I was interested in aggregated team results, as my goal was to study the team dynamics.

4.3. Measures

I chose well established and validated measures for this study. All the measures yielded good reliability estimates in previous research. As all hypotheses were proposed to be tested at the team level, prior analysis of appropriateness of aggregation was performed. I also tested the constructs' dimensionality and confirmed the appropriateness of item loadings.

4.3.1. Measures of independent variables and mediators

Political skill. Political skill was measured using the Political Skill Inventory by Ferris et al. (2005). The measure of political skill includes 18 statements. Participants indicated their responses on a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An example of an item is: *I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.* The PSI was used in teams and, thus, it was revised accordingly. I used "in my team" instead of "at work," and "my team members" instead of "other." The revised inventory can be found in Appendix B. For the PSI α = .93.

The strength of TPS was measured as a product of the mean and the SD. To facilitate reading of the results, the value of SD was standardized and reversed in sign (Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002). Hence, the higher value represents the higher strength of Team Political Skill (high average and low SD). The minimum TPS score was operationalized as the score of the least skilled team member

Group cohesion. Task and social cohesion were measured using 8 items from Chang and Bordia (2001). The respondents indicated their level of agreement with statements using a 9-point scale, from (1) *strongly disagree* to (9) *strongly agree*, with higher scores indicating more cohesive responses. Based on the results of confirmatory factor analysis, I deleted the reversed items with low factor loadings. Thus, only 2 out of 4 items were retained in the social cohesion measure. The remaining items were: *Team members stick together outside of the team project* and *We like to spend time outside of class hours.* A sample item for task cohesion is *Everyone tries to help if members have problems.* Team task cohesion $\alpha = .91$; Team social cohesion $\alpha = .69$; Overall team cohesion $\alpha = .79$.

Group conflict. Conflict was measured using Jehn's (1995) scale for task, process, and affective conflict. Each group member responded to 11 items on a 7-point scale. Sample questions are: *How much tension is there among your group members?* (relationship conflict); *How often do members of your team disagree who should do what?* (process conflict) and *How frequently are there conflicts about ideas in your team?* (task conflict). Relationship conflict $\alpha = .91$; Task conflict $\alpha = .88$; Process conflict $\alpha = .81$.

Team trust. Trust in teammates was assessed using a 4-item scale adapted from Mayer and Davis (1999) and two items from Gillespie (2003). I modified the items to

reflect teams as the intended referent. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. In order to improve the reliability of the scale I had to delete the item *I would be willing to let my team have complete control over my future in this class* and the two reversed items from Mayer and Davis's instrument. The remaining items are: *I would be comfortable giving this team a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor its actions*; *I am willing to rely on the team to represent my work accurately to others; I am willing to depend on the team to back me up in difficult situations.* Team trust $\alpha = .78$.

4.3.2. Moderators

Team task interdependence was assessed with Morgeson and Humphrey's (2006) scale which includes initiated and received interdependence. For the purpose of this study, only the received interdependence subscale was used. The items were: *The project activities are greatly affected by the work of other people; The job (on the project) depends on the work of many different people for its completion; My job (on the project) cannot be done unless others do their work.* Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. $\alpha = .71$.

Perception of organizational politics was not measured in the student sample as it was inappropriate for this sample.

4.3.3. Outcome Measures

Team effectiveness was measured using Hackman's (1987) team effectiveness measures. Team viability was excluded from student measures as irrelevant for two reasons. First, students work in teams that are temporary by definition. At the same time, these teams had fixed membership: after some deadline, students could not freely change

their team. Thus, the team's potential to retain members, aka team viability, could not be accurately assessed.

Team satisfaction was measured on a 7-point Likert scale, using 3 items from Hackman (1987). The items are: *Generally speaking I am very satisfied with the team; I am generally satisfied with the work I do on the team*. *I frequently wish I could quit the team (R).* However, the reversed item had to be deleted to improve the scale reliability. Even then, the scale was not robust: α =.53; mean r_{wg} = .55, ranging from .48 - .69; median r_{wg} = .62; ICC (1) = .19 and ICC(k)=.53. CFA also demonstrated that only one item loaded onto the first level factor significantly. Thus, I used the statement *Generally speaking I am very satisfied with the team* as a single-item measure of team satisfaction in the student sample.

Team performance was self-reported by the students. Two out of four items from Pearce and Sims' (2002) measure were employed. The statements are: *The team is highly effective; The team does very good work;* α = .94.

Team project marks were used as a proxy for *objective team performance.* The data were provided by instructors.

4.3.4. Controls

As with any research, this study is not free from the potentially confounding variables. Specifically I controlled for team size and group demographics, age and gender. I controlled for members' previous experience (measured as members' familiarity with each other), and team and organizational tenure (for the MNC sample only). For the student sample I also controlled for team general mental ability (averaged GPA).

Demography. Age, gender, and organizational tenure are routinely used in political skill research and were also used in my study. In the field setting, I also find it important to measure team tenure, in order to control for team experience and familiarity. These single item demography variables are traditionally used in survey research and are not attributed to any specific source. The wording of each item is available in Appendix A. Average age of the team members and their team and organizational tenure were used. Proportion of men was calculated as an index of prevailing gender in each team. For the student sample, proportion of team members who had previous interactions was used as an index of team members' familiarity with each other.

Group size. Past research shows that group size significantly influences both performance and attitudes (for a review see Brannick et al., 1997). Klimoski and Mohammed (1994) also recognize the importance of team size in their model of team cognition. Team size is likely to be related to the team political skill – team processes/to team emergent states relationship because of its effects on opportunities for team members to interact with one another. Furthermore, larger groups are generally found to be less effective (Levine & Moreland, 1990) and less satisfied (Pinto & Crow, 1982). Thus, team size may be a covariate of team political skill, to team emergent states and team effectiveness, and was, therefore, included in this study as a control variable. I measured group size by using archival data collected from professors.

General cognitive ability. Even though initially political skill was seen as independent from general mental ability (Ahearn et al., 2004; Ferris et al., 2005), some research has demonstrated a moderating effect of individual cognitive ability and political skill in relation to leader performance (Treadway et al, 2004). Thus, the influence of this

variable has to be controlled. Students' self-reported GPA was used as a proxy for general cognitive ability. An average score was calculated for each team.

Dimensionality of the multifaceted constructs

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to examine the proposed dimensionality of the multifaceted constructs. The analyses at the individual level were conducted using the statistical package EQS-6. The models' statistical fit, factor structure, and factor loadings for these measures are provided below.

Values of CFI indexes reflect the improvement in fit when compared to a null model and usually interpreted as representing a good fit when greater than or equal to 0.90 (Bentler, 1990). RMSEA is a measure of lack of fit per degree of freedom for a model. Values of RMSEA of about 0.08 or less reflect reasonable fit of the model to the population (Browne & Cudeck, 1993), although traditionally values between 0.0 and 0.05 are recommended as reflecting a close fit. The somewhat high RMSEA value of my models can possibly be explained by a relatively complex model and a sample size which is below the recommended 200 cases for SEM analyses (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996).

Political skill. At the individual level the Political Skill Inventory has demonstrated good factor structure in previous studies (e.g., Ferris et al., 2005). However, in this study some items were slightly reworded and political skill was measured in regard to teams. Thus, to confirm the factor structure in the current study, the items from the instrument were factor-analyzed, with special attention to the model fit and items loading on their appropriate factors in excess of .30, the criterion commonly used to interpret factor loadings as meaningful. Appropriate statistical fit of the first level CFA model was

achieved for a single factor model of political skill comprising the 18 items. Chi-square = 909.40 (135); CFI = .939; AGFI = .804; SRMR = .059; RMSEA = .087, 90% C.I. .081, .092. Good statistical fit of the first level CFA model was achieved for a four-factor model comprising the four dimensions of political skill. Chi-square = 520.53 (129); CFI = .966; AGFI = .866; SRMR = .050; RMSEA = .066, 90% C.I. .061, .072. Although all factor loadings were statistically significant, three item loadings did not reach the recommended cut-off value. Thus, statement 1 (belongs to Networking ability dimension), statement 8 (belongs to Apparent Sincerity dimension) and statement 18 (belongs to Social Astuteness dimension) were excluded from the following confirmatory factor analysis. Based on the chi-square test of difference, the shortened model appears to be of a better fit: Δ Chi-square = 107.05 (47). However upon close examination, the shortened 4-factor model did not demonstrate a significant improvement in other statistical fit indexes. Chi-square = 413.48 (82); CFI = .968; AGFI = .866; SRMR = .048; RMSEA = .072, 90% C.I. .065, .079. Furthermore, the Wald test did not suggest that those three parameters were to be dropped from the model, and the Lagrange Multiplier Test for adding parameters did not suggest that these items may cross-load onto different factors. Thus, the complete 18 item instrument was retained.

Team Cohesion. As the team cohesion construct is theorized to comprise two dimensions, CFA was employed to demonstrate proposed dimensionality and items loadings. The two-factor model yielded an appropriate statistical fit. Chi-square = 64.29 (19); CFI = .964; AGFI = .913; SRMR = .068; RMSEA = .075, 90% C.I. .055, .095. However, two items belonging to the social cohesion dimension had extremely low factor loadings of 1%. After I deleted these items (both happened to be the reversed items in this scale), the model improved considerably. Chi-square = 3.94 (8); CFI = .996; RMSEA =

.000, 90% C.I. .000, .030. All the items loaded onto specified factors with loadings between .57 and .74. In addition, the fit of the 2-factor model was statistically significantly better than the 1-factor model based on the chi-square test of difference: Chi-square =138.76 (9); CFI = .867; RMSEA = .184, 90% C.I. .158, .211. Δ Chi-square = 134.82(1), significant at $p < .01$.

Team Conflict. CFA supported the 3 proposed dimensions of team conflict: relationship, task, and process conflict. Chi-square = 108.1 (41); CFI = .985; RMSEA = .063, 90% C.I. .049, .077. Factor loadings ranged from .52 to .77. In addition, the fit of the 2-factor model was statistically significantly better than the 1-factor model based on the chi-square test of difference: Chi-square =138.76 (9); CFI = .867; RMSEA = .184, 90% C.I. .158, .211. Δ Chi-square = 134.82(1), significant at $p < .01$.

Team Trust. To assess the psychometric properties of the measure, I conducted the CFA, computing statistical fit of the one-factor model of team trust as assessed by team members. Four out of six items demonstrated low factor loadings and were deleted. The resultant model yielded an acceptable fit: Chi-square = 4.32(2); CFI = .969; RMSEA = .059, 90% C.I. .057, .98. Factor loadings were .85 and .84.

Perceived team performance. To assess the psychometric properties of the measure I conducted the CFA, computing statistical fit of the one-factor model of team performance as assessed by team members. Two items demonstrated low factor loadings and were deleted. The resultant model yielded an acceptable fit: Chi-square = 5.31(3); CFI = .965; RMSEA = .069, 90% C.I. .052, .99. Factor loadings were .85 and .84.

Team satisfaction. CFA of one-factor model yielded a modest fit. Chi-square = 8.208 (2); CFI = .861; RMSEA = .169, 90% C.I. .132, .209. Factor loadings of two items

were below acceptable cut (#1=.173 and #2=.09). Thus, only one item (item #3 with factor loading of .412) was retained for the future analysis.

Team viability was not assessed in student teams.

Team task interdependence. CFA was employed to demonstrate proposed items loadings. The one-factor model yielded a good statistical fit. Chi-square = 3.94 (2); CFI = .996; RMSEA = .000, 90% C.I. .000, .030. Items loadings were between .57 and .74.

Differentiating team emergent state variables

To ensure that the team emergent states measures can be differentiated, I conducted CFAs, with EQS 6.2, computing two models: a 3-factor model (items loading on their respective constructs of team trust, conflict, and cohesion) versus a single factor model (all items loading onto 1 factor). At the individual level, the 3-factor model yielded an appropriate fit: Chi-square = 745.26 (167); CFI = .936; RMSEA = .093, 90% C.I. .086, .100. The one-factor model demonstrated a poor statistical fit: Chi-square = 1839.45 (170); CFI = .814; RMSEA = .157, 90% C.I. .150, .163. The fit of the 3-factor model was statistically significantly better than the 1-factor model based on the chi-square test of difference: Δ Chi-square = 1094.19 (3). A 6-factor model specifying constructs of team social and task cohesion, team trust and team task, relationship and process conflict was also tested and yielded a good fit: Chi-square = 264.79 (155); CFI = .977; RMSEA = .066, 90% C.I. .052, .079. Thus, I conclude that the to team emergent states measures can be differentiated.

Indexes of agreement and reliability

All self-report individual measures were proposed to be aggregated to form a team score. Before aggregating to the team level, agreement among team members must be

demonstrated (see table 5). To do so, I first calculated r_{wg} (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984), a within-team index of agreement. It is worth noting the lack of agreement in the current literature about the minimum value of this index that would theoretically justify forming a higher-level variable. While James and colleagues (1984) recommend .70 (or higher) as a cutoff, other researchers (e.g., Guzzo et al., 1993) suggest that values of .50 and above can be used. LeBreton and Senter (2008) suggest a continuum to determine appropriateness of the decision. The continuum ranges from lack of agreement (values ranging from 0 - .30), to medium agreement, to very strong agreement (values ranging from .91 – 1.0). In this study I applied less stringent cutoffs for r_{wg} for two specific reasons. First, I acknowledge that student teams are, by their nature, affected by an important temporal dimension: at the time of assessment they had been operating for about 2 months only. Thus, it is very likely that team level constructs, such as team cohesion, were not completely shaped, causing occasional low level of agreement among members. While applying more stringent values of agreement indexes is justified for well-established constructs, I argue that in this case it may lead to Type II error. However, teams that demonstrated bimodal distribution of a variable were excluded from the tests of hypotheses that involved the mean. Of note, I detected 3 teams with a bimodal distribution of team cohesion and 4 teams with a bimodal distribution of team conflict. I tested the bimodality of the data distribution using each team's kurtosis value, based on the notion that a kurtosis value of -2 indicates a bimodal distribution (DeRue, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, & Feltz, 2010).

In support of aggregating the variables to the team level, I also found a medium and large effects for within-team variance and appropriate level of between team variance. Traditional conventions used when interpreting ICC(1) suggest that 25% of

variance explained can be considered a large-size effect, while 10% is medium and 1% is small-size effect (e.g., Murphy & Myors, 1998). As ICC(*k*) represents a combined measure of agreement and reliability, it is appropriate to use traditional reliability standards, where values above .65 are deemed appropriate. Based on those criteria, I aggregated the individual variables to the team level.

Team political skill was treated as a common pool of the skill operationalized as an additive model (Chan, 1998). This model involves a summation of the lower level units; therefore, it does not require that individual level data demonstrate consensus prior to the aggregation (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Consequently, I did not calculate r_{wg} indexes for this variable.

By the same token, I operationalized team trust as a construct that has origins at the individual level but emergent properties at the group level, the process known as a discontinuous compilation (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). While some research has operationalized team trust as a consensus model (e.g., Kirkman, Benson, Tesluk, & Gibson, 2006), I believe that that the additive model of team trust is viable. Specifically, I attest that individual trust combines additively to form a collective resource pool of team trust. Furthermore, this assumption was reflected in my choice of the instrument: I chose the measure that reflects *individual* belief in team members' benevolence (e.g., "I am willing to depend on the team to back me up in difficult situations"). As an additive model does not require consensus in individual responses prior to aggregation (LeBreton & Senter, 2008), I did not calculate r_{wg} indexes for this variable.

Analysis of common method variance

Certain precautions were taken during the study design to limit common method bias, such as collecting endogenous and exogenous variables at different times and in various forms (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Specifically, I used a paper survey of independent and demography variables at time one and an online survey of dependent variables two or three weeks after. However, this remains a potential issue because ratings of all variables were obtained from the same team members. In order to test for the possible effect of common method variance, I ran a series of hierarchically nested models based on the specifications developed by Widaman (1985) and commonly used by researchers (see Carson & Kacmar, 2000; Elangovan & Xie, 1999). The addition of a method factor (latent construct with all variables loading on it) to an original baseline measurement model (Chi-square = 143.45 (63); CFI = .964) significantly improved the overall model fit (Chi-square = 78.55 (48); CFI = .986). Δ Chi-square = 64.9 (15), significant at $p<0.01$. This suggested a possible effect of common method bias. However, the incremental fit index *rho* yielded 0.09, demonstrating that this method effect was nonsignificant (Elengovan & Xie, 1999). In addition, the factor loadings of the baseline model remained significant even after the method effect was partialled out. This provided support for the conclusion that common method bias was limited and the respondents were able to differentiate between the variables. In addition to this preliminary test, a post-hoc analysis based on a split sample technique was employed. This will be presented later.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. STUDY 1 RESULTS

5.1. Preliminary Analyses

Comparing dropped and retained samples

Comparison between 94 teams who were dropped because they did not meet the cut-off and 112 intact teams showed no significant difference for the most tested variables. One-way ANOVA results for team political skill, age, gender and GPA can be found in Table 2. The samples differed in terms of students' GPA only. I explain the difference by sampling error. The respondents from the dropped teams who completed the survey demonstrated slightly higher GPAs, possibly because their less diligent peers chose not to respond.

Test of data distribution normality

To ensure that the data met the requirements for being analyzed via regression, I first compared the observed data distributions to the normal distribution. Even though some variables were found to be slightly skewed, no severe deviation from normality was detected for the variables in question. The normalized estimate for Mardia's coefficient, available in the EQS program, was in line with the recommended value (Bentler, 2005), namely less than 5.0. Descriptive statistics comprising means, standard deviations and individual level correlations are presented in Table 3.

5.2. Tests of Hypotheses

5.2.1. Testing a process model linking team political skill and team effectiveness

The first set of hypotheses deals with a model linking team political skill and team effectiveness (see Figure 2). Table 4 reports means, standard deviations, and correlations

among all team-level variables. The hypothesized model was tested with structural equation modeling using EQS-6.1 software.

In testing the hypothesized model, parcels of individual items for each scale retained after the factor analyses described above were used as the observed variables. The use of parcelling has long been debated (see e.g., Kishton & Widaman, 1994; Little, Cunningham, & Widaman, 2001; Marsh, Hau, Balla, & Grayson, 1998). Most cited advantages of the method include better fitting models and less stringent requirements for the sample size. Most criticism is directed at the item versus parcel debate rather than scales versus parcels. Little et al. explain: "A second approach focuses principally on the relations among latent variables. From this perspective, item indicators are merely tools that allow one to build a measurement model for a desired latent construct. Once built, the item indicators become less consequential." (2001: 169). Kishton and Widaman (1994) further explain that this approach would result in a higher order latent construct, wherein the facets are used as manifest indicators. Thus, I first established the dimensionality of each construct in confirmatory factor analysis at the item level, and then used the means of the four dimensions comprising the factor of political skill as parcels. In the same manner, I used the three types of conflict and the two types of team cohesion. This approach enabled me to keep the multidimensional nature of the construct explicit and to explore the role played by each dimension of the multifaceted constructs.

The full mediation model was tested following the procedure recommended by Mathieu and Taylor (2006). The first assumption of this model is a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Secondly, the relationship should become non-significant when the mediator is included. Hypotheses 1.1 - 1.3 stated a positive relationship in team political skill and team outcomes. Regression analysis

supported hypothesis 1.1 suggesting that team political skill positively relates to team performance ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$) and hypothesis 1.2 that team political skill positively relates to team satisfaction ($\beta = .56$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 1.3 on team viability was not tested in the student sample.

Following Mathieu and Taylor (2006) I fit different structural models to test the hypothesized mediation effect of team emergent states. I first estimated a six factor CFA baseline model[2] that included covariances of team political skill and both the mediators and the team outcomes. The model yielded an acceptable fit: $\chi 2 = 143.54$ (63), CFI = .964, RMSEA = .08, 90% C.I. .069, .10, with all parcels significantly loading on their intended latent variables. The fit of this model served as a baseline against which all subsequently specified models were compared.

