

Negative and Positive Synergies:**On Employee Development Practices, Motivational Climate, and Employee Outcomes****Abstract**

While previous studies have increased our knowledge of how employees' perceptions of development practices influence employee outcomes, the role of potential contingencies in this relationship remains relatively unexplored. In the present study, we set out to contribute to this research by exploring whether congruence or lack of congruence between perceived employee development practices and the perceived motivational climate at work influence employee performance and turnover intention. A field study among 169 employees from a Norwegian financial organization revealed that lack of congruence may be detrimental in terms of work performance and turnover intention. Implications for practice and future research are discussed.

Keywords: employee development practices, motivational climate, work performance, turnover intention

Introduction

Providing developmental opportunities is regarded as an effective way to increase employees' performance (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees who perceive that their organization invests in them by providing development and career opportunities respond in kind by feeling obligation to reciprocate the benefits provided (Chay & Aryee, 1999; Pajo, Coetzer, & Guenole, 2010; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Such a reciprocation results in beneficial employee outcomes such as increased work performance and decreased turnover intention (Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011; Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009, 2010a).

While prior research has provided important insights into the relationship between employees' perceptions of development practices and employee outcomes, the role of contextual influences on this relationship remains relatively unexplored (Kraimer et al., 2011; Maurer & Lippstreu, 2006). In particular, calls have been made for research on the outcomes of the extent to which employee perceptions of human resource (HR) practices are aligned with contextual factors (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Kuvaas, 2008; McClean & Collins, 2011b). This may be particularly important when employees perceive misalignment between HR practices and what is emphasized through the expressed work climate in the organization (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Accordingly, a lack of attention to contextual contingencies in prior research on the impact of perceived HR practices may have caused researchers to either under- or overestimate the influence of developmental HR on employee outcomes (Kraimer et al., 2011; McClean & Collins, 2011b).

We seek to extend this area of research by exploring whether incongruence between developmental practices and both favorable conditions (i.e., mastery climate) and potentially unfavorable conditions (i.e., performance climate) may negatively influence the relationship

between developmental HR practices and employee outcomes. Specifically, we investigate whether the relationship between perceived employee development practices (PEDPs), work performance, and turnover intention is moderated by mastery and performance climate(s). We define PEDPs as employees' perceptions that the organization facilitates practices and opportunities that support employee development in terms of long-term personal and professional growth (Kraimer et al., 2011; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). A mastery climate refers to work situations wherein success is defined based on learning, growth, and effort, while a performance climate refers to work situations that define success based on social comparison and normative ability (Ames, 1992). According to the achievement goal theory (AGT; Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989), these climates are referred to as the perceived motivational climate. Mastery and performance climates may even exist simultaneously, and given their different value orientations, mastery and performance climates are likely to either enhance or inhibit the relationship between perceived HR practices and employee outcomes (cf. Ames, 1992).

Because we cannot expect all employees to interpret HR practices similarly, the importance of exploring employees' perceptions of HR practices at the micro level remains uncontested (Nishii, Lepak, & Schneider, 2008). We relate these perceptions to employee work performance because it is considered essential for human resource management (HRM) researchers to predict and understand work performance (O'Boyle & Aguinis, 2012). Furthermore, turnover is a costly affair for organizations, and it is expected to increase as turnover intention increases (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Turnover intention is regarded as the most immediate and direct cognitive predictor of obvious behavior (Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Steel & Ovalle, 1984) and thus represents "the single best predictor of turnover" (Steel & Ovalle, 1984, p. 673).

We intend to contribute theoretically to the literature that acknowledges the importance of congruence between perceived HR practices and organizational contexts (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Kraimer et al., 2011; Kuvaas, 2008) and focus specifically on the motivational climate. Such a climate represents a particularly relevant contextual influence because it sends clear messages about what is valued in the organization (cf. Kopleman, Brief, & Guzzo, 1990; Ostroff & Bowen, 2000). These messages may shape employee work behavior and attitudes (cf. Parker et al., 2003). Accordingly, work represents an achievement context in which the motivational climate has been shown to predict outcomes such as work engagement, turnover intention, incivility, work performance, and creativity (Birkeland & Nerstad, 2016; Černe, Nerstad, Dysvik, & Škerlavaj, 2014; Nerstad, Roberts, & Richardsen, 2013).

We also intend to make a practical contribution to the field of HRM, that is, by informing organizations and managers of important contextual influences on the relationship between perceived HR practices and employee outcomes that could potentially distort the positive influences of developmental HR practices.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Perceived Employee Development HR Practices, Work Performance, and Turnover Intention

PEDPs include aspects such as training, skill enhancement/development, and career development opportunities (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Developmental opportunities are typically valued by employees (Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005) because the employees are provided with new skills, knowledge, and professional growth, giving them the opportunity to develop and, in turn, perform more effectively and remain in the organization (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008; Kraimer et al., 2011; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). By providing such benefits,

organizations are likely to promote employees' positive mind-set toward the organization (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2006).

In this study, we focus on work performance (i.e., work effort and work quality) and turnover intention as outcomes. In line with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), perception of the availability of developmental practices may increase work performance. Consistent with the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), when employees perceive the availability of developmental practices that they believe are of value to them, they are likely to reciprocate or repay the organization through behaviors such as working hard and delivering high-quality work (Brandes, Dharwadkar, & Wheatley, 2004). PEDPs are also likely to facilitate conditions in which employees believe that their employability is cared for and that their contribution is valued by their organization (cf. Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Accordingly, they are more likely to behaviorally reciprocate this exchange by increasing in-role performance (Brandes et al., 2004; Lee & Bruvold, 2003). In line with the norm of reciprocity, we thus expect the relationship between PEDPs and work quality to be the same as the relationship between PEDPs and work effort. Still, it should be noted that behavioral reciprocity may depend on whether employees use the facilitated employee development practices¹.

As for turnover intention, it may be reasonable to expect that the availability of PEDPs will decrease turnover intention. Decreased turnover intention may represent ways by which employees can recompense their organization for supporting and caring for employees (Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Because employees feel obligated to “repay” those who have helped them (Gouldner, 1960)—for example, when the organization facilitates employee development practices—they are likely to do so by continuing their

¹ We would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for emphasizing this.

employment. Consequently, they may be less likely to leave the organization or to seek alternative employment (D. G. Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Consistent with this notion, Kraimer et al. (2011) found that when employees perceive high levels of developmental support, the organization benefits in terms of increased performance and lower turnover. In line with Blaus's (1964) economic-based theorizing, it is expected that forward-looking individuals act based on anticipated rewards that benefit them, and they tend to choose the course of action that benefits them (Cook & Rice, 2003). However, employees may also look backward and value what has been rewarding to them in the past, which in turn affects their actions (Cook & Rice, 2003). PEDPs may develop greater employee obligation toward the organization in that both forward-looking and backward-looking employees become more willing to invest in increased effort, deliver high-quality work, and continue their employment to increase the organization's effectiveness (D. G. Allen et al., 2003; Arthur, 1994; Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between PEDPs and (a) work effort and (b) work quality.

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention.

The Moderating Role of the Perceived Motivational Climate

There are reasons to expect that the associations between PEDPs, work performance, and turnover intention depend on additional contextual variables (Kraimer et al., 2011; McClean & Collins, 2011b). The extent to which PEDPs actually relate to higher levels of work performance (i.e., work effort and quality) and reduced turnover intention may depend on the type of perceived motivational climate, as defined by AGT.

AGT is a social cognitive theory that incorporates both individual difference variables

(goal orientations) and situational determinants (i.e., motivational climate) of achievement behavior within the same conceptual framework (Nerstad et al., 2013). These individual difference variables are products of the socialization process (Nicholls, 1989). According to AGT, the perceived motivational climate—which refers to perceptions of the extant criteria for success and failure underscored through the policies, procedures, and practices of the work environment (Ames, 1992; Nerstad et al., 2013)—plays an important role in that process. Practices and procedures are typically communicated through the way in which leaders support and reward certain behavior (Gilbert, De Winne, & Sels, 2011; Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009; Schneider, 1990) and thereby create a reward structure with which individuals are evaluated in relation to a goal and to each other (Ames & Ames, 1984a). There are two basic types of motivational climate, namely a mastery climate and a performance climate. Mastery and performance climates represent different value orientations that may result in various ways of processing diverse action strategies and information and different meanings attached to failure and success (Ames & Ames, 1984a). Building on Kepes and Delerey's (2007) variations of fit in terms of positive and negative synergistic influences, we expect performance and mastery climates to play different roles in reducing or enhancing the relationships between PEDPs and work performance and turnover intention.

The Interplay between PEDPs and Performance Climate

A performance climate is focused on intra-team competition and normative and social comparisons (Roberts, 2012). In other words, supervisors attempt to exert considerable external control over employee behavior (e.g., incentive programs) or encourage social comparison with contests or tracking (Ames, 1992; Dragoni, 2005). As a result, individuals become more focused on their demonstration of ability and the distribution of ability in their work group (cf. Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1979). Subsequently, effort is considered to be

inversely related to ability (Nicholls, 1978). This means that the *less* effort an employee puts into work tasks, the higher the employee's ability is viewed to be. The perceived motivational climate influences how employees will conceptualize work-related ability, and this conception in turn will guide employee reasoning about ability and effort (cf. Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984). In a performance climate, ability is likely to be judged as lower when individuals work harder (i.e., more effort) than others and as higher when they work less (less effort) than others (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984). A performance climate has previously been associated with mainly negative outcomes, including lower performance and higher turnover intention (Nerstad et al., 2013); however, how such a climate interplays with PEDPs in predicting those outcomes has, to our knowledge, not yet been explored in the literature.

When two activities in an organization work against each other and undermine one another's influence, there exist negative synergistic influences (Kepes & Delery, 2007). These are more likely to take place when PEDPs and the motivational climate are perceived as lacking congruence (cf. Becker, Huselid, Pickus, & Spratt, 1997; Foss, Pedersen, Fosgaard, & Stea, 2014). This situation would probably result in difficulties with clearly understanding what behaviors the organization expects from its employees. This may happen when employees perceive organizational support for employee development but at the same time perceive a performance climate.

PEDPs are focused on and support development practices for *all* employees, across different levels of talent (i.e., talent management versus people management; Björkman, Ehnrooth, Mäkelä, Smale, & Sumelius, 2013; Kraimer et al., 2011). A performance climate, on the other hand, to a greater extent, values the "winners" at work and normative ability in defining success, not effort (Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989). When PEDPs coexist within such a climate (i.e., ego-involving criteria of success), the expected felt obligation to reciprocate to

the organization may instead turn into a transactional exchange, implying norms that encourage opportunistic and self-interested behavior (cf. Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Thus, reciprocity turns into self-interested behavior because the probability of one employee receiving a reward or attaining a goal is reduced when more capable employees are present (Ames & Ames, 1984a).

PEDPs in combination with a performance climate are likely to send conflicting messages that may be perceived as incongruent, which may make the signaled criteria of success unclear. According to AGT (Nicholls, 1984), this is because in a performance climate, employees are “forced” to assess what they can master and whether this implies higher ability than their coworkers. Such a climate makes employees judge whether mastery of, for example, new skills and knowledge will serve their end (Nicholls, 1984). For example, employees may believe that they can improve their skills, knowledge, and professional growth through PEDPs, but they expect such improvement attempts to imply low ability more clearly than inactivity in such practices would (cf. Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984; Nicholls, 1984). One could argue that only the best are successful (i.e., performance climate), but all employees get the same opportunities to develop themselves (PEDP) to join the rivalry. Still, PEDPs require effort to learn, develop, and master (McClellan & Collins, 2011a). In line with AGT (Nicholls, 1984, 1989), the fact that effort improves mastery conflicts with the criteria of success inherent in a performance climate, where higher effort implies that employees have lower ability (cf. Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984).

Although the above arguments suggest that PEDPs will not be attractive in a performance climate, there exists a possible exception. That is when employees see the potential to use PEDPs for their own personal advantage (Kuvaas, 2008). Specifically, because a performance climate is associated with greater social comparisons, it is likely that

employees will compare what they contribute to and receive from their employer with what their colleagues contribute and receive. As a result of the emphasis on social comparison and the more controlling and transactional ties a performance climate engenders, individuals may become more reluctant to support attempts by the organization to develop the growth of and developmental and emotional ties with its employees through PEDPs (cf. Kuvaas, 2008; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Accordingly, PEDPs and a performance climate may result in a negative synergy because employees are more likely to behave in opportunistic ways by giving primacy to self-interests over collective interests (cf. Ames & Ames, 1984b; Kepes & Delery, 2007; Kuvaas, 2008). PEDPs then become the practices that employees use more for their personal advantage, such as securing internal and external career advancement, to the extent that the PEDPs can also be used to make them more attractive in the external labor market (cf. Kuvaas, 2008). Such behavior may result in reduced performance in addition to the intention to quit their job for the sake of career advancement. Although PEDPs encourage the motivation to work hard on behalf of the organization (Kraimer et al., 2011; Kuvaas, Buch, Gagné, Dysvik, & Forest, 2016), the simultaneous existence of a performance climate is likely to shift employees' attention from hard work and effort to their normative ability, where ability is judged to be lower when individuals work harder (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984; Nicholls, 1989). According to AGT, in performance climate situations, if many other coworkers can do a task, it suggests that the task is easy and success does not indicate high ability, whether or not organizational goals are in line with personal goals (Nicholls, 1984). Therefore, instead of employees becoming motivated to work hard for the organization, as encouraged by PEDPs, the goal structure of a performance climate provides opportunities for the realization of opportunistic goals, and PEDPs may therefore be seen as prospects for competitive advantage in terms of, for example, increasing employees' personal occupational

attractiveness (cf. Ames & Ames, 1984a). Under such circumstances, the relationship between PEDPs and the intent to leave the organization may become less negative, and engagement in behaviors beneficial to the organization may decrease. Such opportunistic behavior is likely to be disclosed by employees' immediate leaders, resulting in reduced performance ratings. Accordingly, negative synergies (e.g., PEDPs and a performance climate) may result in more negative outcomes compared to when the value orientation of PEDPs and the motivational climate match (McClean & Collins, 2011b).

Employees may also compete with their coworkers to obtain a greater share of the available organizational resources (cf. Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Accordingly, the relationship between PEDPs and performance is likely to become less positive, while the relationship with employees' turnover intentions is likely to become less negative, as the felt obligation to reciprocate should be weaker the lower the perceived value of the benefit exchanged (Blau, 1964). When PEDP is low, performance is likely to decline, and employees will also be more inclined to have intentions of quitting their job because of the maladaptive consequences a high performance climate facilitates (Černe et al., 2014; Nerstad et al., 2013). We therefore hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 3: A perceived performance climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and (a) work effort and (b) work quality. The higher the perceived performance climate, the less positive the relationship.

Hypothesis 4: A perceived performance climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention. The higher the perceived performance climate, the less negative the relationship.

In contrast, a mastery climate refers to a goal–reward structure that supports effort and cooperation and places emphasis on learning and mastery of skills (Ames, 1992; Pensgaard &

Roberts, 2002). Such a climate is focused on self-development and building competence. In a mastery climate, individuals have been found to adopt achievement strategies such as persisting in the face of difficulty, seeking challenging tasks, and having intrinsic interest and positive attitudes (Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999). Therefore, the importance of creating a mastery climate in sports, classrooms, and organizations has been emphasized (Ames, 1992; Lau & Nie, 2008; Roberts, 2012; Van Yperen, Hamstra, & van der Klauw, 2011). In work settings, a mastery climate has been associated with higher levels of job engagement, higher in-role performance, more creativity, less knowledge hiding, and lower turnover intention (Černe et al., 2014; Nerstad et al., 2013). Still, its interplay with PEDPs in predicting work-related outcomes has, to our knowledge, remained unexplored.

When two activities within an organization have a more positive influence than the sum of each individually, a positive synergistic influence occurs (Becker et al., 1997; Kepes & Delery, 2007). According to AGT, the impact of organizational policies and practices on individuals may be enhanced by a mastery climate, particularly when the underlying value belief framework aligns (Ames, 1992; Ames & Ames, 1984a). Thus, positive synergistic influence is likely to arise when messages perceived from HR practices and the mastery climate are consistent (cf. Ames, 1992; McClean & Collins, 2011b). This means that employees will have a clear understanding of which behaviors the organization values (cf. Ames, 1992; Ames & Ames, 1984a). In addition, employees in a mastery climate may benefit *more* from organizational social exchange relationships (i.e., PEDPs), as supervisors emphasizing mastery climate criteria probably facilitate employee–organization exchanges, encouraging subordinates to engage in developmental and promotional opportunities (Dragoni, 2005). This means that to have a stronger positive influence on employees, developmental HR practices should encourage unambiguous and shared perceptions of the

climate in terms of expected, supported, and rewarded behaviors (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Therefore, the alignment of PEDPs and a mastery climate should be beneficial in terms of enhanced work effort and work quality and fewer intentions to quit because consistent messages are sent to employees regarding the organization's goals of valued employee behaviors and attitudes (cf. Ames & Ames, 1984a; Nishii et al., 2008). McClean and Collins (2011b) argued that congruence between HR practices and leadership leads to higher performance and lower turnover. Furthermore, Kuvaas (2008) found a positive relationship between the perception of developmental HR practices and work performance only for employees who perceived a high-quality employee–organization relationship. Similarly, Kraimer et al. (2011) found that when employees perceived high levels of developmental support and career opportunities, the organization benefitted from increased work performance and lower probable turnover. To facilitate enhanced motivation and performance and reduced withdrawal behavior (e.g., dropout, turnover intention), Ames (1992) initially argued for the importance of making various organizational and environmental structures (e.g., PEDPs and a mastery climate) work in concert. This is meant to secure the alignment between communicated values. Accordingly, because of the adaptive outcomes in a mastery climate and its support of the values (i.e., mastery, learning, and skill development) typically emphasized as important by PEDPs, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 5: A perceived mastery climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and (a) work effort and (b) work quality. The higher the perceived mastery climate, the more positive the relationship.

Hypothesis 6: A perceived mastery climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention. The higher the perceived mastery climate, the more negative the relationship.