Then, I fit 'only directs' and 'no directs' models to serve as an additional comparison. The only directs model estimated direct relationships from team political skill to team performance and satisfaction, with no paths leading to, or stemming from, the mediators. Although team political skill related significantly to both team performance and team satisfaction, the model exhibited poor fit: $\chi 2 = 232.16$ (72), CFI = .929, RMSEA = .116, 90% C.I. .100, .133 and differed significantly from the baseline model ($\Delta\chi 2 = 88.62$ (9); $p < .001$). This indicated the presence of mediator variable(s).

The no direct effect models estimated paths from team political skill to the mediators and from the mediators to the outcomes. In the model, team political skill

[2] The results of the Wald test suggested the deletion of insignificant control variables originally introduced into the six factor model. A CFA model for self-ratings of performance and team satisfaction loading onto a higher-order factor produced a significantly worse fit (Chi-square = 161.05 (65), Δ Chi-square = 17.51 (2).

related significantly and positively with team cohesion and team trust, and negatively with team conflict (see Figure 2). Overall, this model exhibited an acceptable fit: $\chi 2$ = 145.34 (65), CFI = .964, RMSEA = .08, 90% C.I. .06, .10 and did not differ from the baseline model ($\Delta\chi 2$ = 1.8 (7), n.s.).

All three mediators related significantly to team outcomes providing support for hypotheses 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1 that suggested the relationship of team political skill and team cohesion, trust, and conflict. Hypothesis 2.1 stated a positive relationship in team political skill and team cohesion. This hypothesis was supported as the path was found to be significant (β = .38, p < .01). Hypothesis 3.1 proposed a positive relation of team political skill with team trust. The hypothesis was confirmed (β = .24, p < .05). Hypothesis 4.1 proposed a negative relation of team political skill with team conflict. The hypothesis was also confirmed (β = -.28, p < .05). These findings indicated the presence of mediator variables.

Next, I tested a partial mediation model. Adding a path from team political skill to team performance within the no directs model led to a model with acceptable fit: $\chi 2$ = 147.86 (64), CFI = .964, RMSEA = .088, 90% C.I. .07, .10. The same holds true for the model of team satisfaction: $\chi 2$ = 147.81 (64), CFI = .964, RMSEA = .088, 90% C.I. .07, .10. Both models demonstrated no improvement over the no-direct model and differed significantly from the baseline model ($\Delta\chi 2$ = 4.32 (1), p < .05 and $\Delta\chi 2$ = 4.27 (1) at p < .05, consequently.) Noteworthy, in this model, the direct effect of team political skill to performance was not significant (β = .12, n.s.), and neither was the direct effect of team political skill to team satisfaction (β = .10, n.s.). Given the earlier finding of a significant relation between team political skill and team outcomes, this suggests full mediation.

Hence, hypotheses 2.2 - 2.3, 3.2 -3.3 and 4.2 - 4.3 stating a mediating effect of team emergent states were supported. Please see Figure 2 for further detail.[3]

Hypothesis 4.5 stated that out of the three types of conflict, relationship conflict would demonstrate the highest negative correlation with political skill, as compared to task and process conflict. This relationship was tested in partial zero-order correlation, controlling for the demographic variables: r = -.21 for relationship conflict, r = -.15 for task conflict and r = -.11 for process conflict (p<0.05). The results of the strength of significance between the correlations did not support the hypothesis. The following results between the different types of conflict and team political skill were found: z = -.99 at p = .32 for the relationship and process conflict and z = -.6 at p = .55 for the relationship and task conflict.

Post hoc analysis of common method variance

To test common method variance I conducted split sample analyses of the mediation effects. The teams were randomly split in two groups to allow the test of the links between team emergent states (cohesion and conflict) as rated by one half of the team and team performance and satisfaction as rated by the other half of the team. I did not split the teams for team political skill and team trust, as these variables were operationalized as an additive model. The results of regression analyses are similar to the complete sample findings, thus further confirming their validity. This also indicates that team emergent states and team effectiveness represent two different constructs, rather than one latent construct. These results can be found in Tables 9 and 10.

[3] To address a possibility of a reverse relationship where team processes influence the enactment of team political skill, I tested the model where TPS mediates the process-outcomes relationship. This model exhibited a poor fit: $\chi 2$ = 623.38 (70), CFI = .755, RMSEA = .220, 90% C.I. .20, .23. Hence, I concluded that my original model is viable.

Additional analysis: instructor-rated team performance

Even though two statistical analyses suggested that the results were not contaminated by the common method bias, I ran an additional analysis that involved team projects' grades. This data were obtained from the course instructors for 161 out of 189 teams. First, the ANOVA analysis was used to ensure that there is no significant difference between instructors' project marks. The analysis revealed that one instructor differed significantly in his/ her grading ($F = 2.12$ at $p = .047$). To resolve this problem the data were standardized within each class/instructor ($F = 1.46$ at $p = .19$). Second, the new variable was added as another outcome to the 'no direct effects' model used in the test of the mediation effect. This new model exhibited a rather poor fit: $\chi 2 = 284.71$ (103), CFI = .929, RMSEA = .11, 90% C.I. .09, .13 and differed significantly from the original model ($\Delta\chi 2 = 72.43$ (34); $p < .001$). Furthermore, only team trust significantly related to objective team performance ($\beta = .27$, $p < .05$), while team political skill, team cohesion, and team conflict did not relate to the new variable ($\beta = -.05$; $\beta = -.07$ and $\beta = .15$, n.s.).

5.2.3. Testing operationalizations other than the group mean

Multiple linear regression analyses were employed to examine models implying operationalizations other than group mean for team political skill in relation to team emergent states. Team political skill strength is operationalized as the interaction of the level and the standard deviation of the skill. Control variables were first entered into the regression model followed by the mean, and the variable of interest (such as interaction of team political skill level and strength or the lowest skill). This order allowed controlling

for interdependence of the trait mean and other operationalizations. The analyses for each team emergent state are presented separately.

The effect of team political skill strength. Hypotheses 5.1-5.3 predicted the relationship of team political skill strength (the interaction between team political skill level and *SD*) with team cohesion, trust, and conflict. The results are presented in Table 6 and Figure 5. In each round controls were first entered into the model, followed by the average of team political skill and its standard deviation.

Regressing team cohesion on the interaction of TPS level and *SD* tested hypothesis 5.1. The independent variables were significant and explained an additional 12% of the variance in team cohesion. The interaction term of the level and strength of the skill explained a further 3% of variance ($p < .05$). $\Delta R^2 = .03$, $F = 4.82$ (8, 180), $p < .05$. This result supports hypothesis 5.1 predicting a positive effect of the interactive term for team political skill level and strength beyond the effect due to the team political skill mean.

Hypothesis 5.2 predicted an interaction effect between team political skill level and strength in relation to team trust. After controlling for demographic variables, the skill mean and *SD*, the strength of the skill explained a further 2% of variance ($p < .10$). $\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F = 2.66$ (8, 180), $p < .01$. Consequently, support was provided for hypothesis 5.2, though at a marginal level of significance.

Regressing team conflict on the team political skill strength tested hypothesis 5.3. The interaction of the level and *SD* of the skill explained significant variance of 3% ($p < .05$). Thus, the result reveals a significant effect of the interactive term for team political skill level and its standard deviation beyond the variance accounted for the team political

skill mean. $\Delta R^2 = .03$, $F = 4.73$ (8, 180), $p < .01$. Consequently, support was provided for hypothesis 5.3. Please see Figure 6 depicting the effect of team political skill strength.

Operationalization of team political skill as lowest skill level within team. I proceeded with exploring different operationalizations of team political skill and tested the relationship between the lowest score of team political skill and team emergent states. This set of hypotheses was tested on the subsample of 112 teams with a 100% response rate. Hypothesis 6.1 tested the relationship between the minimal score on team political skill and team cohesion after controls were introduced. As Table 7 suggests, the team minimal score for political skill proved to be significant in predicting team cohesion, supporting hypothesis 6.1 ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). However, the minimal skill level did not explain the variance in team cohesion beyond the variance explained by the team average of political skill ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $F = 1.43$ (7, 104), $p = .22$). Thus, hypothesis 6.2 was not supported.

Hypothesis 7.1 tested the relationship between the minimal score on team political skill and team trust after controls were introduced. The results for multiple regression analyses for team political skill and team trust are presented in Table 7. The team minimal score for political skill proved to be significant in predicting team trust, supporting hypothesis 7.1 ($\beta = .17$, $p < .05$). Regressing team trust on the TPS mean and its minimal level demonstrated that the minimal score on team political skill failed to account for variance in team trust in addition to the mean ($\Delta R^2 = .002$, $F = .29$ (7, 104), n.s.). Thus, hypothesis 7.2 was not supported.

Hypothesis 8.1 was supported, as the relationship between the minimal score on team political skill and team conflict was found to be significant ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .10$). Also, significant variance was explained by the minimal skill score above and beyond the 5%

predicted by mean team political skill ($p < .10$) and the 2% predicted by the control variables ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F = 2.56$ (7, 104), $p < .05$). Thus, a minimal level of team political skill among team members accounted for significant variation in team social skill. This result supported hypothesis 8.2 that stated that the lowest skill level within a team would be an important predictor of team conflict beyond average team political skill.

5.2.4. Testing the moderating effect of team interdependence

Hypotheses 10.1 through 10.3 explored whether the relationship between team political skill and team emergent states is stronger when team task interdependence is high. I considered testing the interactions using structural equation modeling because a variety of methods have been created for this (see Marsh, Wen, & Hau, 2004), but each of the established methods stems from the work of Kenny and Judd (1984). Specifically, they proposed that the latent variable interaction term can be calculated as the product indicators of every combination of items from each scale. However, the use of parceling complicates the test of moderation via structural equation modeling, given the lack of items on variables.

Thus, the hypotheses were tested using regression analysis in SPSS. In order to attenuate possible problems with multicolinearity, the independent variable and the mediator were centered prior to the test. The regression analysis controlled for team size and team members' gender, age, GPA, and familiarity with each other. The results are provided in table 8. Although the direct effect between team political skill and team cohesion ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$), as well as team interdependence team emergent states was found ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$), the results suggest no interaction effect of team interdependence ($\beta = .002$, $F = .26$ (8, 180), n.s.). Thus, hypothesis 10.1 was not supported. Hypotheses

10.2 and 10.3 were confirmed. The results suggest an interaction effect of team interdependence and team political skill onto team conflict and team trust. Figure 3 depicts the significant positive relationship between team political skill and team trust that occurred for those who perceived team interdependence as higher ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .10$, $F = 2.81$ (8,180), $p < .01$). Figure 6 depicts the significant negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict that occurred for those who perceived higher team task interdependence ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .10$; $F = 3.23$ (8,180), $p < .01$).

Hypotheses 11.1 and 11.2 comparing team versus leader political skill were not tested in the student sample.

CHAPTER SIX

6. STUDY 2 METHOD

6.1. Participants

This sample was obtained from a large European-based multinational retail company. Participation was sought from personal contacts in this organization. A total of 156 employees working for 28 functional teams participated in the study, translating into a 68% response rate. Noteworthy, 8% of employees were not physically present at work during data collection, as they had their vacations and parental or sick leaves. Gender composition of the sample was 33% male and 67% female. The average age of participants was 29 years old. The company provided the demographic data for the entire store, and I was able to compare the gender and age means of respondents and non-respondents. No significant differences were detected.

Teams consisted of three to sixteen members with a mode of 6 members per team. For the teams of three members participation of 2 respondents was required, and for the teams of four and five members participation of 3 respondents was required, otherwise the response rate cutoff was 60%. In general, they represented various departments, such as sales, logistics, customer service, cashiers, designers, furniture, and an in-store restaurant. These teams were required to perform both routine and project-based tasks. For example, a design team was responsible for supervising the arrangement of the on-the-floor merchandise on a daily basis while developing specific projects such as a seasonal store catalog.

6.2. Procedures

This study was done in a Russian branch of a well-known multinational corporation. The company specifically requested nondisclosure of its name, so I further refer to it as MNC. It is one of the largest furniture manufacturers and retailers in the world, with almost 300 stores operating in over than 30 countries. The company's main strength is arguably its committed workforce, which is often the source of the company's innovative concepts. The company demonstrated interest in the study and provided some support with data collection, such as sharing the information on each team's membership and providing the researcher with an office for the days when responses were collected. These data were obtained from the store located in the south-west of Russia in late spring 2010.

An important step of the study was to ensure that functional teams identified within MNC are actual work teams. In accordance with the definition of a team/ work group, it should include two or more people striving to achieve a common goal, which implies interaction and interdependence. Thus, these characteristics were specifically sought after in the MNC work groups. The company claimed that they use these teams in their everyday work. Not only do they directly refer to certain departments and working groups within departments as teams, but also these groups are assigned specific goals, and are required to cooperate to achieve them. Furthermore, they are incentivized as a group. Consequently, the HR department was able to identify each team and its leader and provided me with this information prior to data collection. The list of the team members was attached to each survey to ensure that the respondents assessed the correct team.

In this branch of the MNC the survey included 85 questions and took between 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Surveys were administered to all managers and employees at

the store in Russian and were completed at work, at a designated location and time. Respondents had to be 18 years of age or older to participate. Due to such sample characteristics as low familiarity with computers and/or low accessibility to a computer at work, especially among non-managerial workers, paper and pencil surveys were administered. The employees were assured of complete confidentiality of their responses, and each survey was coded prior to distribution. I personally delivered the completed surveys to Canada, entered the data and stored it as an encrypted file on a secure computer using no names—only code numbers. Soon after the analysis was done, the company was provided with a brief report on the findings. This included aggregate findings only and did not identify individuals in any way.

6.3. Measures

For the MNC respondents, measures were administered in Russian. A standard procedure of translating the measures and back-translating them into English to identify and correct misinterpreted items was employed. The primary instrument - the Political Skill Inventory – had been validated in the Russian language prior to this study (Lvina, Johns, & Bobrova, 2009). Furthermore, in a different study, the psychometric properties of the Political Skill Inventory were tested in a non-American context and the measurement equivalence was established for the scale in Russian (Lvina et al., 2011). Please see Appendix A for the complete scales used in the study. For the complete questionnaire in Russian, see Appendix B. See Appendix C for the contest forms describing the purpose and conditions of research participation.

6.3.1. Independent variables and mediators

Team political skill was measured using the Political Skill Inventory by Ferris et al. (2005). The measure of political skill includes 18 statements. Participants indicated their responses on a 7-point Likert scale. An example item is: *I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.* The PSI used in teams was revised accordingly whereby "in my team" was used in place of "at work", and "my team members" instead of "other". α = .87.

Leader political skill in teams was measured using a modified Political Skill Inventory by Ferris et al. (2005). Team leaders reported their individual political skill enacted in the teams. α =.78. Also, teams reported the political skill of their leaders. α =.74.

Group cohesion. Task and social cohesion were measured using 8 items from Chang and Bordia (2001). The subjects had to indicate their level of agreement with statements using a 9-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (9) *strongly agree*, with higher scores indicating more cohesive responses. Sample items include: *Everyone tries to help if members have problems* (task cohesion) and *Team members stick together outside of the team project* (social cohesion). The reversed items with low item-total correlation were deleted from the final measure. Task cohesion α = .77; Social cohesion α = .66.

Group conflict. Conflict was measured using Jehn's (1995) scale for task, process and affective conflict. Each group member responded to items from the scale using a 7-point Likert-scale. Sample questions are: *How much tension is there among your group members?* (relationship conflict); *How often do members of your team disagree who*

should do what? (process conflict) and *How frequently are there conflicts about ideas in your team?* (task conflict). Conflict scale α = .77.

Team trust. Trust in teammates was assessed using a 4-item scale adapted from Mayer and Davis (1999) and two items from Gillespie (2003). I modified the items to reflect teams as the intended referent. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. For example: *I would be comfortable giving this team a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor its actions*. Only three items were used in the final measure. I had to delete the following item: *I would be willing to let my team have complete control over my future at the company* and 2 reversed items with low item-total correlation. α = .71.

6.3.2. Moderators

Perceptions of organizational politics was assessed using the "Going along to get ahead" subscale of the Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (Kacmar & Carlson, 1991). Kacmar and Carlson (1997) validated both the full scale and each subscale. This subscale consisted of four items measured on a five-point Likert scale. As per CFA results, one item was deleted. Example item is: *Favoritism, rather than merit, gets people ahead around here.* α =.81.

Team task interdependence was assessed with Morgeson and Humphrey's (2006) received interdependence subscale. Responses for received interdependence were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Sample items are: *My job cannot be done unless others do their work.* α =.72.

6.3.3. Outcome Measures

Team effectiveness was measured using Hackman's (1987) team effectiveness measures (team satisfaction and team viability), and self-assessed (perceived team performance) and managers' team performance appraisals.

Team viability was measured using Hackman's (1987) 7-point scale. A sample item is: *Members of the team care a lot about it, and work together to make it one of the best.* The reversed item *As a team, this work group shows signs of falling apart* was deleted to achieve higher reliability for the scale. $\alpha = .74$.

Team satisfaction was measured on a 7-point Likert scale, using 3 items from Hackman (1987). The items are: *Generally speaking I am very satisfied with the team; I am generally satisfied with the work I do on the team*; *I frequently wish I could quit the team (R).* $\alpha = .78$.

Perceived team performance was self-assessed by the team members. Four items from Pearce and Sims' (2002) measurement were employed. Respondents reported an overall team effectiveness on a 5-point Likert scale. Sample statements are: *The team is highly effective; The team does very good work;* $\alpha = .86$.

Team performance rated by a supervisor was measured independently by the team leader's ratings and the ratings of the store manager. Four items from Pearce and Sims' (2002) measure were employed. Please see Table 1 for the source of data for each variable.

6.3.4. Controls

Demography. Age, gender, time working with the current leader, and organizational and team tenure were measured. These single item demographic variables

are traditionally used in survey research and are not attributed to any specific source. The wording of each item is available in Appendix A. At the team level, proportion of men was used to control for gender. Other demographic variables were aggregated to the team level. Average age measured in years and average tenure measured in months, were employed in the analysis.

Being insignificant, all the controls were removedfrom the SEM used in the student sample. The Wald test also suggested the deletion of the control variables originally introduced into the model. However, there was a different set of control variables in the MNC sample. For instance, organization and team tenure, work experience and experience with the current leader were not among the control variables for the student sample. Various control variables proved to be significant in some of the MNC regression analyses. Unlike in SEM, no tool is available in regression analysis to conclude that a variable is redundant for every tested model. Hence, the controls were retained in analyses used in the MNC sample to ensure rigor.

Group size. This information was provided by the HR department.

Dimensionality and factor loadings of the constructs

CFA was employed to demonstrate proposed dimensionality of the multifaceted constructs. The analyses were done with the EQS-6 statistical package at the individual level.

Team political skill. At the individual level the Political Skill Inventory has demonstrated good factor structure in previous studies (e.g., Ferris et al., 2005). Also, the instrument had been validated in Russian prior to this study (Lvina et al., 2009). However, in this study some items were slightly reworded, and political skill was

measured in regard to teams. Thus, to confirm the factor structure in the current study, the items were factor-analyzed, with special attention to the model fit and item loadings on their appropriate factors in excess of .30, the criterion level commonly used to interpret factor loadings as meaningful. Error terms were allowed to covary within each dimension. Acceptable statistical fit of the first level CFA model was achieved for a single factor model of political skill comprising the 18 items. Chi-square = 181.66 (99); CFI = .938; RMSEA = .081, 90% C.I. .061, .10. Good statistical fit of the first level CFA model was also achieved for a four-factor model comprised of the four dimensions of political skill. Chi-square = 161.58 (95); CFI = .95; AGFI = .72; SRMR = .078; RMSEA = .074, 90% C.I. .053, .094. All factor loadings were statistically significant. However, three item loadings did not reach the recommended cut-off value: statements # 1, # 9 and #10, all belonging to the networking ability dimension, had factor loadings of less than .30. However, based on good statistical fit and significance of the item loadings, the complete 18 item instrument was retained and used for further analysis.