Finally, Ames (1992) initially assumed that the two motivational climates may be mutually dependent and thus interact in a multiplicative way when predicting outcomes. This means that tasks that are designed to facilitate personal choice and challenge may be undermined by evaluation practices valuing social comparison (Ommundsen & Roberts, 1999). If these climates were in fact interactive (multiplicative), they would not be able to compensate for each other (Ames, 1992). For example, a leader who challenges various teams to design a new financial product and then promises a substantial bonus to the team with the winning product would not be able to facilitate perceptions of a mastery climate. This may be explained by the mixed goals the climates reflect in terms of sending incongruent messages to employees (cf. Ames, 1992). How employees interpret and make sense of such incongruent messages and how these messages affect their attitudes and behaviors remain important empirical questions, particularly because some argue that the organizational reality requires not just emphasis on continuous employee growth and learning but also attention to end results (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005). To clarify this matter, it is important to consider not only mastery and performance climates separately but also their combined impact. To our knowledge, only two studies have so far tested such a prediction directly (Buch, Nerstad, & Säfenbom, 2017; Linnenbrink, 2005), although Ommundsen and Roberts (1999) justified the assumption in a study in which they explored different profiles of the motivational climate among Norwegian team sport athletes. Their results showed that the combination of a high perceived performance climate and a high perceived mastery climate seemed to represent a *desirable* motivational strategy (Ommundsen & Roberts, 1999). In the educational domain, Linnenbrink (2005) found that a combination of high mastery and high performance climates facilitated more beneficial outcomes (i.e., student help seeking and achievement) compared to a mastery climate or performance climate alone. Contrary to these

results, however, Buch et al. (2017) found that high levels of a mastery climate only facilitated increased intrinsic motivation under conditions of low levels of a perceived performance climate among military cadets. These results suggest that the simultaneous introduction of a mastery and a performance climate represents an *undermining* motivational strategy (Buch et al., 2017). Given the conflicting findings of the studies, the interactive (multiplicative) roles of mastery and performance climates remain unclear. Nevertheless, according to Ames's (1992) initial theorizing, in situations in which employees perceive employee development practices to a greater extent and perceive a high mastery climate and low performance climate, we expect higher performance and lower turnover intention. This is likely because employees perceive more practice–context congruence, and thus, motivation outcomes may not be confused (Ames, 1992). In situations of high PEDP, a high mastery climate, and a high performance climate, we expect lower performance and higher turnover intention because the PEDPs and mastery climate are not directed toward the same goals and values as the performance climate (Ames, 1992), thus facilitating negative synergies. The same may be expected in situations in which PEDPs are high, the mastery climate is low, and the performance climate is high.

Last, we expect that the combination of low levels of PEDP, a low mastery climate, and a low performance climate will be associated with lower performance and higher turnover intention. When employees perceive low PEDPs and there are low levels of mastery and performance climates, they may not have a reason to perform better, and other job options may become more interesting, thus increasing their intentions to quit. We therefore hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 7: Perceived mastery and performance climates interact to moderate the relationship between PEDP and (a) work effort and (b) work quality. The relationship

becomes more positive for employees who perceive a high level of mastery climate and low level of performance climate, compared to the groups of employees who perceive a high level of mastery climate and high level of performance climate, a low level of mastery climate and high level of performance climate, and a low level of mastery climate and low level of performance climate.

Hypothesis 8: Perceived mastery and performance climates interact to moderate the relationship between PEDP and turnover intention. The relationship becomes more negative for employees who perceive a high level of mastery climate and low level of performance climate, compared to the groups of employees who perceive a high level of mastery climate and high level of performance climate, a low level of mastery climate and high level of performance climate, and a low level of mastery climate and low level of performance climate.

Organizational Context

Good research tells a story, and it should allow the reader to see the world (Johns, 2006; Siggelkow, 2007). As Siggelkow (2007) said, “If theory talks only to theory, the collective research exercise runs the danger of becoming entirely self-referential and out-of-touch with reality, of coming to be considered irrelevant” (p. 23). Accordingly, the particular organization investigated in this study had a special context suitable for facilitating deeper insights and contextualizing our findings for several reasons (cf., Rousseau & Fried, 2001). First, according to personal correspondence with the employee representative, the organization signaled clearly to its employees the importance of continuous growth and development by, for example, emphasizing the importance of daily learning and effort and facilitating improved performance, all indicative of a mastery climate. To facilitate employee development, the organization used various practices, such as encouraging employees who

really wanted further development to contact their direct leaders to create development plans. According to personal and e-mail correspondence with the employee representative of the organization, “the success of these practices was dependent on the leader, but also the employees’ motivation [for learning and growth]” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). In addition, the organization had a trainee program that invited applicants twice a year. According to the employee representative, “this was a protected group which was featured among employees as a group that was carried forward in triumph” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). Thus, the few applicants selected for the program seemed to have benefits that other employees were not offered. Such practices of defining some employees as abler than others may have created the perception of a performance climate. The organization also provided employees with intriguing commission agreements. According to an e-mail correspondence with the employee representative of the organization, these commission agreements resulted in maladaptive behavior, in which “highly skilled employees did not want to share their expertise, or include their colleagues in customer meetings to be able to learn from each other” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). The employee representative also emphasized that there were variations between teams/units, where some teams/units were more focused on achieving the preset goals (numbers) rather than quality. As indicated by the employee representative, “such sales employees often operated with crude sales to get the highest possible commission” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). Other teams/units were more focused on processes in which delivering quality to customers was most important, and the team members collaborated to develop, grow, learn, and perform. According to the employee representative, these development-oriented teams/units viewed the other (performance-oriented) teams as engaging in an “inappropriate

culture” in which “a verbal ‘war’ developed between the teams” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). Another aspect of the particular context was that a new authorization scheme was introduced in which all financial advisors were forced to increase their competence by passing an authorization exam. The pressure to pass the exam was high, given that failing would prevent employees from remaining in their positions as financial advisors (selling financial products). According to the employee representative, “Those who passed on the first try made a lot out of themselves and did often show little willingness to help others who struggled to pass the exam” (personal communication, March 15, 2016). Thus, the achievement context of the organization seemed to reflect employee development practices, with the mastery and performance climates suggesting the relevance of empirically testing the interactive influence of PEDPs, the perceived mastery and performance climate on work performance and turnover intentions.

Method

Procedures and Subjects

One thousand three-hundred employees at a Norwegian financial organization were surveyed with the Web-based tool, Conconfirm. The participants were informed that their individual responses would be kept confidential and that their supervisor would evaluate the effort and quality of their work. This emphasis on confidentiality was important to reduce the likelihood that respondents would “edit their responses to be more socially desirable, lenient, acquiescent, and consistent with how they think the researcher wants them to respond” (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003, p. 888). Approximately 34% ($N = 470$) of participants returned questionnaires. Of these, 169 could be matched with their supervisors’ ratings ($n = 81$). The final sample consisted of 90 men and 79 women, approximately 62% of whom reported an educational background of three to six years at a university and/or business

school. All participants were full-time employees, and the majority (approximately 70%) did not have any managerial responsibilities.

As recommended by Armstrong and Overton (1977); and in line with Krishnan, Martin, and Noorderhaven (2006); as well as Poppo and Zenger (2002), we tested for nonresponse bias by comparing early and late respondents on a number of variables. This approach is relevant because late respondents have been argued to be representative of nonrespondents—the more resistant (i.e., late) respondents are, the more similar they are to nonrespondents (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). The results from the independent sample *t*-test indicated that there were no significant mean differences between late and early respondents in terms of the study's variables: PEDPs ($p = .77$), work effort ($p = .38$), work quality ($p = .26$), turnover intention ($p = .30$), mastery climate ($p = .79$), or performance climate ($p = .17$). If late respondents were representative of nonrespondents, the nonresponse bias seems not to have influenced the results of our study given that there were no significant differences between any of the study's variables.

In addition, we tested whether there was a difference between the 169 respondents who were rated by their direct leaders and the subsequent 301 respondents who responded but could not be included in the study due to a lack of leader ratings. The results from these additional independent sample *t*-tests indicated that there were some significant differences among the respondents who were included and excluded. The participants included in our sample scored significantly ($p < .05$) and slightly higher ($M = 3.87$, $SD = .71$) on their perception of a mastery climate compared to participants who were not included in the study ($M = 3.71$, $SD = .77$). However, there were no significant differences with respect to the other study variables: PEDPs ($p = .28$), turnover intention ($p = .54$), and performance climate ($p = .62$). Accordingly, although these tests were nothing more than a diagnostic technique for

assessing the extent to which nonresponse bias may be a problem, the results seemed to indicate that it was not a serious threat in this study.

Measures

All measures used a five-point Likert response scale ranging from one (*strongly disagree*) to five (*strongly agree*).

Perceived Employee Development Practices

To measure PEDPs, we applied a measure adapted from Allen and Ericksen (2009). The measure included three statements regarding employees' perceptions of HR practices focused on employee development (e.g., "My organization appears to be very concerned with the continuous development of its employees' skills and abilities") and three statements regarding career development opportunities (e.g., "I perceive that the organization makes a conscious effort to facilitate internal career opportunities").

Work effort and work quality

We measured work effort and work quality by having leaders fill out a five-item scale to assess work effort (e.g., "He/she intentionally expends a great deal of effort in carrying out his/her job") and a five-item scale to assess work quality (e.g., "He/she delivers higher quality than can be expected"; (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2011).

Turnover intention

Turnover intention was measured by five items (e.g., "I often think about quitting my present job") used by Kuvaas (2008).

Motivational climate

We applied a measure developed and validated by Nerstad et al. (2013) to measure perceptions of the motivational climate at work. In the questionnaire, we asked participants to indicate how they perceived success was defined in their work situations. Six items measured

employees' perceptions of a mastery climate (e.g., "Each individual's learning and development is emphasized"), whereas eight questions measured employees' perceptions of a performance climate (e.g., "Only the employees who achieve the best results/accomplishments are set up as examples").

Control variables

In our study, we embraced a situated AGT perspective (Ames, 1992) with which the perceived motivational climate was thought to influence individuals' goal orientation. However, many scholars hold a more person-centered AGT perspective and believe that dispositional goal orientation will determine how the individual interprets an achievement situation (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005). We therefore followed the practice of previous studies holding a situated AGT perspective and controlled for dispositional goal orientation (cf. Černe et al., 2014; Nerstad et al., 2013). It should be noted that although the climate conceptualization may seem similar to that of the dispositional goal orientation conceptualization, these concepts are very different. Specifically, dispositional goal orientation concerns how an individual employee personally defines success, and motivational climate concerns how success is defined in a particular achievement context (Roberts, 2012). We measured mastery and performance goal orientation with nine items adapted from the Norwegian version (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2010; Nerstad et al., 2013) of Vandewalles' (1997) work domain goal orientation scale. Four items were used to measure individual performance orientation (e.g., "I am concerned with showing that I can perform better than my co-workers"), whereas five items were used to measure individual mastery orientation (e.g., "I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks where I'll learn new skills"). Furthermore, we decided to control for intrinsic motivation because previous research showed its predictive role for both work performance (e.g., Cerasoli, Nicklin, & Ford, 2014)

and turnover intention (e.g., Kuvaas, 2006). Intrinsic motivation was measured with six items (e.g., “My job is so interesting that it is a motivation in itself”) that were previously applied in Norwegian settings (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009).

Tenure was included as a control variable because it has been found to influence relationship development (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). We controlled for gender because males and females may have different motivational climate perceptions (Abrahamsen, Roberts, & Pensgaard, 2008). Age was also included as a control variable because it has been shown to relate to performance and turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Waldman & Avolio, 1986). We controlled for managerial responsibility because the sample included supervisors at different levels of the organization who were also rated by their direct supervisors.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The reliability results of the various measures presented in Table 1 ranged from .75 to .93, indicating a reliable measurement model (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are also presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the psychometric properties of the included scales as well as facilitate some controls for discriminant validity (Farrell, 2010). Due to the non-independent observations in the dataset (the respondents are

nested within leaders), the CFA was performed using cluster-robust standard errors at the leader level. This approach was applied because clustered errors may reflect that model errors for employees in the same work group are correlated, while model errors for employees in different work groups may be uncorrelated. Failing to control for such within-cluster error correlation may lead to very misleading small standard errors and subsequent large t -statistics, misleading narrow confidence intervals, and low p -values (Cameron & Miller, 2015). One approach to controlling for such within-cluster error correlations is applying cluster-robust standard errors (Cameron & Miller, 2015; White, 1984).

Finally, because “ordinal variables are not continuous and should not be treated as if they are” (Jöreskog, 2005, p. 10), we used the weighted least squares (WLSMV) estimator (Muthén, du Toit, & Spisic, 1997) to accommodate the ordered categorical data (e.g., Flora & Curran, 2004). To evaluate the model fit, we applied common guidelines (i.e., RMSEA < .08, CFI > .95 and TLI > .95 for an acceptable fit; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh, Hau, & Grayson, 2005). Given that our research model consisted of six latent variables (PEDPs, mastery climate, performance climate, turnover intention, work effort, and work quality), we conducted the CFA because we had assumptions about a six-factor structure. This six-factor model achieved a good fit ($\chi^2 [632] = 1245.94, p < .001; \chi^2/df = 1.97; RMSEA = .045; CFI = .96; TLI = .96$). We also inspected the modification indices, which did not reveal any critical values. The six-factor model fit better than more parsimonious ones; for example, we tested one alternative model assuming the mastery climate items to be part of the PEDP factor. We used such a model because the concept of a mastery climate also tapped into the importance of development, meaning it was plausible that PEDPs and a mastery climate tapped into the same concept. The CFA results, however, indicated a poorer fit for such a model ($\chi^2 [640] = 1966.50, p < .001; \chi^2/df = 3.07; RMSEA = .066; CFI = .92; TLI = .91$). To further ensure that

there was no conceptual overlap, we also tested a model in which one particular mastery climate item (“Each individual’s learning and development is emphasized”) addressing the importance of development was assumed to load on the PEDP factor. However, this model was also a poorer fit than the initial six-factor model ($\chi^2 [632] = 1568.03, p < .001; \chi^2/df = 2.48; RMSEA = .056; CFI = .94; TLI = .93$). Therefore, the six-factor model formed the basis of the further analyses. In addition, all factor loadings were sufficiently high, ranging from .69 to .97, exceeding .50 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Hierarchical Linear Modeling

Due to the hierarchical nature of our data (subordinates are nested within supervisors), we applied a hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to test our hypotheses. This analytical approach facilitated the possibility of parceling out the variance in responses that resulted from multiple subordinates reporting to the same supervisor to test only the individual-level variance, which was unexplained by the supervisor effect (Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2011). When several respondents share the same context (i.e., the same supervisor), it is important not to treat individual data as independent to avoid violating the independence assumption of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression (e.g., Hobman & Bordia, 2006; Rosen, Harris, & Kacmar, 2011).

Interaction terms may result in problems with multicollinearity because of their correlation with main effects (Aiken & West, 1991). Therefore, we first centered the variables by subtracting the mean of the variable from each score (i.e., grand mean centering; Hofmann & Gavin, 1998) before computing the interaction terms.

Insert Table 2 about here

We estimated fully unconditional models (null models) for work effort, work quality, and turnover intention. The results of these null models (see Table 2) indicated significant between-group variability in supervisor ratings of work quality ($\tau_{00} = .13, p < .05$), but not for supervisor ratings of work effort ($\tau_{00} = .07, n.s.$) or individual reports of turnover intention ($\tau_{00} = .03, n.s.$). Still, the intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs) of work effort (ICC = .15), work quality (ICC = .25), and turnover intention (ICC = .03) suggested that a significant proportion of the variability in work effort (15 %), work quality (25 %), and turnover intention (3%) was attributable to between-group variability (different supervisors). To account for this variation in the dependent variables, we proceeded to test our hypotheses via HLM.

We further tested our hypotheses by estimating four separate models. First, we estimated the unconditional model (null model), which only consisted of the level 1 intercept (Model 0). Second, we entered the control variables in Model 1. Third, Model 2 contained PEDPs. Fourth, we entered the performance and mastery climates in Model 3. Fifth, we entered the interaction terms (i.e., PEDP x performance climate and PEDP x mastery climate) in Model 4. Table 2 reports the results of these models. We followed the recommendations by Aiken and West (1991) and present unstandardized coefficients when interaction terms are included in the model.

Given the nonsignificant results, we did not obtain support for *Hypothesis 1*, in which we predicted a positive relationship between PEDPs and (a) work effort and (b) work quality (see Table 2). However, as shown in Table 2, the results indicated support for *Hypothesis 2*, in which we predicted a negative relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention.

The significant interaction term in the HLM analysis revealed that a perceived performance climate moderated the relationships between PEDPs and work effort, work

quality, and turnover intention (see Table 2). To examine the form of the statistically significant interactions, we followed a recommended practice (Aiken & West, 1991) and plotted low versus high scores on performance climate—that is, one standard deviation above and below the means using non-standardized scores (see Figure 1). Furthermore, we applied Preacher, Curran, and Bauer’s (2006) HLM two-way interaction tool to determine the significance of the simple slopes. The results did not indicate support for *Hypothesis 3a* that perceived performance climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and work effort. The form of interaction reveals a positive (but not statistically significant) relationship between PEDP and work effort for employees in a lower performance climate ($b_{\text{low}} = .11, p = .17$) and a negative (but not statistically significant) relationship between PEDP and work effort for employees in a high performance climate ($b_{\text{high}} = -.14, p = .10$).

Insert Figure 1 about here

The results displayed in Figure 2 indicate a more negative relationship (rather than the less positive relationship predicted in *Hypothesis 3b*) between PEDPs and work quality for employees with higher perceptions of a performance climate, contradicting *Hypothesis 3b* that perceived performance climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and work quality. The form of interaction reveals a *positive* (but not statistically significant) relationship between PEDP and work quality for employees in a lower performance climate ($b_{\text{low}} = .10, p = .24$) and a *negative* significant relationship between PEDP and work quality for employees in a high performance climate ($b_{\text{high}} = -.26, p < .001$).

Insert Figure 2 about here

The results displayed in Figure 3 show a greater negative relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention for employees with low perceptions of a performance climate. More specifically, the form of interaction indicates a *negative* and statistically significant relationship between PEDP and turnover intention for employees in a lower performance climate ($b_{\text{low}} = -.61, p < .001$) and a *negative* significant relationship between PEDP and turnover intention for employees in a high performance climate ($b_{\text{high}} = -.30, p < .01$). This indicates support for *Hypothesis 4* that perceived performance climate moderates the relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Given the nonsignificant interaction terms, we did not obtain support for *Hypothesis 5* that a perceived mastery climate would moderate the relationship between PEDPs and (a) work effort and (b) work quality (see Table 2). We also found no support for *Hypothesis 6* that a perceived mastery climate would moderate the relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention (see Table 2).