Team Cohesion. As the team cohesion construct is theorized to comprise two dimensions, CFA was employed to demonstrate the proposed dimensionality and item loadings. A 2-factor model yielded a good statistical fit. Chi-square = 1.27 (4); CFI = .999; AGFI = .981; SRMR = .020; RMSEA = .00, 90% C.I. .00, .07. One item belonging to the social cohesion dimension was not included in this test, as prior to this analysis it was deleted to improve scale reliability. A one factor model demonstrated poor statistical fit: Chi-square = 15.08 (9); CFI = .955; RMSEA = .07, 90% C.I. .00, .12. $\Delta\chi 2 = 13.81$ (5); $p < .01$. All the items loaded onto specified factors with loadings between .35 and .63.

Team Conflict. A CFA supported the three proposed dimensions of team conflict: relationship, task, and process conflict. Chi-square = 97.54 (41); CFI = .96; RMSEA = .082, 90% C.I. .049, .111. One factor model demonstrated poor statistical fit: Chi-square = 266.02 (44); CFI = .840; RMSEA = .19, 90% C.I. .16, .21. $\Delta\chi 2 = 168.48$ (3); $p <$ .001.Factor loadings ranged from .43 to .77.

Team performance. A CFA was conducted, computing statistical fit of a one-factor model of team performance as assessed by team members. The model yielded an excellent fit: Chi-square = 2.28 (2); CFI = .998; RMSEA = .033, 90% C.I. .000, .107. Factor loadings were significant and ranged from .80 to .88.

Team satisfaction. CFA of the one-factor model yielded a proper fit. Chi-square = 7.21 (3); CFI = .961; RMSEA = .059, 90% C.I. .032, .09. All factor loadings were significant and ranged from .42 to .68.

Team viability. CFA was employed to test the fit of one-factor model and demonstrate proposed items loadings. The reversed item *As a team, this work group shows signs of falling apart* did not demonstrate an acceptable factor loading and was deleted to achieve higher reliability of the scale and better fit of the model. Chi-square = 3.9 (1); CFI = .971; RMSEA = .067, 90% C.I. .052, .109. Factor loadings were .90 and .51, $p < .05$.

Team task interdependence. CFA was employed to demonstrate proposed item loadings. The one-factor model measuring received interdependence yielded a good statistical fit. Chi-square = 5.93 (2); CFI = .966; RMSEA = .072, 90% C.I. .031, .090. Items loadings were between .37 and .48.

Perceptions of organizational politics. A one-factor model was tested. One of the items demonstrated poor factor loadings and was deleted. For the remained items the

loadings were significant and ranged from .30 to .89. Chi-square = 10.9 (6); CFI = .951; RMSEA = .076, 90% C.I. .06, .099.

Differentiating team emergent states

To ensure that the team emergent states measures could be differentiated, I computed two CFA models: a 3-factor model (items loading on their respective constructs of team trust, conflict and cohesion) versus a single factor model (all items loading onto one factor). At individual level, the 3-factor model yielded an appropriate fit: Chi-square = 302.83 (149); CFI = .942; AGFI = .696; SRMR = .071; RMSEA = .080, 90% C.I. .066, .110. The factors were allowed to correlate with each other, but they did not demonstrate an excessively high correlation (r = -.71 was the highest for team conflict and cohesion). In comparison, the one-factor model demonstrated a poor statistical fit: Chi-square = 1367.03 (170); CFI = .514; AGFI = .454; SRMR = .428; RMSEA = .486, 90% C.I. .430, .594. Furthermore, the fit of the 3-factor model was statistically significantly better than the 1-factor model based on the chi-square test of difference: Δ Chi-square = 1064.2 (21). These results constitute good evidence that the team emergent states can be differentiated.

Aggregating individual variables to team level

The self-reported individual measures were proposed to be aggregated to form a team score. Before aggregating to the team level, agreement among team members must be demonstrated. To do so, I first calculated the r_{wg}, a within-team index of agreement (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1984). To support aggregating the variables to the team level, I also calculated ICC(1) and ICC(k), the indexes representing within team and between team variance. Based on adequate numbers obtained for those criteria, I aggregated the

individual variables to the team level. Indexes of agreement and reliability are reported in table 13.

Analysis of common method variance

With most ratings obtained from the same team members and at one and the same point in time, common method bias represents a serious issue in this second study. In order to test for a possible effect of a common method bias, I followed Widaman (1985) and ran a series of hierarchically nested models. I tested a baseline model that specified the relationship between team political skill, team outcomes, and team effectiveness. The number of teams was small, so I had to use parcels, rather than items, to ensure model convergence. For instance, I measured team effectiveness as one factor comprising 3 parcels: team performance, team satisfaction and team viability. The model had a modest fit (Chi-square = 39.92 (18); CFI = .909; SRMSR =.006). In accord with Mathieu and Taylor (2006) this fit can be considered acceptable. I added a method factor with all variables loading on it, to an original baseline measurement model fit (Chi-square = 29.67 (10); CFI = .924). This did not improve the overall model (Δ Chi-square = 10.25 (8), n.s.). In addition, the factor loadings of the baseline model remained significant even after the method effect was partialled out. These results suggested that common method bias was limited and the team members were able to differentiate between the variables. In addition to this preliminary test, a post-hoc analysis based on a split sample technique is provided in the results section.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. STUDY 2 RESULTS

7.1. Preliminary Analyses

Test of data distribution normality. To ensure that the data met the requirements for being analyzed via regression, I first compared the observed data distributions to the normal distribution. No severe deviation from normality was detected for the variables in question: The normalized estimate for Mardia's coefficient, available in EQS program, was in line with the one recommended by Bentler, namely less than 5.0 (2005). Descriptive statistics comprising means, standard deviations, and individual level correlations are presented in Table 11. Table 12 presents the correlations for the group level variables.

7.2. Test of hypotheses

7.2.1. Testing a process model linking team political skill and team effectiveness

Due to the low number of teams (28), a series of multiple linear regression analyses, rather than structural equation modelling, was employed to examine the model.

Hypotheses 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 predicted a direct effect of team political skill and team effectiveness. After partialling out the effect of controlling variables (age, gender, team size, company experience, work, and team experience) I found support for two hypotheses. Hypothesis 1.1, specifying a positive relationship between team political skill and team performance, was confirmed ($\beta = .42$, $p < .05$). Hypothesis 1.2, stating direct relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction, was supported ($\beta =$

.82, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 1.3 specifying a positive relationship between team political skill and team viability was also confirmed ($\beta = .64$, $p < .05$).

Hypotheses 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1 predicted a relationship between each of the team emergent states and team political skill. As hypothesized, aggregates of political skill positively predicted team conflict and team trust. After controlling for the demographic variables, the beta coefficients were -.65 ($p < .001$) for team conflict ($\Delta R^2 = .38$, $F = 5.38$ (7, 20) $p < .001$) and .53 ($p < .05$) for team trust ($\Delta R^2 = .12$; $F = 4.38$ (7, 20), $p < .001$). Thus, hypotheses 3.1 and 4.1 were confirmed. The hypothesis predicting the relationship between team political skill and overall team cohesion was not supported. Upon close examination, the types of cohesiveness were found to relate to team political skill in two different ways. While task cohesion had a positive relationship with team political skill, social cohesion was found to be related to team political skill negatively. On a side note, the same relationship held true for the two types of cohesion and team effectiveness, namely social cohesion demonstrated negative relationship with team performance, satisfaction, and viability. Thus, two separate regressions were run. Both social cohesion and task cohesion were found to significantly relate to team political skill ($\beta = -.54$, $p < .05$ and $\beta = .4$, $p < .05$, consequently), however social cohesion did not show the hypothesized directionality of the relationship. Hence, I consider hypothesis 2.1 to be partially supported. The results are presented in Table 14. For further analyses I tested social cohesion and task cohesion as separate constructs.

Hypotheses 2.2-2.4, 3.2-3.4 and 4.2-4.4 predicted that team emergent states would mediate the effect of team political skill on team effectiveness. Self-ratings of team performance were used in this analysis. The macros for the Aroian version of the Sobel

test provided by Preacher and Leonardelli[4] were employed to establish the mediation effect. The Sobel test is considered more thorough compared to the traditional Baron and Kenny's (1986) four step regression analysis. The test gives an overall test statistic to measure the indirect effect. An absolute value of greater than 1.96 is considered significant at the .05 level. (For further detail on use of macros see Preacher and Heayes, 2004). As shown in Table 15 all the variables but team social cohesiveness met Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for full mediation for each facet of team effectiveness: team performance, team viability, and team satisfaction. Regression coefficients are provided in Tables 13 and 16. Thus, hypotheses 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 testing the mediating effect of team conflict, were supported. Hypotheses 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 testing the mediating effect of team trust, were also supported. Hypotheses 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 tested the mediating effect of team cohesion. Separate effects for social and task cohesion were tested. As a mediation effect was established for task cohesion only, hypotheses 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 were partially supported[5].

Hypothesis 4.5 stated that out of the three types of conflict, relationship conflict would demonstrate the highest negative correlation with political skill, as compared to task and process conflict. This relationship was tested using partial correlation, controlling for the demographic variables: $r = -.23, p < .10$. for relationship conflict, $r = -.55, p < 0.01$ for task conflict and $r = -.45, p < 0.01$ for process conflict ($p < 0.05$). Overall, task conflict, but not relationship conflict, demonstrated strongest negative correlation with team political skill. However, the strength of correlation was not

[4] http://www.people.ku.edu/~preacher/sobel/sobel.htm
[5] In terms employed by Mathieu and Taylor (2006) the relationship between team political skill, team states and team satisfaction represents an indirect effects model, rather than a mediation model in a strict meaning of their conceptualization of mediation.

significantly different from the other types of conflict (z = -1.36 at p = .17 for task versus relationship conflict; z = -. 47 at p = .64 for task versus process conflict). Hence, the results did not support hypothesis 4.5.

Hypotheses exploring team political skill operationalizations other than the team mean were not tested in the MNC sample due to missing data: only 8 teams had a 100% response rate.

Post-hoc analysis of common method variance

No methodological protection against common method variance was taken in study two. The ratings of all variables obtained from the same team members represent a potential issue. In order to test for the possible effect of common method variance, I conducted split sample analyses. The teams were randomly split in two groups to allow the test of the links between team emergent states as rated by one half of the team and team effectiveness as rated by the other half of the team. The method was not used for team political skill and team trust, as these variables were operationalized as an additive model, thus the entire team's ratings were used in the test. I used the macros for the Aroian version of the Sobel test to examine the mediation effect in the split sample. In the split sample, the results of mediation analyses proved to be insignificant. A mediating effect was found for team trust only (test statistic = 1.98, test error = .23, at $p < .05$). However, the regression analysis reveals the results similar to the ones obtained for the tests of the hypotheses. Namely, team political skill was found to relate to the team emergent states, and the team emergent stat were related to team effectiveness. There were two notable exceptions, though. Team social cohesion was not found to significantly relate to team political skill and the effect size was, overall, smaller (see Table 19).

Based on the combined results of the preliminary and post-hoc tests, I concluded that while I cannot entirely rule out the possibility of common method variance, team political skill - team emergent states relationship was not overly contaminated by the common method.

Additional Analysis: team performance rated by a supervisor

Usable data were collected for team performance from 16 team leaders. I also collected performance data from the store manager (N=28 teams). Possibly due to a small sample size, team political skill and team emergent states were not found to directly relate to objective team performance rated by team leaders. Regression analysis for team political skill and objective performance assessed by the team leader was insignificant: β = .02, R^2=.00, *n.s.* However, when assessed by the store manager, team political skill positively related to objective performance at a lower significance level: β = .32, R^2=.06, p = .15. Results of the regression analysis for team conflict and objective performance by team leaders were insignificant. After controlling for demography and team political skill, performance assessed by the store manager significantly related to team task cohesion: β = .52, R^2 =.11, p < .05 and team trust: β = .42, R^2 =.11, p <.05, but not to team conflict. Sobel mediation tests suggested possible indirect effects of team political skill, although at lower level of significance (t = -1.66 at p = .09 for task cohesion, and t = -1.59 at p = .11 for team trust).

7.2.3. Testing the moderating effect of team interdependence and perception of organizational politics

These hypotheses were tested with regression analysis in SPSS. In order to attenuate possible problems with multicolinearity, the independent variables and the mediators were centered prior to the test.

Hypotheses 9.1 and 9.3 predicted a stronger effect between team political skill and team emergent states when perception of organizational politics is moderate, but not when it is excessively high or very low. Thus, a squared term for perceived organizational politics multiplied by team political skill was introduced into each regression model. It was preceded by controls and linear and squared term for perception of organizational politics. Lastly, the interaction terms of team political skill and perception of organizational politics, both linear and squared, were entered into the model. Hypothesis 9.1 was partially confirmed, as the moderating effect was demonstrated for task cohesion - team political skill relationship ($\beta = .68$, $p < .05$; $\Delta R^2 = .11$, $F = 3.06$, $p < .05$), but not for social cohesion ($\beta = -.18$, n.s.). Hypothesis 9.2 was also confirmed, supporting the curvilinear moderating effect of perceived organizational politics for the team trust - team political skill relationship ($\beta = .84$, $p < .05$; $\Delta R^2 = .17$, $F = 2.83$, $p < .05$). Hypothesis 9.3 was confirmed: The finding demonstrated a significant moderating effect of the linear interaction of team political skill and perceived politics onto team conflict ($\beta = .78$. $p < .01$; $\Delta R^2 = .25$, $p < .05$). The results are provided in table 17. Due to the low n, figures representing the curvilinear relationship appear inconclusive and are not presented here.

Hypotheses 10.1 - 10.3 predicted a stronger effect between team political skill and team emergent states when team task interdependence is high. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. The independent variables were centered prior to the test

to attenuate possible problems with multicolinearity. The results are provided in table 18. Hypothesis 10.1 was not supported as the results suggest no interaction effect of team interdependence for either for social cohesion (β = -.23, n.s.), or for task cohesion (β = .20, n.s.). Hypothesis 10.2 was not confirmed (β = .29, n.s.). The results suggest no interaction effect of team interdependence and team political skill on team trust. Hypothesis 10.3 was supported (β = -.42, $p < .05$; ΔR^2 = .13, F = 2.56, $p < .05$). Figure 8 depicts the significant negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict occurred for those who perceived high team task interdependence.

7.2.4. Team vs. leader political skill: Comparing the predictive power

Hypothesis 11.1 predicted that leaders' political skill would positively relate to team effectiveness. Team leader's (vertical) political skill was assessed as self - perception of political skill. Multiple regression analyses were employed to test the relationship. Leader political skill was found to significantly relate to team performance (β = .43, $p < .05$) and satisfaction (β = .44, $p < .05$) but not team viability (β = .16, n.s.). Thus, I conclude that hypothesis 11.1 was partially supported. See table 19 for details.

Hypothesis 11.2 suggested that team political skill would be an important predictor of team effectiveness beyond leader political skill. For team performance, significant variance of 33% was explained by the team political skill above and beyond that accounted for the leader's political skill (β = .59, $p < .01$ and ΔR^2 = .33, F = 3.56, $p < .01$). Team political skill was also found to be an important predictor of team satisfaction beyond the leader's political skill (β = .67, $p < .01$ and ΔR^2 = .64, F = 3.78, $p < .01$). Team political skill also demonstrated a significant relationship with team viability after controlling for the leader's political skill (β = .71, ΔR^2=.50, F = 3.96, $p <$

.01). Thus, I concluded that support for hypothesis 11.2 was demonstrated: Team political skill accounts for significant variation in team effectiveness beyond the variance explained by the leader's political skill.

The summary of the findings of the two studies are reported in Table 21.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.1. Major Findings

8.1.1. Overview. This study represents the first attempt to investigate how political skill operates at a higher level of analysis. Although researchers have demonstrated a positive association between individual political skill and personal objectives, the current literature does not answer the question of whether the benefits of political skill extend beyond individual outcomes. Hence, the main purpose of this study was to extend the current paradigm of individual political skill by developing a model of team political skill. My primary interest was in determining the role of team political skill as a predictor of team emergent states and effectiveness.

To explain how and when team political skill affects team effectiveness, I tested some mediating and moderating effects in two studies, using 189 student project teams and 28 permanent work teams. Employing a student sample allowed me to collect the majority of the data from intact teams, with no data missing. Furthermore, the controlled environment helped minimize common method variance by collecting the variables of interest at different time points and in different formats. This approach also allowed me to achieve a sample size of teams sufficient for testing the proposed model. To my best knowledge, this is one of the largest samples ever reported in a study on team effectiveness. My second study was completed in a business organization with the primary goal of replicating the findings. Arguably, results obtained from the combination of different samples allow for more generalizable conclusions. To further support the findings, the MNC results were similar to those of the student teams.

Overall, I found full or partial support for 29 out of 33 hypotheses in at least one sample. Twelve out of fifteen hypotheses tested in the two samples were supported or partially supported for both students and employees. The hypothesis stating a moderating effect of team interdependence was not supported for either sample. The hypothesis suggesting that out of the three types of conflict, team relationship conflict will demonstrate the highest negative correlation with team political skill, as compared to team task and process conflict, was not supported for either sample. A summary of results pertaining to the hypotheses is presented in Table 21.

Consistent with recent multilevel theorizing I argued that team political skill represents a property of the team (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). I applied the aggregate multilevel model to the domain of political skill and explored the function of political skill at a higher level. I attested that behaviours associated with politically skilled team members can also benefit teams. For example, teams with many politically skilled members were found to demonstrate high group cohesiveness and team satisfaction. Moreover, the high aggregate levels of political skill facilitated such important team emergent states as team trust and promoted team performance, team satisfaction and team viability. Thus, the synergy of individual virtues implied in team political skill was found to affect the team in a most positive way.

Namely, I argued that team ability to build trust and cohesiveness, and to manage conflict, represent the generative mechanisms through which the focal independent variable of team political skill could influence the dependent variable of team effectiveness. Consistent with my predictions, the results demonstrated that team political skill strongly related to team emergent states. Furthermore, the latter acted as full mediators and explained variation in team satisfaction, team viability and perceived team

performance. Presumably, being attuned to diverse social situations and needs of others (Ferris et al., 2005), politically skilled team members were capable of correctly diagnosing the needs and motives of others and appropriately adapting their routines and behaviour.

Another important contribution of this study was exploring different operationalizations of team political skill. The results revealed a significant effect of the interactive term for team political skill level and the skill's variability, named political skill strength, beyond the effect predicted by the team political skill mean. I also explored the role of the minimal score of team member's political skill and found that it significantly explained variance in team emergent states. However, for team cohesion and trust, it failed to predict the relationship beyond what was predicted by team political skill operationalized as an aggregated model. At the same time, teams with lower scores for the least politically skilled team member were found to have higher ratings for team conflict, even after the average team political skill was controlled for.

Yet another significant contribution of the study is shedding light on some constraints imposed on groups. Specifically, perceived organizational politics was found to set the context for the enactment of political skill. In line with expectations, I found that teams perceiving organizational politics to be high demonstrated a stronger negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict. In addition, support was found for the curvilinear moderating effect of perceived organizational politics for the team trust-team political skill and team cohesion-team political skill relationships. Furthermore, a stronger effect between team political skill and team conflict was demonstrated when team task interdependence was high.

Finally, this study contributes to both the team and leadership literatures. While both leader and team political skill had an important impact on team effectiveness, the findings demonstrated that distributed influence from within the team (team political skill) accounted for the effectiveness of the team above the political skill of the appointed team leader (vertical political skill). Even though cross-sectional design of the study does not address the question of whether politically skilled leaders inspire team members to greater team performance, or rather, politically skilled leaders are successful because they build the political skill of their teams, the finding represents a first attempt to empirically examine the nature of the relationship between leader and team political skill and team effectiveness.