To explore Ames' (1992) theoretical assumptions of climate incongruence, we performed three-way moderation analyses². In these analyses, which are presented in Table 3, we entered the control variables, PEDPs, perceived performance climate, and perceived mastery climate in step 1. In step 2, we entered all two-way interaction terms (PEDP x performance climate; PEDP x mastery climate; performance climate x mastery climate). In

² We would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for this suggestion.

step 3, we entered the three-way interaction term (PEDP x performance climate x mastery climate). The three-way interaction term was only statistically significant ($\gamma = -.20, p < .05$) with respect to predicting work effort (see Table 3), which supported *Hypothesis 7a* that a three-way interaction of perceived mastery climate, the perceived performance climate, and PEDP would influence work effort. However, *Hypothesis 7b* and *Hypothesis 8*, in which we predicted that perceived mastery and performance climates would interact to moderate the relationship between PEDP and work quality as well as turnover intentions were not supported.

Insert Table 3 about here

To demonstrate the form of the three-way interaction, we created four combinations of PEDPs and work effort at one standard deviation above and below the mean and plotted one PEDP work effort slope for each group. As indicated in Figure 4, the relationship between PEDPs and work effort was moderated by both mastery and performance climates. The higher the perceived mastery climate and the lower the perceived performance climate, the more positive the relationship between PEDPs and work effort. Indeed, all the slopes were negative except for slope 2 (low performance climate, high mastery climate), suggesting that a low performance climate in combination with a high mastery climate was crucial for a positive relationship between a PEDP and work effort, providing additional support for *Hypothesis 7a*.

To test whether our significant three-way interaction was the result of significant differences among any two, three, or all four combinations of the two moderator variables, performance, and mastery climates at high and low levels, we conducted a slope difference

test (cf. Dawson & Richter, 2006). The results indicated that the slopes for (1) the high performance/high mastery climate group and (2) the low performance/high mastery climate group were significantly different ($t = -3.16, p < 0.01$). We also found a significant difference between (2) the slopes of the low performance/high mastery climate group and (4) the low performance climate/low mastery climate group ($t = 2.00, p < 0.05$). This meant that PEDPs were more effective (in terms of facilitating work effort) for employees of a low performance/high mastery climate than for employees of a high performance/high mastery climate and a low performance/low mastery climate. The other slopes were not found to be significantly different³. We also applied an HLM three-way interaction tool (Preacher et al., 2006) to determine the significance of the simple slopes. The results indicated additional support for *Hypothesis 7a* that perceived mastery and performance climates would interact to moderate the relationship between PEDP and work effort. This interaction revealed a positive significant relationship between PEDP and work effort for employees in a low performance/high mastery climate ($b_{\text{low/high}} = .23, p < .05$). In addition, we found a negative significant relationship between PEDP and work effort for employees in a high performance/high mastery climate ($b_{\text{high/high}} = -.23, p < .05$).

Insert Figure 4 about here

Discussion

³ High performance/high mastery climate group (1) and high performance/low mastery climate group (3): $t = -1.50, p > 0.05$; high performance/high mastery climate group (1) and low performance/low mastery climate group (4): $t = -1.66, p > 0.05$; low performance/high mastery climate group (2) and high performance/low mastery climate group (3): $t = 1.73, p > 0.05$; high performance/low mastery climate group (3) and low performance/low mastery climate group (4): $t = 0.22, p > 0.05$.

The purpose of this study was to explore positive and negative influences on the relationship between PEDPs and employee outcomes in the form of work effort, work quality, and turnover intention. Our study makes two distinct contributions to the field of HRM research. First, we extend previous research by showing that incongruence may diminish the positive influences of perceived HR practices on employee outcomes. Specifically, although we initially hypothesized a less positive relationship, we found negative associations between PEDPs and leader-rated work effort and work quality when employees perceived a high performance climate. Furthermore, when employees perceived a high performance climate, the relationship between PEDPs and turnover intention became less negative compared with situations in which employees perceived a low performance climate.

Our findings suggest that the simultaneous existence of PEDPs and a performance climate represents a negative synergy in which employees effective execution of work may be less likely. It is possible that PEDPs and a performance climate mutually undermine each other's influence (cf. Becker et al., 1997; Kepes & Delery, 2007). This may be due to inconsistent or confusing messages that employees receive from their organizations (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; McClean & Collins, 2011b). The predicted relationship between PEDPs and work quality did not become less positive in a high performance climate. Rather, a change in direction occurred, and the relationship turned negative, meaning high levels of performance climate may be even more detrimental for employees' work quality than initially expected.

Furthermore, employees may become less likely to remain in an organization over time because they are mainly motivated to pursue self-fulfilling interests, such as leaving for a competing organization for the sake of "better" opportunities (Kuvaas, 2008; McClean & Collins, 2011b; Rousseau, 1995).

From a theoretical perspective, our findings contribute both new and valuable knowledge, particularly because they address how context (i.e., perceived motivational climate) serves as an important boundary condition of the relationship between PEDPs and outcomes (cf. Johns, 2006; Snape & Redman, 2010). More specifically, our findings extend previous knowledge by pointing out the degree of congruence between PEDPs and unfavorable conditions in the form of performance climate and how these conditions may negatively influence the relationship between PEDPs and employee outcomes (i.e., work performance and turnover intentions).

Contrary to our hypothesis, we found no evidence that a mastery climate moderates the relationship among PEDPs, work performance, and turnover intention. A mastery climate in itself seems to predict increased work effort, improved work quality, and lower turnover intention, thus supporting the benefits of such a climate (Černe et al., 2014; Nerstad et al., 2013). One possible explanation for the lack of support for our hypothesis regarding mastery climate as a moderator may be that the combination of PEDP and mastery climate is not sufficient. In addition, the performance climate perception needs to be low. The results of the interactive (multiplicative) roles of PEDPs, perceived mastery, and performance climates for predicting work effort lend additional support for such an argument. In line with our hypothesis, we found support for an interaction of PEDPs, perceived mastery climate, and perceived performance climate in relation to work effort. The form of the interaction demonstrates that in high mastery climate, PEDPs relate positively to work effort for employees who perceive a low performance climate. Although PEDPs have previously been shown to facilitate beneficial employee outcomes (e.g., Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008), our results indicate that high levels of perceived mastery climate must be accompanied by low levels of performance climate for PEDPs to positively relate to work

effort. This finding adds to Buch et al. (2017) conclusions and Ames' (1992) initial theoretical assumptions that the two climates are not able to compensate for each other due to their conflicting value orientations. DeShon and Gillespie (2005) argued that employees need to focus on both exploring a task and performing and demonstrating result attainment, thereby implicitly arguing for the necessity of a performance climate at work. According to our results, however, the benefits of employees perceiving a mastery climate are superior to performance climate perceptions. The main emphasis in a mastery climate is the fulfillment of everybody's potential, meaning that all employees should get the opportunity to achieve the best that is possible for them (cf. Nicholls, 1979). Enhancing performance involves motivating everyone to improve upon past performance, not just the more capable or talented employees. The emphasis on equality of motivation and positive interdependence among coworkers in such a climate may also explain why employees prefer to stay. Because the value orientation of a mastery climate provides opportunities for self-development that all individuals can accomplish, employees may choose to stay as their work-life quality is enhanced (Nerstad et al., 2013). Accordingly, we contribute theoretically by illustrating why it may be important for employee perceptions of HR practices to be aligned with contextual factors, such as leadership, HR policies, or psychological climate (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Kuvaas, 2008; McClean & Collins, 2011b).

These findings may also partly explain why we did not find support for the predicted influence of PEDPs and performance climate on work effort. That is, the influence of a perceived mastery climate on the relationship between PEDPs and work effort may be conditional upon a perceived performance climate. Specifically, as evidenced by the three-way interaction and work effort, mastery climates seem to interact positively with PEDPs on work effort when the perceived performance climate is low. Overall, PEDPs were

significantly more effective (in terms of facilitating work effort) for employees of the low performance/high mastery climate than for employees of the high performance/high mastery climate and the low performance/low mastery climate. This implies that Ames' theoretical propositions (1992) are also relevant in work settings. Furthermore, our findings are novel in that they extend previous research by clarifying the role of contextual influences on the PEDP–employee outcome relationship and how important the alignment between perceived HR practices and contextual factors is for employees' behavior and behavioral intentions.

It should also be noted that work effort for low PEDPs (while lower) appeared similar to that in the high performance/high mastery climate group for individuals who perceived low levels of performance climate and high levels of mastery climate. This indicates the importance of facilitating high levels of PEDPs to enhance employees' work effort in low performance/high mastery climates (Dragoni, 2005).

The lack of support for the nonsignificant association between the three-way interaction and work quality may indicate that PEDPs do not have very much influence on work quality in most combinations of mastery and performance climates. However, given that we observed a significant two-way interaction showing a negative relationship between PEDP and work quality for individuals in a high performance climate, more research is needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

Furthermore, the lack of support for our predicted three-way interaction and turnover intention may have been a result of the relatively robust negative relationship with PEDP. This suggests that a perceived mastery climate, even when accompanied by a performance climate, does not provide positive synergies with respect to the intention of staying with an organization. Because of the opposing main "effects" on the outcomes, the lack of significant findings for the two-way interaction of performance climate and mastery climate on

employee outcomes does not necessarily contradict the idea that the two climates send conflicting messages to employees.

Finally, we applied two indicators of work performance (i.e., work effort and work quality) for which our results differed. One explanation for this may be that there is a distinction between these dimensions—namely, ability. Whereas work effort is easier to reciprocate given that it may concern going the “extra mile” for an organization, quality of work is more dependent upon employees’ ability to actually execute (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010b; Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Given that the two performance dimensions are usually related, as in our study (e.g., Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010b), the results may also differ. Further, in line with previous research (Nerstad et al., 2013), the perceived motivational climate may also play an important role in explaining the differing findings. That is, possibly work effort suffers less than work quality in a performance climate because as we state above, not every employee who invests in effort will necessarily accomplish high work quality. Particularly so when one is not facilitated with help from other colleagues, developmental feedback or private and self-referenced progress information. Based on these differing results it is also plausible that congruence between PEDPs and the perceived motivational climate is even more important when it comes to work quality.

Limitations and Future Research

Our research design consisted of important strengths (e.g., supervisor ratings), but our results should also be viewed in light of several limitations. First, because we applied supervisor ratings of work effort and work quality, the total sample was rather small, which may pose a threat to the generalizability of the study. The robustness of our findings must be investigated in future studies, including a larger number of respondents. One of the main strengths of the present study is the fact that we obtained performance ratings from a source

other than the employees to overcome common source bias (Conway & Lance, 2010; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). However, it is no secret that direct leaders often favor some employees over others, and thus the favored employees typically receive higher performance ratings (Kacmar, Zivnuska, & White, 2007). Our results should be interpreted with this in mind, particularly because we did not measure to what extent leaders liked the subordinate they rated. Furthermore, although supervisor ratings represent a strength, perceptions of the supervisor may also be influenced by circumstances and context, such as the motivational climate. For example, in a performance climate, supervisors may be more stimulated to single out the best performers. Thus, another limitation of our study may be that we measure supervisors' perceptions rather than employees' actual performance.

Second, because we had to rely on self-reported turnover intention, we investigated the potential influence of common method variance (CMV). Moreover, Harman's single-factor test, which included all multiple study items (the results of which can be obtained from the first author), was conducted in addition to the CFA analysis (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). The results showed that four separate factors emerged: PEDPs, mastery climate, performance climate, and turnover intention. This observation suggests that CMV is less likely to have influenced our results.

Third, the cross-sectional nature of our study makes it impossible to argue in terms of causality or to rule out the possibility of reverse causality. Longitudinal or experimental studies are required to draw conclusions about causality with greater confidence and to facilitate a better control for CMV.

Fourth, our data included only one organization, making it difficult to generalize our results to other settings. Thus, the particularity of the organization might also have influenced the results of our study. Future research should further investigate whether our predictions

and findings are also valid under other circumstances and organizational settings. A more extensive survey that includes more organizations is necessary because it would then be possible to determine whether our results are salient across different work domains.

Fifth, another possible limitation is that the personal history (e.g., missed opportunities) of employees in the organization we have studied may have influenced their perceptions. Thus, we do not know whether and to what extent employees' personal experiences explain their perceptions and their work effort, work quality, and turnover intention. For example, financial advisors who did not pass the exam may have perceived a stronger performance climate, and they may have possibly had a higher turnover intention because they were frustrated and lacked internal career opportunities. Thus, it is plausible that both the perceived performance climate and lower employee performance may be explained by frustration and missed opportunities. The explanation and implications of our findings may therefore be different if the "victims" of a performance climate perceived it as such. The question is then "who" perceived a performance climate? Although it would have been a strength to control for variables that captured the answer to this question, we did not have such variables in our data. Therefore, our findings should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

Sixth, although we do control for intrinsic motivation in our analyses, a relevant limitation of our study is that we do not include extrinsic motivation as a control variable. Future research should also include measures of extrinsic motivation and test how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation unfold under the influence of a mastery and/or a performance climate over time.

Finally, another possible limitation of our study is the possibility that the perceived motivational climate can influence employee perceptions of HR practices. One could then

argue that employees make specific attributions regarding HR practices due to the perceived climate. However, the correlations between these variables were not extremely high, suggesting that this may be less likely in this particular study. Still, to explore the nature of such a relationship further, future research could benefit from adopting a longitudinal design.

Another interesting avenue for future research may be to focus on more control-based HR practices and their interplay with the perceived motivational climate. Such practices are likely to align better with the value orientation of a performance climate (i.e., focus on control and end results), and it could be interesting to learn whether such a connection predicts, for example, employee well-being and vitality within the organization (cf. Beer, Boselie, & Brewster, 2015; Boselie, Brewster, & Paauwe, 2009).

Practical Implications

Our results provide specific advice for organizations. While managers may be primarily interested in output performance, employees are mainly interested in creating a productive and pleasant atmosphere (Paauwe, 2004). According to the results of our study, organizations and their HR departments, executives, consultants, CEOs, and other leaders are therefore well advised to consider the internal alignment of their HR practices with other organizational factors, such as the motivational climate (Kraimer et al., 2011; McClean & Collins, 2011b). A lack of internal alignment may be detrimental in terms of work effort, work quality, and turnover intention. When the messages of the HR system are perceived as highly consistent with the motivational climate, they may contribute to higher employee performance by motivating employees to stay and to adopt the desired attitudes and actions that collectively assist the organization in meeting its strategic goals (cf. Kepes & Delery, 2007).

Employees' immediate supervisors represent critical agents for communicating the HR strategy of the organization (Gilbert et al., 2011). Still, the intention of the HR system may be communicated inaccurately, especially when the direct supervisor values the extrinsic criteria of success (i.e., performance climate) that conflict with a commitment-based HR strategy. To avoid such a incongruity, the top management and the HR department should provide clear guidelines on HR policies and how these may be practiced in supervisor–employee interactions to facilitate fit (Gilbert et al., 2011). When employees perceive consistent messages regarding desired behaviors, they are more likely to behave in manners that benefit the organization (Kraimer et al., 2011). Despite all of this, it should also be noted that the supervisor does not necessarily play the most important role in facilitating the motivational climate. For example, the overall HR policies (e.g., reward systems) and/or coworkers (cf. Ntoumanis & Vazou, 2005) may also contribute to creating such a climate.

From a practical perspective, our results further point to the essential role of the perceived motivational climate (i.e., mastery and performance climate) at work. Leaders and HR executives, for instance, need to be aware that PEDPs can lead to lower levels of work effort among employees, unless employees simultaneously perceive high levels of mastery climate and low levels of performance climate. Also, high levels of PEDPs are indicated to be a necessary condition for employees' work effort in low performance and high mastery climates. This suggests the importance of aligning high levels of PEDPs with more mastery climate criteria rather than performance climate criteria. Mastery criteria may be emphasized through the design of meaningful, challenging, and diverse tasks, which empower employees by giving them choices in the task-solving process, as well as a private recognition of effort and progress, rather than ability (Ames, 1992).

Conclusion

Our study contributes to the literature in an effort to expand previous models of HRM and competitive advantage because we examined the fit between PEDPs and other aspects of the organizational context (Delery & Doty, 1996). Thus, we contextualized HR within a broader system of practices that affect organizational behavior and attitudes (cf. Johns, 2006; Rousseau & Fried, 2001).