To facilitate clarity, the following sections discuss the findings of this study addressing each set of hypotheses at a time.

8.1.2. Team political skill in relation to team emergent states and outcomes. The present study contributes to the teamwork literature in two respects. On one hand, it further extends the political skill construct theoretically by examining its function at the team level. The study found support for the aggregated model of team political skill, thus laying the ground for future research in this area. Secondly, the study adds to our knowledge of teamwork processes and team emergent states. Namely, it obtained evidence that political skill acted as an important antecedent of several team emergent states and outcomes. The results proved to be consistent with the premise that team political skill is critical for multiple team emergent states, thus further adding to our understanding of group dynamics.

The first set of hypotheses considered the relation between team political skill operationalized as team members' mean score and team effectiveness. As hypothesized aggregated team political skill was positively related to team performance in both samples. These results mirror the previous findings obtained at the individual level: Politically skilled individuals often come across as better performers (Blickle et al., 2008; Blickle et al., in press; Ferris et al., 2008; Semadar et al., 2006). Arguably, capability of building a large network of colleagues and influencing others may effectively explain better performance of the teams composed of highly politically skilled employees. In fact, this capability is likely to act as a mechanism that eliminates some barriers, such as team conflict, that hinder team performance, and to enhance some desirable properties of teams, such as team cohesiveness and team trust.

A direct relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction was supported in both samples. Team satisfaction reflects socioemotional consequences of group activity (Hackman, 1990) and often coincides with the perceived quality of task accomplishment. I based my arguments on the assumption that high aggregate levels of political skill would facilitate effective interactions and a low-stress climate. Previously, close ties and the perceptions of greater interpersonal control were found to describe politically skilled individuals (Ferris et al. 2007). Arguably, if everyone is socially astute to the needs of colleagues and appears genuine in their interactions with them in a team, this is likely to lead to overall high group attractiveness, and, consequently, to team satisfaction. Indeed, this relationship holds true in the student data and, as expected, this was replicated in the business setting: overall high team political skill translated into higher team satisfaction.

The final hypothesis in this subset tested the direct relationship between team political skill and team viability. Team viability data was not collected from students as irrelevant for two reasons. First, student teams are temporal by definition. These teams always reach their adjourning stage at the end of the term and usually have no chance to reassemble all members for projects in other classes. Furthermore, for the purpose of COMM 222 projects, these teams had fixed membership: after some deadline, students could not freely change their team. Thus, the team's potential to retain members, also known as team viability, could not be accurately assessed. In the MNC sample, the hypothesis was confirmed: team political skill was positively related to team viability. It is very possible that being good at networking and liked by others, highly politically skilled team members facilitate resource exchange, build up emotional stability and encourage knowledge sharing in the team. Naturally, those attractive characteristics lead to the team's desire and potential to retain their team members.

The next subset of hypotheses explained how and when the effects of team political skill on team effectiveness held. Namely, I hypothesized and demonstrated the mediation effect of various team emergent states - group cohesiveness, team trust, and team conflict. After the relationship between team political skill and team effectiveness was established, I tested the mediation effect which represents the generative mechanism through which the focal independent variable is able to influence the dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). I aimed at supporting the mediational, versus indirect effects model (Mathieu & Taylor, 2006). In the student sample, I conducted a series of analyses comparing the nested models to confirm that the direct relationship became non-significant when the mediator was included. Indeed, the "no direct effects" model demonstrated the best fit and all three mediators related significantly to team outcomes.

This provided support to the hypotheses that suggested the mediating relationship of team political skill with perceived team performance and satisfaction via team cohesion, trust, and conflict.

I ran an additional analysis to test the relationship between team political skill and performance rated by instructors. It was found to correlate negatively at $p < .10$ with team political skill and team cohesion. It was positively related to team size ($p < .05$) and the team's perception of task interdependence ($p < .10$). Interestingly, the project grades were higher for the teams reporting that projects required high team task interdependence. It appears that less successful teams did not perceive their projects as dependent on the synergy of all team members' efforts and chose to simply divide the labor up. This approach can possibly result in low team conflict, and does not implicate team cohesion or trust. Hence, this focus on team rather project management may lead teams to perceive themselves as effective. I contend that this is a plausible explanation of the mixed finding in objective versus subjective performance assessment. The teams and the instructors seem to evaluate different targets. While the students described their teams (e.g., "my team does very good work"), the instructor specifically assessed the quality of the projects.

Also, I believe that the classroom context may explain the lack of correlations. It does not permit a close interaction between the instructor and teams, so teams did not enact political skill towards their instructors. This study examined team political skill directed toward the team, rather than toward outsiders (superiors, customers or other teams). Thus, it is probable that some other variables, as compared to team emergent states used in this study, will better explain the mechanism that links team political skill and a team's objective performance. For instance, team's focus on the outcome versus

processes (Woolley, 2009) may affect team's performance. Future research should examine this and other possible mediators. In support of this explanation, in the field study "objective" performance was found to be related to team political skill and team emergent states.

In the MNC sample, multiple regressions and the Sobel-Aroian test were employed to demonstrate the mediating effect. The hypotheses testing the mediating effect of team conflict and team trust were supported. Hypotheses on team cohesion were considered to be partially supported as a mediation effect was established only for task cohesion. I had to test effects for social and task cohesion separately because, upon close examination, the types of cohesiveness were found to relate to team political skill in opposite ways. Presumably, for Russian respondents high social cohesion implied excessive politicking and low professionalism and was perceived as a negative phenomenon. On the other hand, I was unable to find any references regarding the dimensionality of the group cohesiveness construct in the Russian context. A separate validation is required to investigate whether this difference in the perception of social cohesion reflects some influence of the national or, possibly, organizational culture.

Directed toward their own team members, apparently, political skill enacts numerous and effective social interactions, which boost team cohesion and team trust, thus ensuring certain positive team outcomes. However, I argue that this relationship is conditioned by assumptions of relatively low variability of team members' skills at the team level and a non-bimodal distribution of these skills. As mean analysis does not necessarily provide a full picture of team political skill and its functions, in my next set of analyses, I employed operationalizations other than the group mean.

8.1.3. Operationalizations other than group mean. My thesis advances our knowledge of the phenomenon of political skill by exploring different methods of operationalizing the construct. The present study sought to address an important gap in the literature by providing insight into how team-based configurations can influence some critical team emergent states. To date, the majority of research in this area has focused either on personality traits (e.g., Barrick et al., 1998; Barry & Stewart, 1997) or on team demography (e.g., Barkema & Shvyrkov, 2007; Lau & Murnighan, 2005). A mean score for individual measures is frequently used in the team, but there has recently been a call from researchers to use both the mean and a specified aspect of the distribution to see if one of them captures the team composition variable more adequately (Bell, 2007; Côté, 2007). Hence, I explored how alternative operationalizations for team composition, namely, the strength of the skill and the minimum of the skill, pertained to team emergent states.

The first alternative model of team political skill composition stated that for certain team effectiveness dimensions members' average level of political skill might be more important when considered in combination with skill dispersion. "Similarity attracts", so teams with high variance on members' skills may perceive the team as less attractive. Thus, I contend that the standard deviation of the skill moderates the relationship between the level of team political skill and team emergent states. Borrowing from the climate and culture strength literature (e.g., Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002; Lindell & Brandt, 2000; Schneider, Salvaggio, & Subirats, 2002), I explored the interaction of team political skill level and the dispersion of respondents' score on political skill and called this interaction "political skill strength". As expected,

consistently positive outcomes were found in teams when team political skill strength was high.

Regressing team social cohesion on the interaction of the TPS level and *SD* tested hypotheses that predicted the relationship of team political skill strength with team cohesion, trust, and conflict. All hypotheses were confirmed. After controlling for demographic variables, *SD* and average team political skill, team political skill strength proved to be significant and explained an additional variance in team social cohesion, team trust and team conflict.

Another operationalization, the minimum skill score, also demonstrated a significant relationship with team emergent states, supporting the importance of using various operationalizations. As I argued earlier, effective interpersonal relationships within a team require the combined effort of many, but it may take only a single disagreeable or politically unskilled person to destroy the relationship. As expected, teams with higher scores for the least politically skilled member had higher ratings for team trust and team cohesion, and lower ratings for team conflict. In other words, a minimal level of team political skill among team members accounted for significant variation in team social skill. However, regressing team trust on the team political skill mean and its minimal level demonstrated that the minimal score on team political skill failed to predict team trust or team cohesion beyond the variance predicted by the mean of the skill[6]. At the same time, support was found for the hypothesis that the lowest skill level within a team would be an important predictor of team conflict beyond team average

[6] Some caution should be taken with this interpretation of the results, though. Introducing the average of team political skill into regression prior to other operationalizations allowed controlling for interdependence of these measures. However, by the same token, this approach may have reduced a potential to demonstrate the importance of the minimum score, as some of its predictive power is "built into" the team average. In an additional analysis in which I deleted "the bad apple" from the TPS mean score, the minimum TPS proved to be a highly significant predictor for all team emergent states.

political skill. This finding suggests that the operationalization of team political skill as an average of individual scores works fine for some team emergent states, but not for the others.

8.1.4. Moderating effects of team task interdependence and organizational politics. Building on conceptual articles on contextualization (Johns, 2001; 2006; Mowday & Sutton, 1993), this study addresses an important gap in the extant research by providing examples of how context may affect team political skill and its outcomes. Specifically, I found some evidence of the interactive effects of a particular context (e.g., perception of organizational politics and team task interdependence) and team political skill on certain team emergent states.

As indicated before, research suggests that perceived organizational politics sets the context for the enactment of political skill (e.g., Zivnuska et al., 2004). In line with the hypothesized relationship, teams perceiving organizational politics to be high demonstrated a stronger negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict. Presumably, the ability of politically skilled individuals to recognize the motives and needs of others, and use constructive interaction techniques, enabled them to prevent potential conflicts and successfully manage existing ones in situations of high uncertainty and ignited emotions, typical of organizational politics. Based on this, I conclude that being politically skilled becomes even more beneficial in a highly charged political context when a team needs to resolve or avoid conflict.

A curvilinear relationship was specified and found for organizational politics, and team political skill with team cohesion and team trust in the MNC sample. Specifically, the results suggest that moderate politicking sets an optimal context to benefit from

political skill in teams. The curvilinear, versus linear, relationship was hypothesized based on the intuition that too much politicking could result in extremely high levels of uncertainty, provoking a hyper use of self-serving behaviour and diminishing the team values. At the same time, in an organization low in politicking, the willingness to utilize political skill can be viewed as redundant effort as soon as "objective" performance gets prioritized. An intriguing finding deserving future research is what makes teams perceive their organization as high or low on politicking. In the MNC study, the coefficient of variation for perception of organizational politics was found to be 23%, quite an impressive difference considering that one and the same organization was assessed by the teams.

Another important goal of the study was to shed light on the constraints and opportunities imposed on groups by task interdependence. As indicated before, research using team processes and team emergent states to predict team effectiveness suggests that interdependence among team members sets the context for the relationship (LePine et al., 2008). Building on this literature, I hypothesized that teams perceiving high task interdependence would also demonstrate a stronger relationship between team political skill and team emergent states.

Contrary to my expectations, the interaction between team political skill and team task interdependence did not prove to be significant for team cohesion in either sample. This finding may suggest that teams can benefit from higher political skill and become more cohesive regardless of how tight and frequent their interactions are. It is possible that, being adept at social interactions, these teams translate the quantity of interactions into their quality. This is an interesting insight, as it may further indicate the importance of political skill in developing team cohesiveness.

Team political skill and team task interdependence were found to interact in a significant and meaningful way while predicting team trust in the student sample, but not in the MNC sample. My rationale is that political skill becomes of particular relevance for teams that need to work together and exchange information while building trustworthy relations. Possibly, politically skilled students appeared to be honest and open, so they became perceived as more trustworthy compared to politically un-skilled team members. Also, being effective at interpersonal influence, highly politically skilled team members were able to convince others of their willingness to work with them rather than against them. In the student groups this perception of trustworthiness could be attenuated by the high frequency and need for interaction. The more students had to depend on each other for achieving the team goal (i.e. completing their final project), and the more successful their regular interactions were due to high political skill, the more confidence and trust in each other they had. Noteworthy, this relationship did not hold in the MNC sample. Perhaps, some other contextual variables, such as team autonomy or team identification, are better suited for this purpose.

Given its pertinent role in providing the need for individuals to engage in interpersonal interactions, I was not surprised to find that team interdependence significantly moderated the relationship between team political skill and team conflict. Higher team task interdependence evoked a stronger negative relationship between team political skill and team conflict in both samples, supporting the presence of the moderating effect.

An interesting observation, evident from figure 3, relates to the fact that trust was reported to be higher in the context of low team task interdependence as compared to high task interdependence. I interpret this finding in a twofold way. First, lower

interdependence leads to less critical assessment of the quality of relationships and vice versa. In other words, when interdependence is low, people get less "picky" when responding to a question about trust because they do not care. Second, when interdependence is high, there are more opportunities for trust to be violated. On the other hand, this mutual vulnerability does not emerge in the context of low task interdependence. Hence, perception of trust indeed can be mitigated under higher interdependence.

8.1.5. Team versus leader political skill. This study contributes to both team and leadership literatures by examining the predictive validity of shared political skill in comparison to a leader's political skill. First, the results obtained from the MNC sample suggested that leader political skill accounted for a significant increment in team effectiveness variance. This is in line with the current literature reporting that leader political skill is an important predictor of team effectiveness (Ahearn et al., 2004). Specifically, my study demonstrated that leader political skill accounted for a significant increment in team performance and team satisfaction variance even after controlling for leader and team member organizational, team and work experience, as well as other team demographic attributes, such as team gender and age composition, and team size. Arguably, politically skilled leaders can inspire team members to greater team performance and ensure their satisfaction with the team. It is possible that they facilitate performance either by eliminating external barriers that might hinder team effectiveness (Ahearn et al., 2004) or by setting team norms that constitute a climate of effective interpersonal exchanges within teams.

Contrary to my expectation, leader political skill was not found to significantly relate to team viability. Apparently, these constructs have a more distal relationship than I predicted. This lack of relationship may also be influenced by some contextual variables. It is possible that group composition comes into play: The behaviour of low politically skilled team members may contaminate perceptions of the team's will and potency to retain its members.

In support of the above argument, my results provide evidence of team political skill being an important predictor of team effectiveness beyond leader political skill. For team performance, a significant increment of variance of 33% was explained by team political skill above and beyond the 18% predicted by the leader's political skill. Team political skill was also found to be an important predictor of team satisfaction and team viability above and beyond leader political skill. This model employed the aggregate of team political skill, self-reported leader political skill and team performance assessed by each team.

The finding reported above raises an important question as to whether team political skill can substitute for the leader's skill. In order to explore this possibility, I ran a set of additional analyses employing various combinations of independent and dependent variables provided by different sources. In the first model leader political skill was assessed by the leader, team political skill was assessed by the team and team performance was assessed by the store manager. Interestingly, this model failed to replicate the above finding. On the contrary, the leader's self-assessed political skill significantly predicted the team performance score provided by the store manager (β = .46, $p < .05$ and $\Delta R^2 = .21$, $p < .05$) above the 5% variance predicted by the aggregate of team political skill. Apparently, team leader acts as an emissary for its team when

representing it to the supervisor. The second model employed the measures of leader political skill and team political skill assessed by the team, and team performance assessed by the team leader. Yet another picture emerged in the results: Leader political skill assessed by the team significantly correlated with the team performance assessed by the leader ($\beta = .56$, $p < .05$ and $\Delta R^2 = .25$, $p < .05$), while team political skill did not. Thus, I concluded that it would be premature to argue that leader political skill can be easily substituted by team political skill. Rather, further study that would employ different sources of assessment and, preferably, a longitudinal approach, is warranted.

8.2. Strengths and Limitations

As with any research, there are certain strengths as well as limitations to this study. First, the controlled environment of my first study allowed for the achievement of a large sample size of 189 teams with minimum missing data. Even though the controlled setting of the study had these benefits, it has limited generalizability. Although group research is frequently conducted with student samples, the nature of the student groups differs from groups in a typical organization. I recognize that the short life-cycle of the teams and potential lower level of commitment to the course (compared to a job) task may influence the findings. Thus, the results should be taken with some caution especially when applied to long-term teams operating in highly competitive work settings. However, it is worth emphasizing that these were "real" project teams with consequential tasks to which rewards were attached.

Another issue relates to the fact that I used self-report measures, which are possible precursors of common method bias. To attenuate this potential problem in the student sample, I used both procedural controls to prevent bias, and post hoc methods to

ensure that my results were not contaminated by common method variance. First, I designed the study to measure the independent variable in a paper-and-pencil questionnaire about 2 weeks prior to measuring the team emergent state and outcome variables online. This approach allowed for a degree of methodological control as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003). Then, I ran an ad hoc and post hoc tests and found no indication of common method variance.

Study two was conducted in a work setting. Applying such methodological remedies for common method variance as different formats of questionnaires and a time-lag between filling out their parts, is not always possible in organizations. Thus, the MNC sample was apriori vulnerable to the threat of common method bias. In order to test for its possible effect, I ran an analysis analogous to the one performed for the student sample. A series of hierarchically nested models based on the factor analyses, in which a method factor was introduced, demonstrated that this method effect was insignificant. Providing further support to the conclusion that common method bias was limited, the factor loadings of the baseline model remained significant even after the method effect was partialled out. In addition to this preliminary test, a post-hoc analysis of mediating effects based on a split sample technique was employed. Based on the combined results of the preliminary and post-hoc tests, I concluded that while I cannot entirely rule out the possibility of common method variance, there is some evidence that the respondents were able to differentiate between the variables. Thus, I suggested that the findings in study one and study two were not greatly affected by the self-report character of the data.

Another potential limitation is the relatively small sample size of the study two. Although 156 employees constituted more than two thirds of the organization, twenty eight teams were insufficient to run structural equation modeling and fully replicate study

one. Also, this low *N* potentially affected the findings by lowering the power to detect some relationships. Somewhat attenuating the severity of this problem, the results obtained from the MNC sample provided support for twelve out of fifteen hypotheses. Yet the design of study two was not conducive to a 100% response rate and, hence, prevented me from replicating the test of hypotheses on team composition. On the other hand, the MNC sample enabled the test of hypotheses on leader team political skill, team viability and organizational politics – the variables of low relevance in the student sample.

8.3. Theoretical implications and future research

Despite the growing number of the studies related to political skill, the current literature does not answer the question of whether the benefits of political skill extend beyond individual outcomes. Both the theoretical argument and empirical evidence of the impact of political skill in a team context is largely missing from the literature. Hence, the most important contribution of this study is shedding light on how individual political skill functions at the team level. While researchers have demonstrated the importance of aggregated individual personality traits, cognitive abilities and affect in predicting team performance (e.g., Barry & Stuart, 1997), political skill has not been used before as a group level construct. This is also the first time that the association between political skill and team emergent states and team outcomes was examined.

First, this study contributes to the literature by introducing a complex higher-level model of political skill. Many scholars highlight a sizable deficiency in our understanding of teams as complex, multilevel systems (Ilgen et al., 2005; Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). Team political skill was argued to emerge from individual team members' political skills

and capture the array, pattern, or variability of this individual characteristic within a team (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). I asserted that the construct of team political skill had origins at the individual level and represented configural properties (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000) of the team.