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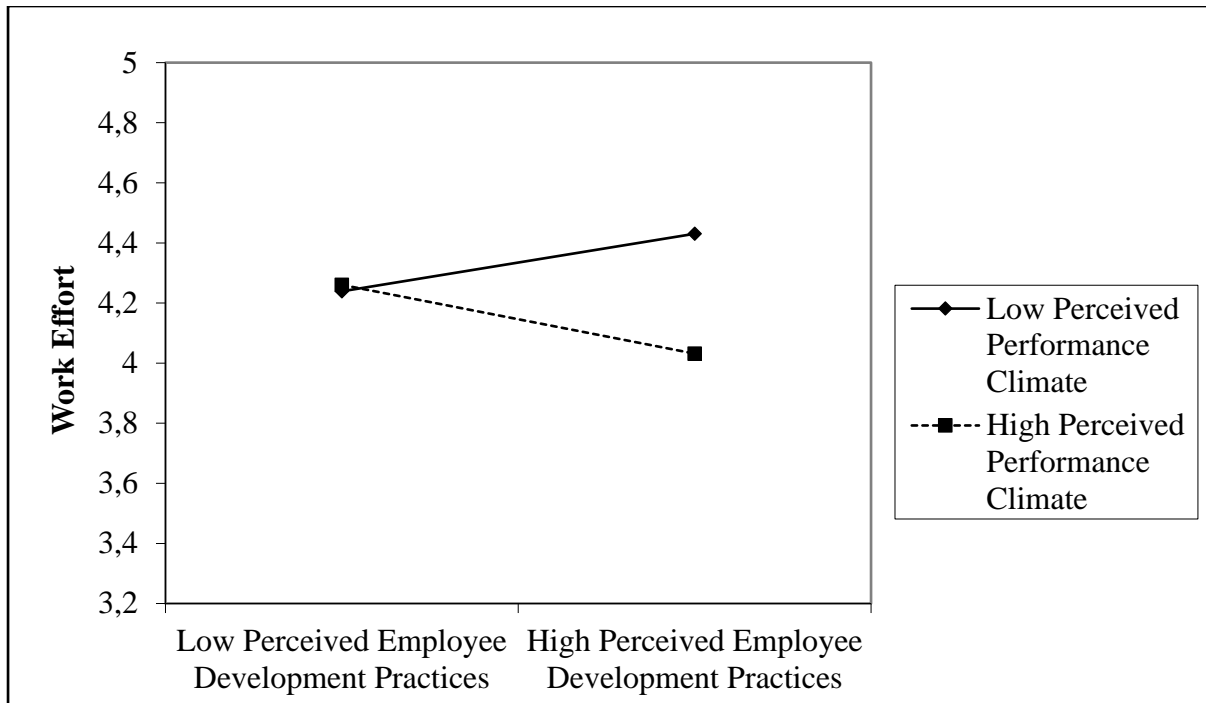
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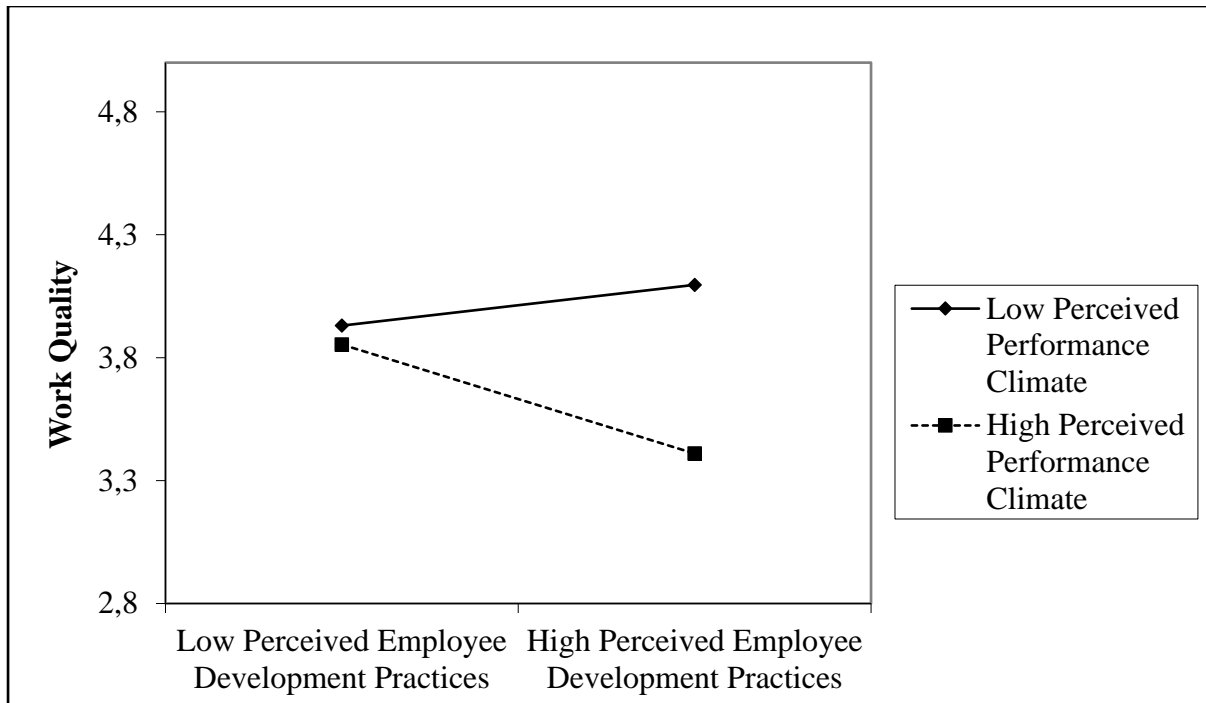
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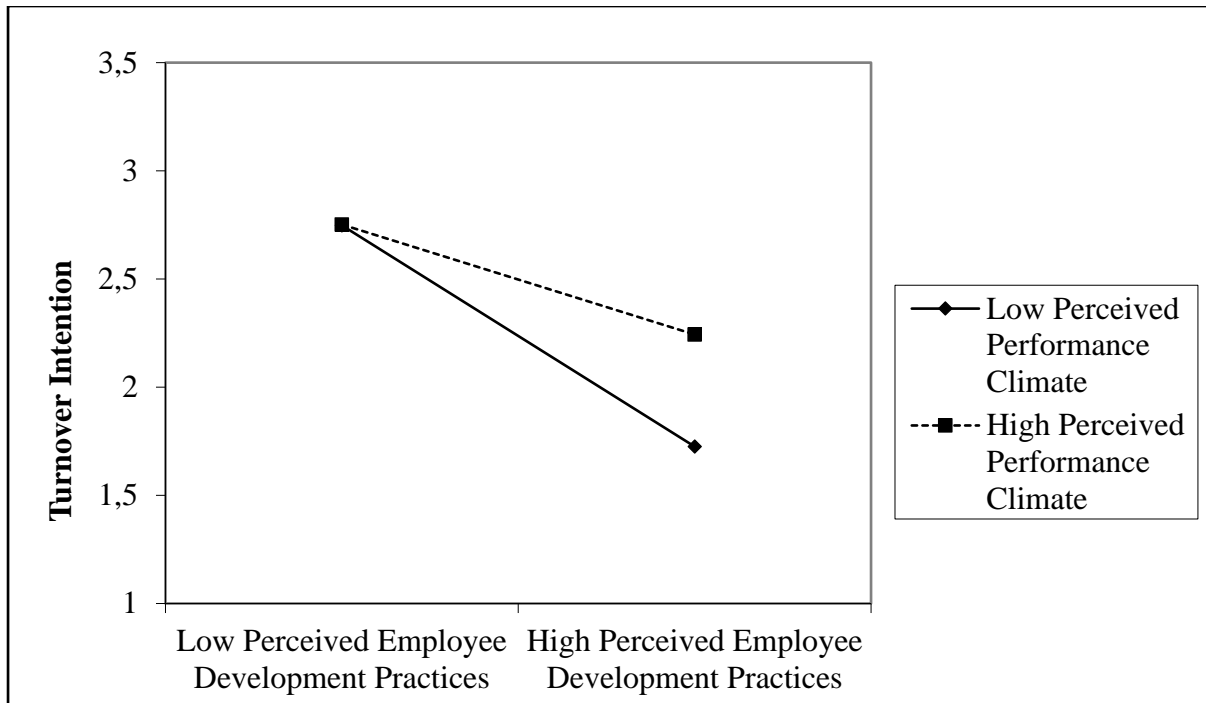
Note. *N* = 169; low = -1 standard deviation; high = +1 standard deviation

Figure 1. The moderating role of the perceived performance climate on the relationship between perceived employee development HR practices and work effort.



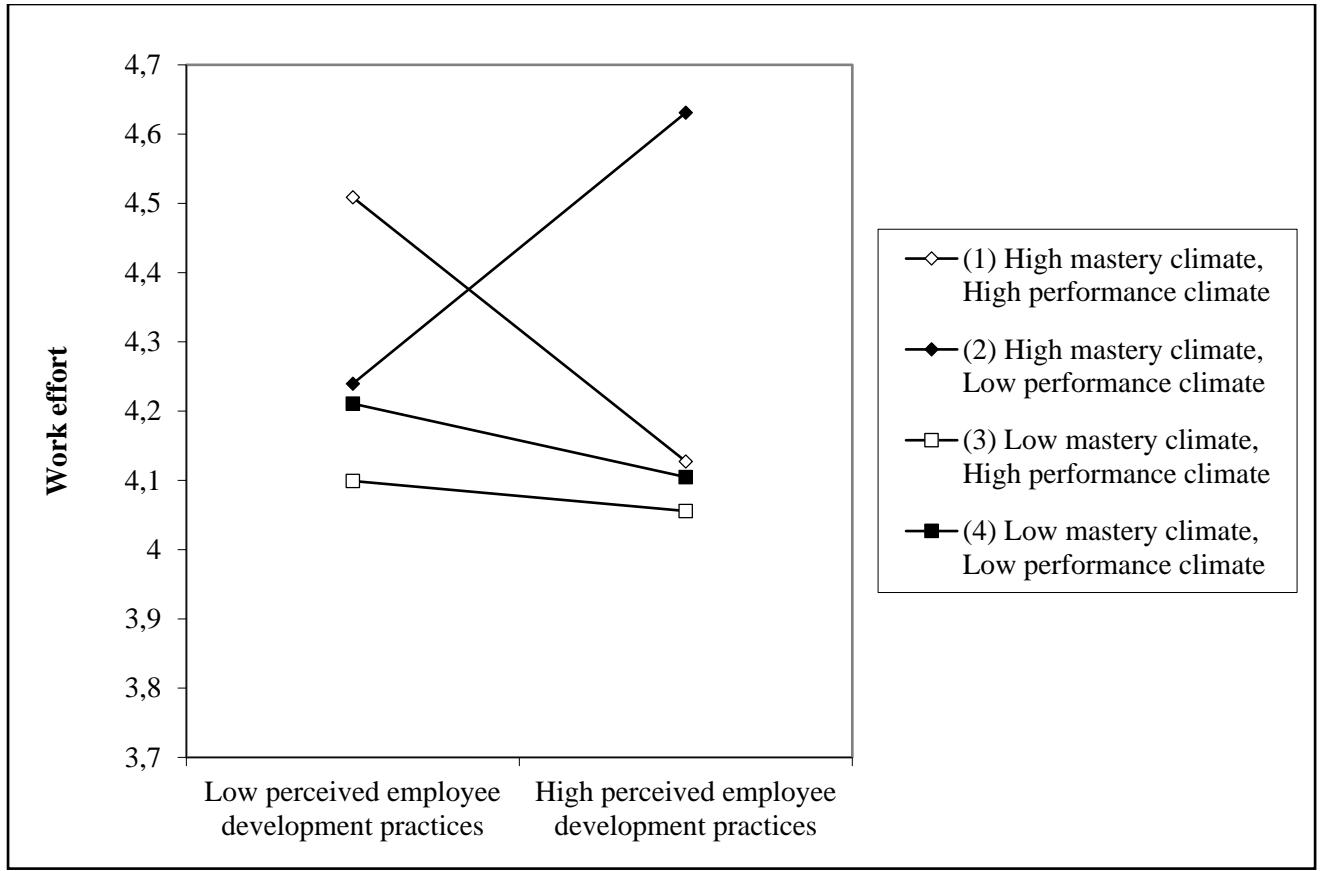
Note. *N* = 169; low = -1 standard deviation; high = +1 standard deviation