This study extended the political skill construct theoretically by introducing two multilevel models of team political skill. First, I demonstrated that it could be operationalized as an additive model (Chan, 1998) that represented a common pool of the skill. Second, a dispersion model (Chan, 1998) that focused on within-group variance of political skill was used as an alternative operationalization of focal construct. Both models appeared to be viable. The additive model of team political skill demonstrated very good predictive power. The aggregate of team political skill was found to correspond to most of the hypothesized relationships. Further, in many cases it explained variance beyond that explained by team political skill operationalized as minimum skill. The results suggest that a simple average of team political skill can be successfully used to study team political skill, especially when the use of a dispersion model is complicated (e.g., due to missing data). However, to improve our understanding of team political skill at a higher level of analysis, future studies should continue exploring the best multilevel models and the best operationalizations of the construct. Furthermore, I suggest that future research use both the mean and a specified aspect of the distribution, such as an individual's highest or lowest score, or the range of individual scores, as it may obtain even stronger relationships between the focal variables.

The fact that most of the teams were formed by self-selection might have several important implications. For example, highly politically skilled individuals might have selected team members like themselves and as a result experienced an overall safer and

more enjoyable group climate. Intrigued by this potential possibility I calculated r_{wg} indexes for team political skill and found high within team agreement on this variable. As it mentioned above, my original operationalization of the construct as an additive model did not dictate any agreement among the team members. However, this new finding may imply synergy of individual political skill and hence suggest the viability of a different operationalization of team political skill, namely shared political skill.

Another important implication of the study is identifying some constraints imposed on groups in the organizations. Team researchers have been encouraged to avoid looking at teams as unaffected by the context surrounding them (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). This study contributes to a call for team research "to incorporate the effects of major organizational context factors specified in models of team effectiveness" (ibid, 2003: 363). For instance, I demonstrated that teams perceiving organizational politics to be high had a stronger relationship between team political skill and team conflict. At the same time, a curvilinear relationship between team political skill, team trust with team cohesion, and organizational politics was observed. I suggest that further attention to contextual variables, such as team autonomy, and team and organization identity, is warranted in the future.

Team identity can be one of the variables potentially responsible for setting a context for political skill enactment. There is a compelling indication that social identity operates as an important determinant of group engagement (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009). Presumably, highly politically skilled team members who do not have strong social identities vis-à-vis the group will not be not motivated to advance group goals or facilitate the success of the group. Rather, they would focus on their own goals and needs. On the other hand, if the group is integrated with their self-concept, team members may develop

an inherent concern for success of the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dukerich, Golden, & Shortell, 2002; Kramer, Hanna, Su, & Wei, 2001). For those individuals, achievement of one's personal objectives will become tantamount to the achievement of team objectives. This is argued to facilitate the relationship between team political skill and team emergent states and outcomes.

The identified mediation effect of team emergent states led to new insights into the mechanisms that facilitated team effectiveness, thus contributing to the team literature in a meaningful way. Consistent with my predictions, the results demonstrated that team political skill strongly and positively related to team cohesion and team trust, and negatively related to team conflict. Furthermore, the team emergent states acted as full mediators and carried the influence of team political skill to team effectiveness.

In this study a direct relationship between team trust and team performance was hypothesized and confirmed. As noted by Dirks (2001), a direct model linking trust and outcomes has dominated in studies of the concept of trust and in managerial interventions. Individual performance is listed among the outcomes for which the main effect model demonstrated the strongest empirical support (Dirks, 2001). Yet, he argues that the evidence is mixed for the long-assumed effects of trust on dyad or group performance. Further study needs to explore the role of trust as a moderator, rather than a mediator, variable setting a context in which a team political skill - higher team effectiveness relationship is likely to occur.

Even though this study was cross-sectional I contend that some assumptions can be made in terms of the temporal criticality of team political skill. As this construct directly influences the quality of relationships I argue its utter importance at the early stages of group development, namely in forming, storming and norming (Tuckman &

Jensen, 1977). It is also an interesting theoretical and practical question if team political skill affects the successful midpoint transition and leads to a burst of performance at phase two of the punctuated equilibrium model (Gersick, 1988). Hence, in the future,research should explore temporal issues concerning team political skill enactment.

Another area that requires attention in the future is leader (vertical) versus team political skill. In this study, I explored the impact of team political skill in comparison to the relatively oft-studied impact of the leader political skill and found that team political skill was an importance predictor of team effectiveness beyond leader political skill. However, it is premature to argue that leader political skill can be easily substituted with team political skill. Rather, further study employing different sources of assessment and longitudinal design is warranted.

Yet another important theoretical and practical issue that requires researchers' attention is different targets of team political skill. Unlike individual political skill, which is always directed from within to the "outside" (to colleagues, to supervisors or to clients), team political skill can be targeted either at the team itself, or directed outside the team, toward other teams, customers, or supervisors. Given the difference in the target of individual versus team political skill, it is possible that the latter may contain some additional dimensions and may even result in different outcomes. In fact, the lack of relationship between team political skill and instructor-rated performance may be one of the examples. Building on the literature that found a significant positive relationship between individual political skill and supervisor-rated performance I hypothesised a similar relationship at the team level. However, targeted within- team political skill did not predict better objective team performance. It is possible that supervisor-rated individual performance ratings are biased as a result of the effective interpersonal style of

highly politically skilled employees. This can be captured by the measure of outward-directed team political skill, but not by "within" team political skill.

To address the fact that political skill may be used differently within the team and outside of it, I would like to highlight the importance of exploring this avenue in the future. Intuitively, this outward-directed team political skill is closely related to team boundary spanning (Ancona, 1990; 1992) and can effectively facilitate the team's capability to coordinate efforts and manage their relationships across their boundaries, such as ones with clients, supervisors, other teams and critical figures outside of the organization.

Finally, in this study team political skill was treated as a synergy of individual virtues and it was found to affect the team and organization in a most positive way. However, extremely politically skilled teams may turn out to be dysfunctional at times. For instance, excessive attention to successful in-group interactions may detour them from effective task completion, especially should the latter challenge the team status quo. It may also lead teams to groupthink, or may even prompt teams to favour their own interests when these are not in line with those of the organization. It is important that future research consider "the dark side" of team political skill and explore the important question of if and when political skill at the team level results in negative impact on teams and organizations.

8.4. Implications for managers

In addition to the theoretical and methodological contributions, this research provides important practical guidelines for organizations on employees' political skill composition in effective teams. Namely, managers and HR specialists may benefit from

paying special attention to this finding, especially in team building and in development of team capability to work effectively. As the amount and distribution of political skill in a team appears to be an important antecedent of team emergent states and overall team effectiveness, I suggest that the organizational implications also extend to recruitment, selection, training, and employee retention in teams and organizations.

Specifically, this study suggests that selecting highly politically skilled team members may enhance team performance, team satisfaction and team viability. The important team emergent states, such as team trust and team cohesion, may also be enhanced by higher aggregate levels of team political skill, and even more so, when the latter is combined with lower variability of the skill. In addition, analyses related to the minimum score demonstrated the critical effect of a single low skilled individual on team conflict. Hence, managers and HR specialists should remember that including just one person who is low on this skill can result in higher team conflict, and can ultimately decrease team performance.

Higher levels of political skill in teams were found to relate both directly and indirectly to team satisfaction and viability. In my opinion, this highlights the criticality of team political skill for employee retention and should also be considered by organizations. Yet another practice application would involve the development of team political skill. It may prove useful to train individual political skill in order to improve the team dynamic. The positive relationship between team political skill, team trust, cohesion and performance may encourage organizations to be more proactive in these types of efforts. They may view training of high political skill and even fostering it in teams as a core element of supporting team building and team performance. Further, my findings

support a critical role of leader political skill and suggest that leader's skill has to be considered in both team development and intervention for dysfunctional teams.

CONCLUSION

Despite some of the limitations of the present study, it enabled answering the question of whether political skill is beneficial for teams in the affirmative. Specifically, the results suggest that team political skill relates to important team and organizational outcomes via team trust, team cohesion and team conflict management. In addition to these theoretical contributions, this research provides important methodological and practical guidelines for team composition and highlights the role of organizational and team context. Taken together, the findings contribute to an improved understanding of political skill. They also add team political skill to the well-established pool of antecedents of team effectiveness, such as general mental ability and personality.

TABLES

TABLE 1

The Source of Data for Each Variable

Measure/ source of information	Study one: Student sample	Study two: MNC sample		
		Respondents: Employees/ team members	Respondents: Team Leaders	Respondents: Leader's supervisor
Political skill (individual)	Self-report in paper-and- pencil	self-report	self-report	
Group performance	Online self-report	self-report	Team leader's assessment	Store manager's assessment
Group cohesion	Online self-report	self-report		
Group conflict	Online self-report	self-report		
Team interdependence	Online self-report	self-report		
Organizational/team politics		self-report		
Team trust	Online self-report	self-report		
Team viability		self-report		
Team satisfaction	Online self-report	self-report		
Autonomy		self-report		
Demography: age, gender, nationality	Self-report in paper-and-pencil	self-report	self-report	
Demography: team and organizational tenure		self-report	self-report	
Group size	Self-report in paper-and-pencil			Objective measure: HR office archives

TABLE 2

ANOVA Test Comparing Dropped and Retained Samples

Variable	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation	*F*	Significance
Team political skill					
Intact teams (n=112 teams)	514	5.42	.76	2.83	.093
Dropped teams (n=94 teams)	506	5.34	.64		
Age					
Intact teams (n=112 teams)	268	21.2	2.15	4.10	.051
Dropped teams (n=94 teams)	339	20.9	1.99		
Gender *					
Intact teams (n=112 teams)	289	.49	.50	.25	.621
Dropped teams (n=94 teams)	342	.51	50		
GPA					
Intact teams (n=112 teams)	210	3.01	.48	16.37	.000
Dropped teams (n=94 teams)	186	3.19	.43		

***Note:** Gender was coded 1 for men and 0 for women.

TABLE 3

Descriptive Statistics and Individual Level Correlations for the Student Sample

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Team political skill	5.38	0.74	(.93)													
2. Task Cohesion	6.73	1.60	.34**	(.91)												
3. Social Cohesion	4.44	1.37	.27**	.23**	(0.69)											
4. Relationship Conflict	2.38	1.27	-.20**	-.55**	-0.07	(0.91)										
5. Task Conflict	2.89	1.11	-.18**	-.40**	0.00	.70**	(0.88)									
6. Process Conflict	2.53	1.06	-.13**	-.44**	0.00	.65**	.74**	(0.81)								
7. Team Trust	4.00	0.92	.19**	.43**	.29**	-.28**	-0.26	-.27**	(0.78)							
8. Team Performance	3.73	0.90	.25**	.67**	.24**	-.50**	-.40**	-.40**	.51**	(0.94)						
9. Team Satisfaction	5.28	1.50	.22**	.60**	.22**	-.52**	-.40**	-.40**	.53**	.73**	(-)					
10. Interdependence	3.19	0.70	.15**	-0.05	0.00	.11*	.16**	.18**	-.10*	-0.09	-0.09	(.71)				
11. Age	22.03	4.32	-0.07	-0.01	-0.06	-0.02	0.00	-0.05	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	-0.01	(-)			
12. Gender	0.50	0.50	0.06	0.03	0.07	-0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.00	-.10*	(-)		
13. GPA	3.11	1.66	0.10	0.07	0.07	-0.06	-0.01	0.00	0.02	0.06	0.01	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	(-)	
14. Previous interactions	1.51	0.82	0.00	-0.03	.22**	.12*	.10*	.18**	0.09	0.03	0.00	0.01	-0.10	.10*	0.03	(-)

N = 688-879; Lower *N* represents optional demographic variables; Gender was coded 1 for men and 0 for women; Figures in parentheses are reliabilities.

TABLE 4

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations at Team Level for the Student Sample

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1	Team political skill																					
2	Team political skill minimum	.796**																				
3	Team political skill maximum	.719**	.309**																			
4	Team political skill strength	.800**	.824**	.390**																		
5	Team cohesion	.395**	.262**	.307**	.370**																	
6	Team task cohesion	.266**	.190*	.187*	.242**	.804**																
7	Team social cohesion	.382**	.240**	.314**	.365**	.851**	.373**															
8	Team conflict	-.228**	-0.101	-.180*	-.196*	-.472**	-.604**	-.203**														
9	Team relationship conflict	-.266**	-0.145	-.190*	-.232**	-.523**	-.635**	-.257**	.909**													
10	Team task conflict	-.195*	-0.103	-.152*	-.179*	-.333**	-.440**	-0.132	.929**	.754**												
11	Team process conflict	-.157*	-0.019	-0.148	-0.118	-.431**	-.579**	-.161*	.910**	.721**	.803**											
12	Team trust	.176*	.163*	0.101	.183*	.538**	.668**	.250**	-.511**	-.466**	-.436**	-.504**										
13	Team interdependence	0.114	0.038	0.084	0.023	.254**	.336**	0.099	-.203**	-.233**	-0.131	-.191*	.294**									
14	Team satisfaction	.202**	0.104	0.133	.234**	.589**	.650**	.345**	-.614**	-.607**	-.533**	-.540**	.672**	.214**								
15	Team perceived performance	.273**	0.123	.243**	.236**	.705**	.733**	.454**	-.574**	-.580**	-.473**	-.519**	.646**	.195*	.740**							
16	Team instructor rated performance	-.171†	-.159†	-0.089	-0.057	-.173†	-0.146	-0.135	0.116	0.09	0.108	0.122	-0.143	0.19†	-0.062	-0.112						
17	Age	-.157*	-0.091	-0.09	-.202**	-0.097	-0.075	-0.085	0.025	0.032	-0.001	0.039	-0.015	-0.045	-0.068	-0.059	0.128					
18	Gender	0.037	0.034	0.036	-0.012	0.004	0.045	-0.033	-0.06	-0.075	-0.02	-0.069	-0.051	0.129	-0.065	-0.037	0.017	-.190*				
19	GPA	0.132	0.135	0.003	.184*	-0.025	0.021	-0.057	0.016	-0.065	0.036	0.085	-0.114	0.082	-0.011	-0.042	0.036	0.042	-0.033			
20	Previous interactions	0.124	0.071	0.124	0.052	.233**	0.073	.299**	0.014	-0.016	0.002	0.057	0.041	0.089	0.004	0.091	-0.088	-0.127	-0.009	-0.082		
21	Team size	-0.106	-.180*	0.095	-0.055	-0.098	-0.12	-0.047	0.079	0.074	0.093	0.048	-0.045	-0.128	0.032	-0.076	.222*	-0.036	-0.031	0.093	-.369**	
22	Team political skill x team interdependence	.553**	.419**	.416**	.389**	.379**	.379**	.256**	-.248**	-.291**	-.182*	-.200**	.317**	.882**	.242**	.264**	-0.018	-0.105	0.129	0.114	0.143	-0.142

† $p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

N = 156-189; Lower *N* represents instructors' assessment of team performance (projects). Gender was coded 1 for men and 0 for women; Gender and previous work (interactions) with team members were calculated as proportions.

TABLE 5

Indexes of Agreement and Reliability in the Student Sample

Variable	# of items	r_{wg} mean	r_{wg} range	r_{wg} median	ICC(1)	ICC(k)
Team political skill	18				.28	.88
Team cohesion	6	.64	.50 - .87	.68	.32	.79
Team task cohesion	4	.66	.53 - .87	.71	.67	.89
Team social cohesion	2	.64	.50 - .81	.69	.25	.59
Relationship conflict	4	.69	.58 - .89	.75	.67	.89
Task conflict	4	.71	.67 - .87	.78	.61	.86
Process conflict	3	.70	.59 - .83	.74	.59	.81
Team trust	3				.43	.69
Team performance	2	.74	.59 - .90	.80	.79	.94
Team task interdependence	3	.74	.53 - .89	.78	.50	.77

TABLE 6

Results of Regression Analysis of Team Political Skill Strength

	Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Cohesion				
Step 1:	Controls		.07*	
Step 2:	TPS mean	.23†		
	TPS *SD*	-1.22*	.18**	.12***
Step 3:	TPS strength	1.37	.20**	.03*
(2) Team Conflict				
Step 1:	Controls		.02	
Step 2:	TPS mean	-.16		
	TPS *SD*	1.30*	.06*	.05*
Step 3:	TPS strength	-1.38*	.09*	.03*
(3) Team Trust				
Step 1:	Controls		.02	
Step 2:	TPS mean	.07		
	TPS *SD*	-.97	.05†	.03†
Step 3:	TPS strength	1.11†	.07†	.02†

†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$

Note. N =189. TPS: Team Political Skill. TPS strength: interaction between team political skill mean and *SD*. Controls: age, gender, GPA, previous interactions with team members, team size.

TABLE 7

Results of Regression Analysis of Team Political Skill Minimum Score

		Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Cohesion					
Model 1	Step 1:	Controls		.09†	
	Step 2:	TPS minimum score	.28**	.17**	.07**
Model 2	Step 1:	Controls		.07*	
	Step 2:	TPS mean	.47***	.19***	.12**
	Step 3:	TPS minimum score	-.15	.20***	.01
(2) Team Conflict					
Model 1	Step 1:	Controls		.02	
	Step 2:	TPS minimum score	-.10†	.05†	.03†
Model 2	Step 1:	Controls		.02	
	Step 2:	TPS mean	-.42**	.07*	.05**
	Step 3:	TPS minimum score	.24†	.09*	.02†
(3) Team Trust					
Model 1	Step 1:	Controls		.02	
	Step 2:	TPS minimum score	.17*	.04*	.03*
Model 2	Step 1:	Controls		.02	
	Step 2:	TPS mean	.13	.05*	.03*
	Step 3:	TPS minimum score	.07	.05	.002

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Note. N =112 . TPS: Team Political Skill. Controls: age, gender, GPA, previous experience with team members, team size.

TABLE 8

Results of Regression Analysis of Interaction of Team Political Skill and Team Interdependence in the Student Sample

	Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Cohesion				
Step 1:	Controls		.07*	
Step 2:	TPS	.28**		
	Interdependence	.24**	.21**	.14**
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	.002	.21	.00
(2) Team Conflict				
Step 1:	Controls		.02	
Step 2:	TPS	-.18**		
	Interdependence	-.18*	.08*	.06*
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	.14*	.10*	.02†
(3) Team Trust				
Step 1:	Controls		.01	
Step 2:	TPS	.16***		
	Interdependence	-.31*	.13**	.12**
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	-.13†	.15*	. 02†

† p < .10. *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001 N =189. Controls: age, gender, GPA, previous interactions with team members, team size; TPS – team political skill; Interdependence – Team task interdependence.

TABLE 9

Results of Sobel Test of Mediating Effects and the Effects of Common Method Variance for the Split Student Sample

	Test statistic	Standard Error	*p*-value
Cohesion mediates team political skill and performance	3.17	.09	.001
Cohesion mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	2.98	.15	.002
Team conflict mediates team political skill and team performance	2.98	.20	.006
Team conflict mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	2.82	.14	.004
Team trust mediates team political skill and team performance	1.61	.23	.092
Team trust mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	1.96	.09	.049

Note. N =189. Each team was randomly split in two. Assessment of team performance and team satisfaction was provided by half of the teams, and team emergent states by the other half. Complete samples are used for team political skill and team trust.

TABLE 10

Results of Regression Analyses Used in the Test of Mediating Effects and the Effects of Common Method Variance for the Split Student Sample

	Predictors	*B*	R^2	*F*(2,186)
(1) Team Cohesion				
	TPS	.37**	.13**	
(2) Team Trust				
	TPS (non-split sample)	.25**	.06**	
(3) Team Conflict				
	TPS	-.33**	.11**	
(4) Team performance				
Model 1:	TPS	.09		
	Team cohesion	.43**	.22*	13.21**
Model 2:	TPS	.18*		
	Team trust	.08†	.09†	4.56*
Model 3:	TPS	.17†		
	Team conflict	-.34**	.22*	10.20**
(5) Team Satisfaction				
Model 1:	TPS	.01		
	Team cohesion	.39**	.15**	8.19**
Model 2:	TPS	.09		
	Team trust	.25*	.08*	4.30*
Model 3:	TPS	.04		
	Team conflict	-.39**	.16**	8.93**

Note. Each team was randomly split in two. Assessment of team performance and team satisfaction was provided by half of the teams, and team emergent states by the other half. Complete samples are used for team political skill and team trust. Similar to the SEM, there are no control variables.