Figure 2. The moderating role of the perceived performance climate on the relationship between perceived employee development HR practices and work quality.



Note. *N* = 169; low = -1 standard deviation; high = +1 standard deviation

Figure 3. The moderating role of the perceived performance climate on the relationship between perceived employee development HR practices and turnover intention.



Note. *N* = 169; low = -1 standard deviation; high = +1 standard deviation

Figure 4. The moderating roles of perceived performance climate and perceived mastery climate on the relationship between perceived employee development HR practices and work effort.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Key Study Variables (N = 169)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Gender	1.53	.50	-												
2 Age	44.18	10.91	-.06	-											
3 Tenure	5.07	6.65	-.18*	.41**	-										
4 Managerial responsibility	1.30	.46	.05	-.03	-.16*	-									
5 Performance orientation	3.45	.72	-.11	-.31**	-.10	.10	(.75)								
6 Mastery orientation	4.18	.54	-.06	-.31**	-.22**	.14	.47**	(.78)							
7 Intrinsic motivation	3.99	.74	-.15*	.02	-.01	.34**	-.02	.18*	(.90)						
8 Perceived employee development practices	3.19	.84	-.04	.11	.10	.15	-.07	-.16*	.33**	(.89)					
9 Performance climate	2.56	.87	.01	-.03	.13	.09	.29**	.06	-.12	-.06	(.87)				
10 Mastery climate	3.87	.71	-.05	.07	.03	.37**	-.14	.01	.56**	.37**	-.11	(.86)			
11 Work effort	4.25	.68	-.16*	-.16*	-.08	.14	-.01	.23**	.25**	.05	-.17*	.26**	(.93)		
12 Work quality	3.82	.73	-.14	-.23**	.05	.04	.06	.16*	.24**	.01	-.24**	.23**	.71**	(.92)	
13 Turnover intention	2.36	1.08	.21**	-.28**	-.11	-.09	.26**	.12	-.44**	-.50**	.23**	-.39**	-.23**	-.12	(.88)

Note. All scores reflect responses on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Coefficients within parentheses and in bold are coefficient alphas. Gender: 1 = female; 2 = male; managerial responsibility: 1 = no; 2 = yes.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2
The Moderating Role of the Perceived Motivational Climate (Performance and Mastery Climate)

Variables	Work effort					Work quality					Turnover intention				
	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Fixed effects</i>															
Intercept	4.22***	4.24***	4.24***	4.25***	4.24***	3.77***	3.79***	3.79***	3.80***	3.82***	2.37***	2.36***	2.36***	2.36***	2.37***
Gender		-.21*	-.21*	-.21*	-.18		-.14	-.14	-.12	-.09		.34**	.34**	.33**	.31*
Age		-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01*		-.02**	-.02***	-.02***	-.02***		-.02**	-.02**	-.02**	-.02**
Tenure		-.00	-.00	-.00	-.00		.02	.02	.02	.02**		.00	.01	.01	.00
Managerial responsibility		.11	.11	.07	.06		-.01	-.00	-.01	-.03		.04	.10	.11	.12
Performance orientation		-.17*	-.17*	-.11	-.09		-.07	-.07	.03	.04		.26*	.29**	.23*	.21*
Mastery orientation		.26**	.27*	.27**	.26*		.07	.06	.06	.07		.15	-.03	-.02	-.01
Intrinsic motivation		.15*	.14	.06	.07		.20**	.21***	.11	.11		-.62***	-.43***	-.36***	-.37***
Perceived employee development practices			.02	-.01	-.01			-.03	-.07	-.08			-.48***	-.46***	-.46***
Mastery climate				.17**	.19**				.18*	.19**				-.14	-.15
Performance climate				-.10	-.11				-.21**	-.22***				.14	.15*
Perceived employee development practices × Mastery climate					.02					-.12					.04
Perceived employee development practices × Performance climate							-.14*								.17*
<i>Random effects</i>															
Subordinate level residual variance (σ^2)	.40***	.38***	.38***	.38***	.36***	.41***	.38***	.38***	.35***	.33***	1.13***	.91***	.65***	.63***	.62***
Supervisor level residual variance (τ_{00})	.07	.02	.02	.00	.00	.13	.08	.08	.05	.05	.03	.11	.00	.00	.00
Deviance (χ^2)	347.63	321.69	321.57	314.71	309.36	366.56	341.94	341.73	326.00	312.84	504.92	439.31	407.12	402.13	397.46
Decrease in deviance ($\Delta\chi^2$ ^a)		25.94***	.11	6.86**	5.35*		24.61***	.21	15.73***	13.16***		65.61***	32.19***	4.99*	4.03*

Note. $n = 169$ (Level 1), $n = 81$ (Level 2). Non-standardized coefficients are displayed.

a The full ML estimator was used to calculate this decrease in deviance ($\Delta\chi^2$), which can be considered a way of expressing effect size in multilevel modeling.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3
The Simultaneous Moderating Role of the Motivational Climate (Performance and Mastery Climate)

Variables	Work effort			Work quality			Turnover intention		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
<i>Fixed effects</i>									
Intercept	4.25***	4.24***	4.24***	3.80***	3.82***	3.82***	2.36***	2.36***	2.36***
Gender	-.21*	-.19	-.20*	-.12	-.09	-.09	.33**	.31**	.31*
Age	-.01	-.01*	-.01*	-.02***	-.02***	-.02***	-.02**	-.02**	-.02**
Tenure	.00	.00	.00	.02*	.02**	.02**	.01	.00	.00
Managerial responsibility	.07	.06	.04	-.01	-.04	-.05	.11	.11	.12
Performance orientation	-.11	-.09	-.07	.03	.05	.06	.22*	.22*	.22*
Mastery orientation	.27**	.26*	.26*	.06	.07	.07	-.02	-.01	-.01
Intrinsic motivation	.06	.07	.09	.11	.12	.13	-.36***	-.36***	-.36***
Perceived employee development practices	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.07	-.08	-.08	-.46***	-.45***	-.45***
Mastery climate	.17*	.19*	.18*	.18*	.19*	.19*	-.14	-.15	-.15
Performance climate	-.10	-.11	-.06	-.21***	-.21***	-.19**	.14	.16*	.15
Perceived employee development practices × Mastery climate		.02	.03		-.12	-.12		.00	-.00
Perceived employee development practices × Performance climate		-.15*	-.12		-.19**	-.18**		.21*	.20*
Performance climate × Mastery climate		.01	-.01		-.06	-.08		-.10	-.09
Perceived employee development practices × Performance climate × Mastery climate			-.20*			-.10			.03
<i>Random effects</i>									
Subordinate level residual variance (σ^2)	.38***	.36***	.35***	.36***	.33***	.32***	.63***	.61***	.61***
Supervisor level residual variance (τ_{00})	.00	.00	.01	.05	.05	.05	.00	.00	.00
Deviance (χ^2)	314.71	309.34	303.73	325.99	312.36	311.03	402.13	396.75	396.66
Decrease in deviance ($\Delta\chi^2$ ^a)	32.92***	5.37*	5.61*	40.56***	13.64***	1.33	102.80***	5.38*	.09

Note. $n = 169$ (Level 1), $n = 81$ (Level 2). Non-standardized coefficients are displayed.

a The full ML estimator was used to calculate this decrease in deviance ($\Delta\chi^2$), which can be considered a way of expressing effect size in HLM.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Appendix***Perceived Employee Development Practices Items***

1. I feel that there is a conscious effort in [organization's name] to facilitate internal career opportunities.
2. In [organization's name], one is committed to facilitating lifelong career prospects.
3. To remain in [organization's name] represents excellent future career opportunities.
4. [Organization's name] invests considerable resources in the development of its employees (e.g., through training, courses, and career development).
5. [Organization's name] appears to be very concerned about the continuous development of its employees' skills and abilities.
6. Through actual allocation of time and money to employee development [organization's name] shows that it truly invests in its employees.

Note. Items 1–3 concern career development opportunities, and items 4–6 concern development practices.