TABLE 11

Descriptive Statistics and Individual Level Correlations in the MNC Sample

Variables	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1 Team politicla skill	5.50	0.72	(.87)																
2 Team social cohesion	5.04	1.95	-.26**	(.66)															
3 Team task cohesion	6.60	1.57	.56**	-.25**	(.77)														
4 Team relationship conflict	2.94	1.25	-.44**	.30**	-.46**	(.77)													
5 Team task conflict	2.84	1.06	-.52**	.42**	-.48**	.75**	(0.79)												
6 Team process conflict	2.72	1.30	-.47**	.36**	-.47**	.66**	.76**	(.74)											
7 Team trust	5.32	1.31	.57**	-.27**	.70**	-.48**	-0.53**	-.49**	(.71)										
8 Team performance (self)	4.12	0.84	.53**	-.43**	.59**	-.51**	-.56**	-.45**	.68**	(.86)									
9 Team vialbility	5.10	1.35	.59**	-.37**	.60**	-.60**	-.56**	-.53**	.65**	.64**	(.74)								
10 Team satisfaction	5.57	1.19	.53**	-.44**	.55**	-.64**	-.63**	-.56**	.54**	.56**	.67**	(.78)							
11 Interdependence	5.66	1.10	.20*	-0.01	.19*	-0.02	-0.01	-0.09	.25**	0.00	0.16	0.14	(.72)						
12 Perceived org. politics	2.57	1.04	-.30**	.31**	-.31**	.34**	.37**	.33**	-.33**	-.31**	-.43**	-.53*	-0.10	(.81)					
13 Age	29.19	9.35	0.04	-0.01	0.01	0.04	0.00	-0.16	-0.09	-0.08	0.03	0.03	.19*	0.07					
14 Gender	0.33	0.47	-0.02	-0.05	0.10	-0.09	-0.10	-0.05	-0.09	0.07	-0.06	-0.02	-0.08	0.07	-.37**				
15 Work experience	85.04	96.80	0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.02	-0.05	-0.15	-0.14	-0.12	-0.03	-0.01	0.16	0.15	.83**	-.20*			
16 Company experience	23.34	13.76	-0.22*	0.17	-.20*	.29**	.25**	0.18	-.26**	-.32**	-.25**	-.36**	-0.05	0.08	.27**	-0.12	.24*		
17 Team experience	18.69	11.99	0.08	-0.13	-0.02	0.10	0.06	0.05	-0.07	0.01	0.08	0.06	-0.06	-0.02	.37**	-.28**	.27**	.60**	
18 Work with current leader	12.78	9.95	0.00	-0.04	-0.13	0.14	0.13	0.01	-0.15	-0.10	-0.03	-0.13	-0.01	0.05	.28**	-.25**	0.15	.41**	.60**

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. N = 156; Gender was coded 1 for men and 0 for women; Work, company, team experience and tenure with current leader were measured in months. Team performance was self-reported by the team members. Figures in parentheses are the reliabilities.

TABLE 12

Descriptive Statistics and Group Level Correlations in the MNC sample

	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1 Team political skill	5.43	0.61																					
2 Team cohesion	6.34	0.65	.45*																				
3 Team social cohesion	5.37	1.13	-0.26	0.38																			
4 Team task cohesion	6.90	0.88	.62**	.83**	-0.18																		
5 Team trust	5.48	0.80	.61**	.56**	-.45*	.85**																	
6 Team conflict	2.80	0.64	-.60**	-0.33	.52**	-.65**	-.66**																
7 Interdependence	5.41	0.69	0.30	0.34	0.03	.43*	0.25	-0.07															
8 Perceived org. politics	2.64	0.59	-0.27	0.10	0.34	-0.18	-0.16	.514**	-0.13														
9 Team performance (team)	4.08	0.63	.66**	0.29	-.62**	.67**	.79**	-.78**	0.14	-0.25													
10 Team viability	5.12	0.83	.71**	.41*	-.46*	.71**	.84**	-.73**	0.23	-0.24	.72**												
11 Team satisfaction	5.71	0.72	.65**	0.27	-.59**	.65**	.71**	-.82**	0.24	-.42*	.81**	.76**											
12 Age	27.81	4.17	0.18	-0.18	-0.24	0.04	0.04	-0.14	.40*	-0.30	0.01	0.30	0.19										
13 Gender	0.46	0.41	0.19	0.26	0.06	0.17	0.18	-0.12	-0.10	0.17	0.23	0.09	-0.12	-.54**									
14 Work experience	77.39	48.99	0.34	0.20	-0.13	0.33	0.23	-0.36	.47*	-.39*	0.11	0.37	0.19	.85**	-0.14								
15 Org. Experience	23.59	8.29	-0.33	-0.34	0.00	-0.37	-0.32	0.34	-0.30	0.29	-0.36	-0.21	-.41*	0.27	-0.27	0.05							
16 Team experience	18.34	7.73	-0.30	-.48*	-0.33	-0.32	-0.18	0.13	-.39*	0.17	0.03	-0.11	-0.08	0.28	-0.38	-0.08	.68**						
17 Work with current leader	11.45	8.01	-.52**	-.42*	-0.20	-0.29	-0.24	0.10	-0.22	0.05	0.03	-0.14	0.01	-0.02	-0.33	-0.32	.42*	.68**					
18 Team size	8.00	4.89	-0.17	-.62**	-0.23	-.50**	-.40*	0.18	-0.04	-0.03	0.03	-0.30	-0.10	0.20	-0.26	-0.02	0.21	0.36	.41*				
19 Leader political skill (self)	5.76	0.59	0.33	-0.06	-0.11	-0.09	-0.13	0.01	-.53*	0.30	0.18	-0.14	0.00	0.11	-0.17	-0.08	0.38	.67**	0.25	0.12			
20 Leader political skill (team)	5.06	1.04	0.24	0.06	-0.15	0.20	0.10	-.42*	-0.02	-.48*	.43*	0.16	.44*	0.22	-0.18	0.22	0.01	0.06	0.32	0.12	0.28		
21 Team performance (leader)	3.91	0.71	0.22	0.16	-0.03	0.22	0.01	-0.23	-0.04	-0.03	0.33	0.05	0.39	0.10	-0.49	-0.19	-0.17	0.37	0.46	-0.22	0.48	.54*	
22 Team performance (store manager)	3.70	0.61	0.24	-0.16	-0.11	-0.13	-0.09	0.07	-.34^{T}	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.02	-0.15	-0.15	0.31	.39*	0.06	-0.33^{T}	0.47*	0.00	.47*

*p < .05. **p < .01. N = 156; Gender was coded 1 for men and 0 for women; Work, company, team experience and tenure with current leader were measured in months. Team performance was self-reported by the team members, team leader and the store manager.

TABLE 13

Indexes of Agreement and Reliability in the MNC Sample

Variable	# of items	r_{wg} mean	r_{wg} range	r_{wg} median	ICC(1)	ICC(k)
Team political skill	18	-	-	-	.30	.68
Leader political skill (team rated)	18	.64	.58 - .79	.68	.27	.70
Team task cohesion	4	.69	.64 - .94	.88	.37	.79
Team social cohesion	2	.90	.78 - .97	.93	.19	.54
Team conflict	11	.69	.59 - .79	.72	.22	.60
Team trust	3	-	-	-	.18	.59
Team performance	4	.79	.74 - .91	.86	.29	.71
Team satisfaction	3	.66	.59 - .84	.76	.39	.76
Team viability	2	.63	.56 - .79	.68	.19	.65
Perceived organizational politics	3	.71	.59 - .81	.76	.18	.68
Team task interdependence	3	.65	.54 - .83	.63	.12	.72

TABLE 14

Results of Regression Analysis of Team Political Skill in the MNC Sample

Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Cohesion			
Controls		.32*	
Team political skill	.13	.33	.01
(1a) Team Social Cohesion			
Controls		.30	
Team political skill	-.54	.48*	.18*
(1b) Team Task Cohesion			
Controls		.44	
Team political skill	.57	.47*	.13*
(2) Team Conflict			
Controls		.32	
Team political skill	-.65*	.58**	.26*
(3) Team Trust			
Controls		.23	
Team political skill	.53*	.40*	.17*

† $p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$

Note. N =*28*. Controls: age, gender, work experience, team and organizational tenure, experience with current leader, and team size.

TABLE 15

Results of Aroian Test of Mediating Effects of Team Emergent States in the MNC Sample

	Test statistic	Standard Error	*p*-value
Social cohesion mediates team political skill and performance	1.22	.12	.22
Social cohesion mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	1.04	.18	.29
Social cohesion mediates team political skill and team viability	1.08	.12	.28
Task cohesion mediates team political skill and team performance	2.54	.16	.01
Task cohesion mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	2.04	.19	.04
Task cohesion mediates team political skill and team viability	2.25	.21	.02
Team conflict mediates team political skill and team performance	2.99	.17	.00
Team conflict mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	2.98	.20	.00
Team conflict mediates team political skill and team viability	2.46	.20	.01
Team trust mediates team political skill and team performance	1.97	.12	.05
Team trust mediates team political skill and team satisfaction	2.37	.19	.02
Team trust mediates team political skill and team viability	2.08	.22	.00

N= 28 teams.

TABLE 16

Results of Regression Analyses Used in the Test of Mediating Effects of Team Emergent States in the MNC Sample

Predictors		β	R^2	$Adj.R^2$	$F(2,25)$
Team Performance					
Model 1:	TPS	.09			
	Team task cohesion	.62**	.45	.41	9.86**
Model 2:	TPS	.33*			
	Team social cohesion	-.54**	.49	.44	11.29**
Model 3:	TPS	-.02			
	Team trust	.80**	.62	.59	19.80**
Model 4:	TPS	-.01			
	Team conflict	-.79***	.62	.59	19.65**
Team Satisfaction					
Model 1:	TPS	.40*			
	Team task cohesion	.41*	.53	.49	13.29**
Model 2:	TPS	.54**			
	Team social cohesion	-.45**	.61	.58	18.93**
Model 3:	TPS	.35*			
	Team trust	.50**	.58	.55	16.66**
Model 4:	TPS	.25†			
	Team conflict	-.66*	.71	.68	29.45**
Team Viability					
Model 1:	TPS	.43*			
	Team task cohesion	.45**	.62	.59	19.65**
Model 2:	TPS	.63**			
	Team social cohesion	-.29*	.58	.54	16.43**
Model 3:	TPS	.31*			
	Team trust	.65**	.76	.74	37.97**
Model 4:	TPS	.42**			
	Team conflict	-.49**	.65	.62	22.26**

N= 28 teams. †$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$;

TABLE 17

Results of Regression Analysis of Perception of Organizational Politics as a Moderator of Team Political Skill and Team Emergent States in the MNC Sample

Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Trust			
Controls		.23	
Team political skill	-.10	.39	.16*
Perceived org. politics	.09	.39	.00
Perceived org. politics (squared)	.08	.43	.03
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics	-.09	.46	.03
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics (squared)	.84*	.63*	.17*
(2) Social Cohesion			
Controls		.29	
Team political skill	-.27	.42†	.13†
Perceived org. politics	.47	.54*	.12*
Perceived org. politics (squared)	-.24	.59†	.06
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics	.18	.62	.02
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics (squared)	-.18	.63	.01
(3) Task Cohesion			
Controls		.43	
Team political skill	-.14	.53†	.09†
Perceived org. politics	.05	.54	.02
Perceived org. politics (squared)	.18	.57	.04
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics	-.003	.59	.01
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics (squared)	.68*	.70*	.11*
(4) Team conflict			
Controls		.29	
Team political skill	-.68*	.47*	.17*
Perceived org. politics	-.23	.55†	.08*
Team political skill X Perceived org. politics	.78**	.80*	.25*

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Note. N =28. Controls: age, gender, work experience, team and organizational tenure, experience with current leader, and team size.

TABLE 18

Results of Regression Analysis of Team Task Interdependence as a Moderator of Team Political Skill and Team Emergent States in the MNC Sample

	Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
(1) Team Social Cohesion				
Step 1:	Controls		.29	
Step 2:	TPS	-.47*		
	Interdependence	-.15	.42	.13
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	-.23	.45	.04
(2) Team Task Cohesion				
Step 1:	Controls		.43	
Step 2:	TPS	.38*		
	Interdependence	.48*	.61*	.18*
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	.20	.64	.03
(3) Team Trust				
Step 1:	Controls		.23	
Step 2:	TPS	.53*		
	Interdependence	.29	.40	.17
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	.29	.46	. 06
(4) Team Conflict				
Step 1:	Controls		.29	
Step 2:	TPS	-.59**		
	Interdependence	.04	.50*	.21*
Step 3:	TPS x Interdependence	-.42*	.63*	.13*

† $p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.
Note. N =28. Controls: age, gender, work experience, team and organizational tenure, experience with current leader, and team size. Interdependence – Team task interdependence.

TABLE 19

Team versus Team Leader's Political Skill and Team Effectiveness

	Predictors	*B*	R^2	ΔR^2
Team Performance				
Step 1:	Team leader political skill	.29*	.18*	
Step 2:	Team political skill	.59**	.51*	.33*
Team Satisfaction				
Step 1:	Team leader political skill	.46**	.20*	
Step 2:	Team political skill	.67***	.64**	.44**
Team Viability				
Step 1:	Team leader political skill	.18	.03	
Step 2:	Team political skill	.71**	.53**	.50***

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$;
N=28;

TABLE 20

Results of Regression Analyses Testing the Effects of Common Method Variance in MNC sample

	Predictors	*B*	R^2
Team task cohesion			
	TPS	.40†	.16†
Team social cohesion			
	TPS	-.20	.05
Team trust			
	TPS (non-split sample)	.60**	.36**
Team conflict			
	TPS	.-37*	.14†
(1) Team Performance			
Model 1:	TPS	.26	
	Team task cohesion	.44*	.33*
Model 2:	TPS	.30	
	Team social cohesion	-.27	.22†
Model 3:	TPS	.36†	
	Team trust	.41*	.32*
Model 4:	TPS	.19	
	Team conflict	-.56**	.42**
(2) Team Satisfaction			
Model 1:	TPS	.29*	
	Team task cohesion	.30*	.52*
Model 2:	TPS	.58**	
	Team social cohesion	-.35*	.56**
Model 3:	TPS	.63**	
	Team trust	.31*	.53*
Model 4:	TPS	.54**	
	Team conflict	.-33†	.52**
(3) Team Viability			
Model 1:	TPS	.45*	
	Team task cohesion	.46**	.54**
Model 2:	TPS	.53**	
	Team social cohesion	-.27	.42*
Model 3:	TPS	.56**	
	Team trust	.43*	.53**
Model 4:	TPS	.48*	
	Team conflict	-.31†	.44**

N= 28 teams. †$p < .10$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$;

Note. Each team was randomly split in two. Assessment of team performance and team satisfaction was provided by half of the teams, and team emergent states by the other half. Complete samples are used for team political skill and team trust. Controls: age, gender, work experience, team and organizational tenure, experience with current leader, and team size.

TABLE 21

Summary of the Findings of the Two Studies

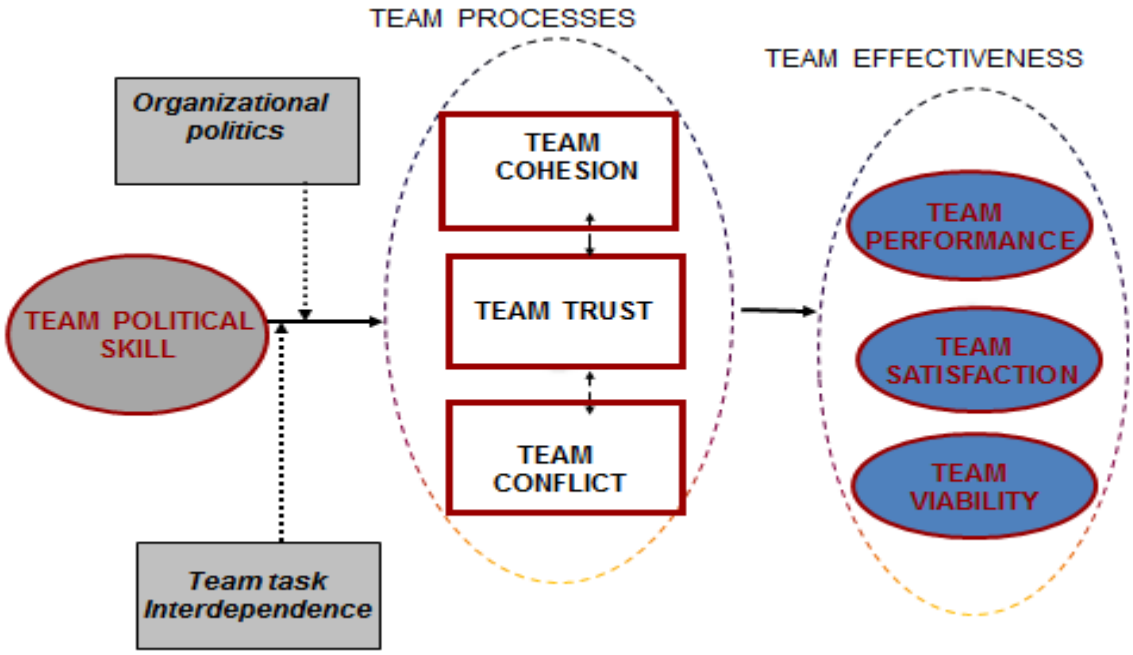
	Hypotheses	Student sample	MNC sample
1.1.	*Team political skill will be positively related to team performance.*	supported	supported
1.2.	*Team political skill will be positively related to team satisfaction.*	supported	supported
1.3.	*Team political skill will be positively related to team viability.*	N/A	supported
2.1	*Team political skill will be positively related to group cohesiveness.*	supported	partially supported
2.2	*Group cohesiveness will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team performance.*	supported	partially supported
2.3	*Group cohesiveness will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.*	supported	partially supported
2.4.	*Group cohesiveness will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team viability.*	N/A	partially supported
3.1.	*Team political skill will be positively related to team trust.*	supported	supported
3.2.	*Team trust will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team performance.*	supported	supported
3.3.	*Team trust will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.*	supported	supported
3.4.	*Team trust will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team viability.*	N/A	supported
4.1.	*Team political skill will be negatively related to team conflict.*	supported	supported
4.2.	*Team conflict will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team performance.*	supported	supported
4.3.	*Team conflict will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team satisfaction.*	supported	supported
4.4.	*Team conflict will mediate the relationship between team political skill and team viability.*	N/A	supported
4.5.	*Out of the three types of conflict, team relationship conflict will demonstrate the highest negative correlation with team political skill, as compared to team task and process conflict.*	not supported	not supported
5.1.	*Team political skill strength will relate to team cohesion, and explain variance in team cohesion beyond team average political skill.*	supported	N/A
5.2.	*Team political skill strength will relate to team conflict, and explain variance in team conflict beyond team average political skill.*	supported	N/A

5.3.	*Team political skill strength will relate to team trust, and explain variance in team trust beyond team average political skill.*	supported	N/A
6.1.	*Teams with higher scores for the least politically skilled member of the team will have higher ratings for team cohesion.*	supported	N/A
6.2.	*The lowest skill level within a team is an important predictor of team cohesion beyond average team political skill.*	not supported	N/A
7.1.	*Teams with higher scores for the least politically skilled member of the team will have higher ratings for team trust.*	supported	N/A
7.2.	*The lowest skill level within a team is an important predictor of team trust beyond average team political skill.*	not supported	N/A
8.1.	*Teams with lower scores for the least politically skilled member of the team will have higher ratings for team conflict.*	supported	N/A
8.2.	*The lowest skill level within a team is an important predictor of team conflict beyond team average political skill.*	supported	N/A
9.1.	*The relationship between team political skill and team cohesion will be stronger when employees perceive organizational politics as moderate and weaker when organizational politics is perceived as high or low.*	N/A	partially supported
9.2.	*The relationship between team political skill and team trust will be stronger when employees perceive organizational politics as moderate and weaker when organizational politics is perceived as high or low.*	N/A	supported
9.3.	*The relationship between team political skill and team conflict will be stronger when employees perceive organizational politics as moderate and weaker when organizational politics is perceived as high or low.*	N/A	supported
10.1.	*The relationship between team political skill and team cohesion will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.*	not supported	not supported
10.2.	*The relationship between team political skill and team trust will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.*	supported	not supported
10.3.	*The relationship between team political skill and team conflict will be stronger when team task interdependence is high.*	supported	supported
11.1.	*Leader political skill is an important predictor of team effectiveness.*	N/A	partially supported
11.2.	*Team political skill is an important predictor of team effectiveness beyond leader political skill.*	N/A	supported

FIGURES

Figure 1

Theoretical Model Linking Team Political Skill and Team Effectiveness

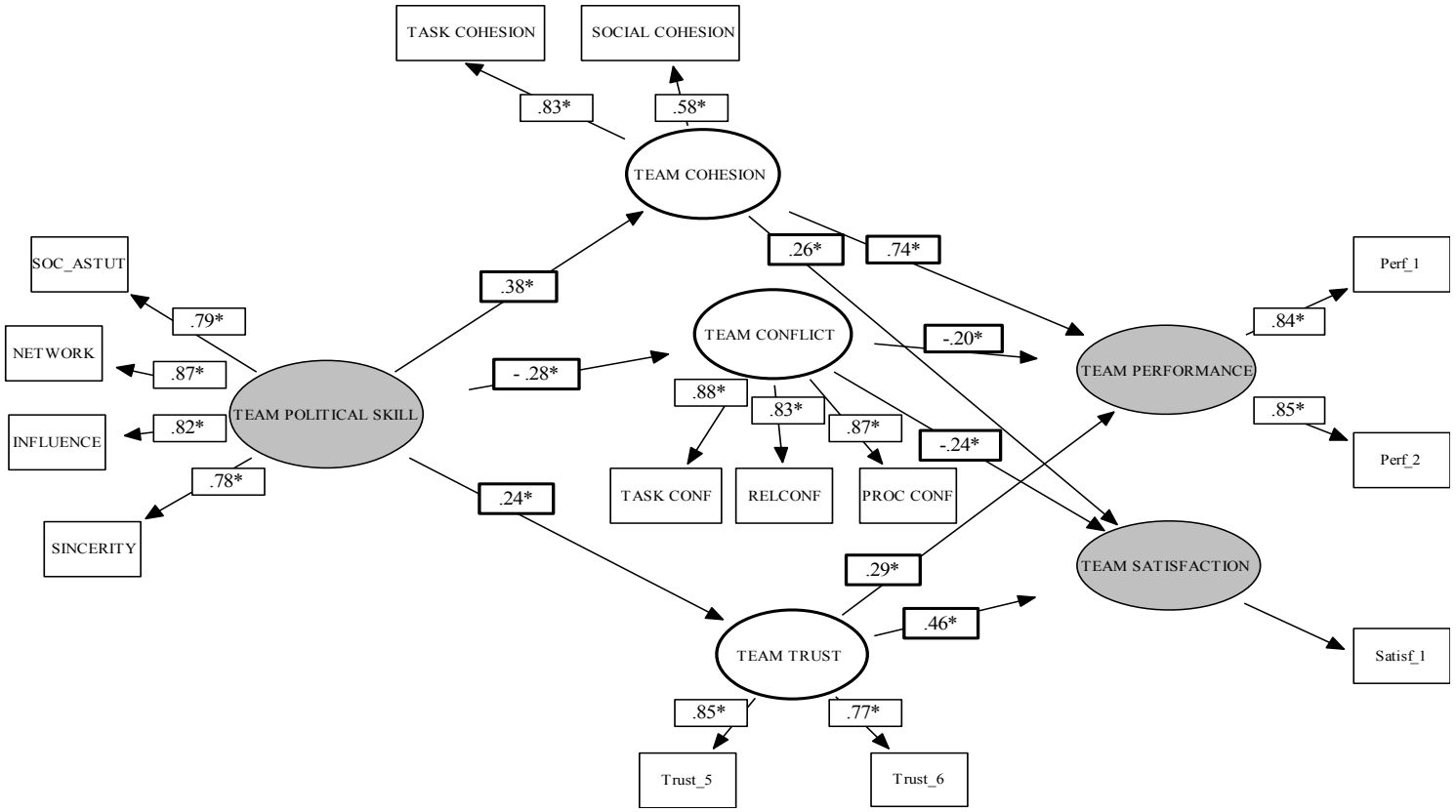


**The predicted relationships between variables are all positive, with the exception of conflict, which is negative in relation to team political skill, team viability and team satisfaction.*

*** Moderation effect is depicted by dotted line.*

Figure 2

Adjusted Model Linking Team Political Skill, Team Emergent States and Team Effectiveness



Fit statistics: $\chi 2 = 145.34$ (65), CFI = .964, RMSEA = .08, 90% C.I. .06, .10.
Note: Soc. Astut. = social astuteness; Influence= interpersonal influence; Network= networking ability; Sincerity=apparent sincerity. The error terms are deleted for clarity.

Figure 3

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill and Team Interdependence on Team Trust in the Student Sample

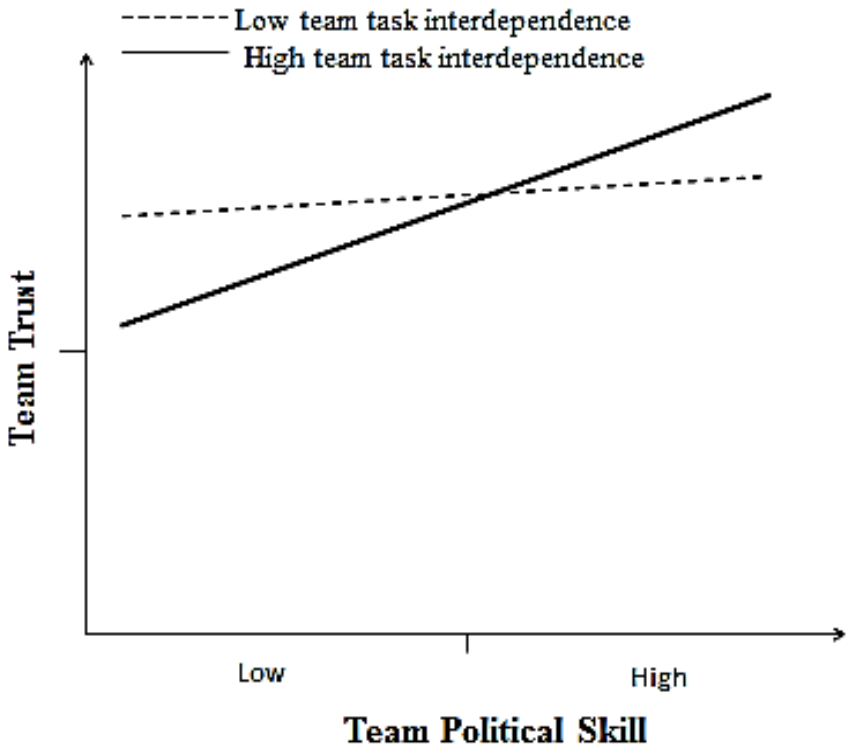


Figure 4

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill and Team Interdependence on Team Conflict in the Student Sample

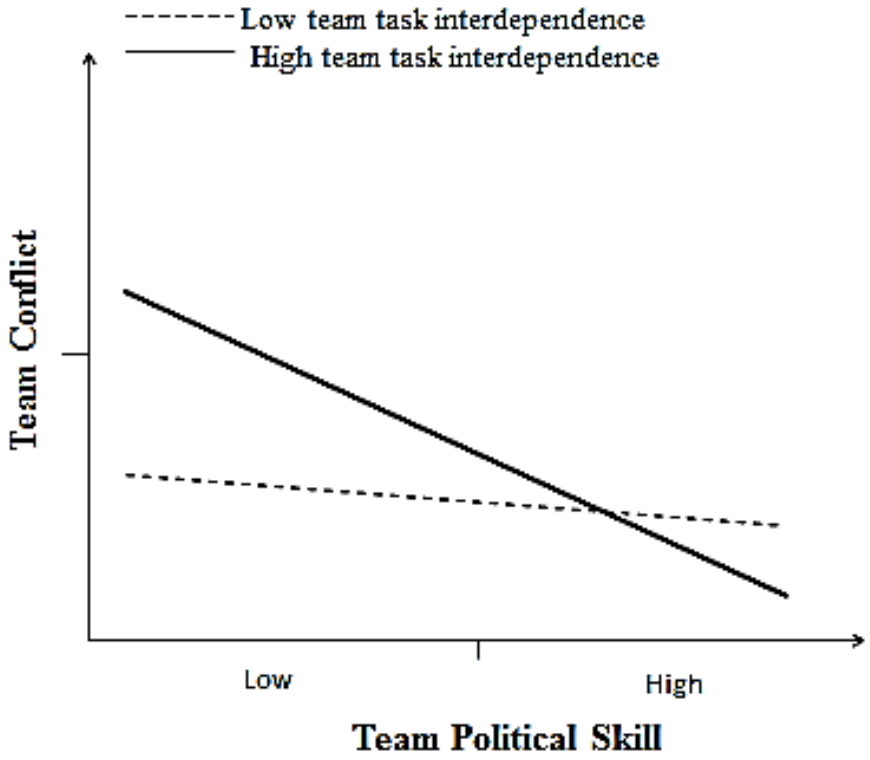


Figure 5

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill Level and Standard Deviation on Team Cohesion in the Student Sample

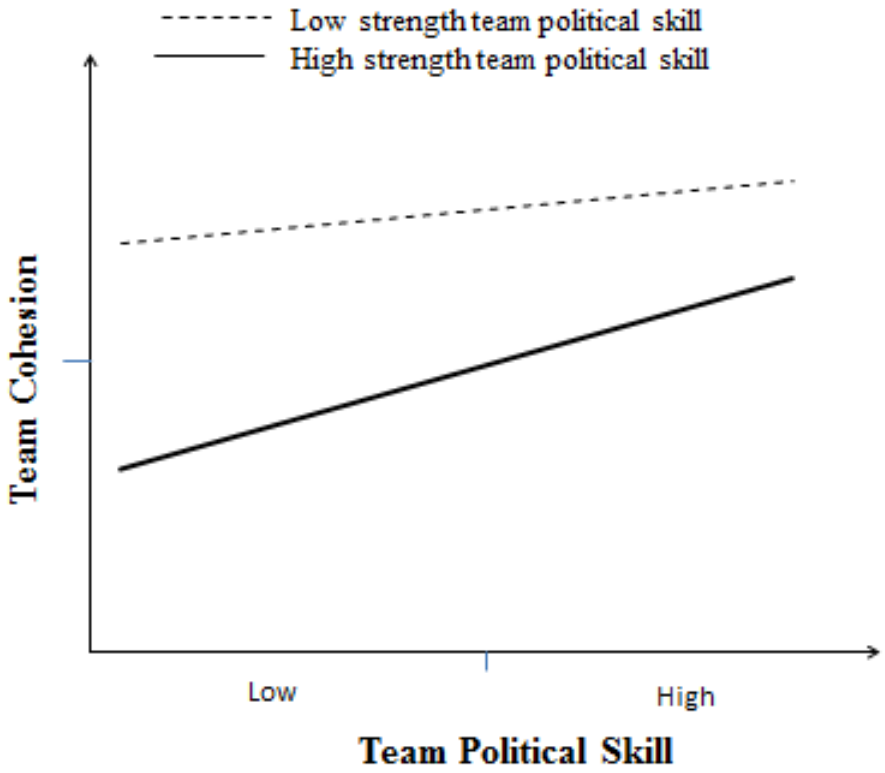


Figure 6

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill Level and Standard Deviation on Team Conflict in the Student Sample

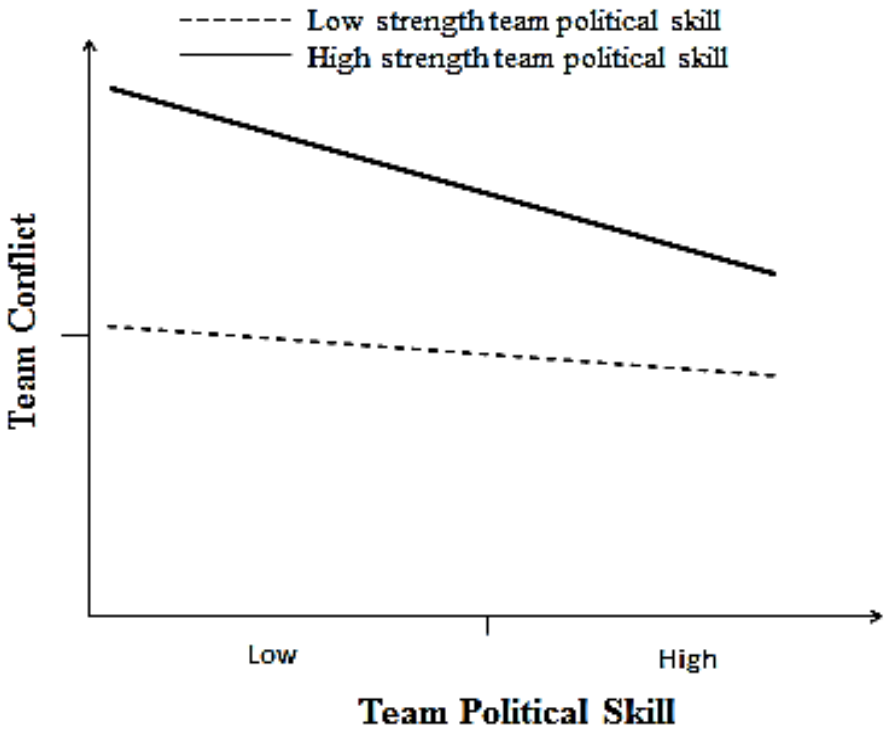


Figure 7

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill and Perceptions of Organizational Politics on Team Conflict in the MNC Sample

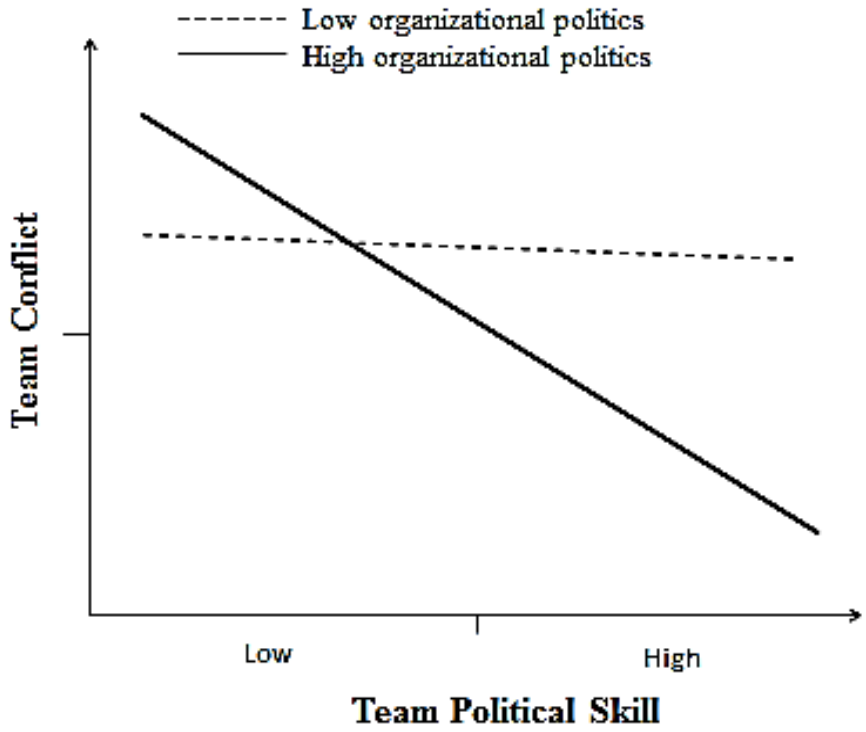
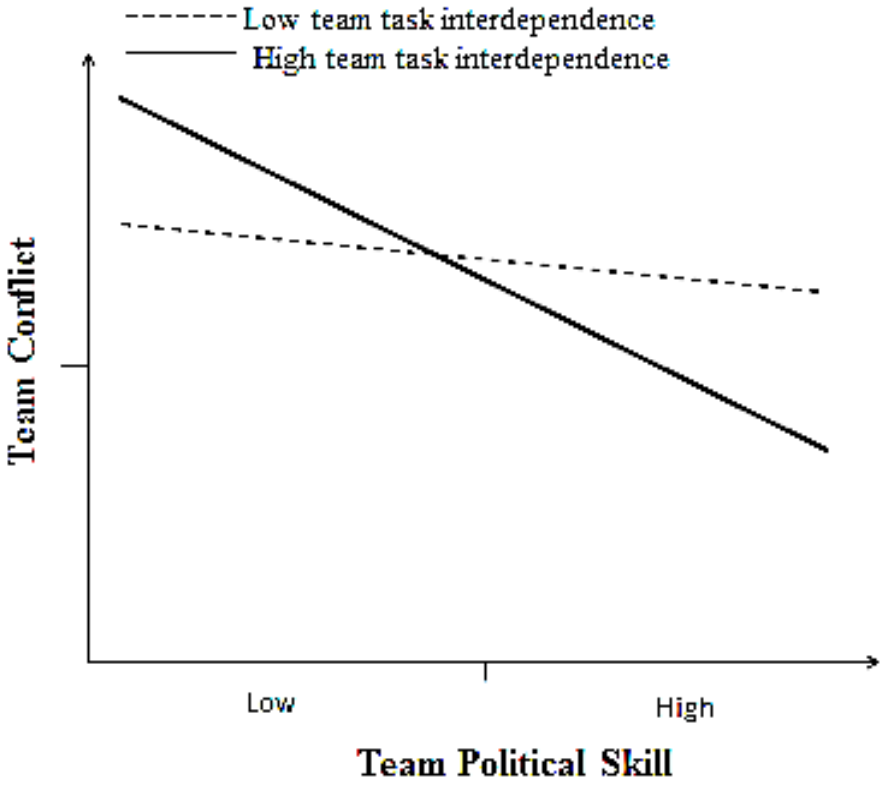


Figure 8

Interactive Effect of Team Political Skill and Team Interdependence on Team Conflict in the MNC Sample



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APPENDIX A

1. Political skill Inventory * (Ferris et al., 2005)

Instructions: Using the following 7-point scale, please place the number before each item that best describes how much you agree with each statement about yourself.

1 =strongly disagree

2 =disagree

3 =slightly disagree

4 =neutral

5 =slightly agree

6 =agree

7 =strongly agree

1. ____ I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with my team members. (NA)

2. _____ I am able to make most people in my team feel comfortable and at ease around me. (II)

3. _____ I am able to communicate easily and effectively with my team members. (II)

4. _____ It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people in my team. (II)

5. _____ I understand my team members very well. (SA)

6. _____ I am good at building relationships with influential people in my team. (NA)

7. _____ I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of my team members. (SA)

8. _____ When communicating with my team members, I try to be genuine in what I say and do. (AS)

9. _____I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates in my team whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done. (NA)

10. _____ In my team, I know a lot of important people and am well connected. (NA)

11. _____ I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with my team members. (NA)

12. _____ I am good at getting my team members to like me. (II)

13. _____ It is important that my team members believe I am sincere in what I say and do. (AS)

14. _____ I try to show a genuine interest in my team members. (AS)

15. _____ I am good at using my connections and network of team members to make things happen at work. (NA)

16. _____ I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to my team members. (SA)

17. _____ I always seem to instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence my team members. (SA)

18. _____ I pay close attention to my team members' facial expressions. (SA)

Note: NA=networking ability; II=interpersonal influence; SA=social astuteness; AS=apparent sincerity.

*****Wording has been changed to reflect team orientation.

Group conflict

Jehn's (1995) scale for task, process and affective conflict. 7-point Likert-scale.

Relationship conflict :

1. How much friction is there among members in your work unit?

2. How much are personality conflicts evident in your work unit?
3. How much tension is there among members of your work unit?
4. How much emotional conflict is there among members in your work unit?

Task conflict :

1. How frequently are there conflicts about ideas in your work unit?
2. How often do people in your work unit disagree about opinions?
3. How much conflict about the work you do is there in your work unit?
4. To what extent are there differences of opinion in your work unit?

Process conflict:

1. How often do members of your work unit disagree about who should do what?
2. How frequently do members of your work unit disagree about the way to complete a group task?
3. How much conflict is there about delegation of tasks within your work unit?

Group Cohesion

Chang and Bordia' s scale (2001). 9-point Likert scale.

Task cohesion:

1. We are united in trying to reach its goal for performance

2. We all take responsibility for any mistake

3. Everyone tries to help if members have problems

4. We communicate freely about each other's responsibility

Social Cohesion:

1. Members rather go out on their own than as a team (R)

2. Team members rarely socialize together (R)

3. Like to spend time outside of work hours

4. Stick together outside of the team project

Trust

Four items scale adapted from Mayer and Davis (1999) and two items from Gillespie's scale (2003). 7-point Likert scale.

Mayer and Davis' scale (1999):

1. If I had my way, I wouldn't let this team have any influence over issues that are important to me.*
2. I would be willing to let my team have complete control over my future in this company.
3. I really wish I had a good way to keep an eye on this team.*
4. I would be comfortable giving this team a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor its actions (in the original: I would be comfortable allowing the organization to make decisions that directly impact me, even in my absence).

Gillespie (2003):

1. I am willing to rely on the team to represent my work accurately to others.
2. I am willing to depend on the team to back me up in difficult situations.

Perception of organizational politics scale

Kacmar and Carlson (1997). Go along to get ahead subscale. 5-point Likert scale.

1. Agreeing with powerful others is the best alternative in this organization.
2. Sometimes it is easier to remain quiet than to fight the system.
3. Favoritism, rather than merit, determines who gets good raises and promotions around here.
4. It is safer to think what you are told than to make up your own mind.

Team effectiveness

(a) Team viability (Hackman, 1988)

7 point Likert scale; assessed by team members.

1. Members of the team care a lot about it, and work together to make it one of the best
2. Working with members of the team is an energizing and uplifting experience
3. As a team, this work group shows signs of falling apart

(b) Team satisfaction (Hackman, 1988)

7 point Likert scale; assessed by team members

1. Generally speaking I am very satisfied with the team
2. I frequently wish I could quit the team
3. I am generally satisfied with the work I do on the team, etc

Team performance measures

Pearce and Sims' (2002) 5-point Likert scale.

1. The team is highly effective.
2. The team is making very good progress on the team's charter.
3. The team does very good work.
4. The team does a very good job.

Interdependence

Morgeson and Humphrey's (2006) 7 point Likert scale on interdependence which includes

Initiated Interdependence:

1. The job requires me to accomplish my job before others complete their job;
2. Other jobs depend directly on my job;
3. Unless my job gets done, other jobs cannot be completed;

Received Interdependence:

1. The job activities are greatly affected by the work of other people;
2. The job depends on the work of many different people for its completion;
3. My job cannot be done unless others do their work.

Demography for the MNC sample

What is your age?_____

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

- What is your country of citizenship _____
- What country were you born in?

  _____
- What is your ethnic background?_____

Questions about Your Work Background

- How many years of full-time work experience have you had? _____ years
- How long have you worked for your current employer? _____ years and _____ months.
- How long have you been working in your current location? _____Months ___Weeks_____Days
- How long have you been assigned to your current team? _____Years _____Months ___Weeks
- How long have you been assigned to your current team? _____Years _____Months ___Weeks
- How long have you been assigned to your current boss? _____Years _____Months ___Weeks
- Prior to this assignment, have you previously worked for this person as your boss? Y/N
- Prior to this assignment, have you previously worked with this person as a peer? Y/N

- How long ago did you meet this person for the first time? _____Years ____Months ___Weeks

Questions about Your Educational Background

- How many years of formal education do you have? _____ years
- If you have an educational major or area of specialization, what is it?_____

  _____

Demography for the student sample

What is your age?_____

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

- What is your country of citizenship _____
- What country were you born in?

  _____
- What is first language?_____

What is your GPA (optional) _____

Have you been working with your Comm 222 team members on previous occasions (e.g., in other class)? Yes/ No

If yes, with how many of them you had interactions before this class? _____

Do you have work experience? Yes/ No

Do you have managerial experience? Yes/ No

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire in Russian

Бланк № 1

Не забудьте оторвать это лист, возвращая опросник.
Имя опрашиваемого не должно появляться в заполненном опроснике.

Имя, фамилия респондента:

_____

Список членов команды:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Лидер/ менеджер:

_____

Уважаемые сотрудники _____!

Коллектив исследователей университета Конкордия (Монреаль, Канада) приглашает Вас принять участие в исследовании, посвященном изучению социальных навыков и умений, проявляемых в ситуациях, связанных с профессиональной деятельностью. Данное исследование является частью проекта, направленного на разработку и внедрение новых методов развития и управления персоналом, в особенности на формирование и развитие команд.

Ваше участие в данном исследовании заключается в заполнении ряда опросников, анализ которых будет осуществляться путем подсчета *среднего балла всех ответивших* на вопросы. Таким образом, гарантируется абсолютная анонимность и конфиденциальность Ваших ответов. Обращаем Ваше внимание на то, что, в соответствие с протоколом Этического Совета университета Конкордия, Ваши индивидуальные результаты не могут быть разглашены третьей стороне (будь то Ваши коллеги, руководитель, или дирекция) ни в какой форме. Большинство вопросов связано с вашей деятельностью в команде. Для Вашего удобства, список команды приводится на 1 странице этого документа.

Проблема социальных навыков и умений, проявляемых людьми на работе, становится все более актуальной для современного бизнеса, когда «кадры решают все». Мы надеемся, что данное исследование ответит на многие вопросы, интересующие современную науку и бизнес. Мы также надеемся, что вопросы, которые Вы найдете в прилагаемой брошюре, будут Вам интересны. Кроме того, в знак нашей благодарности, среди участников опроса будут разыграны 2 ценных приза. Время заполнения опросника зависит от Вас, в среднем оно составляет 30 минут.

Заранее благодарим Вас за участие!

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Социальные навыки в трудовых коллективах

Используя шкалу от 1 до7, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений О СЕБЕ и ВАШЕЙ команде. Рядом с каждым утверждением отметьте цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

1=Полностью не согласен
2=Не согласен
3=Отчасти не согласен
4=Ни согласен, ни не согласен
5=Отчасти согласен
6=Соглсен
7= Полностью согласен

Полностью/совершенно не согласен						Полностью/совершенно согласен
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Я прикладываю много усилий и провожу много времени, чтобы установить хорошие взаимоотношения с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я могу сделать так, чтобы большинство людей, работающих в моей команде, чувствовало себя свободно и комфортно рядом со мной.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я легко и продуктивно общаюсь с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мне легко поддерживать хорошие взаимоотношения с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я отлично понимаю людей, работающих в моей команде.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мне удается устанавливать хорошие взаимоотношения с влиятельными людьми в команде.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я отлично распознаю причины и скрытые мотивы поведения других членов команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Общаясь с членами моей команды, я стараюсь быть искренним в том, что я говорю и делаю.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я наладил хорошие контакты с коллегами по команде, и я могу это использовать, когда необходимо что-то сделать.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я поддерживаю связи и близкое знакомство со многими людьми в моей команде.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я провожу много времени, налаживая связи и хорошие взаимоотношения с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мне удается нравиться членам моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я считаю важным, чтобы члены моей команды верили в искренность моих слов и поступков.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Полностью/совершенно не согласен **Полностью/совершенно согласен**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Мне удается использовать мои «командные» связи и контакты, когда необходимо что-то сделать по работе.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я стараюсь демонстрировать неподдельный интерес к другим членам команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Инстинктивно я всегда говорю и делаю то, что нужно, чтобы успешно влиять на других людей - членов моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я уделяю большое внимание выражению лиц людей (членов моей команды).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Уровень «политики» в организации и команде

Используя шкалу от 1 до 5, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений. Обведите цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Совершенно не так Абсолютная правда

1 2 3 4 5

Согласие с начальством – обязательное условие работы в этой организации	1	2	3	4	5
В этой организации проще и безопасней думать так, как говорят, чем иметь свое мнение	1	2	3	4	5
В этой организации повышения оклада и повышения в должности не достаются тем, кто много работает.	1	2	3	4	5
В этой организации повышения оклада и повышения в должности никогда не происходят в соответствии с установленным (прописанным) порядком	1	2	3	4	5
В моей команде люди часто ведут себя эгоистично	1	2	3	4	5
В моей команде люди поступают так, как выгодно им, а не организации	1	2	3	4	5
Члены моей команды часто действуют «за спинами друг друга», чтобы их «не обошли» при раздаче бонусов и наград	1	2	3	4	5
Члены моей команды готовы подставлять друг друга, чтобы лучше выглядеть в глазах начальства	1	2	3	4	5

Групповая сплоченность

Используя шкалу от 1 до 9, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений <u>О ВАШЕЙ КОМАНДЕ</u>. Обведите цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Мы держимся вместе, даже когда мы не на работе

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Мы стремимся добиваться цели совместными усилиями.

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Члены нашей команды не любят отдыхать вместе

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Каждый из нас отвечает за ошибки, допущенные нашей командой.

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Если у кого-то из нас проблема, все приходят на помощь

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Члены нашей команды редко проводят время вместе (вне работы)

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Вне работы, мы любим проводить время все вместе

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

В команде, мы обсуждаем, кто и что должен делать

Полностью/совершенно не согласен							Полностью/совершенно согласен	
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Групповой конфликт

Используя шкалу от 1 до 7, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений О ВАШЕЙ команде. Рядом с каждым утверждением

отметьте цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает, как часто происходят описываемые ситуации:

Никогда/ Очень мало много			Иногда		Всегда/ Очень много						
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**						**7**
Насколько часты трения между членами вашей группы?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Насколько часты личностные конфликты в вашей группе?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Существует ли в вашей группе напряженность в отношениях?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Насколько часты эмоциональные всплески и конфликты в вашей группе?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Как часто члены вашей группы конфликтуют в связи с разницей во взглядах?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Насколько часты «расхождения во мнениях» в вашей команде?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Как часто члены вашей группы конфликтуют в связи с разницей во взглядах?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Как часто члены вашей команды конфликтуют по поводу того, что они должны делать?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Насколько сильны «различия во мнениях» в вашей команде?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Как часто члены вашей команды спорят по поводу того, кто должен делать ту или иную работу?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Насколько часты разногласия у членов вашей команды по поводу того, как должна выполняться работа?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Существуют ли в вашей команде конфликты по поводу распределения обязанностей?					1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Доверие и Взаимозависимость в группе

Используя шкалу от 1 до7, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений О СЕБЕ и ВАШЕЙ команде. Рядом с каждым

утверждением отметьте цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:
1=Полностью не согласен
2=Не согласен
3=Отчасти не согласен
4=Ни согласен, ни не согласен
5=Отчасти согласен
6=Соглсен
7= Полностью согласен

Полностью/совершенно не согласен						Полностью/совершенно согласен
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Я бы предпочел, чтобы эта команда не имела никакого влияния на важные для меня решения.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я не возражаю, чтобы моя команда определяла мое будущее в компании/ организации.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я бы хотел контролировать эту команду насколько возможно.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я мог бы разрешить моей команде принимать важные для меня решения в мое отсутствие.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Я могу положиться на членов моей команды, когда мою работу надо представить другим	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
В трудных ситуациях я могу положиться на мою команду	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Наша работа зависит от взаимодействия всех членов команды	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Наша работа не может быть сделана без участия всех членов команды	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Работа каждого члена команды может быть выполнена только тогда, когда остальные члены команды делают свою работу	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Эффективность и жизнеспособность команды

Используя шкалу от 1 до 7, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений о ВАС и ВАШЕЙ КОМАНДЕ. Рядом с каждым

утверждением отметьте цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Полностью/совершенно не согласен 1 2 3 4 5	Полностью/совершенно согласен 6 7						
Члены моей команды заботятся о своей команде и стараются сделать ее одной из лучших	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Работа с членами моей команды дает мне энергию и поднимает настроение	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
В целом, мне очень нравится моя команда	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мне часто хочется уйти из этой команды	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Похоже, что эта команда скоро развалится	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
В целом, я удовлетворен той работой, которую я выполняю в моей команде	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Используя шкалу от 1 до 5, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений о <u>Вашей команде</u>, Рядом с каждым утверждением обведите цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Совершенно не согласен **1 2 3 4**	Абсолютно согласен **5**				
Моя команда отлично работает	1	2	3	4	5
Эта команда достигает значительных успехов	1	2	3	4	5
Эта команда – молодцы!	1	2	3	4	5
Моя команда эффективна	1	2	3	4	5
Моя команда хорошо координирует свою деятельность	1	2	3	4	5
В моей команде каждый выполняет свою работу и не перекладывает ее на других	1	2	3	4	5
Мы делаем работу вместе	1	2	3	4	5
Члены моей команды делятся информацией друг с другом	1	2	3	4	5
Члены моей команды помогают друг другу	1	2	3	4	5

Моя команда умеет строить свою деятельность так, чтобы избегать двойной работы и излишнего дублирования действий друг друга	1	2	3	4	5
Когда случается что-то незапланированное, моя команда быстро выбирает члена команды, который может решить проблему.	1	2	3	4	5
Моя команда замечает проблемы до того, как они выходят за пределы команды	1	2	3	4	5
В случае необходимости, мой команда принимает решения очень оперативно	1	2	3	4	5
Если команда неожиданно лишается одного из своих членов, мы быстро перераспределяем его (ее) обязанность между собой	1	2	3	4	5

Пожалуйста, назовите члена вашей команды...

- который обычно берет инициативу и планирует выполнение работ, распределяет, кто и за что отвечает, и т.п. _____
- который стремиться поддерживать «мир и гармонию» в команде: улаживает споры, снимает эмоциональное напряжение, и т.д.

_____

Отношения лидера и подчиненного

Используя шкалу от 1 до7, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений О ВАШЕМ НЕПОСРЕДСТВЕННОМ РУКОВОДИТЕЛЕ. Рядом с каждым утверждением отметьте цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Полностью/совершенно не согласен						Полностью/совершенно согласен
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

На работе мой руководитель прикладываю много усилий и проводит много времени, чтобы установить хорошие взаимоотношения с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель может сделать так, чтобы большинство подчиненных чувствовало себя свободно и комфортно рядом с ним (с ней).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Мой руководитель легко и продуктивно общается с окружающими его (ее) людьми.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель легко устанавливает хорошие взаимоотношения с большинством людей, том числе, с членами нашей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель отлично понимает людей.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Моему руководителю удается устанавливать хорошие взаимоотношения с ключевыми сотрудниками моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель отлично распознает причины и скрытые мотивы поведения других, в том числе, и членов моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Общаясь с окружающими, мой руководитель старается быть искренним в том, что говорит и делает.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель наладил хорошие отношения с членами моей команды, и он (она) может это использовать, когда это необходимо.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель поддерживает тесную связь и хорошие взаимоотношения со многими членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель проводит много времени, налаживая связи и знакомства по работе, в том числе, с членами моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Моему руководителю удается нравиться членам нашей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель считает важным, чтобы люди верили в искренность его (ее) слов и поступков.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мой руководитель старается демонстрировать неподдельный интерес к подчиненным.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Моему руководителю удается использовать свои связи и контакты в команде, когда необходимо что-то сделать по работе.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Интуиция и сообразительность всегда подсказывают моему руководителю, как правильно подавать себя другим людям, в том числе, членам моей команды.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Инстинктивно он (она) всегда говорит и делает то, что нужно, чтобы успешно влиять на подчиненных.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Мне кажется, мой руководитель уделяет большое внимание выражению лиц подчиненных.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Эффективность Вашего руководителя

Используя шкалу от 1 до 5, пожалуйста, оцените насколько вы согласны с каждым из утверждений о Вашем руководителе. Рядом с каждым утверждением обведите цифру, которая наилучшим образом описывает степень вашего согласия:

Совершенно не согласен Абсолютно согласен

1 2 3 4 5

Наш руководитель представляет отдел (команду) перед вышестоящим руководством в наилучшем свете	1	2	3	4	5
Наш руководитель соответствует потребностям нашего отдела (команды)	1	2	3	4	5
Мой руководитель отвечает требованиям нашей организации	1	2	3	4	5
Мой руководитель компетентен в выполнении ее (его) работы	1	2	3	4	5
Качество работы нашего руководителя выше, нежели у других руководителей	1	2	3	4	5

Пожалуйста, ответьте на ряд вопросов, приведенных ниже.

Напоминаем, что любая информация, предоставленная Вами, является анонимной, и будет использована исключительно в научных целях.

Сколько вам лет?_____

Ваш пол? (обведите) Муж. Жен.

Ваше гражданство? _____

Ваша национальность?_____

Ваш опыт работы (постоянной работы) _____ лет

Как долго вы работаете в этой организации? _____ лет _____ месяцев

Как долго вы работаете в этой команде_____ лет ____месяцев___ недель

Как долго вы работаете с вашим теперешним начальником?___ лет __ месяцев___недель

Ваше образование?

Коллектив исследователей университета Конкордия (Монреаль, Канада) благодарит Вас за участие в данном исследовании и желает Вам дальнейших успехов в работе!

APPENDIX C

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN
RESEARCH PROJECT ON TEAM POLITICAL SKILL

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by *Dr. Johns (*gjohns@jmsb.concordia.ca), Management Department of Concordia University and *Elena Lvina* (514 848 2424 ext. 2905, e_lvina@jmsb.concordia.ca).

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to study social effectiveness and how it influences individual relationship within a team.

PROCEDURES

For COMM 222 students:

You will be required to fill out a survey of approximately 25 questions. It will take you about 10 minutes. Your completed survey will be collected by one of the researchers. After receiving the surveys we will enter and store the data as an encrypted file on a secure computer using no names—only code numbers. Paper copies of the surveys will be destroyed after all data are entered and we are ensured of their accuracy. In the end of this form you will also be asked to provide your consent to having your on-line peer evaluation be used for research as part of this project. The results are confidential, and your identity will never be revealed in study reports.

C. RISKS AND BENEFITS

Political skill is claimed to be one of the most important competencies leaders can possess, and appears to be a predictor of managerial performance and an effective career management tool. So, you will be able to assess how good your political skill is and to benefit from the learning. You may contact Elena Lvina at e_lvina@jmsb.concordia.ca for feedback, which will be based on your individual results. You will also be entered into a lottery to possibly win several $50 prizes. Your name will be entered into a lottery regardless of whether you let the researchers to use your on-line peer evaluation or not. Participation in this study is not expected to involve any risk greater than those encountered in everyday life. Under no circumstance your identity will be disclosed to the third part (such as your professors or peers).

D. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

☐ I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.

☐ I understand that my participation in this study is: CONFIDENTIAL (i.e., the researcher will know, but will not disclose my identity)

☐ I understand that the results of this study may be published.

I provide my consent to use my online peer evaluations in addition to this inventory

☐ Yes ☐ No

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print)

_____

SIGNATURE

_____

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics and Compliance unit, Concordia University, at (514) 848-2424 x2425 or by email at kwiscomb@alcor.concordia.ca .